

# DIRECT ACTION

NO. 39 APRIL 20 1973

20 CENTS

A FORTNIGHTLY SOCIALIST NEWSPAPER

## WHAT WILL LABOR DO ABOUT INFLATION?

*WHO*  
**SACRIFICES?**  
*NOT*  
**WALL STREET!**

**WAR**  
**CAUSED INFLATION.**  
**STOP BOTH!**



**Wage Freeze No Answer**

**Labor Government  
Retreats Over  
ASIO Affair**

**Uni Fees Abolished,  
But Student Unions  
Threatened**

# DIRECT ACTION

No. 39, April 20, 1973

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## Student Unions Threatened

One of the most popular planks in Labor's platform was the total abolition of all fees in tertiary institutions. Last month's announcement of the implementation of this promise by Education Minister Beazley was wholeheartedly greeted by students. While recognising that inequality in education will remain in force as long as capitalism exists, we welcome the announcement as a step forward and a valuable reform.

The congratulations to the Labor government are nevertheless marred by the incomplete nature of this measure. The Federal government, while retaining the compulsory nature of student government fees, is refusing to pay them. Student government, which goes under different names such as students' representative council, students' council, students' union council etc, both on the local level and on the national level of the Australian Union Students (AUS), has lent a valuable hand to the anti-war, anti-apartheid, secondary students and similar movements.

If fees are going to be collected by the universities' administrations it will give them an effective lever to control student government. When releasing the last Australian Vice-Chancellor Committee (AVCC) report, its chairman, Professor J.J. Auchmutty, explained that the AVCC wanted students' associations activities curbed. He objected to anti-war and anti-apartheid activities and particularly directed his fire on the bail service to students arrested in demonstrations.

Auchmutty's attack joins that of his British colleagues in an attempt to turn back the radicalisation and prevent student government from being used to further the aims of movements for social change.

The granting of the power to collect (and stop collecting) the fees will give the administration a right of veto on payments to the mass movements and even AUS, which is not under the control of any particular administration. They could always find excuses or even call the Commonwealth Government bluff and stop collecting the fees.

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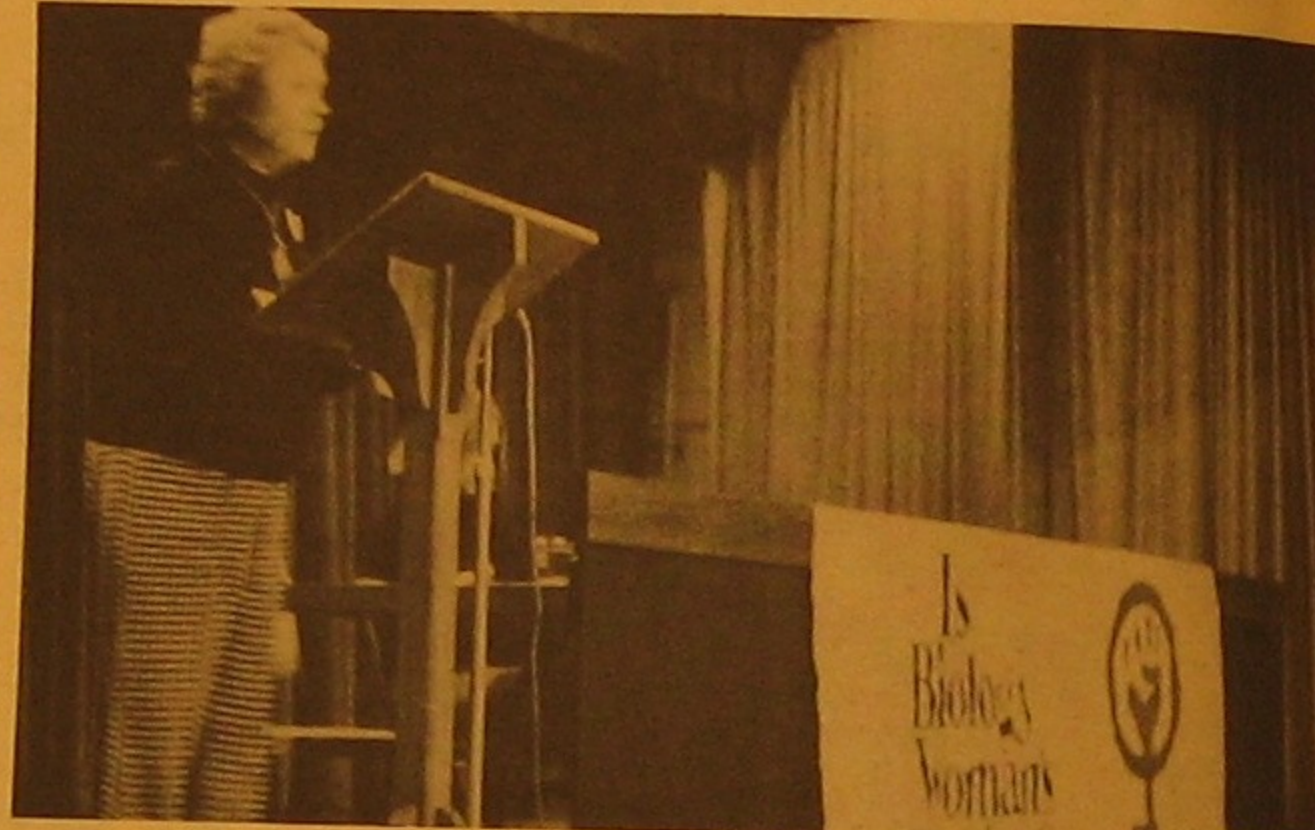
## Large Crowds Hear Evelyn Reed

BY JIM PERCY

The tour by Evelyn Reed has been a tremendous success so far with big crowds at the first speaking engagements of her Australian visit. Crowds of 300 at Macquarie University and 600 at NSW University as well as a public meeting at the Teachers Federation of 500 were highlights of Reed's Sydney visit.

At her press conference at Mascot Airport Reed used the phrase "Infant Universities" to describe the concept of child care centres she envisaged as necessary if both mothers and children were to escape the ills of the nuclear family. The bourgeois press finally dug up an expert comment from one Dr Claire Ishbister who said this would be "dangerous". Its clear that for the mass media, even discussion of these ideas is dangerous.

At her meeting at Macquarie University one "well educated" male demanded page references for Reed's statement of the well-known fact that in some primitive societies, women were stronger than men. He interjected until Reed suggested that he might be irritated by the very idea that this could be the case; all the women and a lot of the men agreed with laughter and applause.



Evelyn Reed speaking at Sydney meeting.

## YLA Conference

BY CHRIS GRAHAM

About two hundred people attended the conference of the NSW Young Labor Council (YLC), held over the weekend of April 14 and 15. In opening the conference, State ALP President Duckert stated (apparently?) that the YLC had always been noted for its "turbulent" character. Events were to prove him right, but not in such a way as to make this mis-leader of the working class proud of his hypothesis.

The conference broke the right wing domination of the YLC. Supporters of the left wing Young Labor Reform Committee, won a majority on the YLC executive, and comprised the majority of conference delegates.

The left lost little time in ridding Youth Council of most of the fetters of right wing domination. They counterposed a socialist orientation for the YLC and the ALP as a whole.

### "CHALLENGE TO YOUTH"

The outgoing right wing executive's report was rejected by the conference which replaced it with a document called "Challenge to Youth". This document analysed the struggle to put forward socialist policies in the ALP, and then went on to outline these perspectives.

The document called for "action to provide a solution to the tremendous problems inherent in capitalism." It also proclaimed support for the women's liberation, black liberation and gay liberation movements and also the struggles for self-determination of countries from exploitation by imperialism.

The document called on the ALP to implement its socialist objective and supported the use of extra-parliamentary action to this end.

In her talk on "Is Biology Woman's Destiny?" Reed attacks the myth that women are in an inferior position in society today because of their biology. It is social causes, she asserted, that are responsible. Only with the advent of class society did women become an oppressed sex. Reed goes on to describe pre-class society, the matriarchal role but where there was no domination or degradation of one sex over another. A realization of the unimportance of biological factors in oppressing women and that woman's role of procreation was used as an excuse by male dominated class society in confidence and ability of women to struggle against this society.

In Brisbane Reed spoke to a crowd of 600 Students at Queensland University and 150 at a public meeting at the Trades Hall. At the meetings at Queensland and NSW Universities Reed spoke on the topic "The Women's Liberation Movement in the US Today", in which she discussed the development of the struggle in the United States, the implication of the recent victory on the abortion question and the diverse trends in the movement. Reed also spoke to 80 women and men in Canberra at the Hughes Community Hall.

## NO WAGE FREEZE!

BY DAVID NIZOZ

In his regular weekly press conference the Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, was asked: "On prices - income policy as you favour a price - income policy as the national Labor government?" After hedging and trying to avoid any answer, Whitlam said: "... There are different views on the efficacy of prices and income policies. But in the short term such as President Nixon brought in, I think six months and then extended for a further period, there is good reason to believe that they can be effective."

After only four months in office, the conservative leadership of the ALP is now holding Richard Nixon, a staunch capitalist politician, as an example for the Labor party. The wage freeze, which up to now was only speculated upon, is becoming a real possibility. Nobody with any knowledge of the difficulties facing Australian capitalism is at all likely to be surprised at the revelation. For some time now, indications were given in the capitalist press of the imminence of such a move.

These indications included calls for such a policy in *The Australian*, and the Melbourne Age, statements on the inflation crisis by the Institute of Public Affairs and Treasurer Frank Crean, as well as the credit reduction by the Reserve Bank.

The scenario is now being developed further with the explicit reference to a wage freeze. The way forward is now open for the imposition of such a freeze on May 4.

On that day a special meeting of the state premiers with the Prime Minister has been arranged. The meeting has been initiated by the Victorian Premier, Rupert Hamer and endorsed by Whitlam. The Prime Minister has said in parliament, following the press conference, that he expected measures to control prices would reduce demands for wage rises. He also leaked to the capitalist media that the Government regarded prices (rather than wages) as the first priority.

Once again this is not surprising. DIRECT ACTION has observed in the past that a Labor government is not necessarily going to follow the crudities of its Liberal predecessors or for that matter that of Nixon in the US and Heath in Britain. One cannot rule out the possibility of a substantial increase in the pending national wage case, particularly in the minimum wage. A price freeze immediately afterwards will not be welcomed by the bourgeoisie, but if it was to be followed with-



In a few months, with a total wage freeze their objections will vanish quite rapidly. There is, at this stage, no guarantee that Labor caucus will approve a wage freeze in the first place. What can be said is that, despite the apparent merits of a price freeze, it is almost certain to be followed within a short time by a complete wage freeze as well.

In the context of Edward Gough Whitlam upholding Richard Nixon's three stage wage freeze as a good example, the question to be asked is what is a "prices and incomes policy" as Ted Heath calls it or a "wage - price freeze" as Nixon called it.

On August 15, 1971, in the midst of an international monetary crisis, sparked off by the worst balance of trade the US had had to date, President Nixon announced

the implementation of three measures. These were quickly dubbed Nixon's Economic Package or the New Economic Policy (NEP). Nixon's measures included (i) a suspension of the convertibility of US dollars to gold (ii) a ten per cent surcharge on imports and (iii) a so-called wage-price freeze.

British capitalism has no doubt more experience with incomes policies than other countries. However, not until the recent period did it resort to the full freeze. US imperialism has now undergone the whole three stages and therefore the experience of the American workers' is of particular interest to Australia.

The Nixon administration pretends its "wage and price control" policies are aimed at "stemming inflation". They have been in effect long enough to test the results.

During the first 90 days, phase 1, American workers lost more than four billion dollars in wages, either through being denied settlements that had already been won or through prevention of negotiation of new settlements comparable to the increases won in the 90 days preceding the decree. The employers were the beneficiaries.

Under phase 2, from November 14 1971, to January 11 1973, the rate of wage raises fell below the pre-freeze period. From an average increase of 8 percent in 1971, the workers' wages went up only 6 percent on the average in 1972.

On February 26, the US Labor Department announced that first-year wage increases in major Labor contracts (which are generally higher than those in succeeding years) averaged 7 percent in 1972 as compared with 11.6 percent in 1971.

These figures represent substantial losses for American workers and apply only to those workers protected by union contracts. Those who had no unions - more than three quarters - fared even worse.

But in the same period, from August 1971 to February 1973, the Consumer Price Index rose by more than 5 per cent and the price index for food rose by more than 9 per cent. The capitalist government cannot enforce controls and it never had any intentions of doing so.

Workers wages can easily be frozen. All Nixon had to do in the US was to use the contract system of collective bargaining. The contract is settled and it applies to tens, hundreds, and in many cases thousands and tens of thousands of workers at the same time. Employers willingly enforce wage control agreements. Under the award system, as it applies in Australia, Federal awards can be frozen by instructions given to the Arbitration Commission by the Federal Government. The cooperation of the states can ensure that similar actions can be taken on the state level. As the vast majority of wages in this country are determined by the various tribunals, such a freeze could be extremely effective.

Where would government price controls be exerted? If at the supermarket level, then what about the wholesalers to the supermarket? If at the level of car prices, then what about the steel industries who supply the vehicle manufacturers? It is inconceivable that capitalists would control prices at every level of production.

The Minister for Labor, Clyde Cameron has himself stated that the machinery for controlling prices in Australia is already effective enough. The Prices

Justification Tribunal is no doubt toothless and unable to carry such an impossible task as the control of prices.



Moreover, some of the capitalists who helped return the Labor government, both through donations and otherwise, are not going to allow Whitlam and company to actually forget this fact. Is Whitlam now going to turn around and prevent those capitalists from raising their prices and thus cut their profits? Is Whitlam going to stop Rupert Murdoch from raising his newspaper prices from 7 to 10 cents?

While support within the employing class for a wage freeze is growing, a substantial section of the ruling class is still in favour of using cruder and harsher methods.

The alternative proposed by the other wing of the Australian capitalists was presented in the "National Times" of April 9. It is the old conservative solution of cutting back government expenditure. The items they have in mind for cutting are the same as those cut by Nixon in his 1974 budget, Social Security, Public Service salaries etc rather than the wasteful expenditure on defence. The impact of such measures and that of increasing taxes can actually increase inflation under current conditions but, more significantly, it will immediately

worsen the employment situation. Once again it is the working class which is going to bear the brunt of such measures. No! Neither a wage freeze nor a credit squeeze is acceptable. Labor should not adopt either one of these schemes. Australian workers' real wages are falling. Urgent steps must be taken to cut both inflation and unemployment. Whitlam's Prices Justification Tribunal is toothless. A fighting programme must be adopted by Labor to combat the capitalist evils. Such a programme should include: Reduction of the working week; unemployment too high. The working week should be cut without any loss of pay to ensure employment for all. Programme of public works: A large scale public works programme should be launched to build hospitals, housing, schools etc, providing jobs for the unemployed. A monthly cost of living adjustment - Only a monthly adjustment can protect the workers from the rapid increase in prices. The adjustment should not be based on the outdated and biased Consumer Price Index, but a genuine index to be kept independently of the Labor government - the ACTU. The adjustment should be written into all contracts and awards. Only this fighting programme can slow the real victims of inflation to demand themselves using their own class organisations of the trade unions and the Labor Party.

## 24 PAGE D.A. FOR 20 CENTS

Thirty months ago in September 1970 the first issue of DIRECT ACTION came off the press. It was a 12 page hopefully monthly newspaper produced by a decision of the Socialist Youth Alliance made at the founding conference of SYA in August that year.

We did not know what response we would get. But we have progressed to a 16 page fortnightly paper and have reached this stage by the consistent support we have received from our readers.

DIRECT ACTION was first sold at the September 1970 Vietnam moratorium. In a sense this was symbolic, as our paper has played and continues to play a major role in analysing the situation in South East Asia and mobilising people in defence of the revolutionary struggles there.

We are convinced that our consistent analysis of the Vietnam war and all the other movements of the oppressed and exploited has been the major factor in gaining us new readers as well as a steady readership of thousands.

In all this time we have sold our paper for 10 cents per copy. Subscriptions have varied from 6 for \$1 to 15 for \$1, the current special price. This is in spite of the more costly fortnightly production schedule, higher expenses in terms of rent, phone, wages and in particular, increased printing costs. We have been the best value all along and we intend to maintain this position.

Other left or "liberal" papers are smaller or more expensive or both. Tribune, the

## D.A. FUND DRIVE FOR \$5000

There's one other way you can help. Subscribe now! and at our old rate. We are keeping open our special offer rate of 15 for \$1 so take advantage quickly and ensure us the stable readers base we need.

We are also going to make some technical changes. For this we need help, urgently, in the form of cash. A supporter has offered us up to \$2,500 to help buy the necessary equipment on the condition we raise another \$2,500 independently. For every \$1 we raise, our friend will donate \$1. That is, for every \$1 our readers give us, we get a total of \$2.

Finally to stress again what we are trying to do; we are providing the alternative news and analysis service to all the capitalist media. Even one consistent, if small, voice is effective. We don't have advertising capital equipment, even a large staff, but we do have the interests of the working people of the world as a guide to what we do and say. If you want to help on our side of the struggle, subscribe to, donate to and read DIRECT ACTION.

I enclose \$... to the DA special fund drive. I do/do not require a receipt.

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Sent to 139 St Johns Rd, Glebe, NSW, 2037.

BY SOL SALBY

A pound of butter for \$27, a bottle of beer for \$22.50, a hair cut for \$63. A nightmare? A wild story? A practical joke? No. These are the projections of the Institute of Public Affairs in Melbourne for the year 2012. The banner headlines of the story in Rupert Murdoch's Australian, indicate that once again inflation is regarded as the most serious problem facing Australian capitalism. Now that unemployment has been reduced inflation is predicted to rise at an annual rate of 8-9% - a rate far worse than any encountered at any time in Australia's post-war history.

The Institute of Public Affairs is financed by 600 business organisations to study economic and industrial matters. Its leading body includes some of the most influential capitalists in Australia involved in industry, retailing, banking and insurance. Its concern with inflation is being shared by the vast majority of business men and, on a different level, by the people who are suffering most from inflation - the working class.

Inflation is a world-wide phenomenon at the moment. All the major countries in the capitalist world are going through increasing inflation. The United States, where unemployment is still quite high, is experiencing a striking case of runaway inflation with the highest cost of living increase in the past 22 years.



Americans have reacted angrily to the new price rises, which affect food prices particularly severely. A national boycott of meat and some other goods took place in the week April 1 to 7. Similar inflation is now gripping the enlarged European Economic Community.

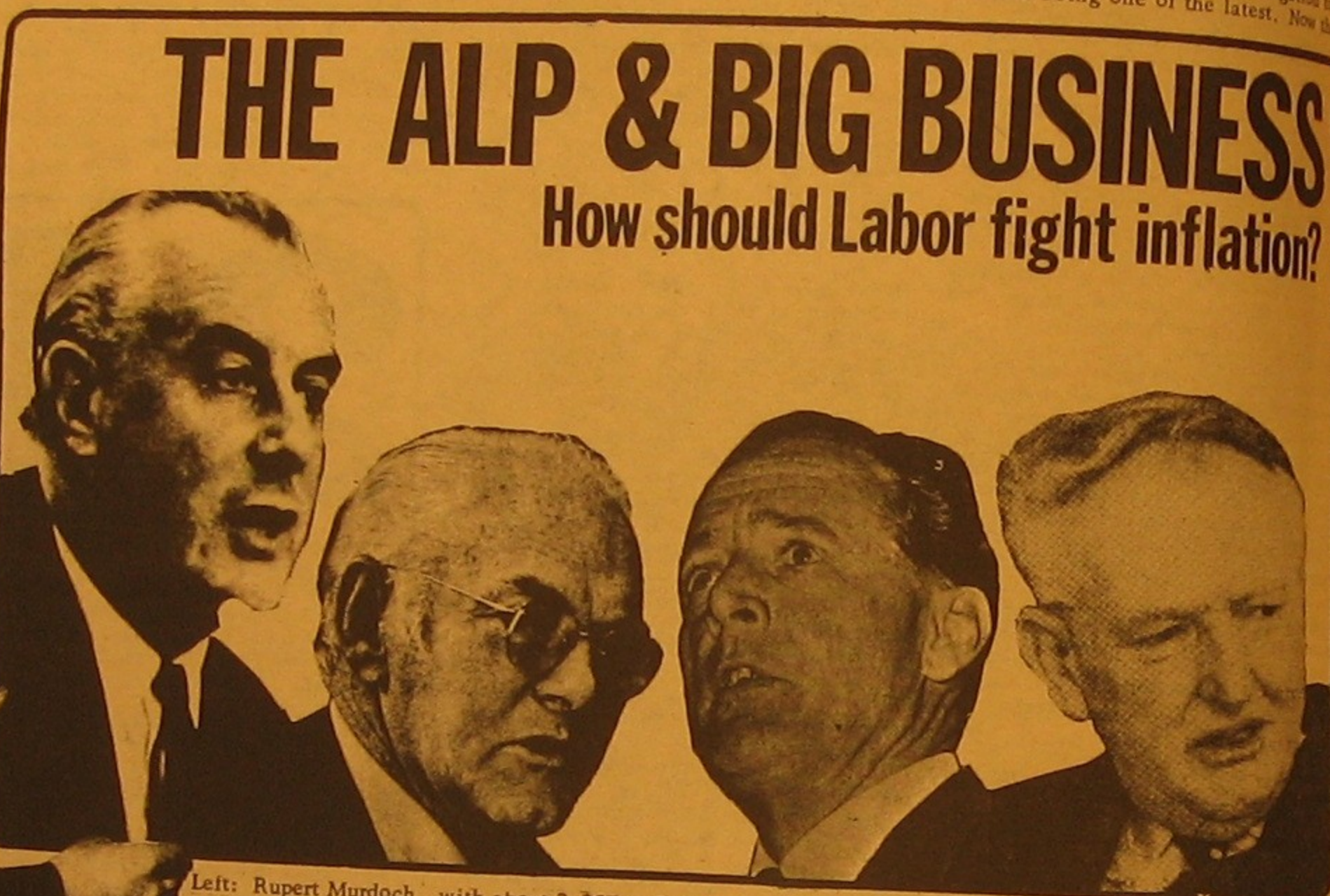
The Australian Treasurer, Frank Crean, who has been busy in recent weeks overseas handling the international monetary time crisis, still managed to find enough time to state that the figures for the Consumer Price Index for the March quarter, due in the next few days, are going to show an unusually high 2% increase which confirms the analysis of the IPA. The two part series in The Australian, which followed the release of the IPA report, gave some interesting examples of the way inflation is operating. A dollar can now purchase what 69 cents could buy in 1963 or 40 cents in 1953. Over the past ten years hospital beds have gone up by 190 per cent, potatoes and onions by 105 per cent, fares by 99 per cent. . . The average wage has gone up by 92 per cent. While in the last decade real wages have increased, the situation is getting worse. This is what price rises are all about. 1973 could be the first year in which real wages actually fell in the post-war period. Even so the average wage figures are highly misleading, owing to built-in biases. The Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union (AMWU) has released figures from a nation-wide survey showing that more than 75% of its members earn a little more than \$50 a week and this already includes overtime and overaward payment.

Inflation is on the increase at a time when unemployment is still fairly high, albeit falling. It is also accompanied by large scale industrial actions.

The latest figures released by the Minister for Labour, Clyde Cameron, on April 9 show that unemployment has fallen by 19,260 in March. It now stands at 84,585 or 1.47 per cent of the workforce. There was also a rise in the number of vacancies in the more reliable seasonally adjusted

terms employment fell only marginally to 1.53 per cent of the workforce. While these figures are far from satisfactory and should not give rise to complacency, there is no question that inflation is currently the dominant factor in the employers' offensive against the working class.

The apologists of capitalism, both in the media and academic circles, have attempted to lay the blame for inflation on militant unions, who manage to gain substantial increases for their members. It is not difficult to see through these lies. In the post election period, when the national wage case ended with a nil increase, prices have risen enormously. Of course, some union officials, anxious to have Labor returned in the last Federal elections at all costs, refused to take any action at all in support of their members' living standards and working conditions and some of this delayed industrial action is now taking place. On the other hand, many employers have postponed their price rises till after the elections to help the Liberal Country Party coalition. In any event, it is not wages which cause inflation. Even Bryan Bowwell in his two part series in The Australian quoted unnamed economists as saying



Left: Rupert Murdoch Above: Whitlam, Cameron, Cairns, Crean.

with about 2.25% inflation, or a 1% unemployment rate with a 3.5% inflation, or between full employment and price stability does not stem just from the fact that policies which increase employment also increase inflationary pressures as full employment is approached. For many countries there is a definite, fairly stable relationship between the level of employment and the rate of inflation." (pp12-13)

Professor Neville's work has led him to scientifically calculate the relationship between inflation and unemployment. This formula covers three factors. They are the price rate of change (inflation), the level of unemployment and the changes in award rates. While admitting the presence of many other factors which, according to him usually exert only a small influence Neville still states his belief in the accuracy of the formula. Essentially it is a trade off relationship. As unemployment goes down inflation goes up and vice versa. As well as that wages provide a small contribution to inflation when they go up.

In fifteen years (1954-1969) over which the formula has been tested, the average error was less than one quarter of one percentage point. This can undoubtedly be regarded as a very small error indeed. Professor Neville is quite likely to be proud of his record. However, the whole irrelevance of the calculation can be seen when considering the application of the formula to the current period.

Using current level of unemployment and increases of awards for the last year and allowing for maximum error inflation should not exceed FOUR per cent. In reality it is 8.9 per cent. In can't be blamed on any inaccuracy in Neville's calculation. It is based on the exploitability of bourgeois economics to explain the real causes of events, in particular such phenomena as stagflation. Fiscal Policy in Australia was written at a period when the long post-war boom was coming to an end. A continued period of long uninterrupted growth is no longer possible under capitalism. From now on employment is going to be accompanied by higher and higher inflation. Unless real measures are taken to combat inflation and unemployment, a reduction in either will mean an extremely high rate for the other.

The inflation caused by the huge magnitude of the expenditure on the Vietnam war is certainly much more than that on the "Enterprise."

In Australia inflation was not so much the product of Australian expenditure on the war, but the export of US inflation. Higher import prices, in particular, those of capital goods used in local production, and higher prices charged by companies with overseas connections all serve as a transmission belt for inflation to be transferred to Australia.

Export of US inflation has been exacerbated by local expenditure on the Vietnam war and "defence". There has also been a huge influx of capital into Australia over the past few years mainly for speculative purposes. To that, one has to add some of the measures taken by the Liberal government in a last ditch effort to win the last elections.

Academics, not being satisfied with blaming inflation on unions and workers have also constructed an elaborate theory covering the relationship between unemployment and inflation. Under a period of boom conditions, the relationship between unemployment and inflation has been outlined in fairly precise terms by capitalist economists. In Australia, a large amount of work has been done by Professor J.W. Neville of the University of New South Wales. His book Fiscal Policy in Australia - Theory and Practice is regarded as one of the most authoritative on the subject.

In his book he states:

"One of the major issues of economic policy facing the Australian Government in the last fifteen years has been whether to aim for, say, a 2% unemployment rate

The increased interest shown by the Australian and the Institute of Public Affairs in inflation can not be taken out of some reason in it. The publisher of the Australian, Rupert Murdoch, is a leading spokesman for that wing of Australian capitalism which supported the return of the Labor Government in the last election. His support was more than welcomed according to David Solomon and Laura G. in their book "The Making of an Australian Prime Minister" Murdoch was an active member of the Whitlam advisory committee in the pre-election period and actually instigated several decisions, particularly in the economic field.

One does not have to accept any conspiracy theory of history to see that the victory to achieve its own ends. Labor is regarded by them as far more able to play Murphy's speech and the article alongside the editorial entitled "Veil lifts on terror's men" was about - no, not the rightist Ustasha, but the Palestinian resistance group, Black September! That piece of press bias neatly illustrates the general attitudes of the capitalist press to real terrorism.

BY DAVE HOLMES

In his speech to the Senate on March 27, Senator Murphy asserted that there was "incontrovertible evidence" that rightist Croatian terrorist organizations presently exist in Australia. Regular readers of the left-wing press in Australia will not be the least bit surprised at this. Even the Sydney Morning Herald conceded that Senator Murphy had produced, "on the face of it", a "strong and impressive case". However, their editorial (March 27) tended to down play Murphy's speech and the article alongside the editorial entitled "Veil lifts on terror's men" was about - no, not the rightist Ustasha, but the Palestinian resistance group, Black September! That piece of press bias neatly illustrates the general attitudes of the capitalist press to real terrorism.

Senator Murphy's speech provided evidence, for those who needed more, of the complicity of the previous Liberal governments in the operation of Croatian terrorist groups. However, the main press reaction was against the Senator and the government because the raid had damaged ASIO's "efficiency". The Australian editorial (March 28) was a fair expression of ruling class opinion:

"Disappointment must be the primary reaction to Senator Murphy's statement, because the efficient operation of Australia's security service and its relations with the central government are the overriding issues in this affair. In comparison, the activities of a few immigrant terrorists, disturbing as they are in themselves, are far less important."

This is quite understandable - the capitalist class and its press always play down, ignore and abet the real instigators of real terrorism (the fascist like Ustasha, the mass murder of governments like Nixon's etc) and play up the entirely different, defensive (if often tactically unwise) measures of the oppressed (Black September, for instance).

The Croatian rightist groups don't pose any threat to the capitalist system - after all, their objective is to destroy the workers' state of Yugoslavia, not establish a socialist Australia. The capitalist class knows its real enemy is the labor movement and its allies. To help them control this movement they need bodies like ASIO, the Commonwealth Police, the various state police forces and their special branches, that is, they need the state, which as Engels pointed out consists essentially of "special bodies of armed men".

Now, as we have pointed out before (see DIRECT ACTION 38) Senator Murphy has only ever sought to bring ASIO more firmly under government control, not to change its fundamental nature and function (as a weapon against the left) or to abolish it. In explaining and defending this point of

view Senator Murphy made the following interesting statement (The Australian, April 5): "The entrenched position of public servants in this country does not carry with it the right to persist in policies of their own."

Or to persist in information on making statements available according to their own notions of desirability of consistency with the statements of previous governments."

If that is allowed to persist the real rulers of this country will not be the elected government, but those who stay

When the governing party (the ALP) acts in such a way as to threaten the operation of the central "security" agency of the capitalist state - holding it to ridicule and what is far worse, dragging a few of its operations into plain daylight - then the capitalist class feels it is time to call a halt.

The concrete meaning of a wage freeze and Whitlam's latest utterings on the subject are discussed elsewhere in this issue of DIRECT ACTION. What appears to surface on the economic front, no matter what action the Labor government may take, is a deepening of the phenomenon of stagflation. It is unrealistic to consider solely the question of unemployment and to insist that unemployment is the only weapon the employers are going to use in their attempts to shift the burden of adjustment on the working people. It is just as unrealistic to state that the capitalist state can not reduce unemployment. This ability, while curtailed, still remains.

The point however is that the cost to the working class in terms of inflation is becoming increasingly higher. It is this conflict between the reduction of unemployment and the growth of inflation which the ruling class for Labor to solve and get it out of a dilemma. The only "solutions" they will come up with will necessitate a hard fight by the working class against the reintroduction of unemployment, increasing inflation and the vicious weapon of a wage freeze.

Between April 20-23 the Socialist Youth Alliance is holding its fourth national conference in Sydney. The conference will open on Friday night with a public rally. Featured speaker will be Evelyn Reed, a prominent feminist and Marxist anthropologist from the United States. Currently undertaking a speaking tour of Australia, Evelyn has been a member of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States for thirty years.

Also speaking will be Peter Rotherham, a member of the National Co-ordinating Committee of the New Zealand Young Socialists, Jim Percy, National Organiser of the Socialist Workers League, and Margaret McHugh, SYA Sydney Branch Organiser and SYA national committee member.

During the weekend four main documents will be presented for discussion. A political report entitled "SYA and the challenge of the Youth Radicalisation" will analyse political developments on a local and international scale over the past year and discuss our perspectives for participating in and building the

It is a time when revolutionary youth from all over the country come together to discuss and plan the most effective ways of building the struggles of all the oppressed, and leading them in a socialist direction. If you want to know more about socialism, more about revolutionary theory and practice and more about the strongest, revolutionary organisation of youth activists in this country, come to the Socialist Youth Alliance Fourth National Conference.

Join SYA!

I would like to attend the Socialist Youth Alliance Conference at Easter. Please send me more information.

I would like to join the Socialist Youth Alliance.

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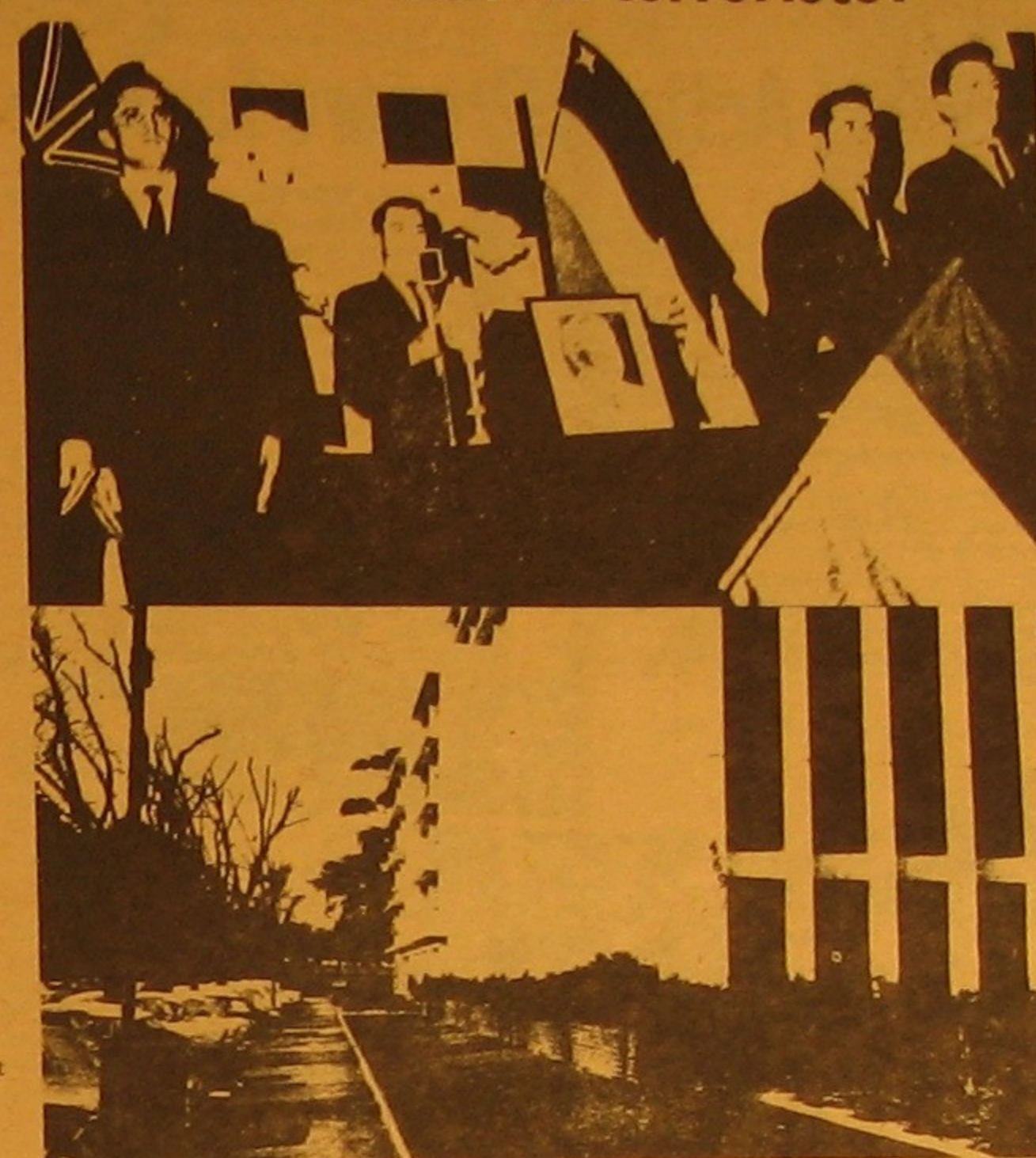
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# LABOR RETREATS OVER ASIO

## Who are the real terrorists?



Top: Ustasha Meeting Below: ASIO Headquarters, St Kilda Rd.

while elected governments come and go" (Our emphasis.)

And this is precisely the case - capitalist power lies with the boards of directors of the big corporations, the top civil servants, their special police agencies and so on (see DIRECT ACTION 38: "What ASIO really means"). It does not lie with parliament and the government - the government merely administers the existing order of things.

Whatever Senator Murphy's intentions, his attempt to bring ASIO more directly under government control without changing its essential nature was seen by the capitalist class as a threat to their state apparatus and hence the antagonistic press reaction to Labor's handling of the whole ASIO affair.

What has been Labor's response to these attacks? They have retreated abjectly. Originally Senator Murphy claimed that documents he obtained from the file of the Canberra ASIO on March 15 showed a conspiracy to keep the government in ignorance of the Croat terror groups. Later on this document, which sent him with 30 (!) Commonwealth police to ASIO headquarters in Melbourne on March 16, turns out to be a "wrong report". So said Prime Minister Whitlam in parliament on April 5. Was it really? The government had simply retreated in the face of the hostility of the establishment press which accused them of "dealing a heavy blow to the morale of its (ASIO's) staff and their ability to function effectively" - and, of course, to ASIO's reputation in the eyes of its overseas sources of information (the freedom loving CIA, for example?).

That was how The Sydney Morning Herald (April 6) put it in its editorial. "Shame on you!" The shame was on the Labor Government, but for a different reason than this capitalist paper had in mind. The ASIO affair is Labor's shame because it capitulated in the face of bourgeois opinion. Gough Whitlam said the raid was the result of a misunderstanding, no drastic overhaul of ASIO was contemplated (much less its abolition) and Labor had the "national interest" at heart too.

Socialist Labor supporters demand that Labor dismantle ASIO lock, stock and barrel - dismiss its personnel, stop the surveillance of labor and left-wing militants, burn their files on progressive activists, scrap the Commonwealth police and the state "special branch" units, take strong and decisive action against rightist terrorists (Ustasha, Nazi, or whatever).

## Come to the SYA Fourth National Conference



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## Join SYA!

I would like to attend the Socialist Youth Alliance Conference at Easter. Please send me more information.

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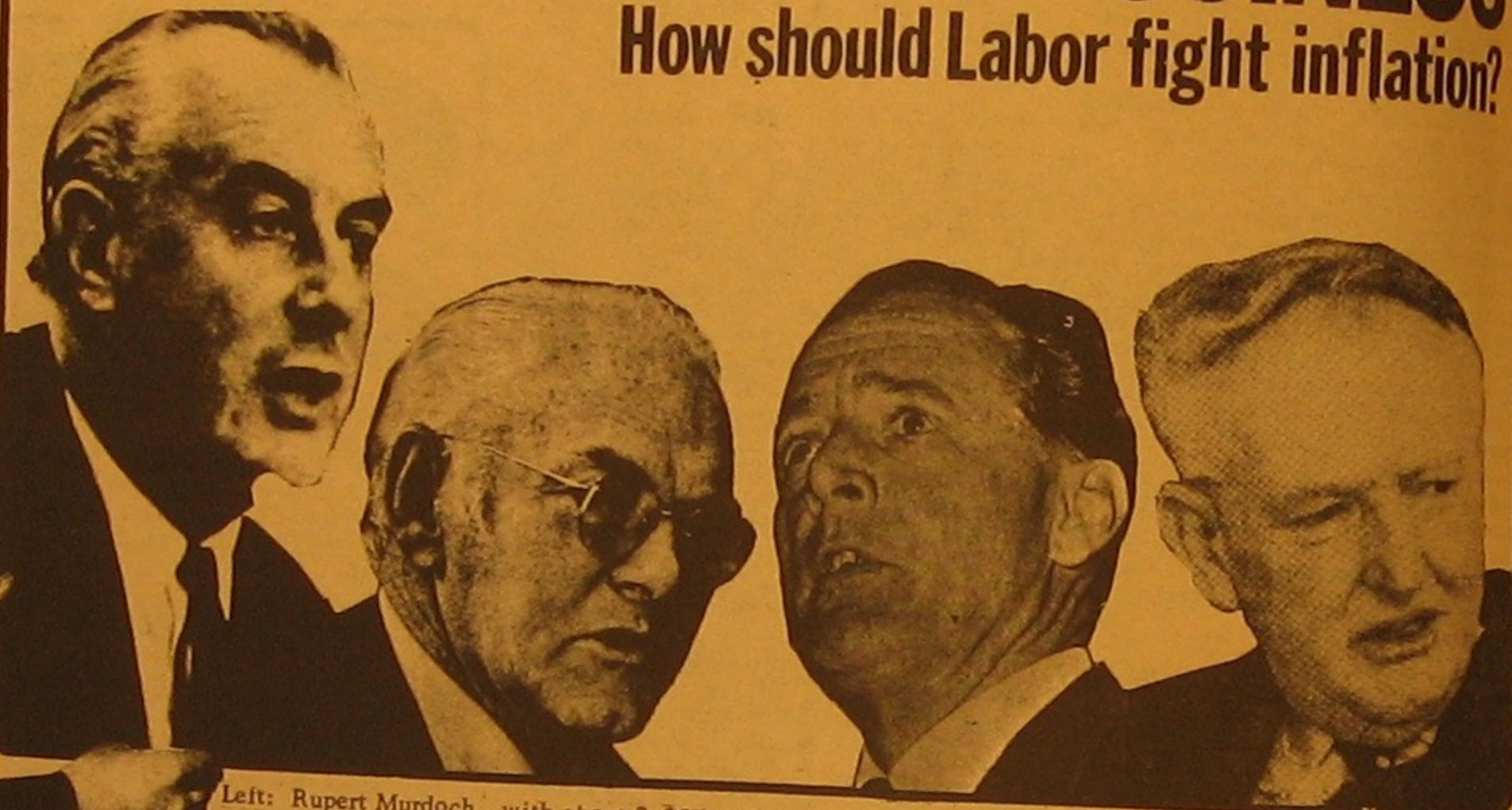
Post to SYA, 139 St Johns Rd, Glebe, NSW, 2037.

BY SOL SALBY

A pound of butter for \$27, a bottle of beer for \$22.50, a hair cut for \$63. A nightmare? A wild story? A practical joke? No. These are the projections of the Institute of Public Affairs in Melbourne for the year 2012. The banner headlines of the story in Rupert Murdoch's Australian, indicate that once again inflation is regarded as the most serious problem facing Australian capitalism. Now that unemployment has been reduced inflation is predicted to rise at an annual rate of 8-9% - a rate far worse than any encountered at any time in Australia's post-war history.

The Institute of Public Affairs is financed by 600 business organisations to study economic and industrial matters. Its leading body includes some of the most influential capitalists in Australia involved in industry, retailing, banking and insurance. Its concern with inflation is being shared by the vast majority of business men and, on a different level, by the people who are suffering most from inflation - the working class.

Inflation is a world-wide phenomenon at the moment. All the major countries in the capitalist world are going through increasing inflation. The United States, where unemployment is still quite high, is experiencing a striking case of runaway inflation with the highest cost of living increase in the past 22 years.



Left: Rupert Murdoch Above: Whitlam, Cameron, Cairns, Crean.

Americans have reacted angrily to the new price rises, which affect food prices particularly severely. A national boycott of meat and some other goods took place in the week April 1 to 7. Similar inflation is now gripping the enlarged European Economic Community.

The Australian Treasurer, Frank Crean, who has been busy in recent weeks overseas handling the international monetary time crisis, still managed to find enough time to state that the figures for the Consumer Price Index for the March quarter, due in the next few days, are going to show an unusually high 2% increase which confirms the analysis of the IPA. The two part series in The Australian, which followed the release of the IPA report, gave some interesting examples of the way inflation is operating. A dollar can now purchase what 69 cents could buy in 1963 or 40 cents in 1953. Over the past ten years hospital beds have gone up by 190 per cent, potatoes and onions by 105 per cent, fares by 99 per cent. The average wage has gone up by 92 per cent. While in the last decade real wages have increased, the situation is getting worse. This is what price rises are all about. 1973 could be the first year in which real wages actually fell in the post-war period. Even so the average wage figures are highly misleading, owing to built-in biases. The Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union (AMWU) has released figures from a nation-wide survey showing that more than 75% of its members earn a little more than \$50 a week and this already includes overtime and overaward payment.

Inflation is on the increase at a time when unemployment is still fairly high, albeit falling. It is also accompanied by large scale industrial actions.

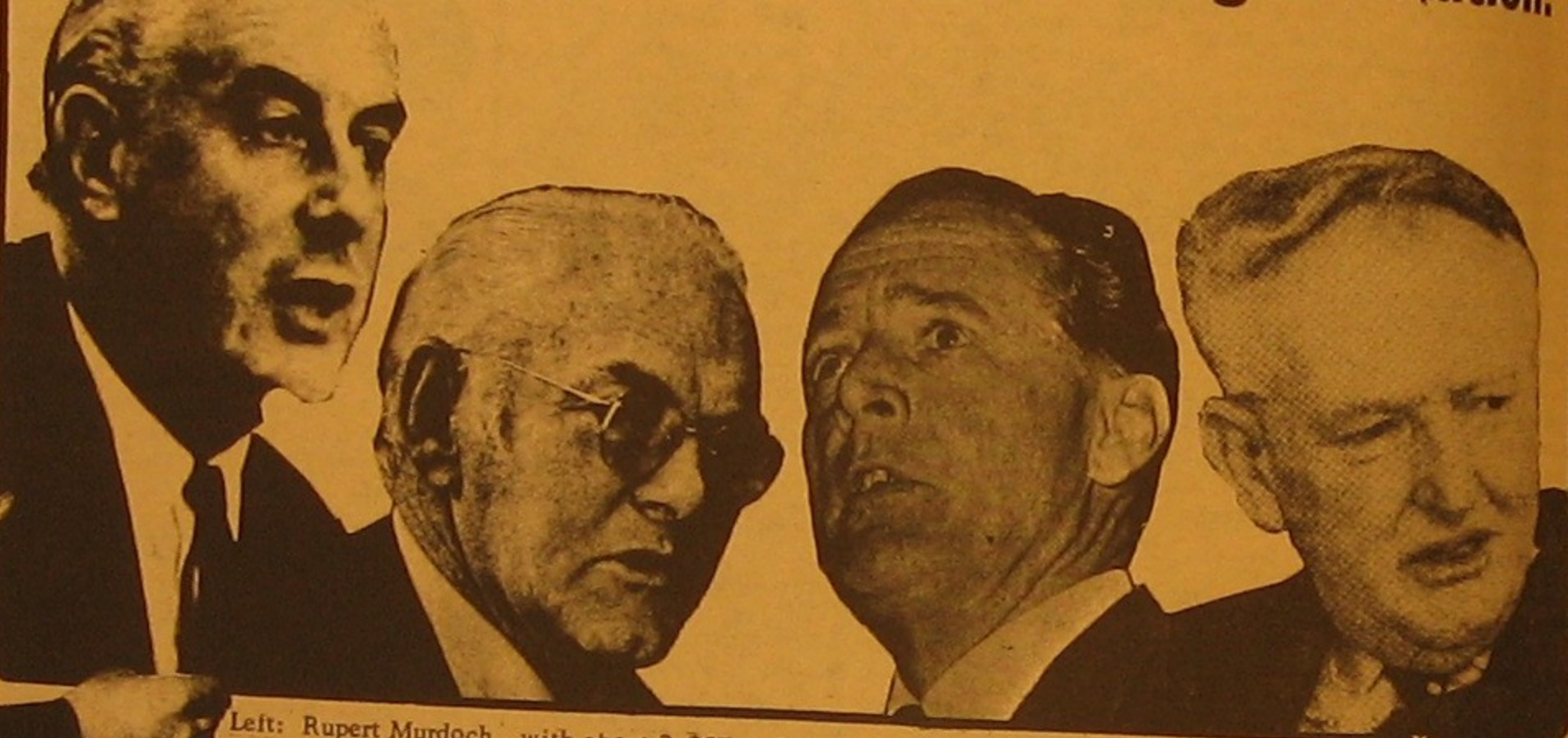
The latest figures released by the Minister for Labour, Clyde Cameron, on April 9 show that unemployment has fallen by 19,260 in March. It now stands at 84,585 or 1.47 per cent of the workforce. There was also a rise in the number of vacancies in the more reliable seasonally adjusted

terms employment fell only marginally to 1.53 per cent of the workforce. While these figures are far from satisfactory and should not give rise to complacency, there is no question that inflation is currently the dominant factor in the employers' offensive against the working class.

The apologists of capitalism, both in the media and academic circles, have attempted to lay the blame for inflation on militant unions, who manage to gain substantial increases for their members. It is not difficult to see through these lies. In the post election period, when the national wage case ended with a nil increase, prices have risen enormously. Of course, some union officials, anxious to have Labor returned in the last Federal elections at all costs, refused to take any action at all in support of their members' living standards and working conditions and some of this delayed industrial action is now taking place. On the other hand, many employers have postponed their price rises till after the elections to help the Liberal Country Party coalition. In any event, it is not wages which cause inflation. Even Bryan Bowwell in his two part series in The Australian quoted unnamed economists as saying

## THE ALP & BIG BUSINESS

### How should Labor fight inflation?



Left: Rupert Murdoch Above: Whitlam, Cameron, Cairns, Crean.

with about 2.25% inflation, or a 1% unemployment rate with a 3.5% inflation, or between full employment and price stability does not stem just from the fact that policies which increase employment also increase inflationary pressures as full employment is approached. For many countries there is a definite, fairly stable relationship between the level of employment and the rate of inflation." (pp12-13)

Professor Neville's work has led him to scientifically calculate the relationship between inflation and unemployment. This formula covers three factors. They are the price rate of change (inflation), the level of unemployment and the changes in award rates. While admitting the presence of many other factors which, according to him usually exert only a small influence Neville still states his belief in the accuracy of the formula. Essentially it is a trade off relationship. As unemployment goes down inflation goes up and vice versa. As well as that wages provide a small contribution to inflation when they go up.

In fifteen years (1954-1969) over which the formula has been tested, the average error was less than one quarter of one percentage point. This can undoubtedly be regarded as a very small error indeed. Professor Neville is quite likely to be proud of his record. However, the whole irrelevance of the calculation can be seen when considering the application of the formula to the current period. Using current level of unemployment and increases of awards for the last year and allowing for maximum error inflation should not exceed FOUR per cent. In reality it is 8.9 per cent. In fact it can't be blamed on any inaccuracy in Neville's calculation. It is based on the exploitability of bourgeois economics to explain the real causes of events, in particular such phenomena as stagflation.

Fiscal Policy in Australia was written at a period when the long post-war boom was coming to an end. A continued period of long uninterrupted growth is no longer possible under capitalism. From now on employment is going to be accompanied by higher and higher inflation. Unless real measures are taken to combat inflation and unemployment, a reduction in either will mean an extremely high rate for the other.

The inflation caused by the huge magnitude of the expenditure on the Vietnam war is certainly much more than that on the "Enterprise."

In Australia inflation was not so much the product of Australian expenditure on the war, but the export of US inflation. Higher import prices, in particular, those of capital goods used in local production, and higher prices charged by companies with overseas connections all serve as a transmission belt for inflation to be transferred to Australia.

Export of US inflation has been exacerbated by local expenditure on the Vietnam war and "defence". There has also been a huge influx of capital into Australia over the past few years mainly for speculative purposes. To that, one has to add some of the measures taken by the Liberal government in a last ditch effort to win the last elections.

Academics, not being satisfied with blaming inflation on unions and workers have also constructed an elaborate theory covering the relationship between unemployment and inflation. Under a period of boom conditions, the relationship between unemployment and inflation has been outlined in fairly precise terms by capitalist economists. In Australia, a large amount of work has been done by Professor J.W. Neville of the University of New South Wales. His book Fiscal Policy in Australia - Theory and Practice is regarded as one of the most authoritative on the subject.

In his book he states: "One of the major issues of economic policy facing the Australian Government in the last fifteen years has been whether to aim for, say, a 2% unemployment rate

The increased interest shown by the Australian and the Institute of Public Affairs in inflation can not be taken out of some reason in it. The publisher of the Australian, Rupert Murdoch, is a leading spokesman for that wing of Australian capitalism which supported the return of the Labor Government in the last election. His support was more than welcomed according to David Solomon and Laura G. in their book "The Making of an Australian Prime Minister" Murdoch was an active member of the Whitlam advisory committee in the pre-election period and actually instigated several decisions, particularly in the economic field.

One does not have to accept any conspiracy theory of history to see that the victory to achieve its own ends. Labor is regarded by them as far more able to play Murphy's speech and the article alongside the editorial entitled "Veil lifts on terror's men" was about - no, not the rightist Ustasha, but the Palestinian resistance group, Black September! That piece of press bias neatly illustrates the general attitudes of the capitalist press to real terrorism.

Senator Murphy's speech provided evidence, for those who needed more, of the complicity of the previous Liberal governments in the operation of Croatian terrorist groups. However, the main press reaction was against the Senator and the government because the raid had damaged ASIO's "efficiency". The Australian editorial (March 28) was a fair expression of ruling class opinion:

"Disappointment must be the primary reaction to Senator Murphy's statement, because the efficient operation of Australia's security service and its relations with the central government are the overriding issues in this affair. In comparison, the activities of a few immigrant terrorists, disturbing as they are in themselves, are far less important."

This is quite understandable - the capitalist class and its press always play down, ignore and abet the real instigators of real terrorism (the fascist like Ustasha, the mass murder of governments like Nixon's etc) and play up the entirely different, defensive (if often tactically unwise) measures of the oppressed (Black September, for instance).

The Croatian rightist groups don't pose any threat to the capitalist system - after all, their objective is to destroy the workers' state of Yugoslavia, not establish a socialist Australia. The capitalist class knows its real enemy is the labor movement and its allies. To help them control this movement they need bodies like ASIO, the Commonwealth Police, the various state police forces and their special branches, that is, they need the state, which as Engels pointed out consists essentially of "special bodies of armed men".

Now, as we have pointed out before (see DIRECT ACTION 38) Senator Murphy has only ever sought to bring ASIO more firmly under government control, not to change its fundamental nature and function (as a weapon against the left) or to abolish it. In explaining and defending this point of

view Senator Murphy made the following interesting statement (The Australian, April 5): "The entrenched position of public servants in this country does not carry with it the right to persist in policies of their own."

Or to persist in information on making statements available according to their own notions of desirability of consistency with the statements of previous governments."

If that is allowed to persist the real rulers of this country will not be the elected government, but those who stay

When the governing party (the ALP) acts in such a way as to threaten the operation of the central "security" agency of the capitalist state - holding it to ridicule and what is far worse, dragging a few of its operations into plain daylight - then the capitalist class feels it is time to call a halt.

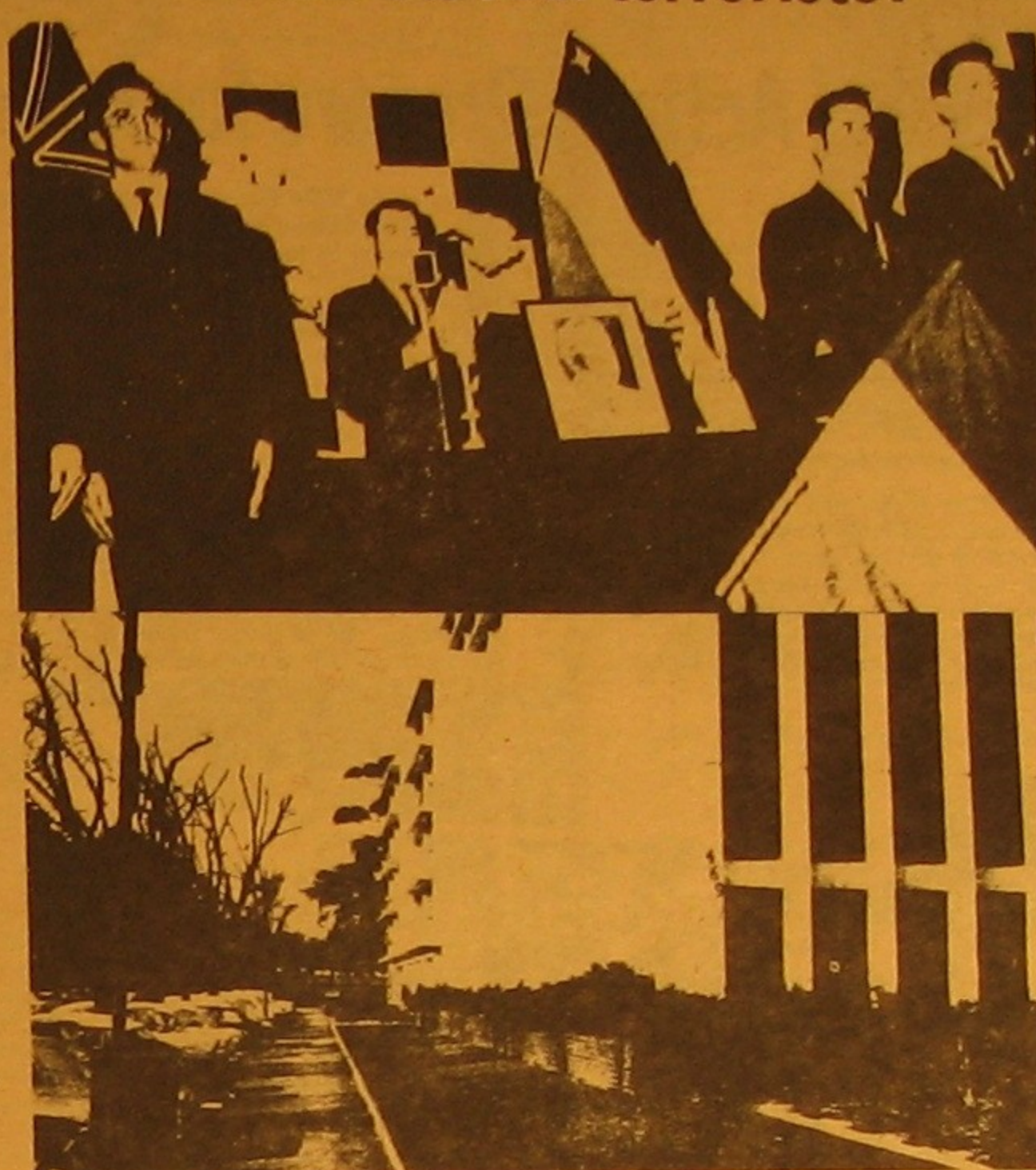
The concrete meaning of a wage freeze and Whitlam's latest utterings on the subject are discussed elsewhere in this issue of DIRECT ACTION. What appears to surface on the economic front, no matter what action the Labor government may take, is a deepening of the phenomenon of stagflation. It is unrealistic to consider solely the question of unemployment and to insist that unemployment is the only weapon the employers are going to use in their attempts to shift the burden of adjustment on the working people. It is just as unrealistic to state that the capitalist state can not reduce unemployment. This ability, while curtailed, still remains.

The point however is that the cost to the working class in terms of inflation is becoming increasingly higher. It is this conflict between the reduction of unemployment and the growth of inflation which the ruling class for Labor to solve and get it out of a dilemma. The only "solutions" they will come up with will necessitate a hard fight by the working class against the reintroduction of unemployment, increasing inflation and the vicious weapon of a wage freeze.

# LABOR RETREATS OVER ASIO

BY DAVE HOLMES

## Who are the real terrorists?



Top: Ustasha Meeting Below: ASIO Headquarters, St Kilda Rd.

In his speech to the Senate on March 27, Senator Murphy asserted that there was "incontrovertible evidence" that rightist Croatian terrorist organizations presently exist in Australia. Regular readers of the left-wing press in Australia will not be the least bit surprised at this. Even the Sydney Morning Herald conceded that Senator Murphy had produced, "on the face of it", a "strong and impressive case". However, their editorial (March 27) tended to down play Murphy's speech and the article alongside the editorial entitled "Veil lifts on terror's men" was about - no, not the rightist Ustasha, but the Palestinian resistance group, Black September! That piece of press bias neatly illustrates the general attitudes of the capitalist press to real terrorism.

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And this is precisely the case - capitalist power lies with the boards of directors of the big corporations, the top civil servants, their special police agencies and so on (see DIRECT ACTION 38: "What ASIO really means"). It does not lie with parliament and the government - the government merely administers the existing order of things.

Whatever Senator Murphy's intentions, his attempt to bring ASIO more directly under government control without changing its essential nature was seen by the capitalist class as a threat to their state apparatus and hence the antagonistic press reaction to Labor's handling of the whole ASIO affair.

What has been Labor's response to these attacks? They have retreated abjectly.

Originally Senator Murphy claimed that documents he obtained from the file of the Canberra ASIO on March 15 showed a conspiracy to keep the government in ignorance of the Croat terror groups. Later on this document, which sent him with 30 (!) Commonwealth police to ASIO headquarters in Melbourne on March 16, turned out to be a "wrong report". So said Prime Minister Whitlam in parliament on April 5. Was it really? The government had simply retreated in the face of the hostility of the establishment press which accused them of "dealing a heavy blow to the morale of its (ASIO's) staff and their ability to function effectively" - and, of course, to ASIO's reputation in the eyes of its overseas sources of information (the freedom loving CIA, for example?).

That was how The Sydney Morning Herald (April 6) put it in its editorial. "Shame on you!" The shame was on the Labor Government, but for a different reason than this capitalist paper had in mind. The ASIO affair is Labor's shame because it capitulated in the face of bourgeois opinion. Gough Whitlam said the raid was the result of a misunderstanding, no drastic overhaul of ASIO was contemplated (much less its abolition) and Labor had the "national interest" at heart too.

Socialist Labor supporters demand that Labor dismantle ASIO lock, stock and barrel - dismiss its personnel, stop the surveillance of labor and left-wing militants, burn their files on progressive activists, scrap the Commonwealth police and the state "special branch" units, take strong and decisive action against rightist terrorists (Ustasha, Nazi, or whatever).

## Come to the SYA Fourth National Conference



Between April 20-23 the Socialist Youth Alliance is holding its fourth national conference in Sydney. The conference will open on Friday night with a public rally. Featured speaker will be Evelyn Reed, a prominent feminist and Marxist anthropologist from the United States. Currently undertaking a speaking tour of Australia, Evelyn has been a member of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States for thirty years.

Also speaking will be Peter Rotherham, a member of the National Co-ordinating Committee of the New Zealand Young Socialists, Jim Percy, National Organiser of the Socialist Workers League, and Margaret McHugh, SYA Sydney Branch Organiser and SYA national committee member. During the weekend four main documents will be presented for discussion. A political report entitled "SYA and the challenge of the Youth Radicalisation" will analyse political developments on a local and international scale over the past year and discuss our perspectives for participating in and building the

movements of the radicalisation, in particular the antiwar and women's liberation movements. This document will also discuss the results of the betrayal by the Stalinist bureaucracies in the Soviet Union and China of the Vietnamese struggle.

The other main documents to be presented for discussion will be on the high school movement, the radicalisation in the universities and the labor youth movement. Workshops and national meetings on a variety of topics will also constitute part of the conference.

It is a time when revolutionary youth from all over the country come together to discuss and plan the most effective ways of building the struggles of all the oppressed, and leading them in a socialist direction. If you want to know more about socialism, more about revolutionary theory and practice and more about the strongest, revolutionary organization of youth activists in this country, come to the Socialist Youth Alliance Fourth National Conference.

## Join SYA!

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I would like to join the Socialist Youth Alliance.

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# Adelaide Secondary Students Strike

BY BERNADETTE RYAN

About 200 secondary students marched in the Adelaide April 11 students' rights campaign.

The students assembled at Elder Park at 11.00 a.m. where Penny Jackson, co-ordinator of the EAG, was well received with her speech on "Why are we marching?". She spoke of the necessity to continue the students' rights campaign until student rights are achieved. She spoke of the need for mass action in the campaign.

The march moved off at about 11.30 a.m. When the demonstrators turned into Rundle St, chants of "Student Rights NOW!" began. The feeling of solidarity and purpose within the march was overwhelming. Of course there were the usual comments by onlookers "Get a Haircut!" "Get back to school!" etc.

The marchers stopped outside the Education Department Building in Flinders St. where Graeme Tubbenhauer, treasurer of the EAG, spoke on "The role of schools in society". After he spoke a student burnt his tie to symbolise his disgust with the Education system in South Australia. This was received with tumultuous applause.

Before the march a letter was sent to Hudson, the Minister for Education, asking him to speak to the marchers at the Education Department. Needless to say, he had just left for a three day visit to Whyalla! The Deputy Director General of Education did speak to the marchers. He said he wanted the marchers to move on because we were blocking the footpath. When he asked if we had any demands, many students thrust forward a leaflet containing the demands. He asked if he could speak to a small delegation of students, to "talk over our problems." After he spoke, a student speaking for the marchers, said that the "time has come for us to stop talking and get down to action." He went on to say that for years students have been talking, but nothing had been done.

The march then moved off to Victoria Square where Mark Burford, secretary

of the EAG, spoke on "Democracy in Schools."

The support for the EAG demands was certainly not reflected by the turn up for April 11. Many students could not come because of parental and school problems. Because of this the SA EAG

## April 11 Actions Prepare for June 6

BY MIKE JONES

There are now less than two months to go until the planned national secondary students' action on June 6. During these two months the National Education Action Coalition and its affiliates will be organising activities designed to construct an independent mass secondary student front capable of leading students in their battle against the education system.

The first of the planned activities was the pickets held in Sydney and Melbourne on April 11 and the strike in Adelaide on the same day. Only 25 people attended the picket outside the Department of Education in Sydney but they represented a new militant core of activists to replenish the

distributed petitions in the march. It is hoped that by June 6 the EAG will have collected about 5,000 signatures. These will be presented to Hudson on June 6 at a rally outside the Education Department.

April 11 was another step forward in the

ranks of the NSW Education Action Group which lost many of its leading members interstate or to job university at the beginning of the year.

In Melbourne at least 125 secondary students attended a rally in the City Square. The speakers covered topics such as democratic rights for students (Jerry Dawson), and the general role of the National Education Action Group. (Ted Murphy).

The rally, which was organised by the Victorian EAG, was chaired by Elizabeth Wheelahan. At times the rally was partially disrupted by ex-members of the Victorian Secondary Students Union. At one stage, one of them, Danny Masei forced himself into the speaking area and

grabbed the microphone. He outlined his plan of beginning small discussion clubs throughout schools, and flatly refused to accept that it is necessary to build mass demonstrations to change the present education system.

The New South Wales Education Action Group has planned a series of public forums designed to educate students and the public concerning the secondary students' movement and its perspective.

Besides the forums, the activities of the NSW EAG over the coming months will include pickets, mass leafleting, intervention in student and other struggles concerning the education system and canvassing for support from interested people.

Nationally, the preparations for June 6 will be stepped up so that the action will be a well coordinated national event. The NEAC newsletter will be appearing regularly every two weeks with information concerning the progress of the movement and articles about the different aspects of our struggle. It is intended for use as an educational instrument and thus it will aid the other activities of the NEAC affiliates in this sphere. Reports of the current student struggles taking place overseas as well as items concerning the activities of the women's liberation and gay liberation movements will be included to give the newsletter an educational character.

If you are interested in taking part in the struggle for democratic rights for secondary students, you can contact the NEAC at Box A444, Sydney South, NSW 2001 or ring 660 6672.



Melbourne rally in City Square

## NSW YLA CONFERENCE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

DEFENCE OF THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION

A motion was initially moved condemning the US presence in Thailand. An addendum was moved recognising the failure of the Paris peace accords to bring peace to Indo-China allowing the peoples of Indo-China to determine their own affairs independently. The addendum also supported the anti-war demonstration on May 19 in Sydney around these demands. The conference overwhelmingly carried the addendum. An addendum calling on the Labor government to recognise the PRG was also carried.

The conference strongly rejected a right wing motion condemning "international terrorism" and in effect calling for a witch-hunt of the Palestine-Australia Solidarity Committee, ostensibly for its support for Black September, but in reality because of its defence of the Palestinian revolution. While the left rejected terrorism as a tactic, it recognised that any witch-hunting of the PASC would work in the interests of the Zionists. Of course, the right wing omitted to mention Zionist terrorism, such as the shooting down of the Libyan airliner last month.

University of NSW student activist Frans Timmerman moved an amendment to

deleting the reference to the PASC. And the president of Northern Districts Young Labor Association, Ian Robertson, moved a further amendment supporting national liberation struggles such as the Palestinian struggle. These amendments were carried with a large majority.

The conference passed a resolution calling for the immediate release of political prisoners in the USSR and Eastern Europe. It was made clear that this was not to be interpreted as an attack on the Socialist gains of the Russian Revolution, but rather an attack on the Stalinist bureaucracy whose repression of struggles for national self-determination within the USSR and the broader struggles for socialist democracy jeopardised these gains.

SUPPORT FOR MASS MOVEMENTS

The conference passed a series of motions supporting the mass movements of oppressed layers of society. The most important of these was a motion supporting the struggle of women for the repeal of abortion laws. A socialist delegate moved an addendum supporting the demonstration on June 30 around this demand. The addendum affirmed that abortion reform was "central to the demands that a Labor government must implement if it is to achieve the stated objective of eliminating exploitation

and other anti-social features" in society. The addendum and motion were carried overwhelmingly.

The conference endorsed the national high school strike to take place on June 6 and supported the actions of the National Education Action Coalition which is organising the strike. One delegate while supporting the demands of the demonstration, opposed supporting it or the NEAC because it was "an SYA front". However, most delegates rejected this as red-baiting and a diversion from the issues involved, and it did not affect the large majority by which it was passed.

A motion calling for the repeal of laws against homosexuals was also carried. The conference also called for the repeal of censorship laws and condemned the NSW Parliamentary ALP for its insipid opposition to the Indecent Publications Act recently debated in State Parliament. Conference also called for the repeal of vagrancy laws which made it a crime to be poor.

DISRUPTION

A great deal of time was lost at the conference through a concerted right wing campaign of disruption, heckling speakers, taking pointless points of order, and filibustering. This only reflected the general bankruptcy of the right: the correct position would therefore have been to ignore it as much as possible. Unfortunately, some of the left over-reacted to this type of dis-

ruption, and retaliated by questioning the credentials of some of the right wing delegates, moving for the suspension of the most vocal of the disruptors. This only wasted more time and added to the confusion that the right was deliberately fomenting.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

It is now appropriate to draw the lessons of the conference and to consider future perspectives for the left in the YLC and the ALP as a whole. The victory in the Youth Council can be considered a victory for the entire left in the ALP. Only the continued principled advocacy of socialist ideas can consolidate the victory.

The motions passed will make the YLC far more attractive to the radicalising youth outside the ALP. Clearly, by supporting the struggles of all the oppressed, the left can relieve the cynicism displayed by many youth towards the right wing ALP leadership.

Flowing from the above considerations, the struggle for socialism in the ALP must be conceived primarily as a political struggle. Politics takes priority over the obsession with "getting the numbers" at any price which is displayed by some people. This entails not just moving motions in support of anti-capitalist struggles, but also becoming involved in these struggles. And above all, it points to the need for a programme around which to unite the left in the struggle.

# Student Unions Threatened

## Labor abolishes tertiary tuition fees - union fees up in air.

BY FRANS TIMMERMAN

During the 1972 Federal election campaign the Australian Labor Party promised, in line with party policy, that if elected the new Government would abolish tertiary education fees from 1974 onwards.

The Australian Union of Students, which represents over 170,000 tertiary students, has had a considerable influence on ALP education policy. However, AUS opinion on the abolition of fees differs from ALP policy. AUS favours a student assistance scheme which would make "need" its first criterion.

Towards the end of March 1973, meetings were held in Canberra between AUS representatives Neil McLean (President), John van Dalen (Education Vice-President), Tom Tescher (Resource Officer), Richard Refshauge (Executive member), and Education Minister, Mr Beazley, officer of the Education Department, Professor Karmel (Chairman of the Australian Universities Commission) and other politicians and bureaucrats.

AUS representatives had gone to Canberra to ascertain government thinking on student financing and to present AUS policy relevant to the issue. In February, AUS Council had agreed that the abolition of fees would not solve the basic financial problem of tertiary students, i.e., students in poor financial circumstances being prevented from entering universities and colleges or from completing their courses because of those circumstances.

AUS believes that the best form a new student assistance scheme could take is to allow all students who are admitted to tertiary institutions to be eligible for assistance under the Commonwealth Scholarship Scheme; change the basis of the scheme so that both fees and living allowances are means-tested; gear the

## Labor Landslide in Brisbane Elections

BY CHRIS GRAHAM

Local government has traditionally been regarded as the province of Liberal Party fronts protecting the interests of real estate agents and high rise developers. The results of the local elections held in Queensland on March 31 have provided a most striking exception to that rule.

In Brisbane, ALP aldermen were elected to 20 out of 21 positions on Council, giving the opposition Brisbane Civic Party (BCP) a most unceremonious thrashing. This gigantic swing to Labor deposed



Clem Jones

scheme to suitable economic indices so that benefits are automatically kept in line with community wages and costs. Abolition of fees does not fulfil these criteria because it provides a redistribution of scarce economic resources to many students who do not need them and also because fees form less than a quarter of a student's cost, so that their abolition only marginally assists the student in real need.

Another problem associated with fee abolition is the matter of fees paid for maintenance of union buildings and services, and also for the activities of Students' Unions, Clubs and Societies and Sports Associations.

Beazley was extremely non-committal on what the Government was doing, though he was receptive and sympathetic to the AUS representations. Nobody really knew what he was up to. So much for "open government". Beazley should have laid his cards on the table and invited comments and criticism.

At the end of March the Government announced the methods of implementation of fee abolition for 1974. AUS officers were surprised at the announcement because Beazley gave no indication at all that decisions were imminent on this matter when he met the AUS delegation a fortnight earlier. In fact, the Minister strongly inferred that no decision on Union fees would be made before the AUS had made its submissions to the Commonwealth Scholarship Board meeting on April 13.

The main provisions of the scheme as announced are as follows:

1. Tuition fees and associated charges (e.g. library and exam fees) are to be abolished for universities, CAEs and technical colleges from the start of 1974;
2. Means-tested living allowances will be available to all full-time non-bonded students admitted to approved courses in 1974;
3. There will be no fee structure for over-

several BCP aldermen, some of whom had "represented" their wards for many years.

The BCP attributed its defeat to the interference of Country Party Premier Bjelke-Peterson who had revised the Brisbane Council Act for the election. These changes consisted of reducing the number of wards from 28 to 21 and of electing the Mayor by vote of aldermen rather than by the previous practice of popular vote. The BCP charged that this simply made voters determined to elect ALP aldermen to ensure that popular ALP Mayor Clem Jones was re-elected.

Poor Joh was only trying to help. His action seems to have been based on the hope that fewer wards would increase BCP's chances; that more BCP aldermen could block Jones' re-election. The trouble was that Brisbane not only wanted an ALP mayor but an ALP Council. The ALP had campaigned on stabilising prices of land, cheap housing and closer collaboration with the Federal Labor Government. These issues were decisive in determining the outcome of the election.

The swing to Labor was statewide. Ipswich elected its first ALP mayor for 20 years. Labor aldermen were elected to all 8 positions on the Maryborough council. From Rockhampton to Mount Isa to the Gold Coast, Queenslanders elected or re-elected ALP councils.

The election results could only breed an optimistic appraisal of Labor's chances in the 1975 State elections. BCP president Douglas apparently shares this view, for he has called on the Liberal and Country

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1. As it appeared far too late to change the Government's mind, the Union would drop its stance against fee abolition;
2. It would support the introduction of means-tested living allowances for all students, a policy for which AUS had argued for many years;
3. However it would oppose part-time students being excluded from the means-tested allowances;
4. To strongly oppose the Commonwealth's plan not to pay Union fees and to urge all constituent SRCs plus Unions, Sports Associations and Institutional administrations to support the campaign.

AUS representatives van Dalen, Tescher and Refshauge again saw Beazley on April 5 to discuss the Government's announcements. Unlike the meeting three weeks earlier, on this occasion Beazley and his departmental advisors were quite frank with the AUS representatives. They had obviously seen AUS press statements on the fees question and stated that the details of the scheme were not final and could be altered if necessary.

The meeting discussed the questions of part-time and repeating students, but most of the time was taken up in discussing the Union fees. The AUS representatives argued that by not abolishing these fees the Government was:

1. abandoning the promise of the party platform;
2. creating a situation in which institutions may refuse to collect Union fees (by calling the Commonwealth's bluff on sanctions). In this case, Unions would have to set up their own fee collecting machinery and raise fees to cover this;
3. making Union fees stand out as the only fee paid encouraging applications for conscientious exemption from paying. If significant numbers of students refused to pay, important questions of institutional and Union sanctions would be raised, and have would be created in Union budgeting.

Students' Unions, and in particular the AUS, have increasingly supported political mass movements for social change, and have thus come under attack from reactionary elements in the community. Unless the Federal government pays for all tertiary education expenses, including Union fees, the very existence of Students' Unions is threatened. The Labor Government must honour its promises of the pre-election period to provide tertiary education without fees.

## 400 NSW Teachers Strike

BY DAVE QUAY

On Thursday April 12 nearly 400 teachers from 17 High Schools in the Canterbury-Bankstown area of Sydney went on strike to protest class sizes and conditions. They were supported by the New South Wales Teachers Federation.

Canterbury-Bankstown is a highly industrialized area with a very large High School drop-out rate. The reasons for this can be seen quite clearly by looking at school conditions. Students are forced to learn in overcrowded classes with an absolute minimum of teachers - this at a time when there are hundreds of unemployed teachers in the state.

Consequently the overworked and under paid teachers have been forced to take militant action to defend their own inter-

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Firstly, it could pay the money directly to the Unions. This is a political "hot potato", because of strong right wing opposition.

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The other argument against the contingency allowance is that it would allow students at different institutions different spending power according to the size of their Union fees.

Parties to "take over" the BCP in order to strengthen it. The call has not received a very ecstatic response from these circles. But there is plenty of time for them to consider revising their traditional "opposition" to "bringing politics into local government" (sic!).

It seems a bit of genuine sunshine has found its way into Queensland. The success of ALP councils in implementing progressive policies will depend on their success and resoluteness in combatting the certain backlash against them by the Bjelke-Peterson government, and also on the assistance they get from Canberra.

In view of the Public Service Board application for deregistration of the Teachers Federation, the meeting also passed motions declaring support for the Federation against these attacks.

The mood of the striking teachers was summed up in a statement by the President of the Federation's area group:

"This is the first strike in the state over class sizes, we have previously felt that a strike would be irresponsible, because then it seemed nothing could be done. Now we believe something can be done."

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# Adelaide Secondary Students Strike

BY BERNADETTE RYAN

About 200 secondary students marched in the Adelaide April 11 students' rights campaign.

The students assembled at Elder Park at 11.00 a.m., where Penny Jackson, co-ordinator of the EAG, was well received with her speech on "Why are we marching". She spoke of the necessity to continue the students' rights campaign until student rights are achieved. She spoke of the need for mass action in the campaign.

The march moved off at about 11.30 a.m. When the demonstrators turned into Rundle St, chants of "Student Rights NOW!" began. The feeling of solidarity and purpose within the march was overwhelming. Of course there were the usual comments by onlookers "Get a Haircut!" "Get back to school!" etc.

The marchers stopped outside the Education Department Building in Flinders St. where Graeme Tubbenhauer, treasurer of the EAG, spoke on "The role of schools in society". After he spoke a student burnt his tie to symbolise his disgust with the education system in South Australia. This was received with tumultuous applause.

Before the march a letter was sent to Hudson, the Minister for Education, asking him to speak to the marchers at the Education Department. Needless to say, he had just left for a three day visit to Whyalla! The Deputy Director General of Education did speak to the marchers. He said he wanted the marchers to move on because we were blocking the footpath. When he asked if we had any demands, many students thrust forward a leaflet containing the demands. He asked if he could speak to a small delegation of students, to "talk over our problems." After he spoke, a student speaking for the marchers, said that the "time has come for us to stop talking and get down to action." He went on to say that for years students have been talking, but nothing had been done.

The march then moved off to Victoria Square where Mark Burford, secretary

of the EAG, spoke on "Democracy in Schools."

The support for the EAG demands was certainly not reflected by the turn up for April 11. Many students could not come because of parental and school problems. Because of this the SA EAG

## April 11 Actions Prepare for June 6

BY MIKE JONES

There are now less than two months to go until the planned national secondary students' action on June 6. During these two months the National Education Action Coalition and its affiliates will be organising a series of activities designed to construct an independent mass secondary student front capable of leading students in their battle against the education system.

The first of the planned activities was the pickets held in Sydney and Melbourne on April 11 and the strike in Adelaide on the same day. Only 25 people attended the picket outside the Department of Education in Sydney but they represented a new militant core of activists to replenish the



Melbourne rally in City Square

distributed petitions in the march. It is hoped that by June 6 the EAG will have collected about 5,000 signatures. These will be presented to Hudson on June 6 at a rally outside the Education Department.

April 11 was another step forward in the

ranks of the NSW Education Action Group which lost many of its leading members interstate or to job university at the beginning of the year. In Melbourne at least 125 secondary students attended a rally in the City Square. The speakers covered topics such as democratic rights for students (Jerry Dawson), and the general role of the National Education Action Group. (Ted Murphy).

The rally, which was organised by the Victorian EAG, was chaired by Elizabeth Wheelahan. At times the rally was partially disrupted by ex-members of the Victorian Secondary Students Union. At one stage, one of them, Danny Masel forced himself into the speaking area and

students' rights campaigns in South Australia. Apart from the petition, the EAG will be meeting to discuss the expulsion of a student teacher at Port Adelaide's Girls Technical High School. She was kicked out because she discussed the strike in a class.

For further information on the EAG activities in Adelaide, write to:

Penny Jackson  
15 Phillips Street,  
Thebarton, 5031. Phone 52 3383

grabbed the microphone. He outlined his plan of beginning small discussion clubs throughout schools, and flatly refused to accept that it is necessary to build mass demonstrations to change the present education system.

The New South Wales Education Action Group has planned a series of public forums designed to educate students and the public concerning the secondary students' movement and its perspectives.

Besides the forums, the activities of the NSW EAG over the coming months will include pickets, mass leafleting, intervention in student and other struggles concerning the education system and canvassing for support from interested people.

Nationally, the preparations for June 6 will be stepped up so that the action will be a well coordinated national event. The NEAC newsletter will be appearing regularly every two weeks with information concerning the progress of the movement and articles about the different aspects of our struggle. It is intended for use as an educational instrument and thus will aid the other activities of the NEAC affiliates in this sphere. Reports of the current student struggles taking place overseas as well as items concerning the activities of the women's liberation and gay liberation movements will be included to give the newsletter an educational character.

If you are interested in taking part in the struggle for democratic rights for secondary students, you can contact the NEAC at Box A444, Sydney South, NSW 2001 or ring 660 6672.

and other anti-social features' in society. The addendum and motion were carried overwhelmingly.

The conference endorsed the national high school strike to take place on June 6 and supported the actions of the National Education Action Coalition which is organising the strike. One delegate while supporting the demands of the demonstration, opposed supporting it or the NEAC because it was "an SYA front". However, most delegates rejected this as red-baiting and a diversion from the issues involved, and it did not affect the large majority by which it was passed.

A motion calling for the repeal of laws against homosexuals was also carried. The conference also called for the repeal of censorship laws and condemned the NSW Parliamentary ALP for its insipid opposition to the Indecent Publications Act recently debated in State Parliament. Conference also called for the repeal of vagrancy laws which made it a crime to be poor.

### DISRUPTION

A great deal of time was lost at the conference through a concerted right wing campaign of disruption, heckling speakers, taking pointless points of order, and filibustering. This only reflected the general bankruptcy of the right; the correct position would therefore have been to ignore it as much as possible. Unfortunately, some of the left over-reacted to this type of dis-

ruption, and retaliated by questioning the credentials of some of the right wing delegates, moving for the suspension of the most vocal of the disruptors. This only wasted more time and added to the confusion that the right was deliberately fomenting.

### FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

It is now appropriate to draw the lessons of the conference and to consider future perspectives for the left in the YLC and the ALP as a whole. The victory in the Youth Council can be considered a victory for the entire left in the ALP. Only the continued principled advocacy of socialist ideas can consolidate the victory.

The motions passed will make the YLC far more attractive to the radicalising youth outside the ALP. Clearly, by supporting the struggles of all the oppressed, the left can relieve the cynicism displayed by many youth towards the right wing ALP leadership.

Flowing from the above considerations, the struggle for socialism in the ALP must be conceived primarily as a political struggle. Politics takes priority over the discussion with "getting the numbers" at any price which is displayed by some people. This entails not just moving motions in support of anti-capitalist struggles, but also becoming involved in these struggles. And above all, it points to the need for a programme around which to unite the left in the struggle.

# Student Unions Threatened

## Labor abolishes tertiary tuition fees - union fees up in air.

BY FRANS TIMMERMAN

During the 1972 Federal election campaign the Australian Labor Party promised, in line with party policy, that if elected, the new Government would abolish tertiary education fees from 1974 onwards.

The Australian Union of Students, which represents over 170,000 tertiary students, has had a considerable influence on ALP education policy. However, AUS opinion on the abolition of fees differs from ALP policy. AUS favours a student assistance scheme which would make "need" its first criterion.

Towards the end of March 1973, meetings were held in Canberra between AUS representatives Neil McLean (President), John van Dalen (Education Vice-President), Tom Tescher (Resource Officer), Richard Refshauge (Executive member), and Education Minister, Mr Beazley, officers of the Education Department, Professor Karmel (Chairman of the Australian Universities Commission) and other politicians and bureaucrats.

AUS representatives had gone to Canberra to ascertain government thinking on student financing and to present AUS policy relevant to the issue. In February, AUS Council had agreed that the abolition of fees would not solve the basic financial problem of tertiary students, i.e., students in poor financial circumstances being prevented from entering universities and colleges or from completing their courses because of those circumstances.

AUS believes that the best form a new student assistance scheme could take is to allow all students who are admitted to tertiary institutions to be eligible for assistance under the Commonwealth Scholarship Scheme; change the basis of the scheme so that both fees and living allowances are means-tested; gear the

scheme to suitable economic indices so that benefits are automatically kept in line with community wages and costs. Abolition of fees does not fulfil these criteria because it provides a redistribution of scarce economic resources to many students who do not need them and also because fees form less than a quarter of a student's cost, so that their abolition only marginally assists the student in real need.

Another problem associated with fee abolition is the matter of fees paid for maintenance of union buildings and services, and also for the activities of Students' Unions, Clubs and Societies and Sports Associations.

Beazley was extremely non-committal on what the Government was doing, though he was receptive and sympathetic to the AUS representations. Nobody really knew what he was up to. So much for "open government". Beazley should have laid his cards on the table and invited comments and criticism.

At the end of March the Government announced the methods of implementation of fee abolition for 1974. AUS officers were surprised at the announcement because Beazley gave no indication at all that decisions were imminent on this matter when he met the AUS delegation a fortnight earlier. In fact, the Minister strongly inferred that no decision on Union fees would be made before the AUS had made its submissions to the Commonwealth Scholarships Board meeting on April 13.

The main provisions of the scheme as announced are as follows:  
1. Tuition fees and associated charges (e.g. library and exam fees) are to be abolished for universities, CAE's and technical colleges from the start of 1974;  
2. Means-tested living allowances will be available to all full-time non-bonded students admitted to approved courses in 1974;  
3. There will be no fee structure for over-

## Labor Landslide in Brisbane Elections

BY CHRIS GRAHAM

Local government has traditionally been regarded as the province of Liberal Party fronts protecting the interests of real estate agents and high rise developers. The results of the local elections held in Queensland on March 31 have provided a most striking exception to that rule.

In Brisbane, ALP aldermen were elected to 20 out of 21 positions on Council, giving the opposition Brisbane Civic Party (BCP) a most unceremonious thrashing. This gigantic swing to Labor deposed



Clem Jones

several BCP aldermen, some of whom had "represented" their wards for many years.

The BCP attributed its defeat to the interference of Country Party Premier Bjelke-Peterson who had revised the Brisbane Council Act for the election. These changes consisted of reducing the number of wards from 20 to 21 and electing the Mayor by vote of aldermen rather than by the previous practice of popular vote. The BCP charged that this simply made voters determined to elect ALP aldermen to ensure that popular ALP Mayor Clem Jones was re-elected.

Poor Joh was only trying to help. His action seems to have been based on the hope that fewer wards would increase BCP's chances; that more BCP aldermen could block Jones' re-election. The trouble was that Brisbane not only wanted an ALP mayor but an ALP Council. The ALP had campaigned on stabilising prices of land, cheap housing and closer collaboration with the Federal Labor Government. These issues were decisive in determining the outcome of the election.

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Sydney University

seas or repeating students;  
4. Living allowances will not be available to students doing higher degrees;  
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6. SRC Union and Sports fees are to be paid by students compulsorily and will be collected by the Institutions' administrations.

The Executive of AUS discussed these provisions in detail at its March 31-April 1 meeting. It decided to take the following stand on the announcement:

1. As it appeared far too late to change the Government's mind, the Union would drop its stance against fee abolition;
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At a mass meeting on the day of the strike the teachers passed motions condemning the State Government and the Public Service Board for their lack of interest in the situation.

In view of the Public Service Board application for deregistration of the Teachers Federation, the meeting also passed motions declaring support for the Federation against these attacks.

The mood of the striking teachers was summed up in a statement by the President of the Federation's area group:

"This is the first strike in the state over class sizes, we have previously felt that a strike would be irresponsible, because then it seemed nothing could be done. Now we believe something can be done."

## NSW YLA CONFERENCE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

### DEFENCE OF THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION

A motion was initially moved condemning the US presence in Thailand. An addendum was moved recognising the failure of the Paris peace accords to bring peace to Indo-China allowing the peoples of Indo-China to determine their own affairs independently. The addendum also supported the anti-war demonstration on May 19 in Sydney around these demands. The conference overwhelmingly carried the addendum. An addendum calling on the Labor government to recognise the PRG was also carried.

The conference strongly rejected a right wing motion condemning "international terrorism" and in effect calling for a witch-hunt of the Palestine-Australia Solidarity Committee, ostensibly for its support for Black September, but in reality because of its defence of the Palestinian revolution. While the left rejected terrorism as a tactic, it recognised that any witch-hunting of the PASC would work in the interests of the Zionists. Of course, the right wing omitted to mention Zionist terrorism, such as the shooting down of the Libyan airliner last month.

University of NSW student activist Frans Timmerman moved an amendment

deleting the reference to the PASC. And the president of Northern Districts Young Labor Association, Ian Robertson, moved a further amendment supporting national liberation struggles such as the Palestinian struggle. These amendments were carried with a large majority.

The conference passed a resolution calling for the immediate release of political prisoners in the USSR and Eastern Europe. It was made clear that this was not to be interpreted as an attack on the Socialist gains of the Russian Revolution, but rather an attack on the Stalinist bureaucracy whose repression of struggles for national self-determination within the USSR and the broader struggles for socialist democracy jeopardised these gains.

### SUPPORT FOR MASS MOVEMENTS

The conference passed a series of motions supporting the mass movements of oppressed layers of society. The most important of these was a motion supporting the struggle of women for the repeal of abortion laws. A socialist delegate moved an addendum supporting the demonstration on June 30 around this demand. The addendum affirmed that abortion reform was "central to the demands that a Labor government must implement if it is to achieve the stated objective of eliminating exploitation

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# Fight for Abortion on Demand Needed

BY TINA HARSANYI

The right of women to control their own bodies is the most essential demand of the women's movement today. Vulnerability to pregnancy has been used as the major pretence for denying women equal education, equal jobs and equal pay.

The right to decide to have or not to have an abortion is the right of the individual woman concerned, not the right of the individual politician or the individual doctor. It is the right of those women who have moral objections to abortion not to have an abortion - not to deny this right to other women.

The inability to control reproduction denies women the right to decide when and if they will have children, and if they will drop out of school or give up a job. It has forced women, often unwillingly, to stay in the home, slaves to successive pregnancies. It has meant that children have been born into circumstances where they could not be adequately cared for, and were resented as a burden. It has forced women to remain in intolerable personal relationships and become economically dependent on a man, in order to support a child.

The demand for abortion attacks the traditional role of women in patriarchal, capitalist society: that of being bearers and rearers of children within the family structure and challenges the right of the state to control women's bodies.

One of the most active opponents of abortion on demand is the "Right to Life Association". They are planning to hold a national campaign starting at the end of April and were active in disrupting a meeting addressed by Margaret Whitlam in Melbourne recently. While the anti-abortion forces are zealously fighting for the rights of the fetus they ignore the women who are driven to despair and suicide by being forced to bear unwanted children, and the plight of young children who have been placed in institutions because they were not wanted or could not be adequately cared for.

The position that the Australian Labor Party takes on abortion is expressed in a resolution which was passed at Federal Conference in 1971 stating that "This Conference recommends that the Party and its various groups, such as the Parliamentary parties should take a non-party attitude and vote according to their conscience on the issue of abortion law reform."

The ALP's shelving of this issue by leaving it up to the "conscience" of individual politicians is merely a way

of abdicating responsibility for taking a clear position on abortion. The ALP leadership will not support the struggle of women for the right to abortion without women themselves demanding that they do.

A private members' bill, which allows abortion on request for up to 16 weeks of pregnancy, is expected to be introduced in Federal Parliament on May 10. The bill will be proposed by government members Mr. David McKenzie (Diamond Valley) and Mr. Tony Lamb (La Trobe). If approved the bill will make it legal for a person to terminate the pregnancy of a woman provided he is a medical practitioner, acts on the request of the woman, and exercises due professional care in terminating the pregnancy. Already more than 3,000 legal abortions were reported to have been carried out in Sydney teaching hospitals last year, according to a group of doctors.

Internationally the most recent historic achievement of women and Women's Liberation movement was the decision

## Anti-Abortion Forces Mobilise

BY DOROTHY TUMNEY

The projected private members' bill on abortion legislation for the Federal Territories to be moved by David McKenzie and Tony Lamb, two labor backbenchers, has precipitated a storm of reaction from anti-abortion forces.

In Melbourne they have been very active in the universities. Right-wing publications have bitterly attacked women's right to abortion and violently denounced any proposed liberalisation of abortion legislation.

At the International Women's Day rally on March 10 an anti-abortion counter-rally was held by a small group of "Right to Life" supporters.

Anti-abortion activity increased further with the recent annual general meeting of the Victorian Branch of the ALP. A vocal and energetic picket attacked abortion law repeal with chants of "Say no to Abortion on Demand" and placards reading "Abortion is Murder" and also "Protect the child's right to life, let him live" (emphasis added) which illustrates the underlying ideology of the whole anti-abortion movement - namely the protection of the interests of male supremacy and the keeping of women in their place as breeders and rearers of children. Of those attending two-thirds were male, two or three out of the total of twenty-five were priests and there were a number of small children. The

by the US Supreme Court which in effect declared that abortion is a woman's constitutional right through the first 24 weeks of pregnancy.

By declaring illegal laws that compromise this right - i.e. laws that say women can have abortions only if their health is in danger, or that requires women to get the approval of a hospital board before getting an abortion - the court concurred with the concept of the woman's right to choose.

The Women's National Abortion Action Coalition (WONAAC) was a major force in the building of a mass campaign for the repeal of all abortion laws, and the US victory serves as an inspiration for women fighting for the right to abortion in other countries. In Europe there has also been a great deal of activity around abortion. On February 6, 345 French doctors issued a public manifesto proclaiming that they had performed abortions. They stated that they were "greatly encouraged" by the recent US Supreme Court decision. Dr. Willy Peers, a co-founder of the Belgian Society to Repeal

children were used to supposedly back up in an emotive way, their position condemning abortion

"Could you kill that child?" they would ask.

"No?"  
"Then how could you agree to abortion?" Women only need abortions because they have an "irresponsible attitude to sex" (again emphasis added). They completely disregard the rights of women placing the rights of a fetus, a piece of tissue, before their rights, and reducing the reasons for women's existence to reproductive functions.

The next major confrontation occurred when David McKenzie and Tony Lamb were invited to attend the annual general meeting in Melbourne of the Abortion Law Repeal Association (ALRA) to discuss their proposed bill with members.

At this meeting the Right to Life supporters present almost equalled the ALRA members. Pro-abortion supporters noted with encouragement that Right to Life's brand of emotional propaganda could not stand up to the factual arguments presented by ALRA speakers. Abortions are still going to be performed, whether legally or not.

Another serious aspect of the anti-abortion offensive is that it is coming in an organised way from the Catholic Church. As well as being a strong force behind Right to Life organizations, it is also urging all Catholics to voice protests

the Abortion Law, is awaiting trial for performing more than three hundred abortions in 1972. On February 20, the Belgian government was forced to free Dr. Peers, pending trial, clearly showing the impact the international solidarity actions made. Belgian abortion laws prohibit abortion except when the mother's life would be endangered by having a child. The law also provides a maximum of five years gaol for women who undergo abortions and twenty years for the doctor performing them.

The results of the women's struggle in the US has been a reminder that millions of women throughout the world are being denied basic control over their lives because of reactionary abortion laws.

Plans were made in Sydney at the Women's Abortion Action Campaign (WAAC) meeting on April 3 that a demonstration be held on June 30. With the added interest around the legalization bill due next month it is essential to gather together large numbers of women demanding this fundamental right.

against abortion. One parish newsletter listed four or five ways for its supporters to fight abortion legislation. One of these involved sending petitions to parliament and letters pressuring individual MPs to reject abortion by not voting for the McKenzie/Lamb bill.

Melbourne's catholic newspaper "Catholic Advocate" recently ran an editorial in which it suggested that an "Anti-Abortion Moratorium" might be held. This indicates that anti-abortionists are really trying to mount a strong campaign in the coming months.

Women must organise a major campaign now to present the case for their right to abortion.

The Right to Life groups are well-organised and have money behind them (notably the wealth of the Catholic Church). They can therefore be expected to do a great deal of agitating before the State election.

Opinion polls have indicated for some time that a majority of people support the right of women to abortion (under varying circumstances) and that most people favor a rationalisation of the present legislation on abortion to bring it into line with reality. Women must not allow their democratic rights to be denied them by a fanatical minority. We are not forcing anyone to have abortions. We want only the right to choose for ourselves.

## Stalinist Tactics at Macquarie

BY PETER JAMIESON

In the last issue of DIRECT ACTION, we reported the events that led up to the resignation of Mark Aarons from the editorship of Arena, Macquarie University students' newspaper.

For his final issue prior to his resignation taking effect, editor Mark Aarons remained true to form, continuing the use of anonymous articles by Arena reporters with an article purporting to be about the Macquarie ALP Club and Socialist Youth Alliance Club.

The article degenerated into a series of blatant lies and slanders reminiscent of DLP propaganda directed against socialists in the labor movement.

Claims included were that SYA supporters, Rod Webb and Peter Jamieson were (1) manipulating the ALP Club and controlling its functions. In fact Webb lost a vote for presidency to Chris Faulkner but was elected vice-president, the other candidate not being well known. Hardly manipulation!  
(2) Jamieson had "appointed himself" treasurer. No doubt this is surprising news for the elected treasurer, Shelley Dixon. In fact Jamieson did not even nominate for the executive.

Recent pathetic attacks on SYA and its supporters by Aarons and his cohorts expose their bankruptcy. For too long Aarons and several other supporters of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) and its breakaway group, Socialist Party of Australia (SPA) have posed as the "left" at Macquarie. Recent actions of these people expose their opportunism.

Underhand attacks, anonymous letters, bureaucratic manoeuvres are directed against Webb in his job as administrative officer.

These bureaucratic manoeuvres are not unexpected given the source of Aarons' political education.

SYA members and their supporters will continue to carry all struggles to general meetings of students.

VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION BETRAYED

Thursday April 5 saw a general meeting of students called to discuss motions dealing with political prisoners in South Vietnam, and proposed donations towards the cost of bringing a North Vietnamese delegation to Australia and the Canberra demonstration outside the South Vietnamese embassy.

The motions condemning the Thieu regime and calling on the Federal Government to cut off all aid to South Vietnam and the motion to contribute \$100 to the Canberra demonstration were easily passed.

However the motion to give \$100 towards the North Vietnamese delegation costs and calling for re-activation of the anti-war coalition to build mass antiwar actions against continued US involvement in Indochina was defeated, due to the opposition of Aarons and his supporters in combination with right-wingers. The actions of Aarons and supporters is more disgraceful considering Aarons had himself elected as a student delegate to help organise the visit!

# Right-wing Defeated in Latrobe Referendum

BY DAVE DEUTSCHMANN

The La Trobe University (Melbourne) referendum on affiliation to the Australian Union of Students (AUS) has been an overwhelming success for progressive forces. The referendum was the latest development in the offensive launched by the right-wing forces at La Trobe against AUS. In the past twelve months the right-wing elements on the SRC had prevented the payment of the 1972 affiliation fees to AUS.

Because of this obstacle it was decided by the AUS Committee to put the issue of affiliation to the La Trobe student body. The Democratic Club, the principal right-wing student organisation at La Trobe, was the driving force behind the attacks on AUS. They were opposed to affiliation with AUS because of the progressive political orientation of the national student union over the past few years.

However, the right-wing was not prepared to level their attacks against AUS on the basis of political opposition. The Democratic Club centred their arguments against the health and travel concessions available from AUS. The distortions and open deceit used by the Democratic Club and its supporters were a consistent feature during the campaign.

The results of the referendum, held on March 28 - 30, were as follows:

Motion 1 - "That we students of La Trobe University do re-affirm the SRC's membership of AUS."  
Yes: 84%  
No: 16%

Motion 2 - "That the SRC be directed to investigate satisfactory methods of ensuring that La Trobe students be not conscripted without their individual assent to membership in the Australian Union of Students, while permitting all students who desire such membership free choice to do so."  
Yes: 28%  
No: 72%

While those forces supporting AUS were confident of an overwhelming victory in Motion 1, they were unprepared for the defence of AUS needed to combat the dubious motion proposed by right-wing elements on the SRC (Motion 2).

It was only after the Democratic Club realised that they had little hope of winning the first motion that they proposed a motion designed to confuse the student body.

In many ways certain sections of the left at La Trobe were confused themselves with this second motion. They paid little attention to the motion and there were indeed fears that it would be won, by the right-wing.

The second motion was an obvious attempt to appeal to students on the basis of 'individual rights' versus 'conscripted into a union.' That motion can be seen

## Socialist Elected at Sydney U.

BY PHIL JEANS

Students at Sydney University have slowly lost interest in their Student Representative Council (SRC) which has become far removed from the struggles in which students have been engaged. Not once in the past year has the current SRC taken the leadership in any of these struggles. There have been Anti-war demos, an anti-conscription campaign, ecology demonstrations, a Black Moratorium, abortion demonstrations, actions against the French Nuclear tests, moves for some form of student-staff control in the Government and Philosophy departments, campaign to readmit Hall Greenland (expelled for participation in former University actions), and in the past month a struggle against the Union bureaucracy (see DIRECT ACTION 38), and not once has the SRC been in the leadership.

In fact, the only time the SRC really had anything to do with the students was when the President and his cohorts tried to blackmail the students into a fee rise. (The fee rise was justified but the attempts at blackmail weren't.)

So bad did the student-representative relationship become, that there has been a

as a deliberate attack on the right of students to organise.

If the right-wing Democratic Club had been successful with this motion, affiliation to AUS would still have been in jeopardy. The right-wing controlled Student Representative Council (SRC) would have been able to stall for a lengthy period of time any suggestion of affiliation to AUS.

In fact, because the second motion called for an end to united student membership of AUS it is very likely that La Trobe University would be unable to become affiliated. And that is exactly what the right-wing forces at La Trobe wanted.

Obviously, this tactical approach which the right-wing have tested at La Trobe will be applied on other campuses. The national campaign of the National Civic Council/Democratic Labor Party and their youth groups to destroy AUS necessitates this orientation.

Admittedly, the right-wing did not succeed at La Trobe - and that is partly because certain left groups recognised the danger of the second motion and began an immediate programme to point out the devious nature of that motion. The tactic used by the Democratic Club did, however, have an initial effectiveness.

At an SRC meeting on Tuesday April 3, a motion was successfully passed which directed the SRC Treasurer, John Lanigan, to proceed with the payment of affiliation fees.

Firstly, it is surprising that this motion was even passed. An independent on the SRC recognised the strength of the referendum. He of course felt obliged to vote against the right-wing bloc which he normally aligns himself with.

The second most interesting feature of this meeting is the reaction of John Lanigan. Lanigan was previously the most formidable obstacle to the payment of affiliation fees. He stated at this SRC meeting that he would feel obliged to follow the decision of the SRC.

The question now remains whether or not Lanigan will be prepared to proceed with the payment of these fees. There is a strong possibility that right-wing elements at La Trobe may instigate Supreme Court injunctions against any such payment.

La Trobe's affiliation to AUS is obviously going to be the principal issue at that university up until the SRC elections, early in second term.

The vote of no confidence which the right-wing elements on the SRC effectively received from the referendum is a boost to progressive students at La Trobe. This initial victory may lead to a more lasting and effective victory later in the year. The course of events at La Trobe University will have a substantial effect on the national student movement.

relationship become, that there has been a spate of nine resignations. Three of the vacant positions weren't nominated for, three were elected unopposed and there were three actual elections, in which the SYA ran candidates.

In the Science faculty, in what must be an all-time low turn-out the SYA candidate Bernie Murphy was elected eleven votes to four. In Arts, the SYA candidate came second (out of six contestants) to an ALP member who also advertised himself as a socialist and ran on a radical platform. The two socialist candidates almost doubled the total vote received by the other four candidates. In the reactionary Medicine faculty, the SYA candidate was defeated 26 to 11.

What these by-elections indicated was just how remote the SRC was from the student consciousness. Only a concerted effort to turn the SRC onto a more radical road in line with student thinking will stop this SRC from total annihilation at the hands of the University Senate (a body of businessmen and politicians who control the University). They have already indicated their interest by an attempt to take control of the SRC constitution earlier this year.

# Women in Revolt



## MOTHERS DAY ACTION

On Saturday May 12, the day before Mothers Day, at 10am, women will march from Sydney Town Hall to Hyde Park to demand full opportunities and social support for women (and men) who are parents. The demands of the demonstration fall into three categories:

### REAL SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR MOTHERS

- \* Free 24 hour-a-day child care facilities
- \* Paid maternity leave (including during child illness)
- \* Paid paternity leave (including during child illness)
- \* Financial support for all parents unable to earn a wage or find adequate child care facilities

### WIDEST SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MOTHERS

- \* Education and opportunity for full range of occupations
- \* Flexible working hours
- \* One rate for the job, irrespective of sex or age

### RIGHT TO CHOOSE TO HAVE A CHILD

- \* Free and freely available safe contraceptives
- \* Free abortion on request

The demonstration is intended to highlight the hypocrisy and tokenism of "Mothers Day" which, although dressed up as a day of appreciation of the work of mothers, is in reality another consumer festival to increase the profits of big business. What women want are opportunities which can free them from the confines of this stultifying wife, mother, housecleaner role. They are realizing that this isn't the mystical, fulfilling and sacred role that they have been taught to believe all their lives.

For further information, or if you want to help with the publicity and preparations, contact:  
Nola Cooper: 587 1165  
Judy Malcolm: 929 7163  
Joyce Stevens: 412 2479  
Barbara Alyson  
or Kaye Maryn: 699 2039  
Rae Kilkenny: 44 2723

## KINDER, KUCHE, KIRCHE

"Many women's liberationists, hormonally castrated, demanding the right to kill the inconvenient unborn child, refusing to breast feed and demanding child minding facilities for their children from birth, so reject the loving nurturing female role that they are greatly damaging the cause of women's rights, degrading the main role, and distorting the development of children."

These words were reprinted from an article entitled "Family, past, present and future" by Dr. Claire Ibister, published in the "Medical Journal of Australia". In an obvious attempt to counter the growing impact of feminist ideas the Sydney Morning Herald in its April 14 edition carried a front page article entitled "Children seen as Women's Lib



Above: A demonstration of approximately 2,000 people in Copenhagen on February 18 in favor of free abortion on demand.

victims", which quoted at length from this article. The Herald article opens: "Children have been portrayed by a leading Sydney child specialist as innocent victims of the excesses of women's liberation."

Dr. Ibister was quoted by the article on her views on male and female roles, and on unmarried mothers.

"The nurturing, loving mother, and the authoritarian, providing and protecting father are having their roles fused."

"There probably never has been a society that so exposed its girls (sic) to risks of extra-marital pregnancy and even encouraged them to attempt to rear the children without fathers."

She also said, "It is absurd that our society should encourage unmarried teenage mothers to rear fatherless children by giving them the same allowance as a deserted wife."

Only a few weeks earlier in a letter to Sydney Morning Herald this reactionary woman expanded her ideas and suggested that unmarried mothers should not have the right to keep their babies, but that such babies would be better adopted out to married couples wanting them.

On April 11, Dr. Ibister was also cited as an authority on children in an article in an evening newspaper where she condemned for the press the views of visiting American feminist and Marxist anthropologist Evelyn Reed on childcare. Reed at a press conference arrival in Sydney had expressed the view that childcare centres should not be "dumping grounds", but should be like "infant universities" where young children could learn from skilled, properly trained adults, and could learn to socialise earlier with their peers. Reed said children were more likely to grow up feeling rejected, and neurotic if they were kept in the house, dragging after their mothers, and getting slapped for being in the way.

The article bore a headline "Infant Universities Dangerous to Children". So alarmed had the pressmen been about these ideas, that they had gone to the trouble of getting the views of Dr. Ibister and Joan Fry, Principal of the Sydney Day Nurseries Training School, two supposed authorities who happened to support their own views on the subject, in order to refute Reed's ideas.

The semi-hysterical reaction to progressive feminist ideas is illustrated by the fact that in order to back up its ideas, the bourgeois press must dig up article from a medical journal and try to pass it off as front-page news. The coverage of Reed's ideas on the other hand, was relegated to the back pages of The Sydney Morning Herald, four days before.

Such treatment of "news" shows the fear that the owners of the daily media have of the women's liberation movement and its ideas.

... BY NITA KEIG

**PUBLIC MEETING**

## THE MEANING OF LIFE: A MARXIST VIEW

A LECTURE BY **GEORGE NOVACK**

What shapes human nature? Are socialism and humanism compatible? What is the way forward for humankind? What is the meaning of life? This Marxist philosopher relates these and other questions to contemporary social problems, discussing various philosophic theories from Epicurus and Kant to Marcuse and Popper.

Tuesday, May 22, 7.30 p.m.  
Teachers Federation Auditorium, 300 Sussex Street, Sydney.

Wednesday, May 23, 7.30 p.m.  
Trades Hall, Wickham Terrace, Brisbane.

Thursday, May 24, 7.30 p.m.  
Hughes Community Hall, Hughes, ACT.

Wednesday, May 30, 7.30 p.m.  
SYA Hall, 287 Rundle Street, Adelaide.

Thursday, May 31, 8.00 p.m.  
Guild Theatre, Melbourne University.

\$1.00 DONATION, 50c SEC. STUDENTS

# The National Wage Case

BY JAMIE DOUGHEY

About 300 unionists, predominantly from the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union (AMWU), demonstrated outside the Arbitration Court in Melbourne on April 3 as the 1972-73 national wage case hearing was drawing to a close. The case ended the day after with the judges reserving their decision until about the end of the month.

The demonstration was addressed by State secretary of the AMWU, John Halpenny, and State secretary of the Waterside Workers Federation, Ted Bull. It drew attention to the spiralling cost of living demanding that the Arbitration Commission grant the wage increases sought after by the Australian Council of Trade Unions. A typical banner read "1600 commodities rise - what about our pay".

The unionists then entered the court to observe the proceedings. Mr. Justice Moore, who was presiding, objected to the appearance of placards in court and demanded their removal. He further objected to the mumbling from the gallery. Obviously very uneasy at actually seeing such a number of those workers that they had heard so much about since being appointed to the Arbitration Commission, Justice Moore and his four colleagues of the Full Bench felt that it was propitious to adjourn. They left the court to shouts of "capitalist pigs".

The workers then adjourned as well. For the judges it was now time to re-appear and get back to business.

In presenting the major claims to the court the ACTU aimed for an \$11.50 increase in the total wage and a minimum wage of \$65. Along with this they asked



Workers demonstrate outside Arbitration Court.

for a rise of 10% for salaried and professional workers, a 7.5% rise for commonwealth public servants and quarterly adjustments in the minimum wage in proportion to the cost of living increases.

Coming at a time when price rises are continuing to erode the paypacket of the Australian worker at the annual rate of about 9% - and when even that is expected to increase markedly in the coming months - the decision of the court will be of special importance.

Together with this is the important fact that there has been a time lapse of 17 months since wage increase was forthcoming from a national wage case. The last, in December of 1972, for the first time in 10 years, failed to grant any increase whatsoever in an attempt to freeze wages and maximise the profit-making capacity of the employer. Since that time inflation has further decreased the purchasing power of the minimum wage by 1.37% according to figures before the hearing.

With Labor in government a real challenge is presented to the labour movement to take on employers over the issues involved in the national wage case, particularly as they are absolutely adamant about keeping wages fixed at their present level.

In their claim the employers proposed that overtime and penalty rates be included in the minimum wage. Thus they were not only after a freeze on wages but a de facto reduction. This was correctly characterised by ACTU industrial advocate Robert Jolley when he said: "This approach is particularly objectionable when it is recognised the employers are opposed to any increase at all in the minimum wage".

In effect, the employers are implying that the commission should reduce any overtime payments and penalty payments that are now paid to the minimum wage earner.

The case put to the hearing by the employers and the calls for "unity in the ranks" emanating from their ruling circles only highlights the continued intention to

depress workers' wage and living conditions, whether it be by means of the Arbitration Commission - which is ultimately a tool in their hands - or by arbitrarily increasing the prices of their goods. All catch-cries that wage increases are responsible for inflation are false.

In the latter case Labor's Prices Justification Tribunal will be of little value. Although by implication it realises that big business is the prime mover in the inflationary process, it nevertheless maintains the "profit margin" line as "justification". Thus it cannot be effective in arresting the skyward trend in prices of essential commodities.

Commenting to DIRECT ACTION on what he predicted as the eventual outcome of the 1972-73 case, Jolley indicated that a "substantial increase in the minimum wage" was expected. He was less optimistic in regard to the total wage, stating that "we will be closer to our minimum wage claim than to our total wage claim".

On the question of quarterly cost of living adjustments in the minimum wage, Jolley was even more dubious. This aspect of the ACTU claim is one that did not receive a great deal of emphasis, either by the proceedings of the case which tended to focus on the minimum wage, or in the press. Yet it is a claim which met very stiff opposition from the employers and seems unlikely to pass the scrutiny of the judges when a decision is handed down. Why?

For people who have been following the industrial round-up in DIRECT ACTION the answer should be obvious. Implicit in this proposal is the possibility of countering price rises from the standpoint of working people, that is, having wages rise in increments with the cost of living.

In this form of action the blame is laid squarely at the feet of the big corporations where it belongs - and more than this it demands that they foot the bill out of their profits as well.

A glaring aspect of this whole wage case, and the one which preceded it in December, is the very contradictory position the labour movement finds itself in. On the one hand Labor is in government and has openly supported the ACTU claims in their major part. On the other hand the movement is restricted in that it must put forward its claims before a brazen instrument of the employers, clearly the responsibility lies with the Government - not only to grant the workers' demands and more, but also to do away with the Arbitration Commission.

In Auckland, 150 people marched from the University to a rally at the Town Hall. Speakers stressed the economic links between New Zealand capitalism and apartheid which were partly strengthened by racist sporting tours.

In Christchurch, 150 demonstrators called for the cancellation of the Springbok tour.

While these actions reflected only the preparatory stages of the anti-tour movement they even more strikingly revealed its potential to mobilise masses of people against apartheid. This threat forced Kirk to cancel the tour. And continued mobilisations which realise this potential will destroy any remaining hope that racist tours will take place in future.

## Opposition to Censorship Bill

BY FRANS TIMMERMAN

The NSW State Government's proposed "Indecent and Restricted Publications Act" has met with continued opposition in the past fortnight.

Some liberal members of the community have expressed objections to the provision to abolish trial by jury. Objectives have even come from conservative ALP leaders, some church leaders and the State Council of the Liberal Party, which passed a resolution opposing the abolition of trial by jury. But the Government is adamant that this provision must remain, because it knows that there is no "contemporary community standard". Juries have great difficulty in getting agreement in these cases.

The bill passed through the lower house but was blocked in the Legislative Council when one government member and two independents crossed the floor to vote with the Labor Opposition. It is of interest that the rebel government member is himself involved in the publishing business. The bill has now been shelved until the August session of Parliament.

Socialists should oppose the introduction of this repressive act, not only because it shows up reactionary attitudes to sexual behaviour, but because it infringes basic democratic rights. The act is wide enough to encompass all anti-establishment media if they deal "with matters relating to sex, drug addiction, horror, crime, cruelty or violence, in a manner that departs from contemporary community standards of decency". An establishment magistrate will determine just what these standards are.

The motion called for urgent financial aid from the Federal Government for education, and made reference to "an election promise by Messrs Whitlam and Beasley to provide \$1,443 million" for State Education by the end of 1975. The motion called on the Federal Government to start emergency grants right away.

Right-wing speakers Peter Redlick and

# Vic. ALP Assembly Rejects Omega Base

BY JIM McILROY.

An important success for the ALP left was gained with the recent near-unanimous vote of the Victorian ALP General Assembly against the construction of an Omega communications base in Australia. Whatever the catch cries of the ALP, the left in choosing to allow the inclusion of the section of the "centre" group amendment which refers to Whitlam's "new independent foreign policy." The recent history of conflicts over Singapore bases and other questions of foreign affairs demonstrates the total wrongness of this assertion.

More than 1,500 rank and file ALP members packed the St Kilda Town Hall on March 25. The large meeting and the applause for Whitlam reflected more the general enthusiasm for a Labor Government than the strength of support for the Prime Minister's specific policies. Whitlam recalled the enormous campaign meeting held in the same hall last year, which heralded the great popular groundswell that swept Labor to power. He was also careful to begin his speech with a list of the most radical sections of the Labor Government in its early days. He referred to the ending of conscription and the withdrawal of all military support to the Thieu regime in Saigon which drew applause. Whitlam drew on the image of a radical, activist administration to bolster his position in the meeting among Labor rank and file.

Perhaps the most telling remark of his address was: "Don't blame the yanks for everything you don't like in this country. It's the fault of our predecessors." This was greeted with loud applause. At the same time, he defended the American alliance and ANZUS, and claimed that in the election campaign "we never said we would disclose other peoples' secrets". Whitlam was able to gain a reprieve on the question of existing US bases in Australia by claiming time to "re-negotiate" agreements surrounding them. (Whitlam had previously described the agreement negotiated by the previous government over the North-West Cape base as "thoroughly obnoxious". The Age, March 17.)

The Prime Minister veered away from the question of the projected Omega communications base. Clearly, his strategists felt that the feeling in the Party against any new military bases was too strong. Whitlam supporters were worried by the possibility of a motion proposed by the Chelsea Branch, for the complete abolition of foreign bases in Australia being passed, and creating a serious problem for the Government. The tactic was to concede on the question of Omega in order to prevent a complete rout of the Government's policy on the bases question.

The so-called "centre" group, whose leaders, (Hawke, Holding and Innes), co-operate closely with Whitlam and his supporters, put forward an amendment to the Chelsea motion congratulating the ALP Government on its achievements and welcoming "the Prime Minister's moves towards establishing an independent role for Australia in foreign affairs". The amendment also opposed the establishment of Omega, while calling for "Australian control" of military installations in this country.

Ken Carr, of the Socialist Left and Moss Case, Minister for the Environment, moved a further amendment recognising the Labor Government's attempts to re-negotiate agreements on bases, and reiterating Federal policy which is "opposed to the existence of foreign-owned,

## Labor Right Rejects Teachers' Claims

BY JIM McILROY

A vote by the March 25 Victorian ALP General Assembly has caused shock waves among the State's teachers' and parents' organisations. The vote came largely as a result of gross misrepresentations by leading right-wing spokesmen who were opposing a motion moved by leading Socialist Left figure, Bill Hartley.

The motion called for urgent financial aid from the Federal Government for education, and made reference to "an election promise by Messrs Whitlam and Beasley to provide \$1,443 million" for State Education by the end of 1975. The motion called on the Federal Government to start emergency grants right away.

Right-wing speakers Peter Redlick and

controlled or operated bases on Australian territory". The central part of the amendment was to focus on opposition to any new bases and particularly Omega.

These two amendments were later amalgamated, and passed overwhelmingly. There must be some doubt about the tactics used by the left in choosing to allow the inclusion of the section of the "centre" group amendment which refers to Whitlam's "new independent foreign policy." The recent history of conflicts over Singapore bases and other questions of foreign affairs demonstrates the total wrongness of this assertion.

At the same time, calling for Australian control of foreign base is quite spurious, as Dr Alan Roberts, who originally moved the Chelsea motion pointed out. There is no way that "Australian control" of a US base can mean anything other than further implication in its political and



Holding, Whitlam and Crawford at assembly.

## Labor's Foreign Policy & Omega

BY JAMIE DOUGHEY

Since Labor took office its foreign policy has come under criticism from many angles. The most prominent issues have been interrelated - the remaining advisors in Vietnam, the Singapore spy base and the matter of foreign bases in Australia. Underlying all these issues is the role of Australia within the world imperialist system, based on the economic dominance of the great multinational corporations and thoroughly antagonistic to the attempts of colonial peoples to end their oppression and poverty as well as antagonistic to the countries where capitalism no longer exists.

This global system needs international military alliances in order to maintain these relations and the world balance of forces. The Omega System and the other US military bases in Australia (14 in all) play a role in this process. The bases, which were introduced under the patronage of the previous liberal governments pose a problem for the Australian Labor Party which has conflicting loyalties to

defend as a party based on the working class administering the capitalist system. Mistrust of the contradictory nature of the ALP was demonstrated clearly by the reluctance of the bureaucracy in the Department of Defence to pass on any detailed information on the function of the bases in Australia.

After being rejected in 1968 by New Zealand, the United States set about making plans for establishing an Omega base in Australia. The US wants a base in this part of the world to fit in with the network of beacons in Hawaii (the control centre), La Reunion in the Indian Ocean, Norway, Trinidad, Japan and Argentina.

The task of Omega is to provide reliable position-fixing information for the nuclear weapon-carrying submarines of the US navy. Unable to penetrate water, the conventional high frequency communication apparatus employed by civil and military traffic is vastly inadequate. What is needed is a system which uses water-penetrating, low frequency radio

has been a constant source of conservative ideas and policies on education. This led to a censure motion being passed against him at last year's Victorian Young Labor Association Conference, while he was still shadow minister. Backtracking on financial aid to the poorer State schools has been no problem for him.

The Minister for Education, Mr Beasley,

military consequences. That is, more direct involvement in the world US system of nuclear terror.

"Action", the SL paper, has explained, while not strongly defending, the left's compromise action by the need to focus directly on the Omega issue and the need to gain overwhelming support against any new bases. While this is a correct approach, the confusion over amendments reflects a certain weakness in the SL's ability to operate cohesively in the open forums of the Labor Party.

The movement against Omega and against all overseas bases in Australia is growing and spreading into new areas. In the ALP, the recent NSW Women's Conference passed a motion opposing all foreign bases in the country. A Stop Omega Committee has been formed in Victoria.

The US government is committed to the

Omega system. Having failed to establish a base in New Zealand because of a broad opposition movement there, the US authorities have sought Australia as an alternative. There is no doubt that the Omega system is important to the US nuclear submarine communications network. They will not give up easily on this question.

Once again the ALP Government is caught between the demands of world imperialism and the demands of the mass base of the Labor Party. Now that a decision has been postponed by the Government, it probably will not be until the Federal ALP conference that a final showdown will occur. This will be one of the key areas of confrontation between right and left forces in the period leading up to the conference. It will be another test of the ability of socialists to mobilise broad support in the Party and in the community at large.



Holding, Whitlam and Crawford at assembly.

waves, fixing the position of the submarines so that they can accurately fire their missiles whilst submerged is what is required.

This Omega does. The US navy is determined to go ahead with the project. It is an important part of the nuclear weapons system promoting the ability of the US to wage nuclear war. Official military statements that Omega is for peaceful purposes are completely false.

Of the bases already operating in Australia, Northwest Cape, Pine Gap and Woomera are the most significant and have been abandoned in secrecy for many years. Northwest Cape is a submarine communication station which, in the event of nuclear war, would transmit information to submarines. Pine Gap and Woomera deal with satellite tracking and radio reception and are closely bound up with the US nuclear apparatus. However a question mark has been placed over the present functioning of Pine Gap due to the revelation of some startling information. The "Financial Review" of January 19 carried an article by John Stackhouse which reported -

"Briefly the information suggests Pine Gap's role has changed from being a computing point and a relay centre designed to detect and interpret missile and rocket firings in central to eastern Asia to that of a button pusher in the event of a nuclear war. The target inferentially suggested is China"

The bases all represent targets in the event of nuclear war - surely are of the reasons (apart from technological efficiency) that the US wants them in foreign countries. The most important question involved however, is the political role these bases play in the foreign policy of the United States, and in the perpetuation of its aggressive imperialism. Labor must align itself with the forces fighting for a better world and representing a progressive historical development, not with the interests of world imperialism.

The right wing of the Party are worried about the size and power of the movement for democracy and equality in education expressed by students, teachers and parents. As Hartley said, this motion throws into doubt much support for Labor by people concerned with education. The right wing leaders of the Party have once again shown their bankruptcy faced with a real social crisis.

## Anti-Apartheid Action: NZ Tour Off

BY CHRIS GRAHAM

Anti-apartheid activists Bob Pringle (NSW President of the Builders Labourers Federation) and John Phillips won their appeals against convictions arising out of their activities in the Anti-Apartheid campaign in 1971. They were previously convicted of causing "malicious damage" to the Sydney Cricket Ground goalposts. They were fined \$500 each, put on three year good behaviour bonds and ordered to pay \$50 each in damages to the SGC Trust. The convictions and the penalties were quashed by the Court of Criminal Appeal on March 30.

The court's judgement was based on the ground that the prosecution had not proved the malicious or spiteful nature of Pringle's and Phillips' actions. Pringle and Phillips successfully argued that their actions had been based on moral and political views, consisting of support for the United Nations resolutions against apartheid (the UN declared 1971 a year to Combat Racism.)

The previous trial had not made this point sufficiently clear. The judge had directed the jury to consider the question of malice in a general way which tended to obscure the political grounds on which Pringle and Phillips had based their defense.

This judgement is a victory for anti-

## National Meat Boycott Planned

BY CHRIS GRAHAM

The Union of Australian Women has called for a national boycott of meat on April 17, to protest against the skyrocketing price of meat. This call has been supported by the Seamen's Union, the Waterside Workers' Federation, the Building Workers' Industrial Union, and the Australian Metal Workers' Union, and by pensioners and consumer groups. Attempts are being made to get the ACTU to support the boycott.

On April 17, the "boycott" will attempt to make their protest directly to NSW Premier Ashin. They will also call for the Federal Labor Government to set up a Prices Justification Tribunal.

Rising prices, of meat in particular, and of commodities in general, have provoked angry opposition from consumers internationally. In the United States, a week long boycott of meat from April 1 to 7 resulted in a 50% drop in sales in some areas. The boycott tactic will probably be universally accepted by consumers in opposition to inflation.

apartheid activists. It will have serious implications for the New Zealand campaign against the Springbok tour this year. The appeal has provided a precedent which would challenge the validity of any similar charge arising out of the New Zealand campaign - or any other political "offence" for that matter.

NEW ZEALAND TOUR CANCELED

Labor Prime Minister Kirk has cancelled the Springbok tour of New Zealand. This action reflects the protests of broad layers of New Zealand society which have forced Kirk to take a stand against apartheid.

These views were most effectively expressed in the Sharpeville Day Committee whose supporters included the Socialist Action League, the New Zealand sympathising group of the Fourth International.

The biggest action took place in Dumedin, where 250 people marched to Burns Hall to hear a speech on Sharpeville by John Gasterwe, an exiled black unionist. The speech was relayed throughout New Zealand.

65 people marched in Wellington in pouring rain demanding that Kirk immediately cancel the tour.

The struggle against inflation will play an important role as the capitalist crisis deepens. But boycotts alone will not succeed in curbing inflation. What is required is a programme of action against inflation which raises demands which recognise capitalism as the source of inflation.

As an immediate step, the establishment of consumer committees to combat price rises would create an awareness of the problem and an organisational basis on which to combat it. The proposed Prices Justification Tribunal will only be effective if it is not composed of bureaucrats who will simply subordinate the interests of consumers to maintaining capitalism, but rather composed of elected representatives of workers and consumers who will determine prices in the interests of the people, not of capitalist profits.

Equally important is to raise demands for a sliding scale of wages. Periodic wage increases should be made to keep abreast of increases in the cost of living.



US women picket supermarket.



Many issues being raised by the women's liberation movement today were anticipated by discussions which took place in the early 1950s. Among these were the questions of cosmetics and other "beauty aids," as well as fashions. One such discussion on these issues took place in the Socialist Workers Party in 1954.

Some women felt that cosmetics and fashions were essential in the interest of improving the appearance of women and therefore upheld their use as one of women's "rights." Others, however, felt that while every woman should have the right to dress as she pleased and use cosmetics as she wished, the reality had little to do with choice, but rather with a subtle social compulsion. Women, in this ruthlessly competitive capitalist system, were in fact obliged to wear cosmetics and the latest fashions. Thus women were being exploited as sex objects by the manufacturers of cosmetics and fashions in an industry which was established in the first place for multibillions in profits and not in the interest of women's beauty. The following is the author's contribution to the discussion.

The myth has arisen that, since all women want to be beautiful, they all have the same interest in cosmetics and fashion which are today touted as indispensable for beauty. To buttress this myth, it is claimed that fashion-beauty has prevailed throughout all ages of history and for all classes of women. As evidence, the fashion-mongers point to the fact that even in primitive society women painted and decorated their bodies. To explode this myth, let us briefly review the history of cosmetics and fashion.

In primitive society, where sexual competition did not exist, there was no need for cosmetics and fashions as artificial aids to beauty. The bodies and faces of both men and women were painted and "decorated" but not for the sake of beauty. These customs arose out of a different set of needs connected with primitive life and labor.

It was necessary at that time for each individual who belonged to the kinship group to be "marked" as such, as well as by sex and age categories. These "marks" included not only ornaments, rings, bracelets, short skirts, etc., but also gashes, incisions, tattoo marks and different kinds of body painting. They indicated not only the sex of each individual but the changing age and labor status of the members of the community as they matured from children to adults to elders. Rather than "decorations," these markings can be viewed as the primitive way of keeping the life history of each individual which, in our society, is kept in family albums. And since primitive society was communistic, these markings also betokened complete social equality.

Then came class society. The marks that signified among other things social equality in primitive society became transformed into their opposite. They became fashions and decorations that signified social inequality, expressions of the division of society into rich and poor, into rulers and subjugated. Cosmetics and fashions began as the prerogative of the aristocracy.

A good illustration can be found in the French Court before the French Revolution. Among the kings, princes and landed gentry, both men and women were dressed in the height of fashion. They were dandies, with their painted faces, powdered hair, lace ruffles, gilded ornaments and the rest. Both sexes were "beautiful," according to the standards of the day. But more decisively, both sexes in the ruling class were demarcated by their cosmetics and fashions from the poor peasants who sweated for them on the land and who were, by the same standards, not beautiful. Fashion at that period was the "mark" of class distinction, embracing both sexes of the privileged class against both sexes of the working class.

Then, when bourgeois customs supplanted feudal practices, for certain historical reasons men left the field of fashion primarily to the women. The big businessmen established their class standing through the fashions of their wives and in other ways and left off wearing gold pants and lace ruffles. Among women, however, fashions still marked the distinction between Judy O'Grady and the Colonel's Lady.

As capitalism developed, there arose an enormous expansion of the productive machine and along with it the need for a mass market. Since women constitute half the population, profiteers in female beauty began to exploit it. And so the fashion field was gradually expanded out of the narrow confines of the rich and eventually imposed upon the whole female population.

To serve the needs of this sector of big business, class distinctions were papered over and concealed behind sex identity. The hired advertising hucksters began grinding out the propaganda: all women want to be beautiful; therefore all women have the same stake in cosmetics and fashion. High fashion became identical with beauty and all women were sold on their common "needs" and "wants" for the purchasable aids to beauty.

Today billions in profits are coined out of every department in the beauty field: cosmetics, clothes, hair-dos, slenderizing salons, beauty salons, jewelry, fake and real, and so on. Beauty, it was discovered, was a very flexible formula. All an enterpriser had to do to become rich was to discover a new aid to beauty and convince masses of women that they "needed" and "wanted" this aid. See any Revlon ad.

To maintain and expand this bonanza, it was necessary to disseminate certain other myths through the propaganda machine at the disposal of the profiteers. These are as follows:

1. Women from time immemorial have been competing with other women for sexual attention from the men. This is virtually a biological law from which there is no escape, and since it has existed for all time and will continue to exist for all time, women must submit to their fate and forever compete with each other in the capitalist sex market.

2. In modern society the natural beauty of women does not really count. Indeed, it is insatiable, nature has really abandoned the female sex in the realm of beauty. To make up for their natural homeliness and disfigurements, they must resort to artificial aids which the kind profiteers have placed at their disposal. Let us

examine this propaganda.

#### Sex Competition: Natural or Social?

A study of the sciences of biology and anthropology discloses that sex competition among females does not exist either in nature or in primitive society. It is exclusively the product of class society and was unknown before class society came into existence, which means for almost a million years of human evolution.

Throughout the animal world there is no such thing as sex competition among females for attention from the males. The only sex competition that prevails in the animal world is that which is imposed by nature upon the male sex who fight one another for access to the females. This is simply nature's way of assuring perpetuation of the species. But because of its disruptive effects upon social cooperation, this feature of male sexual competition was eradicated in the formation and consolidation of the first social organization, which was a system of "primitive communism."

This absence of sex competition among females in nature was one of the reasons women were able to lead in the creation of that original social system. The social order they created to serve their needs was precisely one that was free from disruptive competitive relations. The absence of sex competition or jealousy among primitive women is unchallenged even by many conservative anthro-

logists, although they view it, often in surprise, as a savage "peculiarity" or quaint custom.

Then came class society, founded upon the acquisitive and competitive spirit, together with the degradation of women into dependency upon men. Along with the competitive struggle for property and wealth among men, there arose the competitive struggle among women for wealthy and powerful men. But this social affliction of sexual competition imposed upon women has nothing natural about it. It is exclusively "artificial," i.e., historically created and conditioned.

Sex competition among women arose with the emergence of the sex or marriage "market." The sex market is part and parcel of the commodity market as a whole which is fundamental to capitalist class society. With the expansion of sex as a commodity, the standard of female beauty became gradually transformed from natural to artificial or "fashionable" beauty. This process has reached its peak in contemporary society.

In the earliest period of barter exchange, women were bartered for cattle and cattle for women. The natural beauty and health of women was then at a premium in the same way and for the same reasons that the natural health of cattle was at a premium. Both were necessary and desirable in the productive and reproductive life of the community, with the healthiest and most beautiful specimens best able to carry out their functions.

Then, with the consolidation of the patriarchy and class society, certain women were accumulated by rich men as one form of all the different kinds of property they were accumulating. The custom arose of embellishing these wives and concubines with decorations and ornaments in the same way and for the same reasons that palaces were decorated and ornamented. This reached its apex in the Asiatic palaces and harems. As sexual property of the Prince or Khan, the more he possessed of these luxury articles the more he gave evidence of his standing as a wealthy potentate. At this stage sex competition among women was overshadowed by the competition among men for such property accumulations. The women themselves were "chattels" or commodities.

As monogamy displaced polygamy and property considerations became the basis of marriage, wealthy women had the advantage over poor women in sex competition. A rich heiress, regardless of her beauty and health, made a desirable wife to a man accumulating property, and vice versa. A man would prefer, if he had the choice, the more beautiful woman, but property considerations usually came first. These marriages, involving property mergers, were conducted in businesslike fashion between the families of the pair and had only incidental reference to the wishes and desires of the individuals involved. This type of marriage, conducted through family nego-

tiations or a marriage broker, was in force generally throughout the long agricultural period when property was primarily landed property.

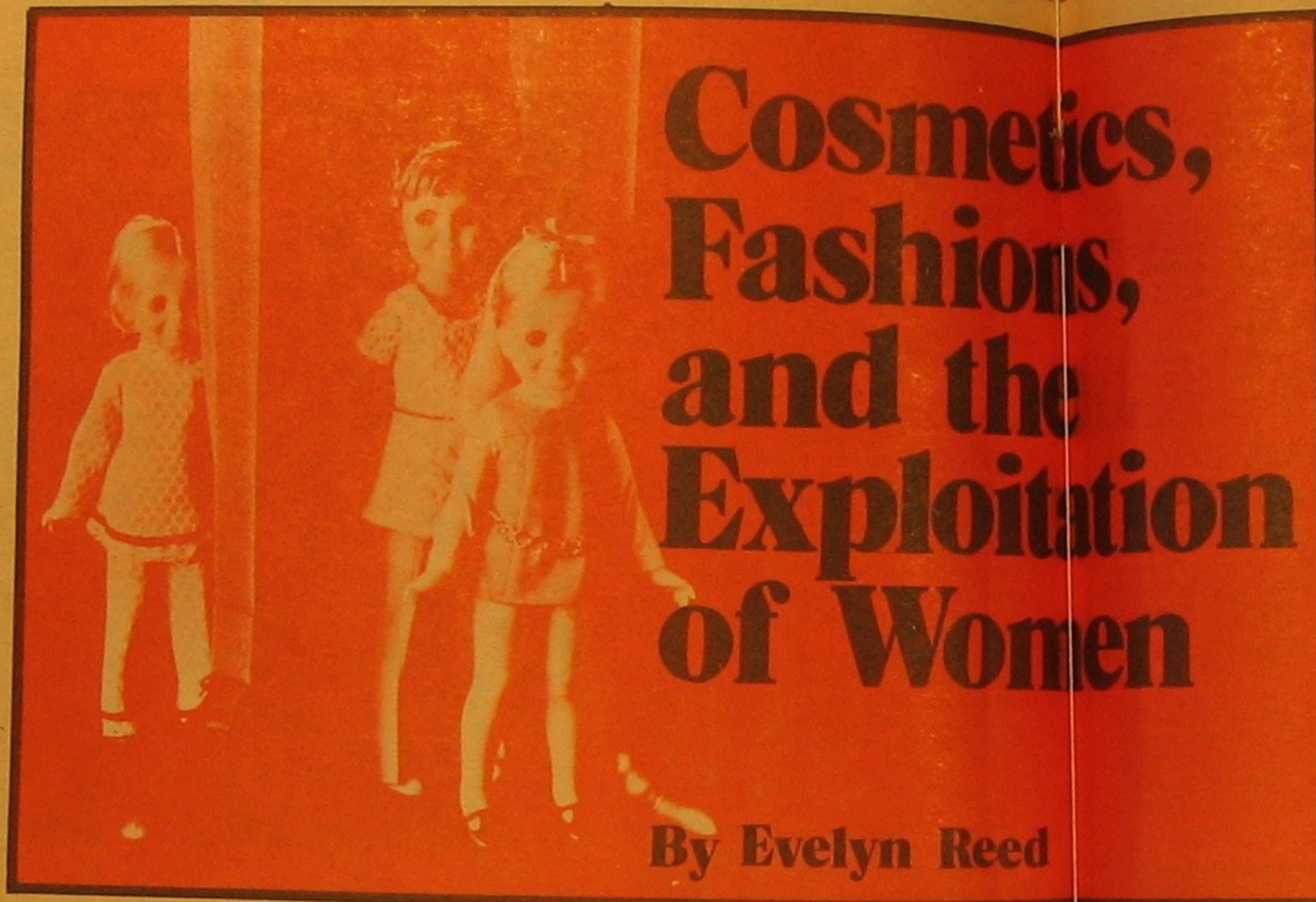
Then came capitalism, with its "free enterprise" and in business competition, which also in female sex competition. Among the wealthy, it is true, marriage mergers continued as a form of property mergers and the two were often indistinguishable. Indeed, with the rise of money capitalism, the two kinds of mergers narrowed the ruling classes down to America's Sixty Families.

But in America, which was being transformed by a man of money, unlike feudal Europe where class distinctions were established at birth. Thus in the heyday of capitalism a worker or middle-class man here could, by a stroke of fortune, become rich and thereby change his class status.

Similarly with a woman. Through an accident or even beauty she could change her class status. This Cinderella fairy-tale, American capitalist style, is most graphically illustrated by Bobo Raskobler, the miner's daughter, who married and then divorced, with a multimillion-dollar alimony

# Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women

By Evelyn Reed



settlement, one of America's richest families prepared the social-psychological ground for the mass commodity market, the mass sex market, and mass sex competition among females. Just as the Horatio Alger stories became the handbook for men on how to rise from rags to riches, so the romance stories for women told them how to get and marry the boss's son or even the boss himself. All she had to do was rush to the Beauty Market and buy all the commodities guaranteed to transform Cinderella into a Princess.

The cosmetics and fashion world became a capitalist gold mine with virtually unlimited possibilities. Businessmen in these fields had only to change the fashions and invent more and newer aids to beauty to become richer and richer. That is how, under modern capitalism, the sex of women as commodities was displaced by the sale of commodities to women. Correspondingly the myth was disseminated that beauty depends on fashion and that all women have identical beauty needs.

Profiteers in Female Flesh

There are three main gangs of profiteers who batten off the mass of women they drag on wheels into pouring out money in their search for beauty:

1) Those who profit by the manipulation of female flesh into the current standardized fashion style and mold;

2) Those who paint and embellish this manipulated flesh with cosmetics, dyes, lotions, perfumes, etc.

3) Those who decorate the manipulated and painted flesh with high-fashion clothes, jewelry, etc.

In the first category, a woman to be beautiful must be of a certain size; weigh so much and not an ounce more or less, and have certain arbitrary hip, bust, and waist measurements. If she varies from this mechanical pattern she is not beautiful. This causes enormous suffering to women who vary from this assembly-line ideal. Weighed down and frustrated by the real burdens of life under capitalism, whose source they do not understand, working women especially tend to view their imaginary "disfigurements" as the source of their troubles. They become victims of inferiority complexes. And so they flock by the thousands and tens of thousands and millions to the manipulators and decorators of female flesh, pouring their hard-earned money into the coffers of these profiteers.

Through Hollywood stars and beauty contests these fleshly standards are maintained and ballyhooed. Selected "beauties" are paraded before the hypnotized eyes of the great mass of women through every available means: in the movies, on television, in

the slick and pulp magazines. But the monotonous uniformity of these "beauties" is appalling. Every vestige of variety, the keynote of real beauty, has been erased. They could just as well be so many sugar-cookies stamped out of the same dough with the same mold.

In the next category are the cosmetic dealers, dyers, and emulsifiers of this regimented flesh. Perhaps only the workers in the factories of these manufacturers know that the same cheap raw materials which go into the \$10 jar or bottle of this and that also go into the fifty-cent bottle or jar in the dime store. To the naive and innocent, however, the \$10 jar must contain some special potent magic that is not contained in the cheap item. The big ads say so, and so it must be true. These poor women strain their financial resources to get this magic product, hoping this will transform them from clerks to heiresses.

Finally, with the fashion profiteers, an agonizing choice is placed before the women. Shall they buy for durability or for a passing fad? The rich, who can do both, have ordained a round-the-clock fashion circus; fashions for mornings, afternoons, cocktails, evening, night and bedtime. They have different fashions for "every occasion" and there are endless "occasions." In addition a vast collateral assemblage of "accessories" are required to "go with" whatever they are supposed to go with.

And all this mountain of fashions pressed upon women one week can the next week, month or season, be declared obsolete through a new fashion decree. A good example of whether women get what they need or whether they are compelled to need what they get can be found in an article published in the *New York Times*. It pointed out that Christian Dior, the famous couturier of the rich, whose styles are copied in cheap versions for the poor, had the power to raise the skirts of fifty million American women overnight—or lower them, or both!

A difference of three or four inches in a hemline can be a disaster for women who feel the pressure to look fashionable at work. It may be fun for the rich to throw out their wardrobes and get new ones. But it is exceedingly costly for the poor.

Thus when it is contended that women have the right to use cosmetics, fashions, etc., without clearly distinguishing between such a right and the social compulsion to submit to this exploitation, it leads straight into the trap of capitalist propaganda and practices. Women of the vanguard, leading in the effort for social change, must never, even unwittingly, reinforce this fashion rat-race; their job is rather to expose the scoundrels who profit from such victimization of women.

#### Opposition—Not Adaptation

It is contended that, so long as capitalism prevails, we women must abide by these cosmetic and fashion decrees. Otherwise we will be left behind in the economic and social rear. It is true that to hold jobs in offices and for other reasons we must give at least token recognition of the harsh reality.

But this does not mean that we should accept these arbitrary and expensive compulsions and edicts complacently or without protest. Workers in the plants are often obliged to accept speedups, paycuts and attacks on their unions. But the militants accept them under protest and continue to struggle against them—in movements that counterpose their needs and will against their exploiters.

The class struggle is a movement of opposition, not adaptation, and this should hold true not only of the workers in the factories but of women as well, both working women and housewives. It is because the issues are more obscure in the realm of women as a sex that some have fallen into the trap of adaptation. In this respect we must change our course. Let us explain that the modern fashion standards of beauty are not a permanent fixture, and that working women can and should have something to say about them.

We can point out, for example, that the use of cosmetics is a fairly recent innovation. In the past century a woman in search of a husband lessened her chances of getting him if she applied cosmetics. At that time cosmetics was the badge of the prostitute, and no respectable man would marry a "painted woman."

Again, in women's clothes, some sweeping changes took place as a result of the large numbers of women entering industry and offices during and after World War I. They cast off their whalebone corsets, the sixteen starched petticoats, big pompadours and bigger hats, and adopted clothes more suited to their working needs. The attractive, "casual" garments of today, which grew up out of these needs of the working women, were then taken over by the rich women for their sports and play.

Recently even the proletarian denim cloth and dungarees of the factory worker have become socially elevated. Perhaps the rich women, nettled by the sexually attractive appearance of women in overalls and sweaters, decided to adapt them to life in the suburbs and on their fancy estates.

In this attack on the fashion racket I am not speaking against attractive clothes nor resisting any necessary or desirable changes in the kind of clothes we want to wear. New times, new productive and social conditions will bring changes of all kinds. What I am against is the fashion rat-race and the inordinate amount of time, attention and money consumed by it. Time is the most precious

of all raw materials, for time is life. We have better things to do with our lives than dissipate them in this costly, vulgar, and depressing frenzy of keeping up with fashions.

Under socialism, the question of whether or not a woman wishes to paint and decorate her body will be of no more social consequence than the painting up on Halloween and other festive occasions of children today, or the painting up of actors for the stage, or clowns for the circus. Some women may regard themselves as more beautiful when they are so painted; some may not. But this will be a purely personal opinion and nothing more. There will be no more economic or social compulsion for all women to submit to these practices. Therefore, let us not defend the hucksters who tout this commercial exploitation of women in the name of "beauty."

#### The Massive Propaganda Machine

In recent years more and more attention has been directed toward the female population as important buyers of consumers' goods of all kinds: homes and home furnishings, cars, refrigerators, family apparel, maternity needs, and so on. Many of these products are necessary and useful and, as such, do not need to be "sold" through high-pressure advertising, which adds to their cost. But under the anarchistic system of capitalism, with its enormous and wasteful duplication of products, the various manufacturers compete with one another for a larger share of this lucrative market. Thus the advertising industry, a parasitic adjunct to big business, has itself grown into another branch of big business.

All the mass media—radio, television and the press—which influence and mold public opinion, are built around and supported by the advertisers who are supported by the capitalist merchandisers. All these wings of big business not only push the sale of commodities; they are also cogs in the massive propaganda machine which disseminates the required ideology and psychology for maintaining the capitalist system and its powers of exploitation.

Women, already weighed down by numerous conflicts and frustrations, are highly susceptible to this psychological manipulation, which directs them to the purchase of things as the solution to their problems. In addition to the general press, a growing number of magazines are directed exclusively to women, especially in the fields of fashions and aids to beauty. These are handsome productions, printed on the finest of slick papers. But the contents are also slick, for they sell not only beauty by the bucket and other profitable merchandise, but also a highly effective sales motivator—that the women who purchase the most are the most happy and successful of women.

In the glamorous ads we see enticing photos of luscious commodities of all kinds alongside beautiful women. The Great American Dream comes true for beautiful women who can purchase the streamlined cars, television sets and whatnot, and even it seems a dreamy sex life and an ideal family. Those who fail to acquire all these things wonder what is the matter with them as women that they have been dispossessed from this Great American Dream. They blame themselves for not having been born rich and beautiful.

This sense of personal inferiority is further implemented by the stories and articles which fill the spaces between the big advertisements. Writers capable of exposing the capitalist source of this sense of defeat suffered by masses of women are not invited to disseminate their views in these slick magazines. The "scientific" opinions peddled in them are designed to uphold and not undermine the capitalist exploitation of women.

Thus the specialists of various kinds, who are hired to write articles for anxious housewives, lecture them on the need for more child care, mother love, family attention—all of which it is clear can be supplied through extensive and expensive purchases. Or they discuss problems connected with career women, often leaving the insidious hint that their happy homes and emotional lives are being endangered by their outside work. Here again it seems that the danger can be averted through more purchasing.

In pitting the working woman against the housewife-mother and vice versa, both sets of women are left with feelings of guilt, conflict, and frustration. This is magnified in the case of those who are both working women and housewives. They are perpetually torn by a conflict of interests they cannot resolve.

But all this distress and sense of defeat suffered by women is extremely beneficial to the profiteers. It tends to send women into fresh purchasing sprees in an effort to overcome their anxieties and sense of failure. Very often as a quick restorative of their self-confidence, they rush to buy a new fashion or some magic item of beauty in a bottle.

In short, first the capitalist system degrades and oppresses the great mass of women. Then it exploits the discontents and fears in women to stoke the fires of unlimited sales and profits.

Our task, therefore, is to expose both the capitalist system as the source of these evils and its massive propaganda machine which tells gullible women that the road to a successful life and love is through the purchase of things. To condone or accept capitalist standards in any field—from politics to cosmetics—is to prop up and perpetuate this ruthless profit system and its continued victimization of women.

Hear Evelyn Reed speak at the opening rally of the

SOCIALIST  
YOUTH  
ALLIANCE  
4TH  
NATIONAL  
CONFERENCE



The  
Women's Liberation  
Movement  
in the U.S.  
Today

Evelyn Reed  
ON TUES. APRIL 24  
7:30 PM  
AT 137 ST. JAMES RD.  
GLB

Other speakers at the rally: PETER BOUTERHAM from the New Zealand Young Socialist, JIM PERRY from the Scottish Workers League, VIVIAN BRET MC BRIDE from the Socialist Youth Alliance

on Friday April 20th at 7:30pm at the Buffalo Hall, 61 Regent St. Sydney

# ON THE PICKET LINE



## Tramways Women Fight For Equal Job Opportunities

BY DOUG JORDAN

Struggles of women for an end to job discrimination have become increasingly common over the past few years. Women have often had to fight employers for the right to work in traditionally "male" jobs, but they have also had to fight the prejudices of their trade union leaderships and their male fellow-workers.

A recent example of such a struggle was the case of women in the Victorian Tramways Union. The roots of the conflict go back to 1956. It was then that the Melbourne Tramways Board announced its intention of selecting a number of women tram conductresses to undergo training as tram drivers.

A mass stop-work meeting of 2,500 members was held after a number of drivers had refused to supervise the training of the women. The meeting resulted in the union backing the stand of the male drivers. This position has been reaffirmed at depot meetings many times in the years since, with no sign of this prejudice breaking down. The bar on women drivers effectively closes higher paid jobs to them. The only arguments raised by the union and the majority of male drivers are that women supposedly "could not do the job," despite the fact that there are over eighty women drivers quite capably handling 14 ton Atlantean and other double-decker buses in Sydney traffic. The main unstated reason seems to be that men would lose overtime money if women were employed.

There has been growing opposition to this policy however, during the past eighteen months, initiated and led largely by women, and slowly gaining support from among the male rank and file. The union executive at its December 11 meeting advocated that any jobs "not requiring the ability to drive a tram" and presently closed to women conductresses be opened to them. While this motion may seem a step in the right direction, the union executive has made no visible moves toward implementing it.

A general meeting of all union members was called for April 1 at 10.30am in order to discuss the question and to try to settle it "once and for all." The meeting lapsed because it failed to

attract a quorum and the question has again been shelved. There are several reasons for this apparent lack of interest. One was obviously the timing of the meeting - Sunday is frequently the one free day for tramway workers, and it is a particularly difficult time for women with children to attend. There also appeared to be a deliberate attempt by the union leadership to minimise publicity for the meeting. Several depots were not informed about the meeting until two or three days before.

Nevertheless, the meeting although disappointing, cannot be seen as a total defeat. Those who did attend showed every indication that they were prepared to wage a long and militant struggle. Secretary Sid Edwards said the only way to ensure attendance at a union meeting was to call a stop-work meeting and this was met with applause. A meeting has been planned for all rank and file members prepared to fight for the right of women to the job. There is every indication that if a determined fight is waged that women will be victorious. There are also a whole range of issues that need to be taken up. These include an end to compulsory overtime and a review of the shifts which mean that tramworkers invariably work a six day week.

## Lift Workers Strike Enters 5th Week

BY ANDREW JAMESON

Lift maintenance workers in Melbourne have entered their fifth week of a strike which has left many city office blocks with inoperative lifts. The strike was called over a log of claims and over award payments which have been rejected by the employing agency, the Metal Trades Industry Association.

The union involved is the Electrical Trades Union which has about 200 men working on the maintenance of lifts. At a mass meeting in the Melbourne Trades Hall on April 4, the lift maintenance workers decided to prolong their strike, but at the same time they granted exemptions to lift failures in hospitals, and high rise flats, involving lifts that elderly or invalid pensioners use.

The strike which could end on April 9 if the Metal Trades Industry Association agree to a \$10 immediate weekly increase coupled with immediate negotiations on the rest of the log of claims, has illustrated the militancy of unions, even traditionally quietest unions such as the ETU, in demanding reasonable wage increases in response to the rising cost of living.



Women unionists with Tramways Union secretary after meeting.

## Vic. Teachers Call Strike

BY RENFREY CLARKE

A decisive struggle is approaching for Victorian teachers. At a mass meeting of over 2000 members of the Victorian Secondary Teachers' Association on March 30, it was overwhelmingly decided to call a week-long strike around demands for basic job security for temporary teachers.

"Temporary" teachers make up 30% of staff in Victorian secondary schools. They include all teachers who do not hold Australian citizenship, among them are several hundred Americans and Canadians enticed to this country by promises of liberal salaries and good conditions. Also, they include all teachers who are working less than full time; many of these have long experience and great competence. Far from being a mere adjunct to the teaching service, temporary teachers are an integral part of it. Nevertheless they are forced to work under conditions of tenure which would never be tolerated by a large, militant industrial union.

Teachers on the "temporary" list can be sacked at the whim of education department heads. No cause need be given, and when one is, it is generally as vague as "conduct unbecoming a teacher." There is no right of appeal, and no constituted body to appeal to. This license of the Education Department has been used ruthlessly to flush non-conformists out from among its employees. Only two people with permanent status were dismissed during a recent period which saw the sacking of 92 temporary teachers.

The leadership of the V.S.T.A. has allowed this situation to exist throughout the whole time since the union was set up. It was not initiatives from the heads of the V.S.T.A. which were immediately responsible for a huge meeting choosing to take militant strike action. It was a chance occurrence, a typically high-headed dismissal which happened to attract wide publicity, and so stirred rank and file support.

### THE HELEN GARNER CASE

In the final school days of 1972 Ms Helen Garner, a temporary teacher at Fitzroy High School, was summarily dismissed at a "preliminary investigation" by the Victorian Director of Secondary Education, Mr. Schruhin. Some months earlier she had conducted a sex education lesson in which she had answered fully and honestly the questions put to her by her class of 11, 12 and 13 year olds. There is nothing extraordinary in this; enlightened teachers do it often, though covertly. But Ms Garner was compassionate enough to make her explanations in language which the children used and could understand, not in the arid and intimidating language of the medical textbook and the carnal knowledge case, but in the "obscene" vernacular of the working class. A series of malicious rumors, and isolated, ill-informed complaints from people who did not have children in the class, led to the investigation. It was nearly four months before the V.S.T.A. responded with a stop-work meeting.

All along, the attitude of the V.S.T.A. hierarchy to the Helen Garner case has been ambivalent. The vote of approximately 80% for a prolonged strike can be regarded as a massive affirmation of support for her, and a motion demanding her reinstatement was passed by an even greater margin. But at no stage has the V.S.T.A. leadership admitted that other issues arise out of the case. If changes are confined to those envisaged by the leadership, Ms Garner could properly be reinstated, be made to defend her conduct before department tribunal, and be dismissed all over again.

At no stage would the students concerned,

their parents, or the other staff in the school, be consulted. At no stage would the findings of educational research, which in this case almost unanimously support Ms Garner, necessarily be brought to bear.

Teachers must be free to teach. They must be trusted to be responsive both to their pupils' needs and to the communities in which they work. If teachers are to win these rights they must cease to be intimidated by entrenched reactionaries, both in the bodies which rule them and in those which represent them. The present strike, which seems likely to be set for mid-April, is an extremely encouraging show of radicalism. It must be defended against attack from the capitalist press by a vigorous campaign to build the widest possible community support.

## Macquarie Uni Staff Under Attack

BY PETER JAMESON

At Macquarie University in Sydney, non-academic staff, including laboratory attendants, assistants and technicians who have enrolled or intended enrolling in part-time degree or diploma courses were recently hit by a 20 point, 3 page directive.

Entitled "Leave to Attend Courses (Non-Academic Staff)" the stiff new regulations governing time off allowed for studies coincides with the arrival of the new deputy vice-chancellor G.A. ("Bluey") Barclay.

In the past, non-academic staff were allowed time off to attend classes without loss of pay, but only for courses approved by the head of school. In effect this meant courses relevant to the employees work, hence of benefit to the university. Such courses are usually part-time degrees here or diplomas at technical colleges.

The latest directive from the administration demands that any time off for studies, even if directly related to the employees work and hence directly useful to the university, must be made up in overtime or loss of pay. Any time off requires the vice-chancellor's approval as well as that of the head of school.

Complaints have come from employees who accepted employment on the understanding that the University encouraged them to undertake courses.

There is already pressure on the union covering the affected employees, the Health and Research Employees Association to fight any erosion of working conditions.

A pay claim dispute and dissatisfaction among security staff and groundsman over working conditions has been going on for some time. At a meeting of the union branch on April 9 further anomalous behaviour by Barclay was mentioned by branch president Reg Dale. It appears advertisements for positions vacant contravene the agreement on working conditions signed by the union and administration.

The salaries agreement which expired on March 31 and is now due for re-negotiation plus the 35 hour week demand raise the likelihood of a union confrontation with the administration later this year.

Students should support the efforts of employees to improve their working conditions. It is in the best interests of students to build strong links with non-academic and academic employees.

At present tutors, the worst off of the academic staff, are organising on a national scale to press for better pay and more recognition of teaching in the university as opposed to pure research.

## ICI Strikers Return

BY STEVE GARDINER

Workers at the Imperial Chemical Industries plant at Botany in Sydney have returned to work after a strike lasting nearly six weeks.

On February 20, 1,000 chemical and maintenance workers at the plant walked out demanding a \$15 a week wage rise.

Earlier, a mass meeting had been called when ICI closed one of its five plants at Botany which left many workers without a job. A committee was elected to organize a campaign of action and sudden stoppages and overtime bans were carried out in order to get jobs for the unemployed workers and prevent any further redundancies.

The workers were then asked to come out in solidarity with other chemical workers in Victoria and South Australia for a \$6 rise. The men at Botany had not had a wage rise for nearly two years and they decided to demand an extra \$15 a week.

Transport workers, members of the NSW Transport Workers Union which declared ICI black-out on strike in solidarity with the chemical and maintenance workers. Picket lines were set up by the workers to prevent entry and exit of ICI's products. Several clashes with scab labour occurred between the strikers and owner-drivers employed by ICI, resulting to the police being called to try to disband the pickets under the guise of keeping law and order.

A ruling by the Commonwealth Conciliation Commissioner for a miserable \$4 increase was accepted by the ACTU secretary Harold Souter and the Federal leaders of Chemical Workers Union (CWU) who sent the chemical workers back to work in Victoria and South Australia. But workers at Botany strongly rejected this at a mass meeting on March 7 and decided to meet again on March 14. At this meeting Ron Gordon, Federal President of the CWU, turned up and attempted to return the men to work and accept the \$4 by playing on the physical hardships the workers obviously felt. However, the men remained united and rejected his proposals to return to work.

At a meeting between company representatives and union officials on March 17 the company increased the offer to the maintenance workers to \$8 a week. But the chemical workers would receive only \$4 as ruled by Commissioner Fortus.

This was a clear attempt to split the ICI workers in their united struggle against

immediate \$4 increase and a further \$3 on terms that the workers participate in a "job redesign programme" will be a programme of attack on the living standards of the workers, a programme of increased production with a smaller work force.

The ICI strike has lessons for the ICI workers and the whole working class: only by united militant actions can demands be met, that the trade union and government bureaucrats will invariably act in the interests of the bosses and that workers committees elected by the workers themselves to fight for their interests are necessary.

## Vic. Meatworkers Call Indefinite Strike

BY ANDREW JAMESON

On Tuesday April 3 more than 7,000 Victorian meatworkers held a 24-hour strike over pay claims. The strike was called by the Meat Industry Employees Union as an initial protest against the employers' refusal to meet various wage demands. A meeting of 3,000 held at Melbourne's Festival Hall along with other meetings throughout the state decided to call an indefinite stoppage which is expected to last at least a fortnight according to MIEU acting secretary, Wally Curran.

The action taken by the union has come after attempts by meat employers to grant a mere \$7.20 per week wage increase rather than the \$15.00 per week rise claimed by employees. The strike has already closed fourteen abattoirs. Others are also closing due to strikes by workers involved in the boiling down process.

One effect of this strike and subsequent meat shortage has been an increase in profiteering. The MIEU has warned against such malpractice and has called for boycotts against butchers who inflate prices in order to cash in on the meat shortage. The Meat and Allied Trades Industry (MATI) has been worried about the amount of meat being rapidly sold and has urged people not to rush to buy up available supplies. It is obviously concerned with trying to minimise the inconvenience caused by the strike in order to make it less effective.

The employers, through organizations such as the MATI have been solely responsible for increasing the price of meat in Victoria, in order to boost falling profits caused by a drop in exports. At the same time no reasonable wage increases have been granted to meat workers, who have suffered along with



ICI worker pickets Botany plant.

the bosses and was recognised as such by the workers at a mass meeting on March 21 when they rejected this proposal. A motion from the strike committee said that: "we reject this further attempt of the company to split the union ranks...."

The role the ALP played in this dispute was clear. Firstly Harold Souter of the ACTU and the Federal leaders of the CWU accepted the \$4 and pressured the State leaders in an attempt to return the men to work. Secondly a deputation had been sent to Cairns (after ICI threatened to close the plant) requesting him to intervene on the workers behalf. Cairns did nothing but support Souter.

At a meeting of the workers on March 28 the vote was to return to work, but the settlement that was reached for an

all other working people with the increase in the cost of living.

Acting secretary Wally Curran said meat industry workers had not had a wage rise for three years. He said that increases should be made on the base rate and not structured so that workers had to work overtime to earn a reasonable living wage. Speaking on the union's rejection of the employers wage offer, Curran said "They set out to give wage increases by bonuses - and that means working harder and increasing productivity."

A proposal demanding immediate full equal pay for female workers was overwhelmingly supported also. The militancy and unity of the meat workers was apparent at all the strike meetings throughout the state.



Trainee teachers demonstration.

## Trainee Teachers Demonstrate Over Pay

BY JAMIE DOUGHNEY

On Friday April 23 a mass meeting at Sydney Teachers College voted overwhelmingly to boycott lectures to protest the NSW Education Department's handling of allowance cheques. At this stage at least 200 trainees had not been paid from the beginning of the year.

Another meeting was called on the same day to support a strike and march to the offices of the Education Department.

Carrying banners and placards, about 600 trainees marched on the following Monday. They demanded that the allowances be paid without delay and a delegation met with the Director of Teacher Education, Mr Muir.

Not satisfied with the result they resolved to stay out until 4pm on Wednesday 28, which due to further delay was extended to Thursday.

Showing great concern for the Trainees who by this time had been unpaid for over 2 months - the Department eventually decided to forward the cheques.

## Evans Deakin Shutdown

BY ALLEN WESTWOOD

The announcement by Evans Deakin Industries that it would close down its Kangaroo Point shipyard in Brisbane by July has brought sharply contrasting reactions from the employers and unions. The shipyard is one of the biggest employers of labor in Queensland and the closure will affect 1,500 workers.

Two central points emerge from the crisis which industry is facing and both are embodied in the two conditions laid down by the company, which if met would avoid closure. The company demands (1) that the Federal Labor Government "legislate to give industry protection and work continuity" and (2) that "all unions engaged in ship-building enter into an industry agreement which will have as its objective the maintenance of an efficient industry, assured of long-term profitable conduct."

"It is not the responsibility of Evans Deakin Ltd to 'go broke' for the sake of the national interest in shipbuilding," ran the editorial in the April 4 Courier Mail. "The Federal Labor Government is pledged to help the industry."

In the same afternoon's Daily Telegraph, finance editor, Peter Charlton declared, "The company's announcement has put the onus squarely on the Federal Government to ensure the future of the shipyard. Evans Deakin is seeking what every business man would like - an assurance that operations are going to be profitable."

The employers are unanimous on this point: that the role of government is the management of the collective affairs of the capitalist class and to bolster up any weak section of it. Guaranteed employment through guaranteed profits!

But the workers think differently. On April 4, job delegates from the company's Kangaroo Point shipyard and Cairncross dry dock met at Brisbane's Trades Hall to discuss the proposed close down.

Further, a mass meeting of over 800 unionists, held on April 5, called on the ALP Government to take over the shipyard as a "government enterprise" to assure employment and decent working conditions. While some of the workers correctly demand workers control as opposed to mere "involvement" the important issue at this stage, around which the employers will struggle against the employers, will be the role of the Labor Government - whose interests will it serve?

In government, the ALP as a party based on the organised Labor movement must support the demands of the shipyard workers and completely reject the first condition laid down by the Evans Deakin management.

The second condition which the company is attempting to impose on the shipyard workers is astounding (union industry to maintain "an efficient industry assured by long term profitable conduct.") Yet it is all the more repulsive in that it serves as a point of departure for the attack against the Evans Deakin workers by the proprietorial classes.

The shipyard workers have been taught many bitter lessons at the hands of the management and now have a strong tradition of militant defence of their conditions. It is this militant example which they are setting to other sectors of the working class which the employers wish to break. In fact the unions claim that Evans Deakin has provoked many of the industrial stoppages to have an excuse for closing the yards.

It is also this tradition of organised struggle, raised to a higher level in the coming months, which Labor can not overlook in determining its policies for Australian shipyards.

## Strike by Apprentices

BY FRANK MORRIS

Apprentices are one of the most exploited sectors of the work force, with abysmal wages and bad conditions. They don't have the right to strike. In Melbourne recently apprentices risked either fines or having their indentures (contracts) cancelled when they went on strike for higher wages. The apprentices are employed at railway workshops at Jolimont, Newport and Spotswood, and were demanding wage rises ranging from \$6.68 for the first year apprentices up to \$13.98 for fourth year apprentices.

One of the striking apprentices who was a member of a strike committee formed to give leadership to the striking railway workers was quoted as saying "We could be fined or have our indentures cancelled but we knew that when we went on strike."

Pledges of support were offered by apprentices with the Tramways and Country Roads Board (CRB). Some of the strikers are junior members of the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union (AMWU) and were able to draw \$4.00 a week strike pay.

The secretary of the Metal Trades' Federation of Unions, Mr. P. Johnson, said that last year the government increased pay rates by up to \$15.90 over the award for a tradesman.

"The apprentices want their rates to be a percentage of the total tradesmen's rate of up to \$86.70 a week and not the tradesmen's base rate of \$70.80," he said.

At one meeting the striking apprentices decided to pool all strike pay and other funds, as the strikers are not in a financial position to support themselves individually.

The strike ended with financial gains won by all apprentices ranging from \$4.50 per week for first year to \$10.00 per week for fourth year apprentices.

# The World Revolution



## British Workers Call General Strike

BY DICK ROBERTS

The British Trades Union Congress has set May 1, the International Workers' Day, for nationwide strikes and protests against the Tory government's Phase 2 limits on wages. This will be the first general strike in Britain since 1926.

The date was set after a delay of nearly two weeks. A protest had been called by the TUC March 5, but no date was set at that time.

Under Phase 2 the government will attempt to prevent any pay rises exceeding the formula of 1 pound plus 4% a week. After April 1, when the wage control legislation went into effect, unions can be fined for encouraging strikes that seek to surpass the government's formula.

On March 23, some 47,000 gas workers voted to end six weeks of strikes and slow-downs. The settlement accepted by the workers keeps their wages within the government imposed limit, but increases their take home pay somewhat more by reducing their share of contribution to fringe benefit programmes.

The British capitalist press is heralding this settlement as a model for workers. Their fire is especially directed against

hospital workers, who are continuing selective strikes despite government strike breaking attempts and arrests of the strikers.

Hospital workers' unions have called for mass demonstrations in their support. One protest in Sheffield included more than 2,000 workers from 30 south Yorkshire hospitals. The London Times reported that "assistants at wholesale departments in south Wales have decided to support the hospital workers strike by refusing to supply linen bought by hospital authorities to combat the strike."

The 220,000 hospital workers are among the worst paid in Britain. Their jobs include scrubbing floors, washing bed pans and toilets, mortuary work, polishing furniture and laundering soiled linen. At present, basic wage rates amount to about \$428 a week.

In an editorial praising the gas settlement, the Financial Times of London boasted about the success of phase 1 of the Tories anti-labor policies. "Average wage rates, if not completely frozen, have risen at a pace which stands in striking contrast to the rapid rate of increase which had been considered normal in the months immediately preceding the freeze - and that despite a

continuing increase, still due mainly to the cost of food, in the index of retail prices.

Frozen real wages and higher prices is the ideal for the British ruling class. On March 24, the British Daily Express carried an article headed "Soaring food prices hit new peak." "Food prices are continuing to soar - last month they went up by a further 1.8 percent. "This means that housewives are pay-

ing a crushing 29.7 percent more for food than at the June 1970 general election. "And the rise in food costs since the price freeze began last November has now reached 5.4 percent."

British workers are setting many examples of how to fight the inflation that is eroding wages throughout the capitalist world. Their declaration for a general strike for May Day is an inspiration for all working people.



A march in Oxford in support of gas and hospital workers strikes.

## 258,000 Danish Workers Out on Strike

On March 21, some 258,000 Danish workers went out on strike or were locked out in the biggest industrial and labor conflict since 1936.

In Denmark wage contracts for the entire work force are re-negotiated every two years. The current contract expired on March 1, and negotiations for a new one had been going on since mid-October.

After more than five months of rejecting the workers' demands for a new contract, the employers have provoked the current conflict in order to increase their economic and political power, to consolidate the benefits they alone stand to gain from Denmark's membership in the Common

Market, and, with the help of the bourgeois parties, to force the workers' movement to retreat.

The official mediator in the negotiations, Sigurd Wechseltmann, had presented a compromise proposal that Premier Anker Joergensen, a Social Democrat and former leader of the country's largest union, had got the negotiators for the Trade Union Confederation to accept, but the Danish Employers' Federation rejected it. But the labor negotiators did not succeed in getting the workers they represent to go along with this compromise. For quite some time workers throughout the country have been making demands of their own: a minimum equal wage of 18 kroner (\$A1 equals approximately 23 kroner) an hour;

a thirty-six-hour work week, a vacation allowance of 12.5 percent, a cost-of-living installment of 60 ore (100 equals 1 kroner); minimum weekly wage for apprentices of 375 kroner.

These demands can in no way be met by the mediator's compromise proposal, which would not even make it possible to keep up with the sky-rocketing prices. His proposal eliminated any shortening of the work week for hundreds of thousands of workers. It did not meet the minimum wage demand. The cost-of-living adjustment amounted to chicken feed and the equal pay provision remained unsettled. The vacation allowance was also much lower than what was being demanded.

The compromise proposal, therefore, did not provide a basis for agreement on a new contract. Nor is it the basis on which the struggle is now being waged. Rather the struggle is being fought on the basis of the demands that have been raised in the trade union movement.

At a rally of 10,000 workers in Aalborg, Premier Joergensen and the Employers' Federation were warned not to play political games, and the Social Democratic government was warned against giving into bourgeois parties by intervening in the conflict. Thousands of workers marched through the town as the Aalborg shipyard band played the "Socialist March", the "Internationale," and many other songs of the labor movement.

After discussing the demands of the workers, union president Niels Kiltgaard told the rally: "No one today can doubt the fact that the intentions of the bosses are related to the position of the bourgeois parties in the debates at Christiansborg (seat of the Danish Folketing, or parliament). Their aim is not only to hold the workers back through the bourgeois contracts, but also through cutbacks in social legislation. Therefore we welcome the move to extend the struggle and make it more effective by involving workers in the power industry." (The Metalworkers Union has decided to strike on April 3 to include plane mechanics, seven power plants, and mechanics on private rail-ways.)

Kiltgaard told the representatives of the bosses to halt their power play. "We will not go on being pawns in your political game," he said. "We have the strength, the means, and the courage through our organizations to make you see the light. You know our demands. We will not be bought off by the mediator's proposal."

To loud applause, he concluded: "We and our comrades throughout the entire country must now raise a storm of opposition to the schemes the leadership of the Employers' Federation is trying to involve us in. The bosses have sown the wind, let them reap the whirlwind."



Danish workers demonstrate.

## French H.S. Students Fight Conscription

BY JON ROTHSCHILD

The French bourgeoisie had been playing around with "reforming" its national service system for some time. As early as April 1968 a joint "army-youth" advisory committee had suggested abolishing deferments by which students could postpone their military service (obligatory for all men in France) until their studies were completed.

In the middle of 1970 a law was proposed that eliminated the student deferments. According to the proposal, youth would be forced to enter military service before the end of their twenty-first year, thus fulfilling the regime's desire to lower the average age of soldiers.

On June 10, 1970, the proposed law was adopted nearly unanimously by the National Assembly. The only negative vote came from Michel Rocard of the Parti Socialiste Unifié (United Socialist Party). Three deputies abstained; the thirty-four Communist party deputies did not participate in the voting.

The resulting legislation, which has since become known as the Debre law (after Michel Debre, the minister of national defence), was altered several times in 1971 and 1972. But its most critical provision - abolition of the deferments - remained. That aspect of the law took effect on January 1, 1973.

Debre and the French bourgeoisie calculated wrongly. They reckoned without the intervention of the French high school students, who, for the first time in two years, have taken to the streets in massive numbers, organized in a national movement to roll back the Debre

law. And the movement was showing no signs of letting up. In fact, support for the high schoolers seemed to be spreading into the universities and the trade unions.

In many areas, the actions against the Debre laws broke out spontaneously, in others, conscious intervention by revolutionists was required.

The spark plug of the mobilization has been the Ligue Communiste, one of the only far-left groups to have urged action against the Debre law before the current outbreak. On February 10 - 11, the Front des Cercles Rouge Lyceens (FCR - Front of High School Red Circles), a group in solidarity with the Ligue, held a national convention attended by more than 300 delegates from the thirty-three French cities. High on the convention's agenda was discussion of action against the Debre law. The convention adopted a communique that noted the small scale struggles that had already broken out in schools and recommended the extension of the struggles.

The February 24 issue of Rouge noted that struggles were continuing in high schools, but at an uneven pace. It called for the holding of general assemblies in the schools to organize the struggle and raised the two slogans that were to become the major watchwords of the Committees of Struggle Against the Debre Law (CSADL): Down with the Debre Law! Re-establish the deferment and extend it to all youth!

The latter slogan became especially important. The regime had attempted to gain support for the law on the grounds that the old deferment system favoured

upper-class youth who could afford to go to universities. The reform, the Gaullists claimed, would have the effect of decreasing social inequalities.

The reality is the opposite, as the CSADLs have stressed. Upper-class students can afford to take a year off to do their army service, and then go back to school. But for less affluent students especially workers, simply getting through high school is difficult. If they are forced to go directly into the army after graduation, thus losing a full year of earnings and having their studies disrupted, the likelihood is that few, if any, will be able to return to the university after doing their military service. They will be compelled to enter the job market immediately. The Debre Law, apart from intensifying the militarisation of youth, would in fact reduce the number of workers able to get a higher education.

"All the conditions exist today for the movement to really break out," Rouge wrote. "The national co-ordinating meeting of the committees planned for March 14, must set national objectives for the movement and thus allow it to overcome the unequal development that still exists between various schools and cities. The perspective of a national day of mobilisation at the end of March must be the occasion to unleash strikes in areas where they have not yet taken place."

The Ligue's strategy seems to have worked well. When the struggle first broke out, the Communist Party tried to block any mass mobilisation. On March 2 for example, the Union Nationale des Comites d'Action Lyceens (UNCAL - National Union of High-School Action Committees, the CP's "mass" high school union) issued a

statement denouncing the anti-Debre law movement as "manipulated by the regime" and urged "that everything be done to bring about the victory of the Union of the Left and the Common Programme," that victory allegedly to ensure the repeal of the Debre Law.

With the elections over, the CP bureaucrats were completely outflanked by the student upsurge. Sensing this danger, they decided that an intervention was called for. Le Monde noted:

"Although before the legislative elections UNCAL (many of whose members are young communists) declared that the high-school demonstrations organised at the urging of the Trotskyists were 'inopportune', after the success scored by these demonstrations, the left (Stalinist and Social Democratic) organisations are now calling for a general meeting Wednesday March 21, on the eve of the 'national day' called by the 'Committee Against the Debre Law.'"

It is significant that the CP-called meeting for March 21 - which seems to have been a deliberate attempt by the Stalinists to undermine the authority of the CSADLs, which had been leading the struggle all along - was much smaller than the March 22 demonstrations which had been previously called by the CSADL. According to the March 23 New York Times, the March 21 action was 20,000 strong; the March 22 demonstration brought out 50,000.

March 22, the first day of nationally coordinated actions against the Debre law, thus marked the opening of full-fledged post-election struggle in France.



French students demonstrate.

## Marcos' Troops Attack Mindanao Muslims

In the months since Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in the Philippines, one of his preoccupations has been to tighten control of the central government over the 3 million Muslims who live on the island of Mindanao. At the beginning of March, Marcos' troops began a fresh offensive aimed at disarming antigovernment Muslim rebels.

The offensive ended a two month truce Marcos had declared on January 3 after his troops met unexpectedly stiff resistance to an earlier campaign. At that time, Marcos offered a "selective amnesty" to Muslim rebels who turned themselves in and gave up their arms. Only 242 persons took advantage of this offer.

After two weeks of fighting triggered by the current government offensive military authorities claimed on March 14 that 187 Muslim rebels and thirty government soldiers had been killed. Twenty-one government soldiers were said to have been taken prisoner.

Thus far, the main result of Marcos' military campaign has been a massive escalation in the misery of the southern population. In an interview published in the March 13 New York Times, Dr Estefania Aldaba-Lim, Philippine secretary of social welfare, reported that 742,000 residents of the Moro Gulf area in western Mindanao had become refugees since the recent fighting began. They are "running from the fighting, looking for food," Aldaba-Lim said.

Marcos accompanied the new assault on Muslim-controlled areas with the usual barrage of propaganda denouncing his opponents as "communist terrorists" and "foreign agents". Press Secretary, Francisco S. Tatad charged that the Muslim insurgents were "outlaws, pirates and secessionists led by a young Maoist leadership." A government report claimed that one of the Muslim leaders was Nuraladji Misuari, a former instructor at the State University of the Philippines. True to form, the

report described him as "a known Communist Maoist."

The March 16 Sydney Morning Herald reported that the Philippines government had formally notified members of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) that foreign troops, "some of them in uniform" are participating in the fighting on the side of the insurgents. Such notification is the first step in requesting "joint defence" under the

Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty.

Philippine officials have refused to name the "foreign power" whose troops are supposedly involved in the fighting, but they have dropped hints that the charge is aimed at Libya. A Libyan member of an Arab delegation that visited the Philippines in 1972 irked Marcos by accusing the regime of genocide against the Muslim population.

## British Students Strike Over Grants

Resentment over continuing government refusal to provide an adequate grant for students erupted March 14 into Britain's first national student strike. The strike was called by the 500,000-strong National Union of Students (NUS).

The national student strike was part of the continuing NUS campaign against the present system of student grants. British students are faced with massive cut backs in higher education and mounting inflation that has considerably devalued the real value of their grants.

Since the November NUS conference the grants campaign has involved cafeteria boycotts, rent strikes in the resident halls, and a national mobilization on February 21, totalling about 60,000 in various cities. The national

student strike culminates the action to date on the grants campaign.

The progress and future perspectives of the campaign will be the main item on the agenda of the tenth semi-annual NUS conference in April. The debate will centre on the handling of the grants campaign by the NUS executive, which is led by the Communist Party.

The national student strike affected most universities, colleges and polytechnics around the country as students became involved in boycotts of lectures, occupations, demonstrations, marches and rallies. Many of the actions were organized by students dissatisfied that the NUS executive had not organized massive demonstrations in London and other cities, rather than

concentrate on poorly organized local activities.

Lack of local leadership and the impending spring recess probably meant that fewer students were involved actively than in the big mobilisations on February 21. But large numbers of students did not go to their schools that day, and a number of cities saw large actions.

In London, about 2,000 students, virtually without any overall organization, marched to parliament buildings to give backing to student representatives who were lobbying Members of Parliament. Some of the biggest turnouts of the day were 6,000 in Glasgow, 3,000 in Brighton, 3,000 in Oxford, 5,000 in Liverpool, 2,500 in Nottingham and 3,000 in Leeds.

# Nixon Renews Bombing Threat

BY ALLEN MYERS

Writing from Saigon in the April 1 New York Times, Sylvan Fox quoted the remark of a journalist on the night of March 29, immediately after all US military personnel had supposedly been withdrawn:

"What I'd like to know is whether this is the last week of the second Indochina war or the first week of the third. Or both."

The answer to the journalist's question is neither. Despite the January 27 cease-fire agreement, neither the "second Indochina war" nor the US involvement in it has come to an end.

This is most immediately evident in Cambodia, where US B-52s continue daily raids in an effort to prop up the wavering dictatorship of the puppet regime. But it is equally true of Laos and Vietnam, as has been made clear by press reports and the words of Richard Nixon himself.

In a March 29 televised speech, supposedly marking the achievement of "peace with honour" in Vietnam, Nixon, for the second time in two weeks, accused the Vietnamese liberation forces of violating the cease-fire and threatened to renew the bombing of Vietnam.

"There are still some problem areas: the provision of the agreement requiring an account of all missing in action in Indochina; the provision with regard to Laos; the provision prohibiting infiltration from North Vietnam into South Vietnam have not been complied with."

"We have and will continue to comply with the agreement."

"We shall insist that North Vietnam comply with the agreement and the leaders of North Vietnam should have no doubt as to the consequences if they fail to comply with the agreement."

"The warning," John Herbers wrote in the New York Times the next day, "was somewhat stronger than that in his March 15 news conference..."

There were basically two objects in Nixon's remarks. One, of course, was to

intimidate the Vietnamese liberation fighters. The second was to create a justification for the bombing of Cambodia and for renewed bombing of Vietnam that would seem reasonable to US public opinion.

Prior to January 27, Nixon had attempted to justify the genocidal air raids over Indochina as necessary "to protect American forces when they are engaged in military actions." With the agreement to withdraw US troops, it became necessary to find another rationale. For the obliteration of Cambodian villages, Nixon has so far come up with no pretext more convincing than a "request" from Lon Nol. For any renewed bombing in Vietnam, it appears, the rationale will be "violations" by the liberation forces of the cease-fire.

There are, of course, continual violations of the cease fire, but they are being committed by Nixon and his puppets in Saigon - a fact so obvious that it has begun to find its way into US capitalist press. When Nixon speaks of "violations" by the liberation forces, he means resistance to the armed attacks of Thieu's US armed, US financed, US directed army.

"Both sides have been guilty of cease-fire violations," Daniel Sutherland wrote from Saigon in the March 30 Christian Science Monitor.

But this reporter's own impression after travelling extensively in three provinces has been that the Saigon government has been guilty by far the greatest number of cases of launching offensive operations into territory held by the other side. Quite a few Saigon troop casualties seem to be attributable to Saigon attempts to build outposts in zones which have been recognised for years as National Liberation Front base areas. The Thieu government also seems to feel that it has the right, despite the cease-fire, to take back territory which it lost during last year's big Communist offensive.

In one case, the reporter was interviewing NLF fighters in a village which had



Thieu

long been held by the liberation front and where the people clearly supported the front when heavily armed Saigon troops launched an operation into the village. The outnumbered front soldiers did not fight back.

In the March 29 Washington Post H.D.S. Greenway provided additional information on Saigon's violations of the cease-fire in the days immediately after it was signed:

"The days immediately preceding the cease-fire were as bloody as any period during the war," one American official said. About 350 hamlets were seized by the Communists and it took the government about three weeks to get them back, and a few more as well.

"Therefore the fighting between January 28 and February 18 was heavy. On February 18, Sahyinh, the only Communist controlled town on the South China Sea capable of becoming a deep water port, fell to the South Vietnamese forces. Since then the level of violence has fallen. "We got most of what we could safely get by the end of February," one South Vietnamese source said.

Even the statistics put out by the Thieu regime indicate which side is violating the cease-fire. According to Saigon, in the sixty days after the cease-fire agree-

ment, 15,149 members of the liberation forces were killed. Thieu's army put 3,126 of its dead at about one-fifth that number.

At a March 31 press conference, Major General Le Quang Hoa, the chief North Vietnamese delegate to the four-party joint Military Commission and Colonel Vo Dong Giang, a Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) spokesman, charged Nixon and Thieu with "sabotaging" the cease-fire.

"General Hoa," Sylvan Fox reported in the April 1 New York Times, "said that while the United States has ended its overt military involvement in South Vietnam it 'continues its military involvement' by turning its military personnel into 'disguised civilian personnel to help the Saigon army.'"

Colonel Giang accused the Thieu regime of 19,700 "serious" violations of the agreement. "He said that if Saigon continued its landgrabbing the Vietcong would strike back. 'We have restrained ourselves,'" he said, "but there is a limit to our restraint."

Giang also charged Nixon had kept 17,000 military personnel disguised as civilians in South Vietnam. (It has already been reported in the US press that the Pentagon plans to employ 20,000 or more "civilian advisers" - many of them abruptly discharged from the military in order to become civilians - in South Vietnam.)

The US State Department has so far admitted that there are still "about 8,500" US citizens in South Vietnam. In the March 29 New York Times, Bernard Gwertzman described some of the functions of these "civilians":

"About 5,000 are so-called 'contract' employees hired by private American companies working for the South Vietnamese Government. The se include a large number of Americans involved in the upkeep and maintenance of advanced military equipment such as jet planes and high-speed communications equipment given to Saigon just before the cease-fire agreement.

"About 1,200 civilians will be attached to the 80-man military attaches office in the embassy, supervising the continuing military aid that is permitted on a one-for-one replacement rate. There will continue to be large economic aid missions as well as a bolstered embassy staff."

Clearly, the US embassy in Saigon is the largest in the history of international diplomacy. No doubt Nixon will insist that the liberation forces respect the diplomatic immunity of this embassy staff as it travels around South Vietnam replacing the weaponry that Thieu's army is expending against them.

Vice President Spiro Agnew recently let slip some additional information about US plans for the future of South Vietnam. Not surprisingly, he revealed that the country will continue to be made safe for imperialist investment.

Agnew was interviewed by reporters after his return from a visit to Saigon. Godfrey Sperling Jr quoted some of his remarks in the March 27 Christian Science Monitor:

"We had a joint meeting between (US 'advisers') and the young Vietnamese, most of whom were trained either in this country or in Great Britain - to discuss what is needed for Vietnam as we move from a condition of actual warfare into a peacetime economy. "There is great realism about the fact there are going to be skirmishes and incidents, but a knowledge that Vietnam has to revise its economy and has to move people into peacetime pursuits. "And the thing that impressed me there was that all the Vietnamese advisers were in key with what our advisers recommended..."

Nixon's administration has thus given us a fairly precise definition of the meaning of "peace with honour" in Vietnam. A puppet regime is to be permanently maintained in Saigon and its army, under the direction of US 'advisers', is to have complete freedom to attack the liberated areas. Serious liberation forces will be met by bombs.

Whether one calls it the second or the third Indochina war, the war goes on.

# International Persecution Hits Palestinians

BY SOL SALBY

The persecution of the Palestinian people has been taking more and more of an international character. From Khartoum to New York, from Beirut to Canberra attacks have been launched on the Palestinians and their struggle for self-determination. The international character of the campaign is also political, capitalist and Stalinist, "progressive" and reactionary have all joined in the campaign of vilification against these people.

The latest excuse in the attempts to liquidate the Palestinian revolution has been the activities of the Black September group in the Sudanese capital of Khartoum. The execution of three imperialist envoys in that city has been taken up and used as a pretext to launch the attack. Sudanese President Gaafar el-Nimeiry was a staunch supporter a year ago of the Palestinian revolution. "We will support the Palestinian revolution to the last man and the last cartridge," he said.

The Khartoum executions allowed him to become far more genuine. "Not only September will be black. The Government will make every day of the year a black one." Nimeiry, who has not changed and whose "progressive" rhetoric was used only to hide his reactionary politics (such as the persecution of the Southern Sudanese) was responding in 1972 to mass pressure. It was only this pressure and the immense popularity of the Palestinian revolution throughout the Arab world which forced people of his ilk to offer token verbal support.

The Nimeiry of 1973 feels strong enough as a result of the massive defeats inflicted

on the Palestinians, to jettison all pretence of being an ally of the Palestinians.

The Sudanese government launched its attack by associating all the Palestinian movement with the activities of Black September - a manipulation hitherto exclusively used by the imperialists. All Palestinian headquarters in the Sudan were closed. Personal vilification was directed at the leadership of the Al Fateh organisation.

The openly reactionary Arab leadership such as King Hussein's in Jordan has of course been more explicit with its threats to the Palestinians. Its planned execution of guerrilla leader Abu Daoud and sixteen others is designed to intimidate the Palestinians even further.

The united front of common interest between Zionism, imperialism and Arab reaction requires that the Palestinians be persecuted wherever they exist, and their supporters should be smashed and discredited. This is indeed an international phenomena. One of the main reasons being advanced for Sweden's new notorious terrorism act is the activities of the Palestinians. In the US there has been a recent stepping up of the attacks on the Socialist Workers' Party and Young Socialist Alliance. The SWP and YSA have been in the fore-front of the defence of the Arab revolution in that country. Now several Zionist and Zionist front organisations have recently issued statements accusing the SWP and YSA of being anti-Semitic in their opposition of the State of Israel - a patently absurd charge.

This kind of attack is also being reflected

in Australia. In the last issue of DIRECT ACTION David Nixon reported on the extent of the new Zionist hysteria, a new form of anti-Semitism in Australia.

The hysteria if anything has been increasing. The March 29 issue of the Australian Jewish Times carried the banner headline: "Jewish Leaders Urge Government to Squash Terrorism Here!" The paper continued: "Leaders of three Jewish federal organisations this week sent cables to the Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, protesting the activities of the Palestine - Australia Solidarity Committee."

As if the implication that the PASC is a terrorist organisation is not enough, the paper's editorial carried one of the most racist articles produced by any newspaper to the left of Eric Butler's League of Rights.

"Statements of the leaders of the Palestine-Australia Solidarity Committee should not be taken lightly, however minor the group may be. "Their voice represents violence, hatred, and as such should have no place in Australia... "Leaders and organisations of the community appealed to the Prime Minister to ban an attempt which aims to sow the seeds of hatred here..."

Joe Riordan, the new Labor MHR for Phillip, whose right wing stand in the past is well known, stepped in on March 29. He asked the Prime Minister to take action against the PASC which, according to him is "dedicated to terrorising Jewish people" a claim no-one could substantiate.

Labor's stand on the Middle East and Whitlam's support for Zionism have been dis-

ussed on the pages of DIRECT ACTION on many occasions and there is little point in repeating it. What is important is to expose the absolute lies on which Whitlam has acted and expose the utter hypocrisy on which the Zionist claims with regard to the question of hatred are based.

The charges against the PASC of terrorising Jewish people are absolutely false. As well as myself there are at least two other Israelis who have in one way or another expressed support for PASC activities. If the distribution of propaganda and the organisation of demonstrations is terrorism then Gough Whitlam, who has spoken at antiwar rallies, is a terrorist and Joe Riordan must therefore denounce him as well.

The aims of the PASC have been distorted to such an extent that a useful service can be provided by quoting its full aims, viz: i) Solidarity with the Palestinian revolution. ii) Palestine for the Palestinians, regardless of race or religion. iii) Opposition to Zionism and Arab reaction, and imperialism in all its forms. iv) Support for all liberation movements around the world.

No amount of putting the Zionist propagandists and Labor opportunists right where they go wrong will achieve any purpose as their lying is quite deliberate. Their hypocrisy however, is exacerbated by the operation in Australia of not one, but several organisations directly involved in the Zionist terrorising of the Palestinians and other Arab people.

The very same issue of the Australian Jewish Times shows the achievements of the Jewish National Fund wing of the United Israel Appeal. Their year to year account for 1967 reads as follows: "The Six Day War. By building vital roads before and during the battles, the JNF enables Israel Forces to move rapidly from one front to the next. The JNF reclaims areas inside the former borders!" (Emphasis added)

Who are the real terrorists? The PASC members who support the just struggle for self-determination of the Palestinian people or those who collect \$4 million a year for military aggressive use in the oppression of other people.

The defence of the Palestinian revolution must be extended to Australia. Strenuous efforts must be made to expose the Zionist hypocrisy and to change Labor policy from supporting the oppressor to wholeheartedly defending the oppressed.

# Lon Nol Regime on Verge of Collapse

BY GORDON ADLER

With the withdrawal of US ground forces from Indochina, the focus of the war has shifted to Cambodia. Although nominally included in the cease fire arrangements, Cambodia is being bombed daily by US forces. The government of Lon Nol, controlling only about 20% of the territory of Cambodia, is in a state of siege in Phnom Penh and its situation appears to deteriorate day by day.

On March 17 a strike of 20,000 high school teachers and students in Phnom Penh prompted the government to arrest many of the leaders and declare a state of emergency. A demonstration of 10,000 strikers was attacked by government soldiers, with two deaths. On March 18 Lon Nol suspended all civil liberties, ordered an end to the strike, declared a curfew, and banned all newspapers except those published by the government.

Last week an extreme shortage of oil in the city resulted in petrol rationing, and a few days later most foreign embassies began to leave the city.

The United States is in a serious dilemma. Defence Secretary, Elliot Richardson on April 1 admitted that without US bombing "it would be very difficult" for the government of Lon Nol to survive. But despite the bombing the military situation worsens for the Lon Nol regime. Nixon is under pressure to increase US military commitment. Yet even the present level of bombing has evoked criticism from congress and a number of senators, who see great danger in any return to

the policy of large scale commitment of US troops. Reports in the US press suggest that Nixon may seek to resolve this dilemma by stationing 20,000 or more "civilian advisers" in Indochina, many of them hurriedly discharged from the services for the purpose.

Whether even these forces can tip the scales and save the Lon Nol regime is extremely doubtful. The B-52 bombers are even now bombing so close to the capital that the city windows shake every night.

Nixon's attempts to confuse the situation

# Sydney Antiwar Action Set for May

BY GORDON ADLER

Since the signing of the Indochina peace accords, approximately 20,000 people have been killed in Vietnam through continued fighting. The war rages on in Cambodia. The United States air force is carrying out massive B-52 and F-111 bomber raids in a desperate attempt to shore up the Lon Nol regime and to break the tightening ring of the liberation forces around Phnom Penh. Refugees pour into Phnom Penh, fleeing from American bombing. Helicopters carrying true supervision teams have been shot down. Canada and Indochina have hinted at the possibility of their withdrawal from the true supervision operations altogether. US General Haig's visit to Cambodia and Nixon's belligerent statements threatening further US military intervention illustrate the gravity of the situation, and the possibility of further US aggression.

All this military activity bodes ill for the permanence of the peace accords and reveals that the issues of the war have not been resolved. The Thieu regime continues to suppress all democratic rights, and still holds enormous numbers of people in prison for oppositional political activities.

In Sydney, the Antiwar Action Coalition proposes to hold a demonstration on May 19. The demonstration will consist of a march through the city with speakers at a rally in Hyde Park. It will call for the withdrawal of US bases from Thailand and the South China Sea as well as from the rest of Indochina, the Thieu regime, the cessation of all attacks on Cambodia, the release of all political prisoners held in Saigon jails, and the rec-

ognition of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of Vietnam as well as the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

If enough publicity is given to the preparation for this demonstration, it can be an important event in the rebuilding of the antiwar movement and making people aware of the true state of affairs. The visit of representatives of the liberation forces to Australia on April 28 can contribute materially to the creation of the appreciation of the situation by the Australian workers. This will require considerable effort to ensure the largest possible attendance at any meetings at which the visitors speak, and at the demonstration on May 19.

There is still great divergence of views within the antiwar movement on the

relative importance of various issues in the conflict. There should be no disagreement however, on the necessity of demanding the release of all political prisoners from Saigon jails, and a cessation of US bombing in Cambodia. The Antiwar Action Coalition is therefore seeking the co-operation of other antiwar forces in organising a picket in Sydney, probably at the US consulate, on the issue of political prisoners held in Saigon. United action on this issue could be an important step in re-establishing the unity of the antiwar forces and for preparing for the demonstration on May 19. As both AICD and the CPA have expressed concern about the continued imprisonment of political dissidents in Saigon, this at least should be a matter on which energetic action will result in a sizable demonstration. It is expected that this picket will be conducted early in May, during the Vietnamese visit.

# Saigon Embassy Picket

BY JOHN COLEMAN

The Saigon Embassy, in National Circuit, Forest, ACT is the official residence of the Thieu regime's Charge D'Affaires. On Saturday March 31 a "Provisional Revolutionary Government" embassy was established next to the sedate white brick building housing the Saigon representatives. Similarities between the aboriginal tent embassy outside another sedate white brick building in Canberra and this tent embassy, established by anti-war activists from Melbourne, Sydney, New Zealand and Canberra, were obvious.

About 30 people maintained a rotating permanent staff till Sunday morning. One gentleman picketed the embassy for a

few hours, but when approached and engaged in conversation by an embassy member, decided to leave, "because he had been convinced he should not be doing such a nasty thing"

It was decided by people at the embassy to roster a staff throughout the night and on Sunday distribute information to visitors to Parliament House concerning the goading and torture of political prisoners in Saigon.

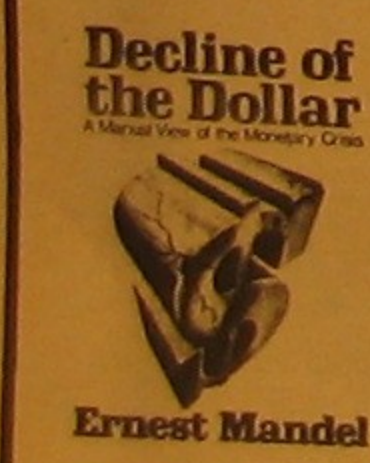
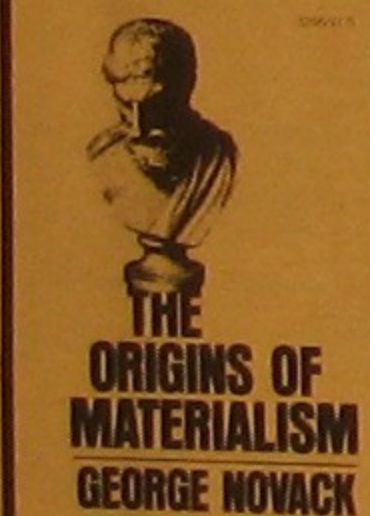
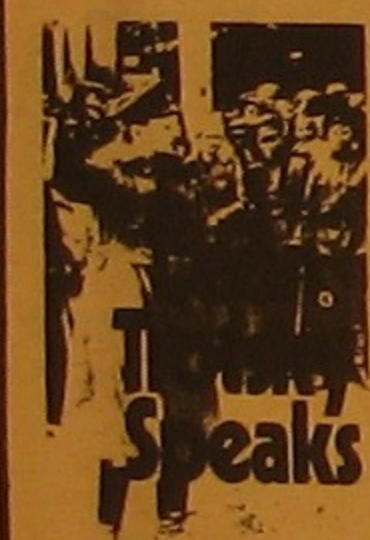
Further lobbying of Parliamentarians concerning the political prisoners in Saigon and calling for the recognition by the ALP of the PRG followed up the action during the week.

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# The Record of Australian Stalinism



Left: R. Dixon, L. Aaron. Right: J. Stalin.



BY GORDON ADLER

In 1921 the Communist Party of Australia was formed, as the response of Australian Socialists to the Russian revolution. The character of that revolution, and the nature of the regime that arose in the Soviet Union have been, and still are, vital issues of the Australian socialist movement and for the CPA.

The October revolution was the greatest achievement of the revolutionary working class movement, and it demonstrated conclusively the validity of Marx's ideas in the period of the domination of the world by imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism. It gave an enormous impetus to the international socialist revolution, and led to the formation of Communist parties in most countries of the world. By 1960 these parties claimed a membership of thirty three million. The Soviet Government, in the first five years of its existence, under the most harrowing conditions, accomplished more for the liberation of the oppressed than all previous governments in history.

Yet within a few years almost all the outstanding leaders of the revolution had become the victims of repression, not only by the forces of capitalism, but also by the apparatus of the workers' State they had helped to create. Old Bolsheviks and young communists dedicated in the new society were alike denied freedom of expression, exiled in carceral or mental institutions, tortured, shot or driven to suicide. Some perished in labor camps, others were executed after spectacular frame up trials. Great numbers became disillusioned and dropped out of the struggle.

In Australia, the socialist movement had been born in the struggle of the miners and the shearers from the period from the goldrush onwards, but there had never been any Marxist tradition. The Australian movement remained largely isolated from world currents until Sharkey and Dixon rose to leadership of the CPA in 1930. By this time the Communist International had degenerated, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was fully Stalinised and the CPA simply followed the Comintern line. There was never any period in which Bolshevik ideas could grow and develop within the party. The CPA leaders identified Leninism with Stalinism, as did the enemies of Bolshevism, and they made no attempt to understand the nature of the political changes occurring in the Soviet Union.

Following the line of the Stalinised Comintern, they pursued a sectarian line in the labor movement, regarding the ALP as a greater menace than the open forces of reaction and they justified the Moscow frame-up trials. During the second world war the party declared a truce in the class struggle and gave its unreserved support to the reformist

Labor Government, in line with the international policy of class collaboration of the Stalinised communist parties. The party grew rapidly during this period, because of its social patriotism, its role in opposing strikes, its subservience to the Australian bourgeoisie, and the popularity of the Soviet Union among the Australian workers through the victories of the Red Army. By 1944 it had reached its peak membership of almost 23,000, and was on the road to becoming the dominant influence in the working class movement.

After the war, the party leaders, lacking a Bolshevik orientation, overestimated their strength. Convinced that they were on the verge of a decisive struggle for power, they launched a series of disastrous strikes that resulted in the defeat, isolation and demoralisation of the most militant sections of the working class. Unable to formulate a programme of transitional demands that would unite the working class on fundamental issues, the party lost ground heavily, and a process of decline set in. This process has not been reversed in the past twenty eight years, and continues even today.

The extreme anti-communism of the cold war was certainly a major factor in the erosion of the party membership, yet this decline continued long after the cold war period had ended, and extended even into the radicalisation period of the sixties generated by the Indochina war. It was, in fact, in this later period that the greatest stresses and splits occurred. The anti-communism of the cold war thrived on the crimes of Stalinism. Without that terrible incubus the casualties of the cold war would have been fewer, recovery would have been more rapid, and the radicalisation would have brought a far greater wave of new recruits to the party.

The decline in the strength of the CPA, which began just before the end of the second world war, reached such a state of crisis that in 1965 a new leadership emerged. This new leadership, headed by Laurie Aaron, ascribed the party's failures to the influence of Stalinism, and declared its intentions to break with the past, and to base its policies on a return to Marxism, brought up to date by a critical, scientific study of current political reality. Unfortunately, the new leadership, heavily handicapped by its training in the school of Stalinist dogma, proved itself incapable of breaking with the past because it did not understand the nature of Stalinism.

Its analysis of Stalinism was superficial, and limited to a rejection of only the most glaring and repulsive manifestations of repression in the workers' states. It was totally unable to grasp the counter-revolutionary essence of Stalinism, its interest in the policy of class collaboration in the interests of the bureaucracy in the workers' states, its sabotage of the revolutions in Germany in 1923, China in 1927, its role in the capitulation of the German Communist party to Hitler

in 1933, and the defeat of the Spanish revolution in 1939, culminating in the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact of 1939. There was never, at any time, in the literature of the CPA, or at any of its conferences, a thorough-going attempt to understand the significance of Stalin's rise to power, or the meaning of the struggle of Trotsky and the left opposition to restore Bolshevik ideas and practices to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Even today the leadership clings to the view that if Stalin was, then Trotsky was wrong too, despite the irrefutable fact that the left opposition was the only organised force in the country, opposing Stalin's rise to power. Stalin has been condemned out of the mouths of the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union at its twentieth congress, his accusations against Trotsky and all the victims of the purges has been proved to have been totally false, Stalin himself has been proved a bureaucrat, a tyrant, a liar and a mass murderer, and yet the slanders against his victims are still propagated by those who claim to have broken with Stalinism. The slanders against Trotsky are repeated, the myths and lies perpetuated.

Why does the CPA refuse to come to grips with history? Is it because the leaders are unaware of the facts? Trotsky's writings are available in cheap editions for anyone who cares to read them. The real reason is not ignorance, nor even the belief that these ideas are outdated. Their relevance to today's world must be apparent to any serious student of Marxism. The reason is that CPA leaders still see their fate bound up with the Stalinist communist parties, those in power and those with mass followings such as the communist parties of France, Italy, Japan, whom they still hope to emulate at some time in the distant future. They still see the CPSU as a revolutionary force, and they still see the world Trotskyist movement as a counter-revolutionary tendency. Unable to distinguish between revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces, the general view of the party leaders today is that Stalinism is identical with the dictatorship of the proletariat, and that bureaucratic repression is the inevitable consequence of the victory of the Bolshevik type party, and with it most of the basic ideas of Marx. In place of Marxism, those disillusioned with Stalinism have erected a philosophy based on abstract idealism, most clearly expressed by Eric Aaron in his book "Philosophy for an Exploding World."

Stalinism arose, in the Soviet Union, because of the failure of the international socialist revolution at that time. It had always been considered by Marxists that socialist society could only be constructed through the victory of the revolution internationally, in a number of advanced capitalist countries. Socialism requires a great abundance of material wealth. In the Soviet Union, extreme shortage of basic necessities existed, leaving a section of the people with more of these necessities

than others, and the bureaucracy arose for the maintenance of the privileges of this favoured stratum. This is at the root of the whole issue of Stalinism, and it is the reason why a fully socialist society cannot be created in the Soviet Union until a much higher level of productivity is reached than already exists, and why revolution in the advanced capitalist countries is a pre-condition for the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union. It has nothing to do with the structure of the Bolshevik party, it has to do with the interests of those in power who claim to be the heirs to the ideas of the Bolsheviks.

The bureaucrats in the workers' States are not interested in world revolution, nor are they interested in socialist construction. They are concerned solely with the preservation of their own positions of privilege, and do not want to see upheavals in the world. They wish to preserve the status quo, and put forward the doctrine of the "peaceful road to socialism", and "peaceful co-existence" as the basis for the policies of the communist parties.

The CPA leaders, whatever their differences with Moscow, have devoted much effort to the application of these ideas to the Australian scene. The campaign against nuclear weapons tests, for instance, developed into a mass movement of very large proportions, and culminated in two great anti-war conferences in 1962, in Moscow and Tokyo. Delegate after delegate rose and denounced the United States for exploding nuclear bombs in the atmosphere. Suddenly, without warning, and whilst the Tokyo conference was still in session, the Soviet Union exploded one of the largest nuclear bombs in its arsenal. The United States certainly was threatening the Soviet Union with nuclear war, and the Soviet test was undoubtedly dictated by military necessity, but the episode revealed the futility of attempting to build a worldwide anti-war movement based on the slogan of peaceful co-existence with United States imperialism. The CPA has, regrettably, learned little from this experience, and still supports the CPSU with its peaceful co-existence line in Indo-China, and the recent visits of CPA leaders to Moscow, and the development of closer ties with the Communist parties of France and Japan indicate that this trend is actually strengthening in the CPA.

What is needed is a complete break with Stalinism and the Stalinised communist parties subservient to both Moscow and Peking. It is necessary to understand that it was not the Bolshevik party that gave rise to Stalinism, but that for Stalinism to triumph it was necessary to destroy the Bolshevik party and replace it by a shell of Stalinist hacks. It is necessary to abandon the policy of peaceful co-existence and class collaboration and to replace it with a programme of class struggle based on an international perspective, relevant for capitalist countries, and for the workers' States, where workers' democracy and socialism can be established only through the overthrow of the Stalinised bureaucratic apparatus.

## Interview with Bruce McGuinness

D.A. How long have you been active in the Black Liberation movement? What are the most successful campaigns you have been engaged in?

B. McG. (a) 32 years. All my life! I've become a contributing factor to the Black rights movement since 1966. Positions I've held are full time Liaison Officer for the Aborigines Advancement League in Victoria. I then became Director of that organisation. I left them in February 1971 and became Chairman of the National Tribal Council. Presently I'm studying at Monash University, doing 2nd year honours in philosophy and anthropology.

(b) The most successful campaigns to date I've been involved in have been the Aboriginal Embassy, the land rights issue (which should bear fruit in the very near future) and the creation of the Aboriginal studies group in Victoria.

The most important aspect of these campaigns is the creating of black awareness in Australian blacks. Developing an ideology, previously non-existent, in a collective sense, in Australian Aborigines.

D.A. Has the black community noticed a change of government attitudes since the election of the ALP?

B. McG. Yes! Because of Gordon Bryant's "hang the expense" attitude of bringing blacks together to advise on how Aboriginal affairs are to be run.

Perhaps in the next 6 months there will be a complete change in government

handling of Aboriginal affairs. In twelve months Aboriginal affairs will be handled by Aborigines. I feel that the ALP government is working toward this.

This doesn't mean I think the ALP Government is the "black messiah" sent to liberate the black people. This is going to be achieved through black people themselves exerting pressure from within the Government and departmental structure with a subsequent politicisation of blacks outside these structures because they will be voting black policies and black administrators into black affairs. This is something the black people themselves have to do, if the Government did it, it would be a facade, "a shop front". It must indeed come from the black people.

D.A. When did you come to the conclusion that the answer lies in black control of the black community?

B. McG. The black way of doing things is different to the European system. The black community is one of brotherhood, socialist in essence. Although it may not be blatantly obvious, you only have to look at what's happening. For instance when Aborigines are given a house they share it with others who don't have adequate housing.

It's difficult for Aborigines to survive in the intensely competitive white system, as it now stands. So you can't have a white person administering black affairs because Europeans neither understand nor are able to relate to the Aborigines' viewpoint or value system.

D.A. What sorts of things are going on now?

B. McG. All over the country, in every major city, similar programmes to those started in Sydney over the past few years are being organised. In Sydney, the Legal Service "kicked off" by Gary Foley, Paul Coe and Gary Williams initiated other programmes. The Aboriginal Medical Centre, National Black Theatre, and breakfast programmes.

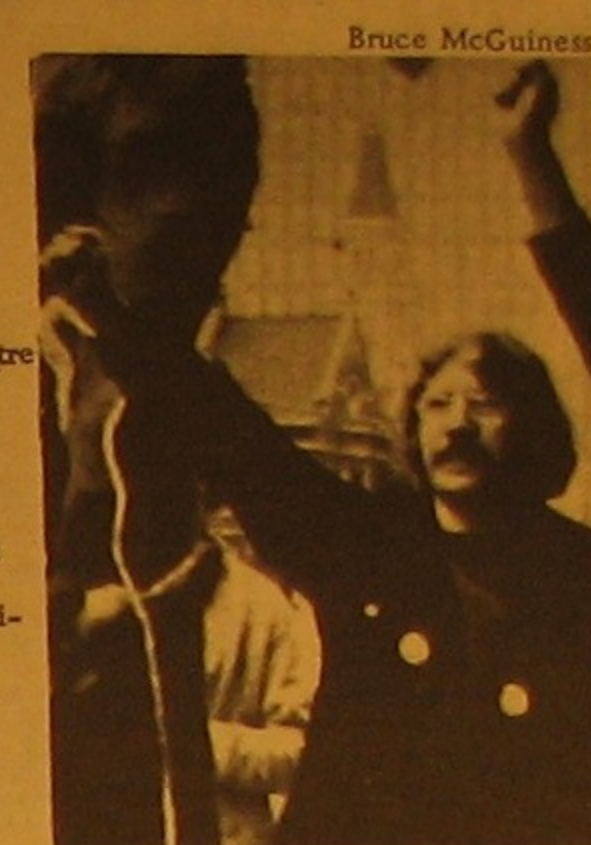
But perhaps the most important thing of all is the "black awareness" the Legal Service created in Aborigines. The evidence of this awareness is the commitment and participation Aborigines have shown in these programmes. This awareness manifests itself in blacks search for new ways of expression as creative human beings.

D.A. What role do you think the "Left" and radicals in general have to play in the black struggle?

B. McG. Supportive! I don't think the black movement can associate itself with any ideology that isn't intrinsically their own. Although obviously some aspects of Marxist ideology are similar to black ideology.

I can see coalitions of black militants and the left movement in Australia, on certain issues, just as I can see its importance for small "liberal" blacks to form coalitions with their white counterparts.

This is what is happening and will again but it won't be the most effective course of action.



Bruce McGuinness

What I see as effective is the whites "cleaning up their own backyard". The whites primary task is to eliminate the system that is oppressing blacks.

Blacks are at an added disadvantage. They are not just economically and socially oppressed, they are also racially oppressed.

This type of oppression whites can never experience, unless they are a minority ruled by a black majority. This therefore excludes Rhodesia and South Africa. But the Asian situation in Uganda may be an example.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Dead Horses

Dear Comrades,

In the issue of DA of Feb. 23, I am in agreement with the letters written by Gavan McCarthy and Pat Flanagan. In my opinion too much paper space is taken up (right or wrong) whipping the dead horses in the form of Stalin and Trotsky. The paper is good in general and all guns should be trained on the common Enemy. There is plenty of matter to be found nearer home, reporting on the "immediate demands and the everyday struggle". I note a write up on a great man Percy Laidler and it is very fitting that it is published in a paper by the name of DIRECT ACTION as that was surely the essence of the man. It would become all young readers of this paper to become more informed about the actions of this native born son and aim to follow in his footsteps.

Solidarity for Ever,

T. Armstrong

### Dead Horse

To the Editor,

I am a regular reader of DIRECT ACTION. I have always agreed with all your policies. However as I was

### Dead Horses

looking back over DA 29, I found in Pierre Frank's "History of the Trotskyist Movement", that during the Sino-Soviet conflict, the International supported China. It said that Russia represented the right wing while China was more "centre leaning". What rubbish! The origin of the Sino-Soviet dispute was Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin. I realise this meant very little, but Mao-tse-Tung was infuriated that anyone could say such things about his master, Stalin. Khrushchev ended the excesses of Stalinist dictatorship, gave more autonomy to the Eastern European States, and apologised to Tito. Mao attacked all such measures.

China and Albania have always attacked "Trotsky revisionism". The Chinese put pressure on Russia to crush the Hungarian revolution. In 1968, China denounced the "Dubcek revisionist clique". And it seems to be mainly China that calls all non-Stalinist opinions "fascist". Not everyone in Russia who opposes the regime is put to death, as is the case in China. China's Tibet is as bad as Russia's Ukraine. You seem to regard the breakaway of China and Albania from the Soviet bloc as the same thing as the breakaway of Yugoslavia, Rumania and Czechoslovakia (1968). But Mao attacked Khrushchev for apologising to Tito and allowing more independent roads to "socialism" in Eastern Europe. I prefer to think of China and

Albania as the last vestiges of Stalinism (Russia having changed to the other side with Khrushchev's apology to Tito) until the re-Stalinisation of Russia after 1968. Yugoslavia is the left, Russia the centre, and China the right.

You gave three reasons for supporting China - 1. Khrushchev believed in peaceful co-existence, while Mao stuck to the anti-coexistence line taken up by Stalin in his later years. We are not simply against co-existence - we support world revolution. Stalin in his later years and Mao did not support co-existence because they were involved in a cold war with the west - an imperialist power struggle. Imperialist power struggle is just as much an enemy of world revolution as is peaceful co-existence. Therefore Mao's line was no better than Khrushchev's.

2. The second reason was colonial revolution. Does this mean that China gave more support to the colonial revolution than Russia did? What about Ceylon, Bengal, Sudan, Iran and Ethiopia? Doesn't Russia give more than China to the Vietnamese? Khrushchev was more "revolutionary" with regard to Cuba than the Chinese were.

3. The last reason was the two powers' opinions on peaceful and parliamentary roads to socialism. But if Russia has the reformists Nehru, Nkrumah, Nasser and Kassem of Iraq, then China has Sukarno, Nkrumah also Sihanouk etc, as well as total reactionaries such as Yahya Khan.

I also have a minor question. You seem to support Cuba, North Vietnam and North Korea more than other "workers' States", and yet these three were the staunchest defenders of the "Soviet" invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Yours,

Fred Stevenson

## D.A. Replies

We don't agree with T. Armstrong that we give too much space to various "dead horses", i.e., issues which are of no relevance to the radical movements of today. As well as reporting on the struggle of the day we are a part of the them and have a definite point of view on what is the most effective way for them to advance and win their aims. Historically, there are three main ideological currents in the world labour movement - Social Democracy, Stalinism and Trotskyism. They are (and we regret it in the case of the first two) very much living alternatives. The Stalinist communist parties still exist and try to control and curb the mass movement. We see that it is necessary to fight them in practice and in theory.

The Trotskyist movement has never endorsed the privileged Maoist bureaucracy. We call on the Chinese workers and peasants to make a political revolution, remove the Stalinist bureaucracy and establish real soviet democracy there.

Furthermore, with the exception of Cuba, the Trotskyist movement regards all the workers states as either deformed or degenerated. We express our solidarity with them in the face of any imperialist attack, but call on the workers in those countries to kick out the bureaucratic castes and take power for themselves through soviet democracy.

We feel Fred Stevenson exaggerates and loses his sense of perspectives when he says "everyone" who opposes the Mao regime is killed. This fate has indeed befallen many who opposed Mao but even the purges of Liu Shao Chi and Lin Biao were not of the scope of the repression in the USSR in the 1930's. This doesn't make Mao and Co. any less Stalinist, but there is no point in making unfounded claims against them.

## DIRECT ACTION FORUMS

Sydney at 139 ST JOHNS ROAD, GLEBE.

Friday, April 27, 8pm  
"LABOR IN POWER"  
Sol Salby will provide a preliminary balance sheet of the first four months of the Federal Labor Government.

Friday, May 11, 8pm  
"THE GAY LIBERATION MOVEMENT"  
A Sydney Gay Liberation activist will discuss the development and prospects of Gay Liberation in Australia.



Melbourne at 140 QUEENSBERRY STREET, CARLTON.

Sunday, May 6, 8pm  
"MAY DAY AND INTERNATIONALISM"  
Speakers from the Socialist Workers League discuss the significance of May Day, the international workers day and the need to build the Fourth International.

Thursday, May 17, 8pm  
"LABOR TO POWER IN THE STATE ELECTIONS"  
Jim McIlroy puts forward our case for the victory of the ALP in the Victorian elections.

# AUSTRALIAN LABOR HISTORY PART 7 THE CURTIN GOVT. 1941-45 BY PETER CONRICK



Curtin with his official chauffeur

This is the seventh part of our series on the history and development of the Australian Labor Party.

## AUSTRALIA IN 1939:

World War Two was the most significant turning point in Australian economic and social history. Throughout the 1930s the Australian economy remained fundamentally linked to the British economy through markets, equipment imports and capital flow. But by 1945, due to a series of military and political circumstances, plus the virtual break-up of the British economy in the war, the way had been paved for the United States to enter as the dominant foreign power. Describing this change one observer has noted that, "In the long period from the 1890s to the Second World War, the economic performance of Australian capitalism had been erratic and spotty.... The understanding of capitalism held by Australian socialists was identified with unemployment, widespread poverty and the failure to meet even the most elementary needs of the masses..." 1.

The basic groundwork for the stability and growth of the economy since the war was laid in the years 1941-45 by the Labor Government of John Curtin. To understand Labor's role in the strengthening of Australian capitalism during the war years it is helpful to outline the main features of the economy on the eve of the war.

In 1939 Australia's economy was still largely dependent on its export income on primary production. Even so, this sector was handicapped by drought over much of northern and central Australia's wool growing areas, and by a growing glut in the world wheat market. Mining, after the gold boom of the early 1930s, was tending to level out. The promise of building up an overseas trade in iron ore was thwarted in 1938 by a Federal embargo on its export. Manufacturing, although still protected by high tariffs, contributed only a modest share to the gross income. Unemployment, although much lower than at the worst of the depression, still stood at between 8 and 9 per cent in 1938-39. And in parliamentary politics, the colourless leadership of the ruling United Australia Party (UAP) was passed on from J.A. Lyons to R.G. Menzies.

## LABOR 1937-39:

The Australian Labor Party emerged from the sustained depression of the 1930s, badly battered, disunited and incapable of asserting its traditional political hegemony over the working class movement. This weakness was reflected by the Federal Party's poor performance throughout the latter half of the 1930s, when it remained in opposition to the relatively stable anti-Labor bloc under Lyons.

Despite a shaky unity on the Federal level, political Labor suffered from the continued existence of split-off groups in South Australia and in New South Wales. In South Australia a left-wing formation opposed Federal leader Curtin's attitude towards defence in the form of 'collective security', thus necessitating the adoption of multiple Labor endorsements in disputed electorates. 2. The New South Wales position was far more complex. By 1937 J.T. Lang and

his followers were recognised by the Federal Party as the legal executive, but their position was challenged by a progressive left group, 'The Industrial Labor Party' which included many sympathisers of the old socialisation units, as well as members of the Communist Party. The factional situation inside NSW Labor was exacerbated by the appearance of J.A. Beasley's 'Non Communist' Labor Party. This latter group was comprised largely of remnants of the moderates who had been faithful to Scullin in 1931 and who were now embittered by the Federal executive's decision to recognise the Lang faction. 3.

Curtin, well aware of the delicate balancing of forces over which he presided, took to the centre. As Dr. J.F. Cairns (now Minister for Overseas Trade in the Whitlam Government) expressed it: "Curtin was able to find sufficient important issues on which left and right agreed. Curtin left the impression that the other issues would, if this were done, soon find their place on the agenda." 4.

One issue which Curtin could not avoid by this policy of attempted reconciliation between right and left was international affairs. In place of conflicting policies over domestic management that had divided the radicalism of Lang from the conservatism of Scullin, Labor now faced alternative foreign policies of isolationism and involvement.

Curtin maintained that through a strong air and naval force Australia could become the 'Policeman of the Pacific'. By contrast traditional Labor left advocated a strongly neutralist posture.

An indication of the potential schisms that could have erupted over international events in the late thirties was given by the conflict inside the Party over the Spanish Civil War. Curtin confided that he was quite prepared to openly support a Republican Spanish government, but the intensity of feeling among the left-wing and Catholic right "all pointed to one moral--that unity depended on avoiding the issue of the Spanish Civil War." 5. One word on Spain. Curtin admitted, would split Labor from top to bottom.

## THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND POLITICAL INSTABILITY: 1939-41.

Australia's neo-colonial ties with Britain were still firm enough for Menzies to announce on the day following Britain's declaration of war on Nazi Germany that Australia was also at war. The first two years of the conflict were highly unstable ones in Australian politics. With the UAP rapidly destroying itself, the Parliament went through four successive ministries formed either by Menzies or the Country Party leader A.W. Fadden. Finally the UAP coalition crumbled in October 1941 and the first Labor Government for nearly ten years took office.

One of Menzies' first tasks after the declaration of war had been to move against the extra-parliamentary working class organisations. An atmosphere of anti-communist, 'fifth columnist' hysteria was created, using the Stalin-Hitler pact as a pretext for banning the Communist Party. The ban, imposed by the first Menzies Government in June 1940, was

not lifted until December 1942, fifteen months after the Curtin Labor Government had come to power.

From the outset, the attitude of the Communist Party, despite the confusion sown by the non-aggression pact, had been that the war was an imperialist struggle in which Australian workers should take no part. In an interview, the secretary of the C.P.A. (J.B. Miles) was quoted as saying that not one member of the Party who enlisted for active service "will lift his rifle against Russian troops, since he will refuse to fight and will try to help the Russians." 6.

Needless to say, the invasion of the Soviet Union by Hitler in June 1941 wrought a drastic and far reaching change in the Party's strategy towards the war. Where official sources had once feared communist led strikes disrupting war-time industry, the Party now took a leading role in 'softening' workers for increased hours and productivity--all on behalf of a patriotic war. So great was the desire of the C.P.A. to maintain its image as a moderate, responsible party that it even went so far as to castigate those ALP members who called for an implementation of the socialist objective! In doing so it implicitly supported Curtin's reassurance to Australian big business that there would be no expropriation of war-time profit companies. With this capitulation to national chauvinism, plus the widespread popular support for the beleaguered Soviet Union, it is not surprising to see the membership of the Communist Party spring from 5000 in 1940 to an all time high of 23,000 in 1943-44.

## LABOR, UNIONS, AND THE WAR:

From the outbreak of war in September 1939 until the resignation of the Menzies Government in August 1941, there had been 835 industrial disputes, an average of eight a week. In the five and a half weeks of the Fadden ministry this figure increased to fourteen a week. The subsequent decline of strikes under Curtin is a measure of the ability of Labor Governments to utilise their mass working class support in the quest for increased productivity. By the seventh week of the Curtin administration all disputes had been 'settled', thanks to the soothing influence of Curtin's more radical ministers. Labor historian Brian Fitzpatrick wrote of how "Only Labor could have engineered such novelties of manpower control. Even within the parliamentary ranks of Labor itself, it is doubtful whether militant workers would have accepted manpower administration and restriction of consumer supplies from any others than Mr. Ward and Mr. Dedman, the Curtin Cabinet's two socialists...." 7.

The methods used to cut back or at least effectively neutralise industrial stoppages often involved close collaboration with communist union officials. The job of the communists was to act as a go-between for the Government and the rank and file in those unions where they had influence. When this process broke down (as it did before 1942) Labor ministers intervened directly in strikes. One of the most important struggles of the war occurred soon after the Curtin Government came into power. Four Thousand workers went on strike at the Lithgow Small Arms factory, which at that time

was producing rifles for the AIF. The strike began with members of the Amalgamated Engineering Union who refused to work with members of the more exclusive Australasian Society of Engineers.

When the dispute snowballed into a general stoppage at the plant, Federal minister for Labor, E.J. Ward tried in vain for two weeks to get a return to work. Despite some government concessions, the strike was a notable example of the way Labor was able to use its mass support to curtail working class militancy.

Thus, for the duration of the war, business and financial interests gave a great measure of support to the Curtin Government --realising that only a Labor government could impose the necessary control on workers, including wage controls.

## LABOR'S NEW ROLE:

The 1943 Federal elections were conducted under the threat of a Japanese invasion of the Australian mainland. The elections were remarkable in the attempts by Labor leaders to disown or downgrade the position of trade unionists in the Party. Prime Minister Curtin conducted his campaign amidst reassurances that Labor would give 'ample scope' to private enterprise in the post-war years and not attempt more than was necessary to restore industry, provide full employment, full production and full consumption. During the 1943 campaign Dr. H.V. Evatt, Attorney-General and Minister for External Affairs, declared that Labor "could not govern as a trade union party". Evatt claimed that Curtin had succeeded because he had refused to govern in the interest of any group or class, Labor's task was to guard the interests of the 'great middle groups'. It was only along these lines that the Labor movement could claim a right to govern the country, said Evatt. 8.

All possibilities of socialisation, even in wartime were ruled out. Curtin pledged that "No question of socialisation or any other fundamental alteration in the economic system arises". 9. Not all Labor ministers agreed with Curtin's flat denial of socialisation. E.J. Ward clearly disliked Evatt's reference to the party consciously drawing on middle-class sources of electoral support, and drew considerable embarrassment from his statement that "the workers would feel secure in the peace under socialism". During the 1944 fourteen powers referendum campaign (designed to centralise all employment, housing and health facilities), Ward was again prominent as "advocate of nationalisation of industry." "What was wrong with nationalisation if the people wanted it", asked Ward. "They had returned a Labor Government knowing its policy, so why should it be shackled and prevented from giving effect to that policy?" 10.

The result of the 1943 elections was a landslide to Labor, which won outright majorities in both Houses. In the Representatives, the ALP won forty-nine seats out of a total of seventy-four. The Senate figures showed an Australia-wide swing to Labor. This was also reflected in the sharply reduced majorities for sitting UAP and Country Party members in safe Lower House seats. Leaders such as Evatt were careful to point out that

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# IN BRIEF:

## LIBERALS REBEL ON CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

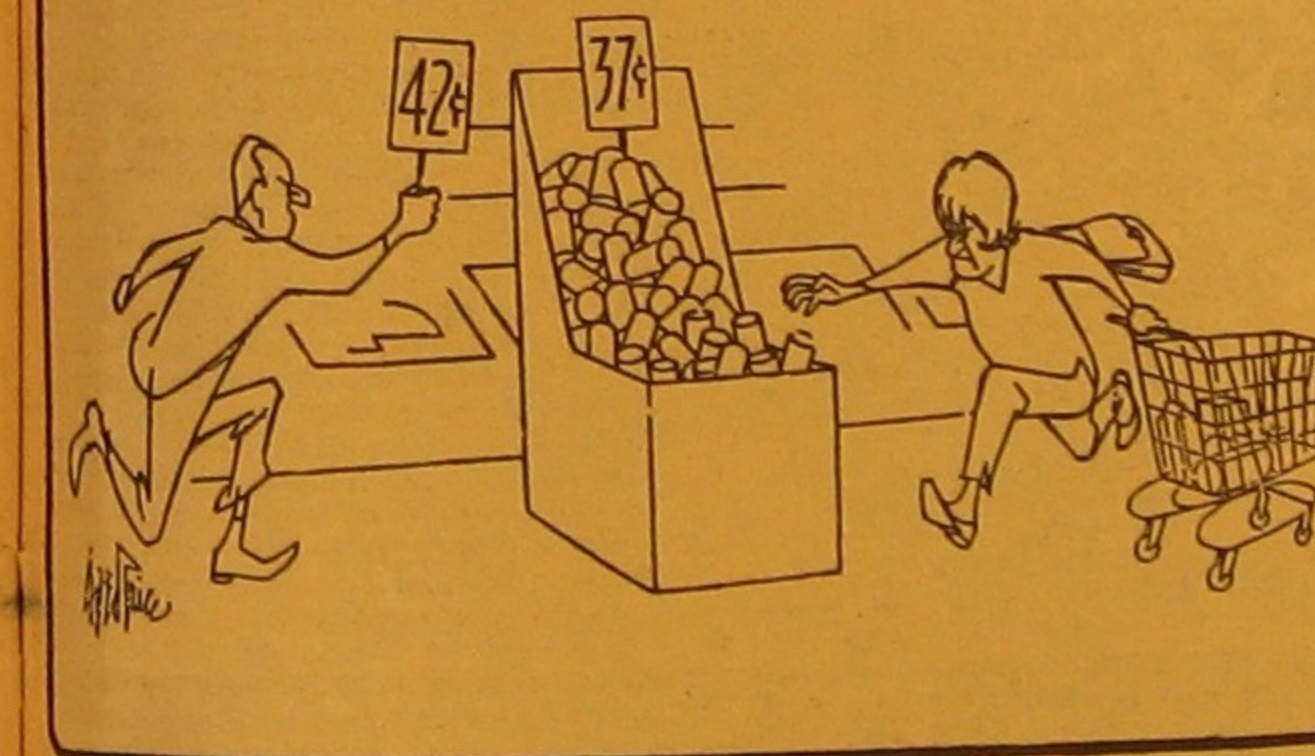
Following a meeting of Liberal members of Parliament, the Liberal Party has decided to allow a free vote in parliament on the question of capital punishment. Previously the Liberal Party has taken a strong stand in favour of capital punishment, however, pressure against the leadership's stand forced the change. It appears even in the reactionary Liberal Party significant numbers of people are becoming convinced that capital punishment is a barbaric practice which solves nothing.

## YOUNG LIBERALS TRY TO EMULATE SYA

The Liberal Party is attempting to set up a Teenage Young Liberals organisation to operate mainly among secondary school students. Neil Hansford, a spokesperson for the Young Liberal Movement (for older Young Liberals) said of the decision to set up a teenage group: "The Socialist Youth Alliance got quite strong in the schools two months before the last elections. TAYLS will be a good way to counter them."

The Young Liberals might have to do more than set up an organisation if they want to attract students. They might have to do something about their politics - most students do not like organisations which support Nixon's genocide in Vietnam, which maintain links with white supremacist regimes in Southern Africa and which oppose the elimination of discrimination against women, black people and homosexuals.

Apparently the present membership of TAYLS comes from wealthy schools on Sydney's North Shore. The main policies of the group will centre around conservatism, pornography and marijuana. One can safely predict that their office bearers will not be overworked processing membership applications.



## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22

Labor's great win was due to the cultivation of the middle-class vote. The 1943 elections saw the growth in influence of the new Laborites such as Evatt in contrast to the old style 'fundamentalist' approach of Ward. Evatt was a proto-type model of the Labor technocrat.

While Evatt is gone, his 'revisionism' has now become the hallmark of the Whitlam and Dunstan leaderships.

## THE TURN TO AMERICA:

In late 1941, at the height of Japanese military successes in the Pacific, Curtin made the following dramatic announcement which was to change the whole orientation of Australia's foreign policy and ultimately to determine the shape of its post-war history: "Without any inhibitions of any kind, I make it quite clear that Australia looks to America, free of any pangs as to our traditional links of kinship to the United Kingdom." 10. Summed up, Australia's external policy was designed to commit the US as a keystone in the plan for a Pacific strategy. The immediate tasks of Curtin's strategy were to stave off a Japanese invasion, but it was in the long term that

## TRUE BELIEVER

President Kaddafi of Libya has issued orders forbidding Libyans from displaying portraits of political leaders. Kaddafi explained to the Arab Socialist Union, Libya's only legal party, that the purpose of the regulation was to prevent persons from putting up portraits of "atheists like Marx and Lenin."

## CONSCRIPTS VOTE WITH THEIR FEET

Figures recently released by defence minister, Lance Barnard, reveal that out of 11,800 conscripts who were in the army at the beginning of December, only 2,800 decided to complete their 18 month term after the Labor Government offered them immediate release and abolished conscription. Only 120 of the 11,800 decided to transfer to the regular army.

## NO SOLUTION

West Australian minister for Community Welfare, Thompson recently proposed that a "drinking school" be set up for Aborigines. The idea of the school would be to "teach them how to stop drinking..." Thompson is a minister in the Labor Party government of West Australia. Leaving aside the racist ideas behind such a proposal, Thompson's scheme gives an indication of the WA Government's complete inability to understand the needs of the Aborigines.

Maybe if Thompson's government did something about granting land rights to Aborigines and providing jobs, housing, education and medical facilities, he would find that the incidence of heavy drinking among Aborigines would decline quite sharply.

A crackpot proposal such as Thompson's might be expected from the Liberal or Country Parties, but Labor might be expected to show a deeper understanding of the needs of oppressed sectors of the community.

## ACTION ON RACIST PROPAGANDA CENTRE

30 people led by Black Rhodesian activist Sekai Holland attempted to take over the Rhodesian Information Centre on March 29. The centre acts as a trade and propaganda outlet for the racist Smith regime.

Locked doors prevented the demonstrators from entering. Two of them got in through a window however and occupied the centre until they were thrown out by police. While the police were violent, no arrests were made as a court case could expose the illegality of the centre.

The demonstrators demanded that the federal Labor Government fulfill its promise to close down the centre. They threatened to repeat their attempt to take it over if no action is forthcoming from the Whitlam Government.

In a further move to expose the exploitation of the black people in Zimbabwe, Sekai Holland has set up an alternative "Rhodesian Information Centre" to publicise the struggle of the black population against oppression. As it is based on the 85% of the population who are black, this alternative centre can claim to be the only valid body representative of the black people of Zimbabwe.

## NEW RED GOVERNMENT RUFFLES EMPLOYERS

The newly elected president of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce recently aired his views on the new Labor Government. The president, E.J. Ayton, thought that most of the business people were indifferent or welcomed Labor's election (they didn't have much choice). But, he went on, after the first hundred days it is clear that those who support free enterprise are under continuous attack. Ayton went on to say that the supporters of the right of a powerful few to grow rich through the exploitation of the labour of thousands of people wanted to cooperate with the Government "until the attacks on rights and freedom become intolerable".

Ayton did not say what would happen when the attacks against the right of a minority to rule over the majority became intolerable. Perhaps he will advocate an end to the democratic experiment and a return to more efficient means of ruling over those who create his wealth.

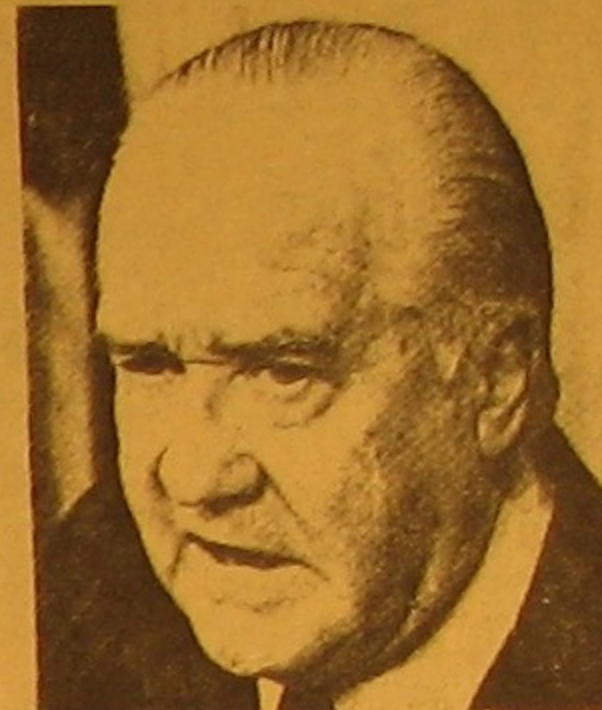
The most interesting revelation made by Ayton is that the rights of "free enterprise" are being eroded by the Government in the cause of socialism. Perhaps he knows something that we don't know. Have the fiendish reds in Canberra been nationalising industries and not telling anyone?

## TOO BLATANT

In response to angry protests from civil rights organisations, Ralph Perk, mayor of the city of Cleveland in the United States has ordered the city's police to remove racist graffiti which they had taken to painting on police station walls. He has also told the upholders of law and order not to wear swastika armbands on their uniforms while they are on duty.

## ASKIN COMES OUT AGAINST POLICE STATE

NSW Premier Askin said recently that NSW "was not countenancing becoming a police state" and that there would be no more raids on private homes... in search of Croatian terrorists. It is strange that only after the anti-Ustasha raids has Askin realised the danger of NSW becoming a police state. He was silent about the raids on the homes of students and people who, the police chose to regard as "suspect" following the escape of draft resister Michael Matteson from police at Sydney University last year. Also if you happen



Askin

to be a black person, living in Redfern (Sydney) you might take Askin's anti-racist statements a little cynically.

But it's good to see that Askin has had a change of heart. Does this mean that people who do not share the moral outlook of the Government and publish material regarded as "offensive" by some people, will not have their homes raided? Does it mean that police intimidation of black people in Redfern will end?

## LABOR ELECTORAL REDISTRIBUTION UPSETS ANTHONY.

Commenting on Labor's plans to change electoral boundaries, Country Party leader Doug Anthony said "Their motives are sheer political skulduggery aimed at depriving rural people of fair representation..." Anthony has a novel view of fair representation--due to the present arrangement of the electoral boundaries the Country Party in the December election gained 16 per cent of the parliamentary seats with 9 per cent of the vote.

## THE SPIRIT OF FREE ENTERPRISE

German arms merchant Guenther Leinhausen, when questioned on the morality of selling arms to the Irish Republican Army recently replied: "For me it is not a matter of morals. It is just commerce--a pure business deal."

When people want arms I supply them. I do not start worrying about where they are going to be used." As Trotsky commented some time ago, the last capitalist will sell the rope to hang the second last.

... STEVE PAINTER

conflict, many of these changes lay incomplete. It was left to his successor J.B. Chifley to implement the remainder of these reforms. The part played by the 1946-49 Chifley Labor Government is the most important concrete historical illustration of Labor in power and one which we shall attempt to explain in our next instalment.

## FOOTNOTES

1. Rowley, K. 'The Political Economy of Australia Since the War', in *Australian Capitalism*, (ed. Playford & Kirsner), p265
2. Sawyer, G. *Australian Federal Politics and Law*, (ed. Playford & Kirsner) p. 265
3. see L.F. Crisp's *Ben Chifley*, Chapt. vii
4. Cairns J.F. in the foreword to Irene Dowling's *Curtin of Australia*, p vii
5. Andrews E. "Australian Labor and Foreign Policy" 1935-9 in *Labor History*, No. 9 p27.
6. cited in *The State Papers*, Australia Outlaws the Communist Party in the Age, November 1 1972.
7. Fitzpatrick, B. *A Short History of the Australian Labor Movement*, p248.
8. see Waters, W.J. 'Labor, Socialism and World War Two' in *Labor History*, No. 16, p. 14.
9. cited, *Ibid.*, p. 15.
10. Dowling, *Op. Cit.*, p. 109-110.

**MARCH WITH THE  
SOCIALIST YOUTH ALLIANCE AND  
SOCIALIST WORKERS LEAGUE ON**



**MAY DAY**

**SUNDAY  
MAY 6**

**SYDNEY 1.30PM HAY ST.  
MELBOURNE 2.00PM TRADES HALL**

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