

injured in  
ear 3,502  
injured

**FOR WHOM  
THE ROAD  
TOLL ?**

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F 74 C

**Price 5 cents**



Thousands of people are being killed and injured in road accidents in Australia every year. Last year 3,502 Australians were killed on the road and 87,864 were injured — many seriously.

A doctor said recently that if as many people who were killed and injured on the roads died and fell ill each year as a result of disease, then a state of national emergency would be declared. But the road toll goes on. Each year it grows bigger. The chances of you, the reader of this pamphlet, being killed in a road accident are now 1 in 20. The chance of you, being seriously injured is many times greater.

### Nothing Really Done

Before this growing national disaster — for that is what it is — nothing is really done. All sorts of theories are put forward in an effort to “explain” the reasons for the mounting road toll. There are all sorts of inquiries, road safety bodies, police “blitzes”, etc., etc. Every week there are statements by police and other “experts” which deplore the road toll, condemn drivers, appeal for safer driving, threaten more penalties, condemn magistrates and judges for not inflicting severe enough penalties. Newspapers write endless feature and leading articles which deal with the road toll. But still the deaths rise and hospitals are swamped with the injured. The wail of the ambulance siren is now accepted as part of the daily scene. Old safety bodies are scrapped and new ones set up to “inquire” into the road toll. So it goes on. It never approaches solution and it never will under capitalism.

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The "experts" offer as their explanations excessive speed, lack of attention, drink. There is no doubt these things do have something to do with road accidents. But we venture to suggest they are only incidents of a much deeper matter. The real problem is a profound social problem. It directly concerns the nature of society in Australia. All the official "inquiries", all the newspaper comment and theories only deal with effects. The real cause of the road toll, capitalism, of which the motor car monopolies are a dominant part, is carefully avoided.

## Cars Are Unsafe

Capitalism is a system of exploitation for profit. Everything is subordinated to the profit-making of the monopolies. The road toll is the product of a profit making system. We say the main responsibility for the road toll rests with the biggest motor car monopolies in this country. All of them are giant U.S. monopolies. They build unsafe cars, they increase the power of their cars, they corrupt young people with advertising that panders to individualism and human weaknesses. These monopolies run the Australian government. Everything is subordinated to them. General Motors, Fords, Chryslers, are the product of the social system of capitalism. They typify it. These three are spectacular examples of such monopolies.

These monopolies control the decisive means of spreading ideas (e.g. educational system, press, radio, television, art and literature, culture of all kinds). Their system of ideas (ideology) justifies exploitation, selfishness, survival of the fittest, bitter competition amongst people. It fosters

ideas of big motor cars, keeping up with the Joneses. It has made a pathetic status symbol out of the motor car. Its society is rotten and corrupt. And ordinarily decent people fall victim to one or other of its influences. They get attracted by ideas of getting on, the power of big motor cars, etc., Also, this social system is so oppressive that escape from oppression takes the form of speed, drink and drugs. These things are products of this rotten social system. Like the road toll they will be abolished only when their cause is rooted out. By their use (note the immense advertising and news material about speed, drink and drugs) the monopolies seek to divert the rebellious wrath of the people away from those really responsible, that is, these very monopolies.

## Three Million Cars

The profits of the motor car monopolies, particularly of G.M.H., are notorious. How these monopolies have expanded to their position of dominance is illustrated by the fact that in 1945 there were half a million cars in Australia; today there are three million. One in ten wage and salary-earners in Australia is involved in making, assembling, servicing or driving motor cars for the public. Australia is now the third most motorised nation in the world.

There is no better illustration of how Australia has been invaded by the U.S. giants than the motor vehicle industry. There is no better illustration of how the only interest of these U.S. monopolies is to exploit the workers and the public for private profit. There is no better illus-



tration of how these U.S. monopolies have a total disregard for life and property (other than their own) than these U.S. monopolies. They control governments. They have consciously and deliberately run down public transport. It has been estimated that it costs the average motorist £3.20 a day to travel from an outer suburban area to work in the city and home again. One writer on traffic congestion says that in the city of Sydney more than 80 per cent. of all daily trips are made by car. In 1946-47 the figure was 13 per cent. To many people the motor car is now an essential burden. They cannot get to work without it. Such is the state of urban planning and of the public transport system.

## Monopolies Never Challenged

The big Yankee motor vehicle monopolies have simply taken over Australia. Not even the Australian capitalists have any say in them. They are solely U.S. giants. They are so powerful, no rival could challenge them. They are capitalism. Their domination can only be ended by ending capitalism.

None of the great "experts" on the road toll ever really challenges these giants. This is because the "experts" serve capitalism. They serve these giants. No newspaper ever seriously criticises them because the newspapers are the voice of these very monopolies. On the contrary, the newspapers advertise motor vehicles and in "news" columns extol them.

Australia is dominated by the three motor giants, General Motors, Ford and Chrysler. No one can deny

they are U.S. companies. No one can deny they are the U.S. government. The Australian government is their mere puppet.

## Most Powerful Corporation

General Motors is the world's single most powerful corporation. Its first resident representative arrived in Australia as far back as 1914. In 1926 the corporation financed the formation of General Motors (Aust.) Pty. Ltd. At the end of that year five small factories were operating here; imported chasses were assembled and the bodies fitted were made by Holden's in Adelaide. In 1931 a new company was formed — General Motors-Holden Ltd. GMH has always been a big profit spinner. As far back as 1937 it disclosed a profit of £2m. This figure, of course, does not include that profit paid to U.S. investors in an unknown country: that undisclosed profit is made to appear outside Australia free of Australian tax and commitments. Today, GMH turn out about 110,000 vehicles a year. There is a range of 29 models. The most widely known is the Holden, of course. This vehicle is sold well above its cost. GMH estimate the cost of the Holden car as a little over \$1000 for which amount it is insured. It sells for nearly three times that. The Holden is not a safe car. For years suspension firms have advertised stabilisers as an essential "extra" to "firm up the ride . . ." Holden is the car involved most in accidents. It is a car with defective brakes, defective steering and defective construction. The safest known brakes are power-assisted disc brakes on four wheels. The ordinary Holden is not fitted with disc brakes.



Disc brakes are an "extra" costing about \$30. To have them fitted with power assistance costs £51. Not long ago the N.S.W. secretary of the Road Safety Council criticised G.M.H. for failing to set an example in fitting disc brakes. He said: "Manufacturers must surely admit by now that disc brakes should be a necessity and not a luxury". If you want power-assisted disc brakes you get them from a semi-subsidiary of General Motors. The body of the Holden car is of what is called mono-construction. It is stamped out and welded-up into one piece. What is described as the chassis is similarly made. The mono-construction is in fact a large number of components tack or spot welded together. In the grab for maximum profits little attention has been paid to rust. For years there was no rust proofing done by GMH with the result that the welds and body quickly became rusted out. In collision the car folds up like a concertina or literally falls to pieces, killing or maiming the occupants. It is common knowledge that government inspectors of taxis carry ice-picks with them when examining a Holden for taxi work. If the ice pick goes through the steel floor a new one has to be welded in before the vehicle is given a road-worthy clearance. The floor of the Holden is part of the chassis. The Holden's steering column will smash the ribs and vital organs of the driver yet it can easily be made collapsible. The tyres fitted are the cheapest possible. Safer tyres are "extra". All components are shoddy. They are deliberately made this way to provide a market for replacement parts. The fact is too, that these great monopolies actually profit from motor car accidents. Such accidents mean an increase in the sale of spare parts

(extremely profitable business) to repair the damaged vehicles. Where a vehicle is destroyed, there is probably the sale of a new car. Road accidents, in fact, are an extra source of huge profits to the motor monopolies.

GMH never lists the profits of its spare parts subsidiary NASCO. There is a good reason for this. From the sale of spare parts GMH makes nearly as much in profit as from the straight sales of its cars. When you read of big discounts being offered on new Holdens when the time for the launching of new models approaches, remember this statement made by a senior GHM executive . . . "We instruct our dealers to offer big discounts so as to get the vehicles on to the roads. The moment a car is on the road it starts to wear out and becomes a milking cow. Every Holden quickly needs spare parts and that's where we make even bigger profits".

## Advertising Directed At Youth

The Holden is no longer a petrol miser. This did not suit the oil companies. Holdens are now petrol spend-thrifts. Exhaust fumes pollute the atmosphere. Mr. R. P. Murphy, Principal Air Pollution Control Engineer for the N.S.W. Health Department, said earlier this year. "If they (car emissions) were visible, as they are from any other combustion process, there would be such visible smoke that the situation would have to be fixed as a result of the great public outcry that would follow".

One could go through many other aspects of these cars made for profit.



We have said that the motor car giants launch powerful advertising campaigns directed at the youth. They build ever-more powerful cars, boost "the thrill of speed", talk endlessly about "the satisfaction of power" and so on. All over the suburbs "speed shops" spring up with their appeal to youth. The result is that the car has become the greatest killer of our 17 to 25-year-olds. The 'giants' (V8 Holden Monaros, Ford G.T's and Valiants) are hard to handle, even for experienced drivers. With inexperienced drivers in them they become lethal machines. All the 'giants' tend to veer sideways when the throttle is pressed. You cannot blame the people who are inexperienced for 'treading on it' for this is exactly the purpose of the car—to give the driver a sense of 'unlimited power'. The criminals in this sort of deal are the manufacturers who specifically build and advertise the car 'for the thrill of speed . . .'. Wheel spin causes these powerful cars to veer sideways. One wheel has only to grip a little better than the others and the car quickly gets out of control because of the enormous power on the wheels. Inexperienced drivers just don't know what is happening. Only recently a GTHO Ford with an engine developing 300 h.p. took off with an inexperienced driver at the wheel. Within seconds the car was lurching sideways and in a distance of only 25 yards it had developed enough acceleration for it to knock down a telegraph pole and a medium-sized tree. The brakes on ordinary Holdens and Fords are just not good enough. They fade and inevitably grab on one wheel causing the car to spin and get out of control.

When an aeroplane crashes an investigation is made into the cause. But not so with the motor car. The driver is blamed and the makers of the car are never questioned. The police are quick to blame people for the high road toll. This is just dodging the question. Let the police look at their own drivers who are highly trained. Very few of them have not been involved in an accident. Even the police are the victims of profit-hungry motor car monopolies. The tyres of many police cars are not suitable. They are too small for the power of the car to which they are fitted. They are four-ply tyres, are too narrow and, of course, are the cheapest. Police cars are bought under contract. The motor car monopolies see that they make the maximum profit from them.

### **"Safety" Too Costly**

Another factor contributing to the road toll is the licensing system. Anyone can get a licence, irrespective of health. It has been suggested already that licences should be graded so that inexperienced drivers are prevented from driving cars they have not the skill to handle. But the car monopolies won't have graded licences for obvious reasons. Such a system would trim down sales.

Not long ago a committee to investigate the safety of motor cars was set up. It made a report which advised many modifications and additions to stock model cars. The committee suggested that the additions could be incorporated in cars over a period of time so as to alleviate costs. Again the motor car monopolies said "no". They told the



government that the safety requirements recommended by the committee would be too costly.

So motor cars "unsafe at any speed" are foisted on to the people. There is indeed little to distinguish this sort of thing from murder.

## Profit Out Of Accidents

Ralph Nader, the American lawyer who wrote "Unsafe At Any Speed" the devastating exposure of the very same automobile giants with which we are dealing here said in the introduction of his book:

"Highway accidents were estimated to have cost this country in 1964, \$8.3 billion in property damage, medical expenses, lost wages and insurance overhead expenses. Add an equivalent sum to comprise roughly the indirect costs and the total amounts to over two per cent. of the gross national products. But these are not the kind of costs which fall on the builders of motor vehicles (excepting a few successful law suits for negligent construction of the vehicle) and thus do not pinch the proper foot. Instead, the costs fall to users of vehicles, who are in no position to dictate safer automobile designs.

"In fact, the gigantic costs of highway carnage in this country support a service industry. A vast array of services — medical, police, administrative, legal, insurance, automotive repair and funeral, stand equipped to handle the direct and indirect consequences of accident injuries. Traffic accidents create economic demands for these services running into billions of dollars. It is in the post-accident response that lawyers and physicians and other specialists

labor. This is where the remuneration lies and this is where the talented energies go. Working in the area of prevention of these casualties earns few fees. Consequently our society has an intricate organisation to handle direct and indirect aftermaths of collisions. But the true mark of a humane society must be what it does about prevention of accident injuries, not the cleaning up of them afterward".

## Break Power Of Monopolies

Nader sees the solution to the road toll in the better construction of cars. However, it is a bigger problem than that. It is a matter of altering the whole attitude to the motor car and breaking the political power of the giant monopolies. The road toll, like other serious problems in Australia has grown out of the social system of capitalism and the virtually unfettered control of the Australian economy by foreign multinational corporations (particularly those of the US) with power to dictate the political and social life of the exploited country. According to government sources total investment in the motor car manufacturing plant in Australia amounts to \$510,000,000. Of this amount, \$470,000,000 is owned by General Motors of Detroit, USA. This gives some idea of the size of G.M.H. in relation to the other monopolies.

In 1968-69 G.M.H. made \$30.8 million dollars profit. In '67-'68 the figure was \$25.2 million and in '66-'67 \$20.3 million. For the first half of this financial year the figure stands at \$13.5 million.



## G.M. Dictated Its Terms

When General Motors of Detroit agreed to manufacture "the Australian car" here, it laid down stringent terms to which the Curtin labor government quickly agreed. These terms were:

The Government shall not itself engage in car manufacture.

GMH shall not be restricted as to type of vehicles produced.

The Government to give GMH fair warning if it contemplated increases in tariffs on accessories or components imported.

The Government to give GMH first refusal on the purchase or lease of all items of government-owned equipment installed in GMH plants during the war.

Importation, free of duty, primage and sales tax of machinery, equipment, tools, etc., unobtainable locally. Foreign exchange for this to be made available by the government.

Travel to and from Australia by personnel required in the project, transport for equipment and development material from the U.S., Canada and England to Australia, and the allocation of manpower and supplies to GMH to be given suitable government priorities and the allocation of foreign exchange for these purposes guaranteed.

The Government to repeal The Engine Bounty Act and The Motor Vehicles Bill which gave special concessions to another Australian monopoly.

No discrimination against GMH because of the origin of capital or nationality of ownership.

The government to give favorable consideration to repeal of the law then in effect which taxed undistributed profits by 10 p.c.

Much is often heard from the Australian government about the Yankees taking "all the risks". Where were the risks for G.M.? There were absolutely no risks because the G.M. bosses — as can be clearly seen — dictated to the labor government — their terms.

## Did Not Risk A Dollar

General Motors did not risk one dollar in starting car manufacture here. Its former boss in Australia L. J. Hartnett in his book "Big Wheels and Little Wheels" writes: "Australian money, given readily by the Chifley Government as a most generous long-term loan, enabled the Holden to come into production. So there is no question that the Australian people have a genuine financial interest in the Holden. Australian money started it. Australian money has made its profits."

Chifley arranged for the Commonwealth Bank to advance £2½ million (\$5 million) to GMH to start building the Holden car. The Holden became such a money spinner that the annual profits were an embarrassment. So the GM bosses in the U.S. decided to oust all Australian capital from the company so that profits could remain hidden. To this end they registered a company in Australia (but fully-owned in America) called General Motors (Aust.) Pty. Ltd. This company was used to buy out Aust-



alian shareholders in G.M.H. On this Hartnett wrote: "For GM to have acquired those shares was a harsh ungrateful act. And the Australian Government allowed it to happen. No other country in the world would have allowed a situation like that to develop". This is the reaction of a capitalist ! How then should the workers react ?

## Armed Forces Big Market

The motor car monopolies have a very big interest in the armed forces. So-called "defence" (really aggression) provides a huge market for motor vehicles of all types, including special, expensive ones such as tanks, armored cars etc. The representatives of these U.S. monopolies sit on what is called a "defence sub-committee" handling transport problems. These representatives dictate to their puppets what motor vehicles they will purchase. The result is very lucrative "defence" contracts which bring in additional millions. Similarly with other government departments. The motor monopolies get rich hand outs. They supply the bulk of the government's transport needs.

GMH is the biggest exploiter of Australians. It doubly exploits Greek, Italian and other such workers. It pays low wages, continually speeds up its workers. Its factories are known as the shops of the walking wounded (injured workers are kept at their work). It ruthlessly exploits the small capitalists who make components for its cars.

Its rivals, Fords and Chryslers, do exactly the same. They produce high powered dangerous cars as cheaply as possible, built for obsolescence. Just like the Holden. Total car production of these monopolies last year was

452,769. Ford's profit in Australia for 1969-70 was \$13,470,000, Chrysler's \$7,217,000.

These giants are the real criminals. They are the cause of the road toll.

They are directly interested in downgrading and ruining the public transport system. They want to sell motor vehicles. They live by making and selling motor vehicles. They have the power to make governments. They say "what is good for General Motors is good for America". This is true from a capitalist standpoint because they and their fellow monopolists are capitalist U.S.A. In Australia, of course they want a declining public transport system: of course they want settled areas not served by public transport at all. They want to compel people to go by motor vehicle. They have a vested interest in bad public transport and large areas unserved by public transport.

## Government Serves Monopolies

Their power is enormous. To serve them, governments build houses for workers, bring out migrants (paid for by the government) provide roads, cheap gas and electricity etc., etc. All public services are designed to serve such monopolies and their exploitation. If the common man gets anything from these same services, it is only as an incident of their real purpose, to serve the monopolies. Every government in Australia, every parliamentary political party, serves these monopolies. No government could for a minute refuse a request that these monopolies really pressed. How is it for example, that what are well known



and well accepted safety features, find no place at all in their vehicles, (just a simple example)? How is it that they virtually escape Australian taxation? It is because they are the government. Karl Marx said that the executive (government) of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie. Since Marx wrote, the decisive bourgeoisie (capitalist class) has concentrated into a handful of gigantic monopolies such as General Motors, Fords, Chryslers.

But it goes much further. Steel production in Australia is monopolised by BHP. BHP now has various partnerships with U.S. monopolists (e.g. BHP-Exxon). A huge amount of BHP steel goes into the motor vehicle industry. Again this shows what an enormous concentration of power centres around the motor car. Other huge U.S. and other foreign monopolies feed on it, namely oil and rubber.

### Big Profits From Oil

There are 11 companies engaged in the oil industry in Australia. They are:

1. Shell — 100 per cent English and Dutch.
2. Mobil — 100 per cent U.S. (Standard Oil, New Jersey).
3. Ampol — 12 per cent of shares owned by Caltex which is owned by Standard Oil and the Texas Oil Corp., New York.
4. B.P. — 100 per cent English.
5. H. C. Sleigh — 35 per cent of shares owned by Caltex (which is 100 per cent U.S. monopolist).
6. Caltex — 100 per cent U.S. (as above).

7. Esso — 100 per cent U.S. (Standard Oil).
8. Amoco — 100 per cent U.S. (Standard Oil).
9. Total — French and U.S. owned.
10. Neptune — 100 per cent Shell.

Every single one of these companies is either wholly foreign owned or largely foreign owned. The dominant owners are American. Ampol's claim to be an Australian company is just an advertising gimmick to exploit the loyalty of Australians.

### Foreign Firms Control Local Oil

The profits of the oil companies are vast but over recent years they have been written down in Australia. This is because it suits the monopolies to charge high freights for crude oil carried here in their own tankers. In this way they also dodge taxes. But all this will be more difficult to cover up when mainly local crude oil is refined. It is predicted that profits will rise to astronomical figures, particularly those of the U.S. companies. Even so, Shell Oil recently announced a profit of \$26 million, \$8 million more than last year, a 43% increase. Yet it still demands a price rise.

The combined assets of the oil monopolies in 1969 in Australia amounted to \$1,443,195,000. Every year the value of these assets rises by some millions. In 1968 they were \$1,426,650,000: in 1967 — \$1,285,270,000. But the Australian oil fields owned by these monopolies are valued on their balance sheet as nil. They are not included in the assets!

Main suppliers of tyres for motor vehicles in Australia



are the big rubber monopolies Dunlop, Goodyear and Olympic.

Dunlop Rubber is a British based monopoly with the rich Australian Baillieu family represented on its boards here and in England. The Australian branch has an authorised capital of \$100 million dollars. This giant monopoly also makes motor car batteries. Like the oil companies the tyre monopolies have endeavored to secure their retail outlets through the "tied" service stations system. Last year Dunlop made a profit of \$9,251,000. The year before the figure was \$6,842,000.

### **U.S. Rubber Monopoly Does Well**

Goodyear Tyre & Rubber Co. (Australia) Limited registered as a N.S.W. company in 1926, was the first intruder to set up a foreign corporation on classical principles for the efficient exploitation of the economy of Australia and its people. T.G.R. & Co. of Akron, Ohio, U.S.A. by its holding the whole of the voting share capital of the Australian subsidiary, rendered even the rights and dividends of Australian preferential shareholders of little significance. But again, the sleight of hand trick with profit appearing in U.S.A. was private information. In 1969 profit was \$2,127,000; in 1968 \$2,105,000.

Olympic Consolidated Industries Limited owns the Olympic Tyre and Rubber Company and runs a chain of service stations. It is an Australian monopoly with authorised capital of \$40,000,000. Last year it made a profit of \$3,599,000; in 1968 \$3,465,000.

The Australian market for rubber tyres has attracted a swarm of foreign tyre manufacturers who have now established their agencies here. They include: Armstrong, Akron, Pirelli (U.S.), Alliance (Israel & U.S.), Continental and Fulda (West Germany), Brentford (U.K.), Michelin (France), Vridestein (Holland), Semperit (Austria), Ohtsu and Yokohama (Japan).

Here then is a picture of absolutely enormous millions (really beyond description) sunk in motor vehicles, oil and tyres. No one of these giants is interested in humanity.

### **People Always Attacked**

Of course when the top members of these monopolies themselves begin to get killed and injured in motor vehicle accidents, they get alarmed. They look about to demand this measure and that measure to protect them — new roads, more repressive laws, etc. etc. They most certainly do not look at their own responsibility nor the social system of capitalism of which they are the product. Belatedly they take a few "safety" measures. They themselves ride around in the safest of vehicles.

To reduce production or make safe vehicles costs money. They are interested in profit and power which they pursue ruthlessly. They do it in Australia. They do it all over the world. They fight wars for it. They are in the Middle East for it; in Indonesia for it; in Vietnam for it; in Australia for it. There is literally nowhere in the capitalist world the U.S. imperialists are not present.



This then is U.S. imperialism in Australia. It explains why Australian young men are conscripted and killed making Australia a vital target for U.S. imperialism's rivals. It explains U.S. pressure to keep wages low, to keep the workers disciplined, to maintain "law and order" i.e. repression. Even a place as small by world standards as Australia, is used to export motor vehicles. In fact Australia has become an important base for export of vehicles to the Asian market. Both GMH and Ford have shifted their Asian regional headquarters to Australia. Not long ago a great song and dance was made about the appointment of Australians to the top jobs in GMH and Ford. What was not stressed so much was the fact that the U.S. bosses have moved up a notch. They are now Asian regional bosses and their offices are still here. They can still keep a watchful eye on the local manufacturing operations. The establishment of the regional offices here by GMH and Ford is really a counter move to increased Japanese operations in Asia. Although the Japanese militarists are "allies" of the U.S. imperialists, business is business.

### Big Profits From "Defence"

Further, both GMH and Ford are well geared into the U.S. imperialist war machine. They have a direct interest in the aggressive war the U.S. imperialists are waging in Indo-China. They supply a good deal of equipment to the war zone.

Holdens are now exported to more than 60 points round the world. In Indonesia, New Zealand, South Africa

and the Philippines the G.M. octopus has established plants where Holdens are assembled from parts sent from GMH in Australia.

Thus the growing export business of GMH means that the G.M. bosses will place a tighter grip on Australia's foreign policy. Nothing will be allowed to interfere with the "regional operations" of General Motors and Fords.

And never let us forget that what is good for G.M. and Ford is NOT good for the Australian people at home and abroad. General Motors must be protected. Australia is vital to them. It explains U.S. military installations in Australia and the U.S. soldiers that are always in Australia (even those under the guise of rest and recreation).

### No Advantage To Australians

Is it for the benefit of Australia? Certainly not. How can disastrous wars, threats of more wars, huge profits, low wages, exploitation, killing and maiming by motor cars, pollution, rotten public transport systems, be to the advantage of Australia? But it is all to the advantage of General Motors, Fords, Chryslers. (We do not exclude British Leyland Motor Corporation, Volkswagon, the Japanese manufacturers at all. They are just the same but have not the same power).

The solution to the road toll is a class question. The foregoing illustrates this. While the monopoly capitalists control the country then the road toll will continue. This is not to say that the struggle against the road toll should not go on. Indeed it is only through struggle against the



motor car monopolies and their puppets that the revolutionary people's movement will develop. It is quite useless to expect the parliamentary politicians to do anything about it. These hirelings are in the pay of the motor car monopolies. This newspaper report from Washington of August 24, 1966, is very revealing in this regard. "Washington — The Senate and House of Representatives today begin ironing out differences in the auto safety bill, one of the most important pieces of legislation which will come out of this Congress. When the auto safety bill was being debated in the House of Representatives last week, Lloyd Cutler, astute attorney for the auto manufacturers, sat in the House gallery, the most interested spectator of all. He was there to check on which Congressmen tried to insert criminal penalties in the bill against his clients in case they defaulted on the new law.

### **Politicians In Pay Of Monopolies**

"What Cutler knew but the public didn't, was that a vigorous back-stage hassle had taken place over these criminal penalties. Many Senators had urged that the auto manufacturers be subject to the same provisions as other corporations when they failed to protect the public.

"Drug manufacturers, for instance, have been prosecuted under the Food and Drug Act for putting defective drugs on the market, even though the drug manufacturers pleaded ignorance of their mistake . . . However, the auto attorney Cutler managed to corral all the Republican votes in the Senate Commerce Committee plus three Democrats. Together they knocked out criminal penalties for the auto magnates".

It is the same story in Australia. There are plenty of pious statements but the real cause of the road toll is not tackled by the paid political servants of the big monopolies. Bolte has just come to light with legislation for making the wearing of safety seat belts compulsory. This is drawing a red herring over the whole scene. Safety belts are a help but to make an issue of them diverts attention from the monopolies. As with everything else that the political lackeys of the millionaires do, it turns into an attack on the ordinary motor-car driver and is a further source of immoral profit to the motor car accessory houses most of which are subsidiaries of the car monopolies.

### **Public Transport Should Be First**

The road toll flows from capitalism which is an unplanned, ruthless, savage system. Everything is subordinated to the motor car simply because the motor giants control the country. In a society run by the working class the interests of the working people come first. The uncontrolled and wasteful production of hundreds of thousands of motor cars would be stopped. The motor car would be seen as part of a planned transport system. It would play only a minor part. Public transport would play the major part. It would be run to provide the maximum service to the working people. The motor car would be an ancillary only. The principle on which a socialist transport is built is "serve the people". Such a lofty principle is diametrically opposed to the putting of profits first at the expense of the people.





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ary of Victoria

We are not at all against motor cars and motor vehicles, but we are for them for rational use and not for personal profit and power.

We say the problem of road safety will never be solved under capitalism. Specifically in Australia it will never be solved until U.S. imperialism (i.e. General Motors, Fords, Chryslers) is driven right out. That means bitter struggle. These people are gunmen. It is they who wage war. They do not hesitate to use force and violence against their own workers and workers and working people as a whole. Law and order is *their* law and order. It protects their property. The courts are their courts, the gaols are their gaols, the police are their police, the army is their army. They call it law and order and ordered government. They call their opponents rioters, the mob, murderers, lawless, etc., etc.

## **Smash Monopolies' Political Power**

To them we are all those things. We stand for smashing their political power, for taking their factories from them, for running them by the useful people who now work in them and who will produce for use, not for the profit of a handful. Then the road toll will be abolished.

Australians with the people of the world must unite against U.S. imperialism. U.S. imperialism is a scourge of mankind. It is the root of all evil. It props up an evil social system. That must be ended and replaced by socialism — government by the workers and working people — the overwhelming majority who will produce for rational use — not for private profit.

MELBOURNE  
DECEMBER, 1970



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