socialist party and an effective ALP left. There is a necessary and complementary role for both and, beyond that, a pressing need for a more effective and united broad left which brings together all those with a commitment to socialism and progressive issues.

It seems clear to us that an independent party is vital, given the many big issues before us and the current offensive of the Labor right to change ALP policy and contain and defeat the left.

The CPA has often stated, and we reiterate, that we are committed to work with all progressive, democratic and socialist forces to create a more united left to work more effectively for a socialist Australia. We wish to make it clear that our members, working alongside those who have chosen to leave, will continue to work in a comradely way.

The Immediate Future

The general meeting of members held last Sunday, April 29, represented a large majority of our membership and was the largest gathering of members for many years. The meeting decided that there was little to gain from dwelling on past events. 15 members volunteered to assist the State Committee in planning the State Conference, which will be held in June.

At the Conference our members will be discussing the prospects for socialism in Australia, and planning the ongoing work of the party in Victoria. We are optimistic that, despite our current difficulties the CPA will continue to make a significant contribution to the struggle for socialism in Australia.

A statement by the CPA's National Executive and the letters of resignation from Queensland and Victorian members are printed in the April 24 edition of Tribune. We hope that these statements and this letter of explanation help to clarify the situation.

For further information contact:
The Communist Party of Australia,
12 Exploration Lane,
Melbourne 3000.
Telephone: 662 3799
Statement from a General Meeting of
Victorian members of the Communist
Party of Australia

There has been considerable speculation in the press in the last
fortnight concerning the state of the Communist Party of
Australia. Everyone from the Financial Review to the National
Civic Council’s Newsweekly has seen fit to speculate.

The facts, as always, are somewhat different. We wish to clarify
them.

The Resignations

On April 17, 23 members of the Victorian State Committee
resigned from the CPA. Their considerable experience and
standing in the trade union and social movements is indeed a loss
to the party in Victoria. However, press speculation that the
resignations have crippled the party are wildly untrue. Nor is it
true that mass resignations have followed. To date, only 5
resignations have been received. In Queensland, 14 members
have resigned. There have been no resignations elsewhere.

While the resignations are a setback for the party, particularly in
the trade union movement, the majority of our activists continue
their membership and the breadth of our industrial base remains.
As well in all areas covered by the social movements, the CPA is
well represented. The party is, and will continue to be, an
important centre for activists in many different arenas of struggle.

In the letter of resignation there were no complaints about the
conduct of the prospects debate. Indeed, many of the 23
members who resigned played a central role in initiating the
prospects for socialism debate. The only reason they gave for
leaving before the debate was concluded (at our next National
Congress) was that it was clear to them that their proposal to
replace the CPA with a ‘broad socialist organisation’, would not
win majority support, and they felt that further discussions would
be useless.

The resignations of the 23 members were announced without
prior discussion with either the Victorian or national party bodies.
We were disturbed by the timing and manner of the resignations,
the selective lobbying of party members and the selective issuing
of invitations to members to attend a meeting to explain their
actions.

Those who have left the party in Victoria and Queensland say
they will work to establish a ‘new, broad, socialist organisation’
and that they no longer agree with the concept of an independent
socialist party. We cannot comment on the policies of the
proposed organisation because they have not been spelt out.

We state our firm belief that the effectiveness of the socialist
movement in Australia requires both an independent, democratic,