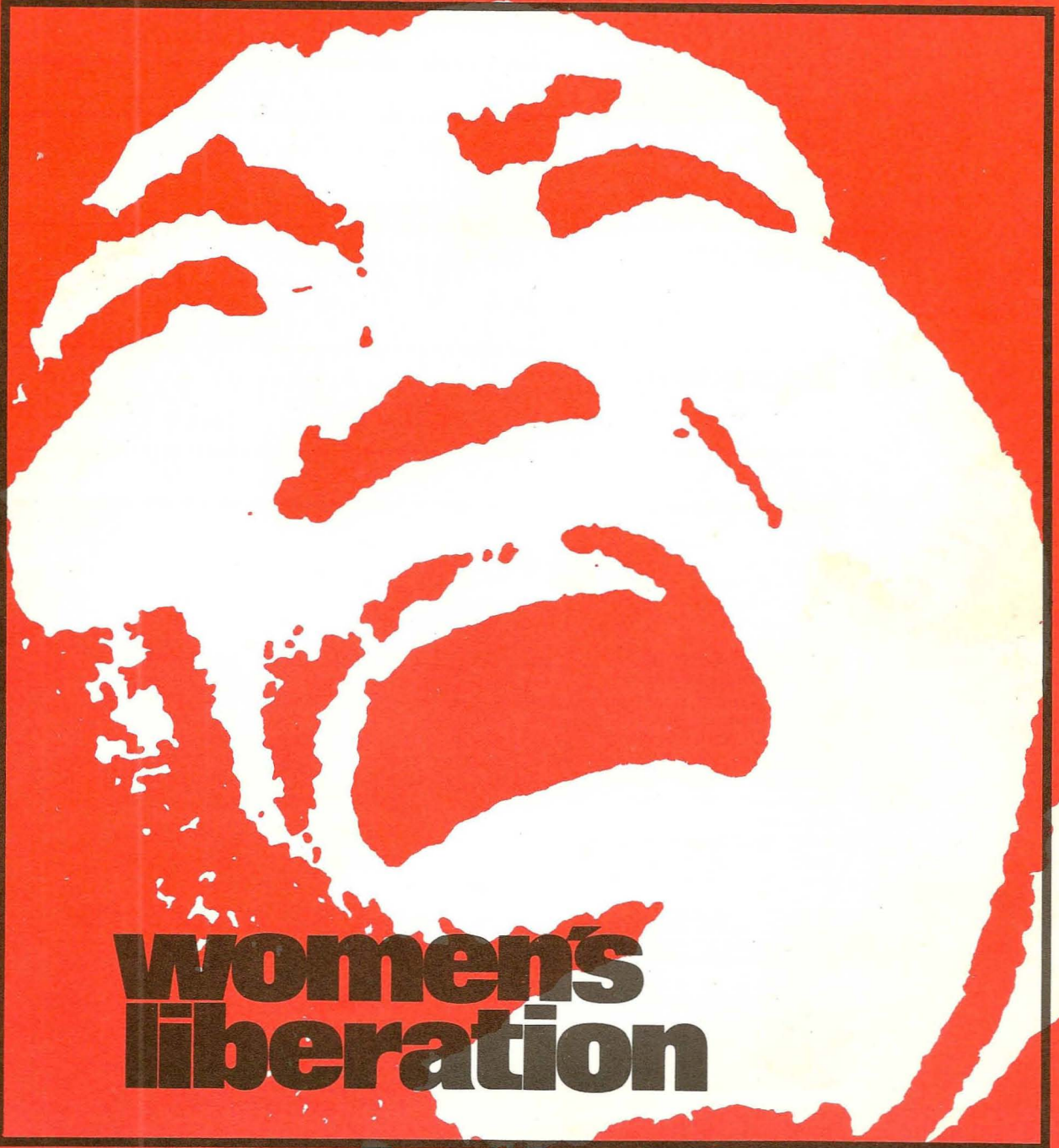


socialist review

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**women's
liberation**

socialist review

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LYNCHED

Ernest Mandel accepted an invitation to deliver a paper at the inaugural Socialist Scholars Conference in May of this year. He was also scheduled to speak at meetings, organised by Resistance, in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. On May 11, a few days before he was to leave Brussels for Sydney, he received word of the Australian Government's refusal to issue

a visa. Two days later, answering questions in the House, the Minister for Immigration, Phillip Lynch, refused to either consider a reversal of the decision, or to give any reason for the ban other than that Mandel was excluded in the interest of 'national security'.

What follows is Mandel's summary of the paper he was to deliver to the Conference.

THE CRISIS OF CAPITALIST RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION: Ernest Mandel

1. What are capitalist relations of production?

A general misconception consists in reducing these relations to the capital-labour relation inside the factory. But Marx makes it very clear that production relations are all the basic relations in which men engage between themselves in the production of their

material existence. This means concretely that capitalist production relations encompass three main sorts of relations:
(a) Universal commodity production relations (i.e. the fact that factories and men relate to each other as commodity owners and buyers-sellers).
(b) Subordination of labour to capital during

the production process inside the factory (which flows from a) under conditions of a division of society into a class which monopolises the ownership of the means of production, and another class which has nothing to sell but its labour power.

(c) The dialectical combination of (a) and (b), which determines that what is produced and how it is produced is fairly independent from the free will of agents involved in the production process, but determined by "market laws", i.e. by competition which determines the behaviour of the capitalists (the individual firms).

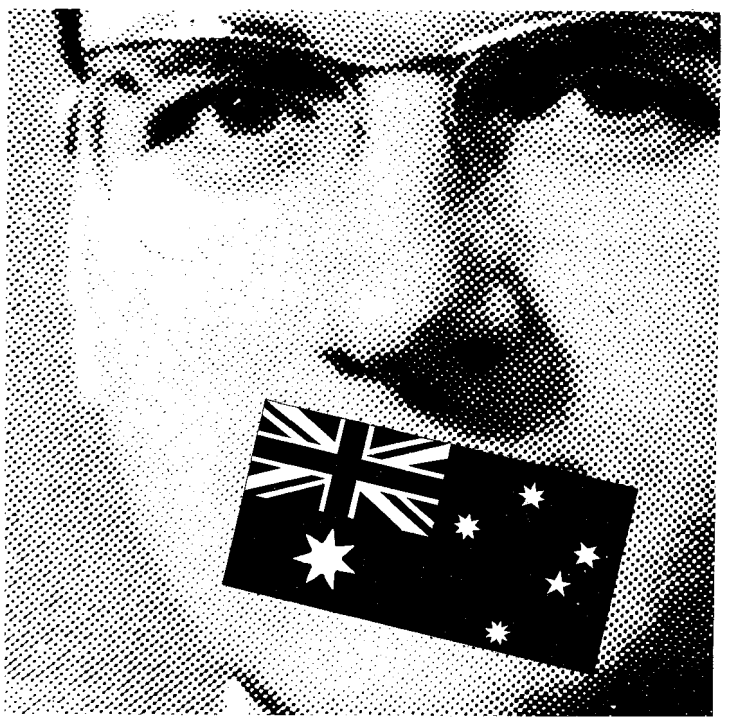
Capitalism can be understood as a given mode of production only if we understand it as the sum total of these three factors. To take only (b) and isolate it from (a) and (c) would mean to equate basically capitalism to slavery, and in fact to any of the class societies based upon the exploitation of labour. The specific nature of capitalism flows from the integration of (b) into the sum total of a-b-c.

Essentially then this is a contradictory process of organisation of labour. In (a), labour is conceived as entirely private (commodity production results from the separation of society's collective labour force into units of "private labour"). In (b), labour is partially socialised (huge masses of labour are combined under a central, be it alien, command). In (c) the contradiction between private and partially socialised labour explodes as the contradiction between the tendency towards a growing objective socialisation of production and labour on the one hand, and the survival of private appropriation of the fruits of labour on the other hand.

2. What is the crisis of the capitalist relations of production?

Generally, this crisis is seen as a contradiction between the growth of the productive forces and the existing relations of production. But a forgotten aspect (result) of this contradiction is the inner crisis of the production relations themselves. This crisis expresses itself in the three main relations indicated before:

- (a) The crisis of market economy - Under declining (late) capitalism, the inability of market mechanisms to guarantee a further growth of the production forces or even some form of "normal" reproduction is being understood with respect to an increasing number of phenomena:
 - the inadequacy of market mechanisms to "regulate" output where saturation of demand is appearing (cf. the permanent crisis of agriculture and of public transport in Western Europe and North America).
 - the inadequacy of market mechanisms to "regulate" output where major interests of the whole of mankind are at stake: nuclear energy; pollution and other threats to the environment, etc.
 - the inadequacy of market mechanisms to "regulate" the potential "science input" of production (university explosion



- and pre-selection).
- the inadequacy of market mechanisms to "regulate" exchange between the industrialised and the underdeveloped parts of the world (the breakdown of these mechanisms threatens marginally to "expel" the underdeveloped countries from world trade altogether).

- (b) The crisis of the subordination of labour to capital (i.e. the crisis of contemporary factory organisation) resulting from the third industrial revolution, the reintroduction of intellectual labour into the production process, the general rise in the level of skill and education of the working class, the appearance of the new youth vanguard etc. This crisis expresses itself as an increasingly explosive conflict between two basically contradictory tendencies: the need for late capitalism to increase "planning" and complete control over all elements of production and reproduction, i.e. in the first place over labour; and the instinctive urge of contemporary labour to deny the right of capital to dictate what should be produced, where it should be produced, where it should be produced, and how production should be paid for. This conflict is giving class struggle a new dimension, already apparent in the most advanced struggles of Western European workers (May 1968 in France, autumn 1969 in Italy), and will become more and more the general trend of all these struggles.
- (c) The crisis of the combination of market economy and subordination of labour to capital, i.e. the crisis of late monopoly capitalism, with its huge international degree of concentration and at the same time the survival of commodity production relations.

This crisis expresses itself in several ways:

- by the efforts of multinational corporations to find new and more adequate forms of social superstructure (a new European state, the "Atlantic community" etc.).
 - by the growing trend towards socialisation of costs (e.g. costs of research and development) and state guarantee of monopoly profit.
 - by the growing reprivatization and manipulation of money (bank credit) as the only means of insuring realisation of surplus-value.
 - by threatening breakdown of the world monetary system which flows from the previous point.
- Etc. etc.

3. The myths which tend to obscure the growing crisis of capitalist relations of production

The basic difference between the marxist and the vulgar-evolutionist concept of social change: for the vulgar-evolutionist, a system adapts itself to a changed environment by modifying the relations of production; for marxists, a system tries to survive by adapting the modus operandi of a given set of relationships which, however, cannot be changed without a social revolution. In other words, marxism rejects the very possibility of a "gradual overthrow" of the basic production relations which characterise each specific mode of production. In fact, liberals as well as reformists and neo-reformists base themselves on precisely such a "gradual overthrow", and thereby tend to mask the explosive crisis which is maturing.

A liberal example and its critique: Galbraith's "The Affluent Society" and "The New Industrial State".

A neo-reformist example: the theory of "state monopoly capitalism" and the "scientific-technical revolution" exemplified by Garaudy's "Le grand tournant du socialisme", and its critique.

4. The revolutionary solution of the crisis of the capitalist relations of production

The central historic task of our century: man must reestablish control over the productive forces, over his social fate; otherwise he risks complete destruction. The socialist solution as the only rational solution of this task without great historical regression

The contents of a socialist revolution re relations of production:

- (a) The withering away of commodity production, instead of an increasingly absurd market economy.
- (b) Democratically-centralised self-management instead of subordination of labour to capital.
- (c) Socialist planning as a synthesis of (a) and (b).

The economic, the social, the cultural and the humanistic contents of the concept of conscious socialisation of labour.

MORE MORATORIUM

After pronouncements from all quarters that the antiwar movement as it has existed over the last few years was dead and after pronouncements on the uselessness of mass demonstrations—"peace marches"—the issue was finally resolved with a stunning confirmation of the validity of mass action organised around the central demand of immediate withdrawal of all troops. The whole action was the biggest political outpouring since the 30's.

However there are several disquieting features about the moratorium which have been commented on by many sections of the socialist left. These comrades are disturbed, and rightly so, at the low level of the marchers. The common denominator seemed to be "Peace Now", rather than immediate withdrawal, let alone anything "anti-imperialist" such as 'Support the NLF'. Some of these comrades mistakenly conclude that such actions as the moratorium are virtually useless in terms of raising consciousness and here they are dead wrong.

For the thousands that marched throughout Australia, the Moratorium was a big step from a normal apolitical existence to a direct intervention in political life. Such extrovert action is a radicalising feature in and of itself. The raw material is now available in enormous quantity for the left to propagandize and develop from the "Peace Now" consciousness. The fact that to a large extent we failed is a problem of our own, and not of mass antiwar action itself.

The left by and large failed to take advantage of the open structure of the moratorium. Compared to previous mass mobilizations of a coalition nature, the moratorium was somewhat democratic. It still allowed the big bureaucracies to predominate but at least in Sydney and Melbourne, the left was not squeezed out completely (although this was of course achieved by the early vigilance of the left, not the beneficence of these bureaucracies).

However once in, the left was unable, often through its own inadequacies, to concentrate on the task of making sure the central demand was pushed in propaganda and the implications of the demand brought home to potential demonstrators.

The moratorium was a powerful propaganda campaign against the war in and of itself. The fact that the tone in the culminating action was so overwhelming for "Peace Now" is a reflection to a large extent on the way the demonstrators were mobilized. The style of the publicity was on the level of atrocity photos rather than an emphasis on the political solution

to the war and the nature of the U.S. aggression.

Concurrent with the loss on this political level was the defeat of the left on an organisational plane. The apparatus of the action was concentrated increasingly in the larger bureaucracies. In Sydney where an independent office had been established for the Moratorium the AICD bureaucrats ignored this and worked through their own office almost exclusively, even when it was quite unnecessary in terms of equipment. This culminated in the AICD receiving the \$2,000.00 excess funds of the campaign.

The response of some to this defeat is to reject work that is aimed at influencing the politics of the central body and in fact to withdraw to independent action. This course however should be seen as a supplement to action oriented towards the centre, not as an alternative. The left failed to provide this alternative as well. In Melbourne preparations by the left took the form of elaborate precautions in case of a fight with the police.

In Sydney there was little distribution of literature designed to implant some understanding of the imperialist nature of the war in the minds of the demonstrators.

The composition of the actions throughout Australia was overwhelmingly youthful. (By and large what protest there was to the bureaucracies within the Moratorium came from youthful quarters.) The enormously large turnout in Melbourne was due perhaps to two factors. Firstly the influence of the ALP machine led by Cairns in mobilising branches and workers to come to the march. This fact is not appreciated by some ultralefts in Melbourne. Albert Langer made the statement that the large Melbourne demonstration was due to the presence of a left-wing (i.e. him and his mates) within the moratorium which made the whole campaign an issue. Some people will never learn, even when something as big as the moratorium rolls right over them.

Secondly in Sydney the C.P. and pacifist forces managed to split the emphasis of the demonstration and spread it over Friday and Saturday. Throughout the campaign, Saturday was seen as a big culminating rally which everyone could attend. In the event only 5,000 did but the damage had been done already.

From what has emerged so far it is clear which way we should work now. The left in all centres must seek to penetrate the apparatus of the Moratorium and influence the political line that is applied in practice. This will mean out-organising the right and the ability to sustain the effort throughout the campaign and to be more active in the production of propaganda.

Further the left must seek to create its own areas of influence and prepare itself for the culminating period with an adequate arsenal of propaganda.

We should reject all formulas that isolate us from the massive potential of the antiwar movement bearing in mind that there is nothing the liberals and C.P. would like more than to see us leading small actions away from the main protest while leaving the real movement to them.

PJM

RISING

The weekend of May 15-17 saw the first national conference of Womens Liberation groups in Australia. Gathered informally in a large lounge at Melbourne University, about 80-100 women met to discuss such issues as women in the work force; women in education; the concept of femininity and the role of the family; strategy and tactics. Like the Oxford conference of the British Womens Liberation movement held earlier this year, it was mainly an interchange of ideas between the various groups.

Women came from Brisbane, Newcastle, Sydney (four groups represented), Adelaide and Melbourne (two groups represented). Those present were mainly comprised of university students and tertiary educated women, with a smaller percentage of working class women. Reports from groups represented were given, including a range of activities from picketing the Miss Freshette farce at Adelaide University to organising around the Abortion Campaign in Sydney.

Those who participated in the Conference left with the impression that a womens liberation movement in Australia will be a viable revolutionary force in the struggle for socialism. An internal national newsletter was set up to maintain national coordination.

For further information, contact Womens Liberation at 67 Glebe Pt. Rd., Glebe, of phone 660 6803.

S, S & R

UNAPOLOGETIC

This is a poor magazine. Few in people. Lacking in brass. Weak in belle-lettrists. We make no apology, then for printing any, and every, piece we think is worth it. We've no real objection, apart from pride, to filling the whole thing with pieces whipped from elsewhere. We think the stuff must be read, is important, and isn't widely available.

You'll find that we do credit our sources. They're the only riches we've got.

sr

discussion

CAMPUS BALANCE SHEET



LaTrobe: interim report

Grant Evans

View of the La
Trobe occupiers
from a great height.

Expulsion of student activists has become quite a fashion in Universities. First there were those at Sydney, then Albert Langer was excluded, then six were shot out of La Trobe. If the numbers keep going up, perhaps a whole faculty, something small like Applied Chinese, will get the boot.

La Trobe's fracas began on Tuesday, June 16th, when a general meeting of students declared "That this general meeting in view of past motions on the military and conscription, condemns the presence of Defence Dept. officials on this campus" It then resolved "That this General Meeting en masse present the above motion to the Defence Dept. officials"

The reason and justification for the motion were stated in the following week's Rabelais editorial:

"The educational philosophy which is claimed to have inspired La Trobe's development has two aims: to communicate and expand knowledge and to serve society. These aims are assumed to be complementary but in reality are antagonistic. The spread and search for knowledge would not serve but rather oppose this social structure. This contradiction can only be solved by making one aim eclipse the other, and at La Trobe there is little doubt that critical knowledge has been eclipsed by homage to capitalism."

So the motions against the defence department were seen as an attack on the conception of a university serving the worst institutions of this society. In response to the second motion about 70 students moved off from the General Meeting and during that afternoon were responsible for escorting the Defence Dept. officials to their car. A minor scuffle occurred.

Nothing more was heard of the incident, except that a right wing petition was

Grant Evans is editor of the La Trobe paper 'Rabelais', and one of the six expelled.

circulated during the next couple of days. On Thursday night, however, five students received telegrams directing them to appear before the Vice Chancellor the next day. Two more were informed verbally on Friday that they were also to appear.

At a meeting of students during the lunch period on Friday a motion was carried demanding open, collective hearings to be deferred until Wednesday 24th at 3pm. It was further decided that if these demands were refused then the administration building would be occupied. When the V.C. refused these demands, the occupation threat was carried out. Two glass doors were broken, and students remained in the building until late that evening.

A meeting of 300 staff and students discussed the issues on Monday. Come Tuesday and it was disclosed that six of the students had been excluded from the university.

At lunchtime that day a meeting of 500 staff and students gathered to hear the V.C. explain his actions. A motion of no confidence was carried overwhelmingly. On the Thursday there was a general meeting of the student body and 1500 of the 2500 students turned up. While the meeting condemned the use of violence, motions were also passed condemning the inept handling of the whole affair by the administration.

A fact-finding commission was set up involving two sympathetic staff members. The terms of reference, seemingly broad, were limited by the V.C. when the commission declared the hearings null and void.

The six students have refused to appear before the proctorial board.

An important point throughout the struggle is that the students charged all worked closely together. We pushed for a collective hearing of the whole 70 people involved in booting the Defence Dept. off campus. Also at the general meeting on Tuesday we tried to point out and heighten awareness of the victimization. Sixty-five people handed their names to the Vice Chancellor at that meeting saying that they demanded to be charged as well.

United fronts presented the issues to the students and prevented factionalism from getting out of hand. The charged students were a united body and were pushing for the idea of a collective trial and pointing out the action taken as collective. Remaining solid as a group allowed a clear line to emerge and the charges were denied flatly as a group which became identified as a focal point of the fight against the administration.

It is important to emphasise the role played by the General meetings of students. Here the left has to explain itself before all interested students and not just put out anonymous newsheets. Mass meetings also give gauge of how the students are responding to the whole affair and gives something to base your strategy on. By passing motions (even though not binding) direction is given to the whole struggle and

by making sure that motions are stated clearly we also managed to polarize the struggle and gain ground. For instance, by making sure that the motion condemning the V.C. was very explicit, it could be passed around by word of mouth: "The V.C. has been condemned by a meeting of students and staff". This sort of action forces people to come along to future meetings and consider the whole affair as one in which they have to take sides.

By these methods we were able to counter the general hysteria about the violence. It is true that we lost a vote on this issue but the main point was that we didn't get bogged down in it. Emphasis was instead placed on the ineptitude of the administration rather than the "violence" of the students. We managed to get a motion passed calling the administration provocative at the same meeting of 1500 that by a narrow margin condemned "violence."

Between the occupation and the meetings of the following week we had a weekend to prepare thoroughly for the issues that would arise. We made sure that a consistent line emerged from the charged students, since we knew that they would set the tone in the meetings to come.

We also mobilized quite good staff support. Petitions were circulated among staff members in support of the students. Almost the entire humanities block was on side. This presented the Vice Chancellor with quite a problem when faced with this solid opposition.

We were also lucky in having a fact finding committee conceded in a moment of weakness by the V.C. As has been pointed out the committee comprised two staff members sympathetic to the students. When it declared that the hearings had been null and void, the V.C. decided to limit its terms of reference to the committee.

One of the biggest problems we faced was our inability to refer back to the original issue often enough. The relationship between the Defence Department and the university was not made clear enough and our approach to what a university should be was not presented enough.

Also with the issue of violence we got bogged down with liberal arguments. We didn't relate the arguments to outside institutions such as the Defence Department perpetrating violence in Vietnam. We did not discuss why these sorts of things crushed the university as a centre of learning completely limiting its whole scope and confining it to capitalism's needs.

What we learnt about putting forward a certain line is that it gives coherence to the whole struggle. We are not arguing in someone else's terms.

However the struggle is far from over yet. What we have gained so far is a fairly solid left-wing core of a couple of hundred and several hundred more sympathisers.

If the issue blows up again we will no longer argue in terms of legalism but more in



terms of the nature of capitalism and its universities. This is perhaps the only way of maintaining a strong position vis a vis the students. By bringing up the main issues that concern us we can explain the reasons for victimization and the actions of the

administration. This is our best defence and main line of attack at the same time.

We feel that the lifting of the suspensions was a direct result of the widespread support we gained. Our victory is a vindication of the way we worked to gain this support.

Inspecting the damage to one of the glass doors at La Trobe

discussion **Sydney: assets and liabilities**

Michael Alexander

In attempting to explain why the left at Sydney University has suffered a defeat, it is necessary to have a clear and realistic appreciation of the issues involved and how these were presented.

The campaign as conducted by the SRC and Victoria Lee had one objective: to get Victoria Lee admitted as a full time student at Sydney University. The issues raised by her and the SRC focused on this aim. Victoria Lee was presented as being unique and the victim of what appeared simple bureaucratic bungling on the part of the administration. Issues raised in support of this argument included such things as: her outstanding academic record; her unusual choice of courses; the secret clauses under which she was excluded; and the refusal of the administration to justify its actions. All in all, Victoria Lee was a person with an exceptional and "justifiable" grievance against the administration. The mass of students saw her as such. They sympathised with her to the point of mobilizing at fairly large front lawn meetings, voting for her immediate admission, publication of all University laws, open senate meetings and threatening direct action if these demands were not met. As events were to show, the whole drama involved an attack on bourgeois injustice whilst accepting and protecting the basic tenets of the injustice.

During this pre-"occupation" period the role of the left wing was ambiguous. In the first place most of the physical work involved in organising and advertising meetings and the like was left to the campus radicals. However their influence on the actual tone of the conflict seems to have been less. The real issues involved in Lee's exclusion were only touched upon and never became central to the campaign. The class nature of the university, its elitist outlook, its collusion with capitalists and the state were all brought into the confrontation, but seem to have had little mass impact. The failure to propagandize effectively and an inability to see how ineffectual its propaganda was, laid the basis for the isolation of radicals. The careful and hard educational and organizational work needed to create a radical environment for the reception of the ideas put forward did not precede this confrontation between socialist ideology and capitalist power.

It was at the actual occupation that the left took the movement over completely. Victoria Lee dissociated herself from it, the SRC condemned it. The administration issued injunctions against seven students and threatened an injunction against the whole student body. It was in this atmosphere that an SRC motion condemning the occupation was put and heavily defeated. But what seemed a great victory at the time

was not decisive, but merely the high point of euphoria and mass support. One of the main issues discussed at this meeting was not so much the occupation as effected by the occupiers but the duplicity of the SRC president in the whole affair, and how he had "stabbed the left in the back" after being himself involved in the preparation for the occupation. It is more likely that the vote was one against the SRC and the injunctions rather than one of complete support for the occupiers. The refusal of the left wing to see this was an error on its part. The left perhaps overestimated its support and influence and proceeded to base future strategies upon this overestimation. This is born out by the way front lawn meetings tended to vacillate on such issues as nonvictimization and, after seven students had been suspended, no suspensions. At one stage a front lawn meeting even refused to ratify a series of motions previously passed. From that time to this the course of events has been complicated, and lead to the slow but definite demoralization of a great portion of the activist left, showing that this grouping had little idea of what it was doing and aiming for.

One important generalization ought to be made and its that the left wing rhetoric was far in advance of the mass of students. The complete inability to fight the administration on issues involving the very nature of the university arose out of the inexperience of both left and moderate wings of students. Had the expulsions been fought around a relevant issue rather than the meaningless issue of "direct and meaningful action", mass support of students might have been won. Had the expelled challenged the proctorial board rather than waging a direct attack on Williams the V.C., student support and maybe some degree of success may have been achieved. These modes of action were rejected in favour of a wordy radical "confrontation." But radicalisation involves more than mere action, it presupposes a theoretical basis for that action. No real theoretical basis existed in the left. To behave as if one did was a gross tactical error.

On campus any attempt to radicalize through radical action and involvement must presuppose a certain standard of knowledge. If radical action is to be successful it must occur in a receptive environment. The veracity of this is borne out by experience in the anti war movement where it took some two or three years for this environment to develop both as a result of radical action itself and the dissemination of information and propaganda. The success of radical action here was admittedly tied up with the timing, something lacking on a campus. Further the radical actions involved in the

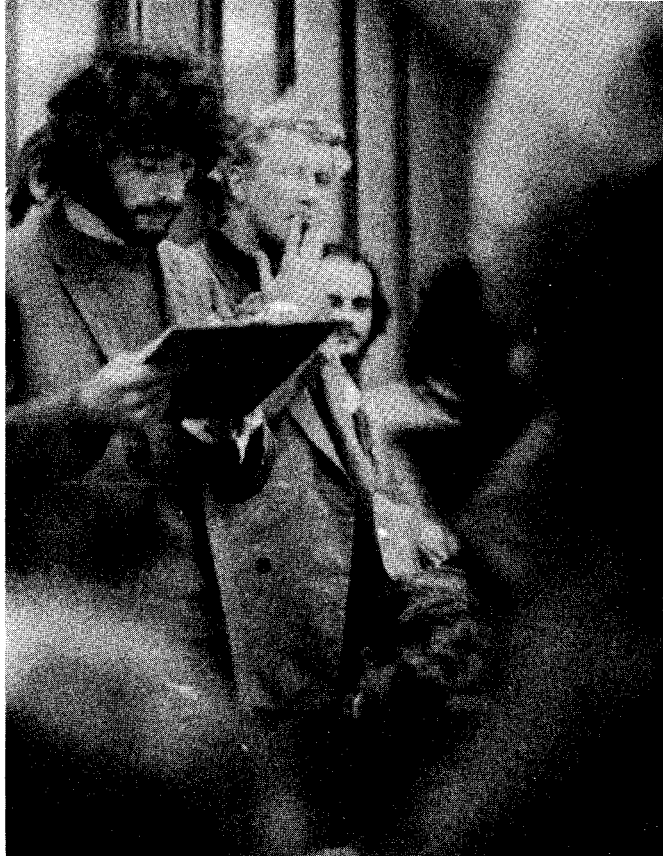
anti war movements were geared to the public at large, the slogans and aims were relevant. This did not occur on campus. The importance of propoganda was crucial. It had to win support quickly or not at all. Without even referring to the quality of the material the left wing distributed, its significance to most students ought to be questioned. In its own sectarian sphere, the propoganda was correct and instructive, but in general it was unintelligible and so ineffective.

The reaction of the left to the situation it found itself in was the only one it could make outside accepting defeat before it was actually inflicted and using the mass activity and interest to stimulate education and discussion upon the nature of the events. Perhaps this would have been the most effective, but in the euphoria following the occupation it seemed, in terms of the appraisal of the situation made by the left a regressive and defeatist step.

Overall the left behaved correctly but was hampered by its view of the situation and by its organisational form. The attempted strike failed but this was not due to any inherent fault in the tactic but to the inadequacy of the left's mass support. Most of it was all in the mind. Some of the real support that did exist was neutralised by the real attempt made by the administration to win the students. Whilst it is unlikely that this occurred, it is possible that the fight put up by the administration hardened and united the tactics the left could use. Further the real presence of the administration in the conflict, its apparent willingness to fight may well have demoralised a large sector of the left well before any proposed actions in support of the occupiers occurred.

For the participants the events of the last few months at Sydney University have been extremely important. It may have laid the basis for an effective and powerful revolutionary movement at Sydney to develop in the next year or two. Spontaneism has proved to be a false prophet. Being one of the major reasons only the left has, as yet, failed to develop any clear perspective of action. Up to date, the left has reacted to events as best it could with little or no real direction. The need for an organisation to develop a clear analysis and as a result present a strategy for action is patently obvious. Further such a grouping will have to direct propoganda in a conscious and determined way, promoting action, which arises out of a rational theoretical view of the University. It is essential that this propoganda be radical and yet geared to (at the very least) the more middle of the road type of students who support the SRC leadership.

Furthermore, although the left obviously should struggle around any and every issue, it is not true that they should go for broke and occupy on all issues. In a sense an occupation on almost any issue at Sydney at the time would have led to an upsurge. What revolutionaries must gauge however is what issue gives them a chance of advancing.



Along these lines it is worth noting that 6000 people were involved in the Moratorium at Sydney U., three times the amount that turned up for Victoria Lee or the occupiers. Vietnam is in fact an issue where thorough work has been done by the left over the past few years. The real nature of the capitalist university is still largely unknown to most.

More La Trobe views on the day.



WOMEN ARISE

George Novack on revolutionary dynamism of the struggle for women's liberation

The current ferment in radical circles around the issue of women's liberation betokens a new and higher phase of a social struggle which has periodically erupted in the West for 200 years. The demand for female equality is democratic in character. It asserts the legitimate right of one-half the human race to be placed on a par in all respects - legal, social, economic, educational - with the dominant male half.

This kind of demand is at odds with the patriarchal, feudal conception of women's place in society.

As these mobilizations for democratic objectives unfolded, the ruling powers were compelled to recognize the most insistent needs of the masses. The big bourgeoisie, the principal beneficiary of these upheavals, was disposed to short-change the claims of the plebeians. But the exigencies of overcoming their feudal foes, consolidating their supremacy, and maintaining social and political stability prevented them from totally denying the demands from the lower orders. It enabled the latter to make considerable advances over feudal times in their freedom.

The appeal made by the bourgeois radicals to "the right of the people" against the privileges and prerogatives of the old regime had tremendous dynamism. This abstract slogan, which inspired the democratized forces, became a seedbed for the sprouting of specific

demands articulating the urgent needs of diverse contingents of the oppressed. These passed from the peasants, wage workers, slaves and subject nationalities to the religiously persecuted, racially discriminated pariahs and paupers, the aged, the sick and disabled, criminals and prisoners, the insane and the young. As the democratic movement and its ideals spread through bourgeois society, each of these downtrodden groups found defenders and evangelists who strove to secure redress of their grievances and betterment of their situations.

The first cries for women's liberation resounded in this historical setting. Whenever the rest of society was shaken up and set into motion during the bourgeois era, what was then termed "the distaff side" of the population was sooner or later stirred up, and calls for reforms in their subordinate status came from militant women as well as sympathetic males.

It is noteworthy that, in contrast to protests by isolated individuals, sustained movements for women's rights emerged rather late in the upswing of bourgeois society. This tardiness was in itself an index to the extent of the oppression and submissiveness from which women suffered. They were slow to rouse themselves, organize, and act in a concerted and self-confident manner.

Although the women of Holland and Great Britain played active and prominent parts in many of the most dramatic developments of the Dutch and English revolutions, they were

Reprinted from the *Millitant*, the weekly newspaper of the Socialist Workers Party in the US

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in the dynamics of representation



kept in the rear and assumed minimal roles in political affairs. Their place was still in the home, not in public life. The Levellers, for example, who were the most vigorous exponents of democracy in the British civil war and whose leaders displayed high regard for the capacities of their women adherents did not request any share in government for them, any more than they proposed to extend the franchise to "servants," as the wage workers were then designated.

The American colonists could not have settled and cultivated the land without the skills and strength of the pioneer women, nor could have they have waged their seven-year war of independence successfully without the efforts and sacrifices of their wives, sisters and mothers. In 1777, at the start of armed conflict, Abigail Adams, wife of John Adams, wrote her husband: "In the new code of laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you should remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the husbands. Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we had no voice or representation."

Her half-jocular plea was not acted upon. When the U.S. republic was founded, women received little more political recognition than did the black slaves.

In Europe the materialist philosopher Condorcet, under prodding from his wife, was one of the first, and very few, male heralds of the French revolution to propose giving women certain political rights. In 1790 he declared that "either no member of the human race has true rights or all have the same." But his attitude was exceptional among the spokesmen of the time.

The 8,000 working-class women who marched on Versailles in October 1789 were instrumental in breaking the royal power, and the women of Paris played a decisive role in all the great days which accelerated the revolution. Yet that epoch-making charter of bourgeois democracy, the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, adopted in 1789, did not provide any special civil rights for women of France.

Four years after this declaration was proclaimed, Olympe de Gouges, the daughter of a butcher who was one of the first champions of her sex to write on politics published a Declaration of the Rights of Women. It contained these memorable lines: "Women are born free and equal to men in their rights. . . . Women have the right to go to the scaffold; they should have the right to ascend the tribune. . . Women, arise!"

However, many leaders of the first women's organisations were guillotined and imprisoned and the Convention voted to dissolve and prohibit all the women's clubs that had sprung up under the impetus of the revolution. Whereas divorce was authorised in 1792, the

A meeting of the Women's Social and Political Union. From left: Flora Drummond, Christabel Pankhurst, Jessie Kenney, Mrs Martel (an Australian suffragette), Emmeline Pankhurst and Mrs Charlotte Desparde. Opposite page: Christabel Pankhurst in London's Hyde Park.



Emmeline Pankhurst speaking at London's Hyde Park.

Napoleonic Code of 1804 placed the wife under strict subordination to the husband.

Despite figures like Mary Wollstonecraft, the author of "Frankenstein" and a radical critic of many spheres of social life, who issued one of the earliest challenges to male supremacy in her "Vindication of the Rights of Woman", published in 1792, public agitation for women's rights in the English-speaking countries does not go back much further than 150 years ago. Interest in the question rose in England soon after the passage of the Reform Bill of 1832, which somewhat liberalized the franchise.

So long as the rural family with its cottage industry remained intact, the plight of women attracted little public attention. This changed when large-scale industry pulled increasing numbers of women and small children into the mills and shops, where they were pitilessly ground down. Their severance from the home and entry into social production singled out the sex for the first time as a force apart from the family. Thanks to the propaganda of the proletarian Chartists as well as middle-class reformers and writers the problem of working women came to the fore between 1832 and 1850.

The gains in civil rights made by women in the most favored of capitalist nations indicate that the overcoming of the grosser disabilities inherited from patriarchal feudalism was one of the most difficult jobs encountered by the bourgeois movement of democratization. The obdurate resistance to their removal testifies both to their deep roots in class society and to the conservatism of the upper classes, even in the most progressive periods of bourgeois development. They fear any tendencies which threaten to weaken the social supports of private property and profiteering upon which their system rests.

Male prejudice, family custom, religious beliefs and all the other baggage of the patriarchal past would not have deterred the capitalist class from equalizing the situation of women much faster and further than they have done had it been in their interest to do

so. But the exploiters have failed to promote the emancipation of women beyond its present limits for the same reasons that Afro-Americans have been held down and held back. More freedom for women would have been too costly and cut into the profit-making which is the be-all and end-all of the capitalist system.

Male predominance and female subordination is a permanent fixture in bourgeois society because this relation of inequality is an integral component of the mechanism of capitalist exploitation. Women are oppressed both within the society as a whole and within the family. The fountainhead of that double degradation is their economic dependence upon the male wage-earner who is the initial recipient and disburser of the household income. If she does not have an outside job, the woman as daughter, sister, wife, mother and hombody relies for her ration upon the husband, father and brother, who are in turn dependent upon the employer who buys their labor power.

In the second place, capitalists require not only cheap but constantly renewed supplies of labour power, which must primarily come from the younger generation. Women have the prime responsibility for raising children. Their unpaid or poorly recompensed labours in the family household serve to lower the costs of reproducing and renewing the labour force.

These costs would be much higher if the capitalist regime had to take over the multiple services provided free or at minimal expenditure by the family setup and the domestic drudgery of married women. The socialization of such services would have to be paid for by taxation, which would in part fall upon the capitalists. This shift would increase the cost of the most vital factor of production, labour, and reduce whatever advantage accrues to the national capitalist class.

Third, where women work in large numbers in industry, trade, offices, schools and the professions, discrimination against them is directly profitable to the employers. Degradation and domesticity keep them in the category of lower paid labour. The capitalists always benefit from maintaining national, racial and sexual differentials in income and status among the work force. The working class as a whole would be a far more homogeneous and formidable antagonist if all discriminations and divisions within it were eliminated.

Fourth, women are part of a reserve army of labour required by the capitalists during periods of labour shortage. This supply can be impounded or tapped according to the fluctuating rate of the accumulation of capital. During wartime, women can be mustered out of the household and drawn into the productive processes, as was done during the first and second world wars. Then, with the end of hostilities, they can be sent back to the family hearth, there to be kept in

storage until capital needs to recall them again. The family home is a depot where surplus labor is deposited and kept in mothballs at least expense to the profiteers.

Fifth, females of all ages are the prime target of the advertising hucksters who must induce them, by fair means or foul, to purchase of all kinds of commodities, useful and useless, from gadgets to cosmetics. In this con-game even the appliances which are supposed to relieve and lighten household toil become devices for fastening the family to the credit companies.

Social as well as economic reasons lead the possessing classes to shore up the cult of the family. The ordinary urban family with the male at its head acts as a stabilizing and conservatizing agency in an otherwise unsettled world. It is a corral where the domestic servant works for the master in the kitchen, nursery and dining room. Though the family nest may often provide the sole sanctuary from the buffetings and harassments of a cruel outside environment, it fosters immersion in purely private concerns, narrowness of outlook and exclusiveness among its members. Here attempts are made to tame, discipline and conservatize adolescents. All sorts of backwardness, from religion to racism, are nurtured within its walls.

These ever-present factors are more potent than long-standing prejudice in preventing the capitalist regime from giving women the freedom they desire. The rulers can under duress bestow upon women the same formal juridical, political and constitutional rights to own and dispose of property, the right to vote and hold office, and the right to divorce, although these rights may be curtailed in practice. They can even be pressed to legalize birth control and abortion.

But just as the bourgeois revolution transformed the Southern chattel slaves into impoverished landless freedmen and then returned them to new forms of bondage, so bourgeois reforms have allowed women to escape from being a complete chattel of the male master and become a "free individual" in the bourgeois sense. What they have not done is to release women from the grip of the men and give them equality in all spheres of social life.

The exploitative structure of their system sets limits on the scope of the freedoms the monopolists can grant to any segment of the oppressed. Just as the capitalists have failed to give equality to the blacks a hundred years after the Emancipation Proclamation, so they have not truly emancipated women. They cannot make good on their promises of "liberty for all" because they lack the material incentives and class impulses to do so.

It will take a thoroughgoing reorganization of the entire social setup from the economic foundations up to and including family relations before women can eradicate the causes of their inferior status and the evils flowing from it. In order to accomplish that,



a socialist revolution, which will transfer state power and the ownership of the means of production from the monopolists to the majority of the people, must be carried through.

These are lessons to be learned from the disappointing results of the democratic epoch in improving the position of the female sex and from examining the actual role of women, in the functioning of capitalism today.

These conclusions likewise correspond with the tenets of the permanent revolution, which were projected by Marx and Engels in 1850 and elaborated by Leon Trotsky in the light of 20th century conditions. This theory affirms that, whereas the bourgeoisie could be a progressive and at times a revolutionizing force during the expansion of capitalism, this class has become more and more conservative and counterrevolutionary in the period of its decline and death agony.

Trotsky originally applied this proposition

Mary MacArthur, militant women's union organiser and leader during the British Suffragette struggle.



Campaigning for a Suffragette candidate: Christabel Pankhurst.

to the political role of the bourgeoisie in backward regions like Russia and the colonial world, which had not yet experienced a bourgeois-democratic revolution. As a Marxist, he took for granted the elementary premise of the socialist movement that the imperialist plutocracy of the industrial metropolises was utterly reactionary and had to be overthrown.

However, the historical-sociological generalization he made holds good not only for retarded countries which had not been democratized but also for those advanced capitalisms whose bourgeois revolutions defaulted in consummating their democratic assignments, as all of them did in one or another respect. Though our war of independence and civil war had many revolutionary accomplishments to their credit, they failed to make blacks equal with whites and women with men.

What has happened in the century since 1865 has served to aggravate both problems. Consequently, these unsolved tasks of the democratic era have been transmitted for solution to the next stage of revolutionary advancement in this country, which is centred around the struggle for socialism. The American revolution now in the making is called upon by the course of our national development to do two sets of jobs at one and the same time. It must tackle the unfinished business left over from the preceding revolutions, such as equality for blacks and women, together with the tasks connected with the construction of socialism. This simultaneous combination of missions belonging to successive stages of historical progress is characteristic of the age of permanent revolution we are living through.

Some participants in the women's liberation ranks approach the intolerable predicament of their sex in a highly personalized and unpolitical way. They seek relief and release through some sort of psychological readjustment, anti-male attitudes, or by gathering together in small utopian communes.

These reactions are understandable in the first flush of revulsion against family domination and male chauvinism and in the desire to cast off the yoke of servitude without delay.

Indignation against injustice is a mighty motive force in the individual and in society. But bitter hatred for what is detestable has to be enlightened and guided by scientific understanding in order to become politically useful and socially effective. Rational inquiry into the underlying causes of the age-long oppression of women is indispensable for working out the best ways and means of attacking and abolishing it.

The Marxist explanation for the subjugation of women is based upon recognition of the fact that private ownership of the means of production, plus the right of property inheritance, was the prime condition for woman's downfall. This began at the dawn of class society and has provided the foundation and framework of her servitude throughout civilization. It persists today in the most developed countries because property and power are monopolized by the capitalist rulers.

What conclusions are to be drawn from these fundamental truths? First, that women cannot find freedom and independence or develop their capacities as a sex or as individuals within the confines of the most liberal capitalism. A liberal bourgeois attitude toward women involves no more than lengthening the chain which remains riveted to the stake of private property and the evils of the family, marital and sexual customs derived from it.

It also signifies that women cannot liberate themselves unless the socio-economic basis of male and capitalist supremacy is destroyed. A democratic workers' regime and the collective ownership of the means of production are required for any fundamental and beneficent transformation of the relations between men and women, husbands and wives, parents and children.

It further signifies that the exploited of both sexes must make common cause in getting rid of the capitalist class structure behind their deprivations.

Finally, it signifies that there can be no socialist movement and no socialism without the participation of women on an equal footing with men in all spheres of activity and without conscious counteraction against the habits of male chauvinism.

If the demand for women's equality is democratic, the call for her total liberation can only be socialistic. The relations between capitalism and the struggle for democracy have undergone a dialectical reversal in the 20th century. During its confrontations with the feudalists, the progressive big and little bourgeoisie promoted democratic rights and institutions. Now, as imperialistic capitalism holds sway, the monopolists and militarists have become the deadliest enemies of democracy. They deny the elementary right of self-determination to other nationalities abroad

and at home.

Under present conditions, the struggle for the expansion of freedom on any front and for any sector of the population cannot be separated from the anticapitalist movement of the workers, black and white. Only a socialist revolution can create the conditions for eliminating social inequalities of all types. Not least among these are the subjugation of women and the antagonisms between the sexes fostered by the alienations of a competitive capitalist environment.

Women have been one of the major forces in all the socialist revolutions of our time. The Russian Revolution and its sequel in Yugoslavia, China, Vietnam and Cuba have, whatever their deficiencies, introduced tremendous improvements in the lives of the terribly trampled upon women of these countries, raised their dignity and opened new vistas of opportunity and achievement to them.

All the earlier efforts to enlarge women's rights have been connected with broader movements of social protest. The pre-civil-war agitation in the U. S. was part of the upsurge against slavery. "It was the abolition movement that women first learned to organize, to hold public meetings, to conduct petition campaigns," writes Eleanor Flexner. "As abolitionists they first won the right to speak in public, and began to evolve a philosophy of their place in society and of their basic rights. For a quarter of a century the two movements, to free the slave and liberate the woman, nourished and strengthened one another." ("A Century of Struggle", p. 159.)

The feminist crusade of the late 19th and early 20th centuries was mainly a branch of that middle-class progressivism which tried to effect democratic reforms in the structure of capitalism.

The socialist struggle against wage slavery is today's parallel to the abolitionist struggle against chattel slavery - and the current strivings for womens liberation bear a comparable relation to it. Marxists must be in the forefront of this movement, which is a component of the most progressive tendencies of our time, and vigorously participate in it with their program and ideas. Many of the most effective fighters for womens liberation will get their organizational training and political education within a revolutionary movement.

In Australia, the womens liberation movement has developed rapidly in the nine months since its inception. Encouraged by the formation of groups overseas (in particular Great Britain and the U. S.) it was initiated by women already radicalised around general left wing issues, and active in existing left groupings. The traditional womens organizations (like the Union of Australian Women) do not contain the revolutionary demands with which womens liberation is concerned. The vital struggles around 'equal pay' are only part of the conflicts with which women are concerned in their advance



towards liberation.

These radicalised women in the left have initially seen their oppression, first in the form closest to them, male chauvinism. Much of the revolutionary potential will be lost, however, if women become diverted from an economic analysis of their position under capitalism to one based solely on the sexual roles played by men and women in this society.

Womens liberation is completely separate from the existing traditional organizations, and at the moment in Sydney, is organized solely by women, a vital step towards building a revolutionary force.

Womens liberation groups will be joined in turn and in time by rearoused contingents of militant workers. The strategic task is to have them strike at the main enemy together. The unified struggle of all these forces against capitalist domination is the key to bringing about a "new birth of freedom" for both women and workers for a socialist world.

Lady Astor, first woman member of British Parliament.

NO LABOUR LOST

**Ivan Dixon on
practical entrism**



In the June-July issue of Australian Left Review Eric Aarons laid about him at all the groupings on the left outside the Communist Party. One of the shots he fired in our direction was:

"But what is the strategy of the FI 'party' for example? One searches in vain for anything coherent, and the only thing that stands out is the continued consideration of "entrism", but exactly what this involves remains unexplained, while its failure to produce significant results over a period of thirty years is not analysed. The fact that there has been some success in achieving high positions in the Labor Party only pin-points the question: what is the strategy; what has been achieved by it; what is the perspective for future success; and where are the experiences illustrating its reality?"

This seems to me to be as good a starting point as any for a discussion of the tactic of working inside the Labor Party. We might observe in passing that the strategy of the FI has been fairly widely publicised on the left in the past, through the old "Socialist Perspective" and "International".

However, to set entrism in its general strategic framework: what we are trying to do is construct a mass revolutionary party capable of giving leadership to the masses in a future revolutionary situation, in order to overthrow capitalism in Australia. This involves us in an effort to unite together as

many people as possible behind a revolutionary political program. The emphasis in this program being on transitional demands such as withdrawal from Vietnam, workers control of industry, womens' liberation, an end to capitalist destruction of our environment, and urban planning. Demands chosen deliberately because they stack the system up, highlight its real nature, cannot be granted by the capitalist class without its suffering a severe defeat, if at all, and yet are acceptable to the masses at their present level of political consciousness. At the same time we conduct a program of discussions, on the nature of world capitalism, the history of the world communist movement, the state of the world revolutionary movement today and other relevant topics, aimed at continually educating both ourselves and as many people around us as possible in revolutionary Marxist theory.

This is also combined with action in mass movements, the antiwar movement, high school, university and youth organisations, the ALP and the Trade Unions, aimed at popularising this program.

Before discussing the nature of entry work inside the ALP we first need to summarise our analysis of what the ALP is, in itself and in society.

It is, first of all, a working class party based on the trade unions. It is a reformist party: reformism being the main product of the dominant bourgeois ideology of this

society as far as the labor movement is concerned. But while dominated by bourgeois ideology, it is not a bourgeois party; it is not controlled by the bourgeoisie as its own creation, as are the Liberal and Country Parties, but rather arose out of the trade union movement, and is dominated by the trade unions as far as its decision making processes are concerned.

A very large part of the population supports it, and recognises it, for better or worse, as its political leadership. At elections it gets more votes than any other party, and the only other ones with a significant mass base are the parties of the conservative coalition and the DLP in Victoria.

The youth of the country, having been predominantly against it in the immediate past, now show signs of swinging around to supporting it. This is especially true of students.

Attempts to win this mass support away from the ALP to rival parties set up outside it (the CPA and the CPA(M-L)) have so far failed dismally, though it is important to note, not in the trade unions. Although the CPA at the end of World War II seemed to be moving in that direction, it has not been an experience unique to this country. It has happened to every other small Marxist or left party rivalling an entrenched social-democratic party in the world. The mass communist parties such as the French and Italian, however Stalinised and reformist these may now be, arose not out of small isolated beginnings, but of splits in mass social democracies. These splits ran right into these parties' mass following and took large chunks of it away to the CP's.

When we work inside the ALP we aim not so much at capturing control of the ALP machine, "taking it over from within" as some describe it, but in winning away at a future crisis point a large part of its mass following to the support of a mass revolutionary party. Something which, on the basis of historical experience, is most likely to arise as a result of a deep split in the ALP.

We do not say this is inevitable. Only, because it is based on a valid historical generalisation, highly likely. It may be that the new CPA may be able to do what no other small leftist party in the world has so far been able to do: win a mass following to itself and become a mass party in its own right. If it can, good luck to it. But the lessons of history all point the other way. They indicate that the CPA will have no more success than a small group of militant Ironworkers of AWU members would have in building a new union for themselves starting from a position outside the existing organisation, or by hiving off without waiting for a genuine split to develop amongst the rank and file.

The clear lesson from the French events of May 1968 is that the revolutionary movement failed to continue, developing and deepening all the while. This was not

because there weren't enough Marxists of one kind or another around offering leadership to the working class. It was because these Marxists were not recognised by the great bulk of the workers as an alternative leadership to the treacherous bureaucrats Waldek Rochet, George Seguy and Co. of the Communist Party and General Confederation of Labor. The main hope for alternative revolutionary leadership recognisable by the workers, an open opposition grouping in the CP large enough to attract their support, failed to appear. The militant students were successfully isolated from the workers by the CP and GCL leaders. They found themselves in much the same position as the communists did in New South Wales in 1932, when Governor Game's sacking of Jack Lang ignited a mass movement which culminated in the biggest political demonstration in the country's history, one of 100,000 people at Moore Park. The communists were isolated on the sidelines, unable to win any significant following from these people, whose attention was riveted all through to the ALP.

The second point about the ALP concerns its internal life.

It is an election party, having almost no life outside of the electoral - parliamentary scene. The Moratorium provided the only break in this pattern of behaviour seen for a long time. The branch structure is based on electoral boundaries, there generally being 2, 3, or 4 branches in each electorate. Their function is mainly to provide workers at election times. In some states they also have the right to pre-select ALP candidates, though this right is under constant threat from the bureaucrats in the machine.

Branches grow and decline more or less according to the electoral fortunes of the party. When Labor is in office, particularly in State Parliament or the local council, branch membership and attendance rise due to an influx of people seeking some direct personal advantage in being close to the men holding power, and of people given some political motivation by the very social conditions that brought about the Labor government.

In New South Wales, the right wing machine values holding office in the state more highly than federally, because of all the patronage and perks it can give its supporters through the government. For the same reason, the loss of the Sydney City Council was a disaster of the first magnitude as far as the party machine was concerned.

The branches make whatever policy decisions they like and send them to the State Executive or State Conference, the latter being supposedly the supreme policy making body. However, the politicians have a great deal of de facto control over policy - as we saw in the last Labor government of New South Wales where they ignored a whole series of Conference

resolutions calling for the repeal of the penal clauses of the State Arbitration Act.

In the Federal Parliament the politicians are more closely tied by Federal Conference decisions on controversial issues than their State counterparts, because there is not that homogeneity of outlook amongst them that is to be found in state parliaments. All the famous left-right clashes amongst ALP politicians in recent times have been in Federal Parliament.

The ALP is an electoral party because the masses themselves equate politics with parliamentarism. The parliamentary party, not the machine, is what has their attention.

This was shown very clearly in the Moratorium where ALP politicians, particularly Jim Cairns, had an enormous effect in mobilising public support, and gave the impression, at least as far as Victoria was concerned, that the Moratorium was being largely organised by the ALP. That an estimated 120,000 people were involved, a number staggeringly out of proportion to the size of any previous Vietnam demonstration organised by anybody in this country, shows the continuing pull that the ALP has on the masses. The voluminous publicity unwittingly provided by the Liberal Party has to be taken into account, but cannot alone explain the Moratorium.

The importance of the politicians as distinct from the machine was shown in the Sydney Moratorium. Here the State ALP and Labor Council were opposed to the whole thing. Results clearly show that public attention in NSW was just not focused on them. Neither was it focused nationally on the ACTU as a part of the leadership of the Labor movement. The ACTU was divided and impotent on the Moratorium but the politicians support apparently nullified the mass impact of this.

The influence of the ALP in the public mind is not palatable to some, particularly those revolutionary purists on the ultra left. But they and all others who consider themselves to be revolutionaries must face it as fact, and dismiss it at their peril. For while they remain outside the ALP, for all their deep crimson purity, types like Whitlam will be able to move in with impunity and take the lead of the new force of young people and set it moving in a reformist direction, diminishing its revolutionary potential.

What are we trying to do in the ALP?

The job as we see it is to build a Marxist left wing, as distinct from the reformist one existing at the moment, although working wherever possible in a united front with that left wing to defeat the right. Essentially, the tactical differences which arise between us and our associates in the militant left on the one hand, and the old reformist left on the other, are over the question of who we are trying to

influence around the ALP.

The attention of the reformist left Steering Committee is directed in NSW towards those ALP members who still have the heart to drag themselves to State Conference every year. The name of the game for them is wheeler-dealing with anyone, right, left or centre, in order to get the number for their Executive how-to-vote ticket: and the Executive they seek is a "balanced" mixture of right wing grubs, middle of the road 'names', and themselves.

It is noteworthy here that the leadership of the reformist left is responding somewhat to the changing scene, the mass antiwar movement, the rise in trade union militancy, the crisis of arbitration and the left turn in the CPA. But while it ran a ticket at the NSW Conference that went about half way to being principled, its leaders were mostly absent when the left wing rank and file started disrupting the Conference with interjections and booing directed against the right.

The building of our type of left wing requires firstly, an organisation outside the ALP to act as a 'spiritual' home for the cadres inside that party, to prevent them from becoming corrupted and demoralised through work in such a 'decadent' environment, particularly in that bastion of grouperism, NSW. Entrist work without such an organisation is pretty well useless, and as far as we are concerned, the best organisation for this purpose would be an open section of the Fourth International. Our attention is directed in NSW towards left wing ALP members who no longer bother coming to State Conference, disgusted with the reformist left established sellout line, and non-members of the party who could be induced to join and help build a left wing around a revolutionary transitional programme.

Secondly means of linking these people up with work while people already in the ALP and in the process of joining it is needed. This is difficult, because the internal life of the ALP is based on locality branches, and the political level of the discussion inside these is generally at the level of the parish pump. For this reason, the left inside the ALP needs to hold regular all-in general meetings, to co-ordinate action and boost its own morale, as distinct from the meetings of the self-appointed coterie of union officials and attendants known as the Steering Committee.

Ways need to be found also to use the ALP branches as an alternative voice to both the politicians and the machine, since 'getting the numbers' at State Conference and in preselection ballots is not on the immediate programme. After all, only a fraction of the ALP members actually go to the State Conference - at the 1970 NSW Conference there were 565 union delegates

and 212 branch delegates. Getting a delegateship to Conference can be difficult, and it will always be much harder to involve large numbers of active leftists at this level than at branch level.

It is also hard to see the machine in NSW changing hands without right wing defeats in some significant unions particularly the AWU and the Ironworkers. The Steering Committee strategy of trying to win favour with the right wing by including such well known individuals as Laurie Short on its ticket is not only unprincipled, it hasn't worked. The only hope of beating the right wing permanently is to encourage left wing activity at all levels, including opposition groups within right wing unions.

The staff writer for Tribune who reported on the NSW ALP Conference in the June 24 issue, attacked the old strategy in the following terms:

"For the Centre-Left, the way lies not in top manoeuvres or seeing only the Numbers Game, but in developing the maximum rank-and-file pressures, in ALP branches as well as in unions, for a more democratic ALP structure, for positive progressive policies and radical measures on these. The right, unable to compete in this, can be forced on to the defensive."

This is an encouraging sign that the CPA has taken a new look at the strategy of the union leaders of the Steering Committee. If this line continues, a new and more militant attitude must develop amongst the rank and file of the ALP left, with whom the CPA does have an important influence through the left wing unions and Tribune.

The way to build the left, in short, is not to 'go quietly' as in the past and hope that the right will leave a few left wingers on its official how-to-vote ticket, but to turn on a battle royal in the Conference and at lower levels in the ALP, to show all the militant left where the action is and where they can lend a hand. We need solid confrontation with the 'Young Turks', as Tribune describes them, Ducker, Westerway and Co. of the NSW machine, not to forget old Charlie. Indeed, among the blows suffered by the right wing in NSW, none has been greater than the shattering of Oliver's image of permanent and overwhelming control of the Australian Workers' Union. A great boost to the left here.

However, entrism need not and should not be wholly directed towards influencing State Conferences, important as they may be. Much can be made of the grass roots organisation of the ALP. For while local branches of the ALP are not supposed to act independently of Conference and State Executive, it does not mean that they are not able to, after all, the officials of the NSW ALP showed clearly at this year's Conference that the rule book can be discarded whenever it

conflicts with their purposes. Local branches should be involved in a direct way in such things as antiwar demonstrations, and march as branches with their own banners, as well as taking direct and open action around local community issues such as town planning.

A practical example of local activity is provided by the recent history of the Balmain Branch, where two ALP aldermen, Nick Origlass and Izzy Wyner, were expelled from the party for voting against a caucus decision in the Leichardt Council. The decision was to give ALP support to the siting of highly dangerous chemical tanks in the Balmain residential area.

Such was the local feeling of support for their stand amongst the Balmain residents, that a genuine mass movement emerged. This resulted in the formation of a new Labor Party in the area, the Balmain Labor Party, which secured, with Origlass as its candidate, a massive 25% of the vote at the subsequent state election. This was in a seat traditionally known as an ALP fortress.

The limitation of this movement lay in the purely local appeal of the dispute which produced it, and in the larger Federal electorate Origlass polled much worse. None the less, in the eyes of 25% of the people in Balmain-Leichardt electorate, and of a majority in the Balmain part of it, Origlass was the real Labor man, as distinct from the other lot who had sold out.

Given an issue of wider importance - state wide or nation wide, a new radical



Labor party with a revolutionary transitional programme could emerge in much the same way as the Balmain Labor Party emerged. It is, incidentally, important to note that Origlass and Wyner were politicians in a parliamentary sphere - i.e. a local council - which easily brought them to the notice of the people. If they had only spoken out against the official ALP line in their capacity as branch officials, they probably would not have had such an impact. It is also noteworthy that the right wing poured oil on the flames by expelling them. If they had merely resigned to form the Balmain Labor Party the mass impact of it all would probably have been much less. However, 'Never resign' is an old and true political maxim. No one ever gains anything by resigning in protest, and the latest man to prove that in the ALP is Gough Whitlam. It is far better always to take such a militant stand that you force the right to expel you, and play it from there.

Now Eric Aarons asks us: what has been achieved by entrism so far? We can answer this truthfully: only a limited amount. Why? Simply because the ALP right wing is a rather big opponent for our admittedly small force to tackle. But given our limited numerical strength, a great deal. We can take our share of the credit for helping organise the 'breakaway left' at the last four NSW Conferences, whose tactical line in relation to the right wing has been vindicated by the 'Steering Committee' shift to the left, a manoeuvre designed essentially to head us off, and prevent us from growing into a new left wing leadership to replace them. We also helped organise a large amount of the anti right wing demonstrations which caused the press to note that this conference was the stormiest in years. Members of the ALP who were not delegates found that they could participate pretty well as effectively in the conference as the outnumbered left wingers simply by getting up into the public gallery of the Town Hall and abusing the right wing with placard and voice.

What follows from this is the conclusion that if a large number of CPA members and/or new left radicals were integrated into the ALP in an organised (not piecemeal) way, then the ALP would just not be the same party. These leftists would have, both in the ALP and in society, a political influence out of all proportion to their numbers, just as the communists have in the union movement, and just as our opponents from Santamaria's National Civic Council have through their operations in the ALP.

There is no doubt that the fight is hard. So is overthrowing capitalism, It

is also true that there will be political casualties on this battlefield. As our numbers and influence grow, some of us are probably going to get expelled. But if, as we anticipate, the Australian experience is similar to that of the Trotskyists inside the Canadian counterpart to the ALP, the New Democratic Party, then for every one expelled we should be able to put three or four back in.

If Eric Aarons or someone else can prove that there is an easier and quicker way to build a revolutionary mass party, we are prepared to listen to him. But if, as all the indications are from social-democratic and communist history, that the road to a revolutionary mass party happens to run through a sewer, and that sewer is the ALP, then we are prepared to rope ourselves together and follow that road too.

Eric Aarons also makes the following point in his article:

"It is wryly amusing to see others now wrestling with this tattered 'leading role' banner. In addition to the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) which has been in this field for some time, we have the 'group of revolutionary' Marxists, supporters of the Fourth International' who have recently issued No. 1. of Socialist Review. This contains an article by Ernest Mandel on the Lenin Centenary, which concludes: 'The future belongs to Leninism. That's why it belongs to the Fourth International'. That sort of declamation the CPA has had enough of. We'll make them a present if they wish of all the old banners on which we have inscribed similar empty declarations. It is an interesting sidelight, too, that all the Australian contributors in Socialist Review write under pseudonyms - the better, one supposes, to exercise their 'leading role'."

He should know, on the subject of pseudonyms, that the right wing would be only too glad to expel us from the ALP, and putting our names to the articles in this journal would give them just about all the evidence they'd need. Of course it would be much better if we had an open section of the FI as well as our entrism cadres, and we hope this journal will help us build one. None the less, we are reasonably well known. The CPA officials know us, a good part of the new left knows us (in Sydney that is), ASIO, and therefore the ALP right wing, certainly know us, because they've tapped our phones. And anyone interested in Trotskyism can easily find out.

As to the leading role: revolutions have so far been made by revolutionary mass parties, and it is hard to see how

the Australian and imperialist bourgeoisies are going to be overthrown without one.

The major characteristic limiting the effectiveness of the international and Australian new left is its overwhelming tendency to spontaneity and ultraleftism, and its distrust of organisation. This last characteristic seems to derive from two sources: its healthy aversion to Stalinism, and its middle class origins. This is the reality. To recognise it is one thing; to accommodate and pander to it is something else. For the CPA some ultraleft hooks are already coming home to roost. Compare for instance, the warm support its delegates at the Left Action Conference gave to the ultraleft line of Brian Laver on the antiwar movement with the way Tribune attacked him in the June 24 issue for ultraleftism in the Moratorium.

The moth eaten old banners that Eric Aarons keeps in his back room are symbols of the type of Stalinist party and organisation that the new left youth just don't want. But that does not stop them throwing out the baby with the bath water: Leninist methods of organisation with the Stalinist monstrosities which displaced them.

The student ultraleftists will remain isolated from the masses in Australia, as they are in Europe and America, unless they join a genuine Leninist party integrated with the masses in mass organisations such as the trade unions and ALP, or unless they join an already formed mass revolutionary party. Moreover, after they graduate and get jobs and leave the universities, the places where their concentration in numbers makes their organisation easy, they will face strong pressures to depart from political activity and seek some accommodation with the system. This was the fate of the bulk of the leftist students of the 1950's.

It is only in a revolutionary Marxist Party that they are likely to retain their political drive and scope for activity.

This does not mean that a vanguard party cannot have within it rights of tendency or creative freedom. It does not mean that everyone has to think and act alike. Lenin's party as it was before Stalinism corrupted it is an excellent model of what such a party would be like.

Large numbers of people in Australia are now coming into industrial and political action already implicitly against capitalism. They are in the main looking to the ALP for political leadership, not to the ultralefts and the CPA, and while the latter remain isolated from them William and his PR sharpies will reap the benefits. The CPA will encourage ultraleftism and

accommodate itself to fragmentation on the left at its own peril.

The Russian Bolshevik Party, the anti-Stalinist Left Opposition and the Fourth International have been the successive organisations in which the full and rich traditions of the revolutionary Marxist thought which gave rise to the Russian Revolution have continued up to the present day - despite the mighty efforts of the Stalinists to wipe it out.

That tradition will be returned to by revolutionaries, because it is not hampered by lack of perspective created through years of mechanically following the Moscow line; because it gives us, above all, a science of making revolution, proven in practice.

The CPA Congress Documents show that it is moving in the right direction. The leadership however, has yet to make a full analysis of the party's history to find out and explain what went wrong in the Stalin period, just as it has to analyse the full history of world communism since the rise of Stalin. Otherwise, Stalinist tradition lives on: strategic assumptions derived from the Stalin period continue and Stalinist practice continues.

To say with Mandel that the future lies with the Fourth International, is to say no more than that it lies with the great tradition of European Marxism, Leninist internationalism, and of the Russian Revolution.



correspondence

welcome

Comrades,

May I congratulate you on your new magazine. From the contents of the first issue it is evident that you have taken another serious step towards the formation of a revolutionary vanguard in your country which can resolve the crisis of the leadership of the working class.

This is especially welcome at a time when greater numbers than ever before are actively opposing the aggression of the imperialist "allies" in Vietnam and demanding immediate withdrawal of Australian troops.

The high standard of the material and the attractive format of "Socialist Review" reflect the confidence you must feel in the power of revolutionary Marxism, of Trotskyism, to provide the answers and an action programme for the new layers who are being radicalised by this huge antiwar upsurge.

Venceremos!
George Fyson,
Socialist Action League,
New Zealand.

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