Labor Militant
For Workers' Power and Socialism

Hawke's faction on offensive

Economic strategy debate
Calls for rejection of Accord

Britain
Thatcher's new anti-union laws

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incorporating

SOCIALIST FIGHT
Labor Militant promotes socialist policies for the Labor Party. Each issue carries news and analysis from a socialist viewpoint of events and issues of particular interest to Party members. We have devoted a lot of space to discussing the Prices and Incomes Policy over the past year. In our view the Accord signed with the ACTU last February is of no importance to the social contract that proved so disastrous for British workers under Labour Governments in the 1970s.

Labor Militant looks at the nature of the capitalist economic crisis and the socialist measures needed to confront a crisis of this depth. This crisis is not caused by wage raises and wage cuts will not help resolve the crisis in the interests of the working class. We also devote a lot of attention to the threat of war and the wars that are already going on. From Central America to the Middle East, the United States and its allies are determined to block progressive movements in order to protect their economic interests. This drive to war by Ronald Reagan increases the danger of nuclear war and Australia’s participation as part of the US war machine must cease.

We also insist that progressive policies must be advanced by Labor on the liberation struggle in El Salvador, on Solidarity’s fight for socialist democracy in Poland, on the Israeli aggression in the Middle East and the rights of the Palestinian people, on the Indonesian occupation of East Timor and on the need to make reparations to Vietnam.

Labor is in government in four States and federally. Yet never before has there been a bigger gap between stated Labor policy and Government performance. Let alone the gap between performance and working class interests. This gap is reflected in the important debate and discussion within the Party Branches and at Conference. We seek to develop a broad coverage of this process.

We believe that the most free and open debate within the Party and affiliated unions on Party policy and practice is necessary to develop positions and actions that can represent working people from whom Labor draws its strength.

But the current structures of the Party and new democratic rules and practices prevent this. So we support moves to democratise these structures—in particular, to make the Parliamentarians and Party officials truly accountable to the ranks, unions and branches.

If you agree with these aims we encourage you to help finance and distribute Labor Militant. You can get each issue sent by mail at a cost of $6 for 10 issues. We can also make arrangements to have a bundle of any size mailed or delivered for your branch or for you to sell. There are high costs involved in the production of a publication like Labor Militant so any financial contribution will help to ensure its continued regular appearance.

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Signed articles do not necessarily represent editorial opinion

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Two journals in one

If you have got this far you already know that this is a special issue of Labor Militant that deals with the amalgamation of Labor and the coalition. Let us turn to this issue and let us look at the future of the Socialist Left.

The anti-Labor forces of the National Socialist left are in a desperate situation. They have recently become aware that they are in a desperate situation. They have recently become aware that they are losing support in the community. Their leader, Mr. Smith, is facing a serious challenge from Mr. Brown, who is a rising star in the Socialist Left.

The Socialist Left has been gaining ground in the community. They have been able to present a coherent and persuasive case for a socialist solution to the problems facing the country. They have been able to show that the capitalist system is broken and that only a socialist society can provide the necessary solutions.

The Socialist Left has also been able to present a strong and effective alternative to the Labor government. They have been able to show that their policies are better suited to the needs of the people. They have been able to present a program that is focused on improving the lives of working people and providing a better future for all.

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Hawke threatens job losses

'Australian people have to have a longer view, being concerned not merely for today's jobs but tomorrow's children'

If 1983 was the year of the economic summit, then 1984 appears to have been earmarked as the year of restructuring Australian industry. Both initiatives by the Hawke Government have been portrayed as major steps toward resolving the economic crisis. Yet behind the armaturas of a national consensus and short-term sacrifices for long-term benefits lies the same stark message—the workers have to pay.

Debra Stewart, member of Manlyville East (AWU) branch

In the interest of national reconciliation, the union movement would be required to forgone a 1.5 per cent wage catch-up, sign a four-year no-claims agreement and accept a wage fixing system that in reality does not fully compensate for inflation.

This year, in the interest of restructuring, the union movement is being asked to sacrifice jobs and make even more concessions to employers.

In response to Hawke's 'grand plan' for industry, many sections of the union movement have understandably fallen back on the old standby of calling for protectionism. But in the current economic climate, inefficient Australian industries can no longer afford to shelter behind tariff barriers.

The ACCC, which has not yet examined some of the restructuring programs of other organisations of its own design, has been forced to delay competitive. It can only be naively assumed that any profits gained through protectionism would be used to maintain employment levels.

Acceptance of the Prices and Incomes Policy by the union movement has also left it in a weaker position to resist the consequences of any major restructuring program. In fact it was the acceptance of this policy and the restrictions that it places on the union movement which has allowed Hawke to embark on this course.

The fundamental problem that Labour Party members must address is the success of clear-cut strategies and the outcome of the referendum in the Middle East. It is the only way that we can then go on to forge a new and better path.

In 1983, the Australian Steel Industry announced a plan to modernise its workforce. This plan was generally welcomed by the workers, who saw it as a way to improve their jobs.

However, in 1984, the plan was revised to include redundancies. This was a shock to the workers, who had been led to believe that they would remain employed.

The workers were also concerned about the lack of consultation in the decision-making process. They felt that their opinions were not being taken into account.

In response to the workers' concerns, the management agreed to hold further discussions. These discussions resulted in a revised plan that included some provisions for retraining and redeployment.

The workers were more satisfied with this revised plan, and they agreed to the redundancies that were necessary to implement the plan.

In conclusion, the union movement must be prepared to make sacrifices for the greater good. This is especially true in the current economic climate, where every job counts.

Labor Militant, March 1984
Critical that SL rejects Accord

The following is an interview with Kevin Reilly, a founding member of the Socialist Left in Victoria and editor of the Melbourne Socialist Left newsletter, Pickford City Council. The interview was conducted by Paul Weller.

Reilly: There is a great deal of discussion in the ALP Left at the moment, nationally, about the need to develop an alternative economic strategy. What is your view of the general direction of this discussion so far?

Weller: I think the discussion so far has been encouraging in that it has been held. There are some problems with the document that has come out of the national discussion so far. There is a tendency to accept the Accord. It makes the point that wages have been a cause of inflation, and I think there are questions that we certainly have to challenge and not accept.

Reilly: I agree with the point about wages being a cause of inflation. However, we should not simply accept the Accord. We need to challenge it and not accept it.

Weller: I agree. The Accord is a dangerous document that needs to be challenged. We need to look at the cost of living and the real wages of workers. We need to challenge the government on their policies.

Reilly: The Accord needs to be challenged. We need to look at the real wages of workers and the cost of living. We need to challenge the government on their policies.

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Labor Government should ensure that all workers receive at least the indexed CPI increase as a wage, and not have to crawl to some bloated judge on a bench, who may not give you the full amount even then.

Question: What has been the major issue in the debate on the GST so far? Is it a question of whether the GST should be imposed, or how it should be calculated?

Answer: The debate on the GST has been primarily focused on whether it should be imposed, with concerns about its fairness and adequacy.

Question: How do you see the GST affecting different groups in society?

Answer: The GST is expected to have a significant impact on low-income households, as they spend a larger proportion of their income on goods and services.

Question: What are the potential benefits and drawbacks of the GST?

Answer: The potential benefits include increased government revenue and a more efficient tax system. However, drawbacks include increased costs for lower-income households and potential for inequity in how the tax is applied.

Question: What do you think the future holds for the GST debate?

Answer: The future of the GST debate is uncertain, as it depends on the government's ability to address concerns and negotiate with other parties.

Manifesto of Social Rights

1. Social Security: A comprehensive system of social security that covers all workers and provides a safety net for those in need.

2. Healthcare: Universal access to healthcare, including free and affordable medical services.

3. Education: Access to quality education for all, starting from early childhood to higher education.

4. Housing: Affordable housing for all, with measures to prevent evictions and homelessness.

5. Environmental Protection: Policies to protect the environment, combat climate change, and ensure sustainable development.

6. worker rights: The rights of workers are protected and respected, with measures to prevent exploitation and ensure fair wages.

7. Peace: A commitment to peace and non-violence, with measures to prevent conflicts and promote international cooperation.

8. Justice: A fair and just legal system, with measures to prevent corruption and ensure equal treatment under the law.

The Social Rights Conference

A conference that will bring together experts in the field of social rights to discuss and develop strategies for addressing the challenges facing society today.

A call to action for social justice, equality, and a better future for all.
National Labor Women's Conference

The National Labor Women's Conference in Adelaide held over the Australia Day weekend, highlighted many of the contradictory facets of the Party's attitude towards women.

Jill Hickson, member of Whitford's W.A. ALP Branch, President of WA Labor Women.

One facet was the most progressive reform and spending programs initiated by the Federal Government on women's issues. Another was the attitude that Labor Women must advance their careers within the Party rather than as a vehicle for the Party to reach out and campaign to improve the situation of women.

The most important aspect of the Conference was the overwhelming hostility towards the top leadership for its policies on uranium and foreign policy.

The reserved response given by most delegates to Bob Hawke when he tried to give his main address and the huge anti-uranium banner held up during his talk certainly indicated this. Yet outlined in his speech were many of the Government's initiatives that will be of enormous benefit to Australian women.

These included the Sex Discrimination and Affirmative Action Act. The Green Paper was originally part of the Sex Discrimination Bill but was delayed for two years to allow community education about its benefits.

Other reforms have drawn violent opposition from the Liberals and the media.

- greater access to employment opportunities for married women through the Community Employment Program.
- a $4 million emergency for women for the National Women's Emergency Program. This will fund women's organisations.
- an extra $30 million for the Children's Services Program.
- a promise of an extra $5 million for Childcare Services.
- $50 million has been provided for childcare and an association with the Australian Education program, no mention was made of any plans for Government-funded free community childcare facilities. $8.5 million has been spent directly to create jobs for women but the lack of adequate childcare prevents many women from fully participating in the workforce. Those who do so often have to pay expensive fees and cope with the problems of inadequate services, where they exist at all.

The Women and Families workshop took up the issue of childcare. Hawke was seen as a right and as just one more welfare issue. Resolutions were passed demanding the setting up of childcare programs under a planned approach.

Significantly, abortion was one crucially important issue for women that was neither mentioned by the Prime Minister nor by Senator Susan Ryan in her address. But the workshop entitled "Our Bodies Ourselves" discussed this issue and mapped out a national campaign to rescind the Conference vote at the July National Conference.

It was also decided to try to have included in the Health Policy the sentence: "Women's right to all forms of safe contraception including abortion." The Conference also recommended to State Labor Women's organisations that they would carry the removal of all restrictions on the right of all women to access to safe, legal abortion.

Young Labor takes on Hawke

The fourteenth National Conference of Australian Labor held in Sydney on February 4 and 5, a number of key issues facing the Australian labour movement were discussed. In particular, foreign affairs and defence, uranium mining, economic policy and industrial relations.

Anne McDonald, member of the Harris Park (NSW) ALP Branch and the Chifley/Parramatta YLA.

Most notable in the discussions were the foreign policy proposals that led to a general dissatisfaction of the Conference with the continuing deterioration of Australian relations with Indonesia and the Hawke Government for adopted Party policy.

Motions were passed demanding that "the Federal Labor Government reverse its public policy in regard to denying aid to Indonesia until Indonesian troops withdraw completely from East Timor"; that the Labor Government "implement ALP policy on Vietnam and restore aid to Vietnam at least to pre-1979 levels"; and that this Conference condemns the unilateral announcement by Bob Hawke about the "inappropriate" policies on East Timor and Vietnam, made without consultation with, and against the wishes of the vast majority of ALP members.

The Conference took a strong stand against Australia's ties with U.S. Imperialism. Adopted motions condemned the Australian Alliance and the friendship of the U.S. on a partnership basis, as well as criticizing the U.S. intervention in Panama, Brazil and Argentina and demanding that the Government publicly condemn this U.S. agression.

There was fierce opposition to the Government's moves to win back Party policy on the mining of uranium. Conference called on the Government to "stop all uranium mining in Australia, both present and new contracts and that the ALP National Conference rescind the Hogg Amendment and make ALP policy on uranium." A further motion supported the involvement of the South Australian Young Labor Association in the coming Roxby Downs blockade.

On the subject Economic and Industrial Relations, the key area of discussion was the question of the ALP's views on the Industrial Relations Act 1988. The ALP unanimously resolved to oppose the ACTU and the ACTU union movement.

1983 NSW Young Labor Conference adopted a report that fully condemned the Accord, seeing it as merely another form of wage restraint. However, at this Conference, the motion put up by the NSW YLA, which stated that "any wage fixing mechanism should be determined as an attempt to make Australian industrial relations a model of 'reconciliation,' was defeated instead, a more ambiguous motion passed supporting the concept of the Accord but calling on the Government to maintain wage levels.

Hawke participated in this motion, and in contradiction to it, two other motions were introduced. This session was called on the Hawke Government to take no action to undermine the Accord, or to undermine the Accord, and to place it under control of the Federal Government. The other stated that the ALP should "implement a scheme whereby the national government would take control of the key industries would pass from private ownership to workers and government control."

Until such contradictions are resolved the clear socialist thrust of these latter motions will be undermined by the clear pro-business, pro-union, anti-workplace policies of the Accord.

Labor Militant, March 1984
The fight over foreign policy

This article begins a series leading up to the next Australian Labor Party Conference. Each part of the series will examine a policy area to be debated at Conference.

When Bill Hayden returned from the Middle East earlier this month, he was already well aware of the momentum-builders would be bringing to a special Cabinet for reviewing Party policy opposing Australia's participation in a war of aggression in Central America. Hayden had already made it clear that the Party's opposition to the war was inevitable, and that his return from the Middle East would not change that position.

The opposition is based on the following principles:

1. The war is illegal under international law.
2. The war is immoral, and will only lead to more violence and more deaths.
3. The war is against the interests of the people of Central America.
4. The war is a waste of resources, and will only lead to more poverty and more hunger.
5. The war is a threat to world peace.

The Party's opposition to the war is based on the following principles:

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Medicare makes a start

Medicare is a welcomed policy initiative of the Hawke Labor Government. Health care for the majority of Australians has become expensive and inaccessible due to the growing demands and the effects of the Fraser's dismantling of the old Medibank.

Coral Wynter, member of the Labor Left, has raised alarms about the increasing costs of health care. "It's time to bring Medicare back to its original form," she says. "We need to ensure that all Australians have access to quality health care, not just those who can afford it."
Thatcher's new anti-union laws

Local Government

Already 3 million are unemployed yet the Tories are planning to push up to 400,000 on the dole. Their target is the coal industry - 70,000 jobs, and in local government and central public services the savings could be measured in hundreds of thousands. For here the central target is the large metropolis authorities covering the big cities like Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, the Greater London Council and Newcastle.

In the local area of government Thatcher's aim is not just to cut jobs but also to change the traditional system with employment more lightly controlled by a powerful centralised Civil Service. In Britain local authorities carry a vast range of services including education, social services, police, road, housing, planning, environmental control, and creation of local industries. At Thatcher's insistence they go through the Tories will have virtually total control of all government and semi-autonomous councils to provide some measure of local improvement of nothing in the past World War II Labour government.

The ability of local Labour-controlled councils to run services in the way the class will disappear. There is a reform program that is not facing the facts. Every time the profits are increasing, strike figures are down. The cost over 15 years and the leadership of the labour movement is in retreat.

Tory strategy

From these experiences the current Tories have drawn two conclusions:

1. 72 laws that outlaw strikes and other forms of union action cover the way for workers to legally defy the state. If they get enough support this can cause a political crisis, like that which brought down the Heath Government;

2. 30 previous laws and social contracts have relied too heavily on union leaders being voluntary police of the union movement.

So current Employment Minister Tebbit, following the path of his predecessors, has decided on a policy of hemming in the union movement with a wide range of laws particularly aimed at the trade union movement. This law is the law that saw a British Labour Party leader, Robert Macmillan, win an injunction against the biggest print union (SCCP).

The Tory laws aim to restrict unions to house-trained bargaining units. It is ironic, to say the least, that Thatcher can still claim to be a supporter of Solidarnosc in Poland.

The miners in 1974, the ruling class has realised that its strategy towards the unions and the working class needs to be more carefully thought out.

Workers who have experienced a wide range of Government-initiated programs designed to cut wages. They have ranged from social contracts and incomes policies to straight-out jailing of strikers.

TUC sells out

On December 23, 1985, it became clear the Tories have picked the Achilles heel of the union movement by putting pressure directly on the officials. For that was the date when the TUC sold out the struggle at Warrington.
Coomeb-Ivanov affair

New evidence against ASIO

Joa Coxedge

The following is an interview with Joa Coxedge, a prominent member of the Socialist Left in Victoria and MLA. She is the co-author of a book about secret police in Australia Rooted in Secrecy. The interview was conducted by Rebekah Mohiakos, member of the Preston (Vic) ALP branch. A second part of the interview will appear in the next issue of Labor Militant.

**Question:** What would you say overall about the charges made against Mr. Coomeb?

**Answer:** The main thing is that this was agreed to by the Attorney-General, General Evans and others, that he had not committed any offence. It was never charged with anything.

The whole Royal Commission was based around finding out whether or not the Government had acted properly in denying him access to the ministers. This link was to the expulsion of Soviet diplomat Valery Ivanov and that was linked to the global campaign against Soviet personnel.

Australia put itself in line with other capitalist countries on this. If you look at what happened in Britain, there was a Soviet diplomat expelled prior to our expulsion of Ivanov. Looking at the two cases you find an uncanny resemblance: both diplomats even held the same name, Ivanov.

So, I refer to the translationalism was part of a global campaign of anti-Sovietism, and we fell in line with it.

In one sense, you could say that the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency got a double whammy effect in Australia. Not only could they check out a Soviet diplomat who they could claim was a KGB agent, but they could implicate a senior Labor figure as well.

In fact, it's quite blatant when you read the transcripts of the Commission, when the head of ASIO, Harvey Barnett, was interviewed and cross-examined, he came out and admitted, he had met with the Prime Minister and discussed their options. They could check out Ivanov, or they could do something that would have a big impact.

Of course the option ASIO wanted was to make a big fuss, because ASIO was always a appeasement for never having found a spy in all the years that they have operatd. This thing was doing quite well, it was still quite big. The thing was causing all sorts of problems, and eventually they started to look for them again.

The implications are very serious for all Labor MPs, particularly for political activists.

The blush on the face of the Labor government on this issue at the time is quite clear, and it's quite obvious that the Labor government at that time did have a role to play in this.

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The Militant Propagandists in World War I

The following article examines the way Marxists in the Australian labor movement used propaganda in World War I. It is the first of a series of articles on this topic that will be published in future issues of this journal. The series is intended to provide a comprehensive history of labor's role in the war, and it will be made available to working-class readers in the form of a pamphlet titled "The Militant Propagandists in World War I." The series will be published in installments, with each installment scheduled to be made available on the first day of each month.

In August 1914, a crisis began to form in the labor movement. The assassination of Archduke Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary sparked a wave of violence that spread throughout Europe. The labor movement was quick to respond, and in the immediate aftermath of the crisis, the labor movement in Australia became deeply divided. The Labor Party was split into two factions, the pro-war faction and the anti-war faction. The pro-war faction believed that Australia should support the war effort, while the anti-war faction believed that Australia should remain neutral.

The pro-war faction was led by John Lang Hancock, the leader of the Australian Labor Party. Hancock believed that Australia should support the war effort because it was in the best interests of the working class. He argued that supporting the war effort would help to protect the rights of workers and would help to prevent the spread of socialism.

The anti-war faction was led by Tom Uren, the leader of the Australian Labor Party. Uren believed that Australia should remain neutral because it was in the best interests of the working class. He argued that supporting the war effort would only help to prolong the war and would do nothing to help the working class.

The dispute between the two factions was resolved when the Labor Party was dissolved and a new Labor Party was formed. The new Labor Party was led by Sam Hughes, who was a former army officer and a strong supporter of the war effort.

The new Labor Party was able to gain the support of the majority of the working class, and it was able to win the 1915 general election. The new Labor Party was able to implement a number of policies that were beneficial to the working class, including the establishment of a minimum wage, the introduction of a national health care system, and the introduction of a national education system.

The new Labor Party was able to maintain its popularity throughout the war, and it was able to win the 1917 general election. The new Labor Party was able to implement a number of policies that were beneficial to the working class, including the establishment of a national pension system, the introduction of a national unemployment insurance system, and the introduction of a national education system.

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Labor History

During the debate the Ballarat Branch put forward an amended version which was later to become a popular formula.

"That this Conference disbelieves in conscription of men unless all wealth is conscripted and that every effort is made to impress this view on Victorian members of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party."

But the motion passed, put forward by J. McNeill and T.P. Moroney of the Australian Workers Union, said:

"That this Conference absolutely pledges itself to oppose conscription of human life, and that it be a direction from this Conference to the ALP members to take immediate action to select candidates to contest the next election (in opposition to all (Parliamentary) members who vote in favor of conscription." But not as strong as Congress's motion, this resolution provided a good basis for building the anti-conscription movement.

The Militant Propagandists also tried to take advantage of the February 1917 overthrow of the Czar of Russia to stimulate discussion about how to stop the war. They resolved to publish and win support for the anti-war proposals of the workers, peasants, and soldiers of Russia and organized in their own country the Soviets.

A model motion was drawn up at the May 12, 1917 meeting of the Milions to be used in the Labor Party and unions. It read:

"That this Branch of the labour movement is to be entirely agreed with the intention of the workers and soldiers' delegations in Russia to convene a Peace Conference. In a neutral country and in accordance with the demands of the PLC (Labor Party) Delegates, Central Council of the BLS and Federation of the Trades Unions, the demand to the Government to draft a proposal for the immediate withdrawal of all troops from Russia."

The motion called for the Labor Party to "act immediately to stop elected day meetings at factories to protest against economic conscription for workers being forced into the army by economic hardship, unemployment and in favour of the peace resolutions passed at the Australian Labor Party's Conference."

The tactics used by the Militant were very different to those of the Industrial Workers of the World (WWII) who scored work in the Labor Party. The Militant were unorganized skilled but in burning their hands on the Labor Party, they made errors of a sectarian and ultra-left nature. Militants were too close to the Wobbly's and the Militant in the early period of the anti-conscription campaign were not prepared to take risks to build the movement. Yet when Hughes tried to undermine the movement, they formed the first up twelve members of the Wobbly's in Sydney who came to their defense, formally putting the Militant's case and distributed those to the House of Parliament.

On July 1, 1918 they helped organize a "monster demonstration" on the NSW Wobbly's and nine Militants who were later sentenced by the capitalist system, reorganizing the Russian Soviets in the motion the furthered the view that War was the inevitable result of capitalist rule, which could only be accomplished by united effort of the workers of all countries in an international conference to negotiate a peace settlement.

The motive force behind this resolution in NSW was a radical group known as "the industrialists" which will be dealt with in a future article. However, in Victoria the exasperating and organizing necessary to get this motion through was done by the Militant Propagandists.

At the same Victorian Conference the Militants narrowly failed by 50 votes (600 to 100) to he the Branch to a position of support for an immediate peace without annexations or indemnities.

The tactics of the Militants provide valuable lessons for socialists in the ALP today. The group had some prominent trade unionists as members but it never restricted itself to fighting the party through its official channels. It was also serious about winning support for its ideas among rank and file workers.

For example, a resolution adopted by the group on July 21, 1917 urged members to "take immediate steps to hold solid day meetings at factories to protest against economic conscription for workers being forced into the army by economic hardship, unemployment and in favour of the peace resolutions passed at the Australian Labor Party's Conference."

The Militant Propagandists in both NSW and Victoria in 1917 resolved to organize a "peace call" for a united effort for a workers' state to be accomplished by a "peace conference of workers of all countries in an international conference to negotiate a peace settlement without annexations or indemnities."

The motion further declared that War was the inevitable result of capitalist rule and that a revolutionary situation could only be accomplished by a united effort of the workers of all countries in an international conference to negotiate a peace settlement.

March on April 15

This year's large anti-nuclear demonstrations are to be held in most centres on April 15. The slogans will focus on such things as opposition to US bases and uranium mining. Many solidarity organizations will organize contingents focusing on particular struggles. Undoubtedly the stances of Central America and the Middle East will be prominent.

Adelaide:
2pm Victoria Square

Brisbane:
11am Roma St Forum. March to Albert Park Sound Shell

Canberra:
2pm, Russell Hill Australian War Memorial

Melbourne:
Marches converge at the corner of Bourke and Swanston Sts. Marches begin 1pm

Perth:
1pm Kings Park main entrance. March to Supreme Court Gardens

Sydney:
4pm Hyde Park South. March to Domain

The role of people in heading the anti-nuclear campaign cannot be underestimated.
U.S. invasion plans

The following article is taken from the February/March issue of the Venevision bulletin of the Committee in Solidarity with Central America and is based on a report presented to the North West Regional Conference of the U.S. Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) on December 10th.

The period up to the scheduled March 25 presidential elections in El Salvador will be one of major escalation of the U.S. war in Central America, a time when the threat of direct intervention by the United States will be at its peak. This is due in part to developments in El Salvador but also reflects domestic concern. Unlike the U.S. presidential elections in November 1984, United States policy will be formulated within the framework of the Reagan re-election campaign. There are many factors that point to the likelihood of a direct U.S. intervention in Central America before the end of March.

In Nicaragua, the Contras are launching a new guerrilla campaign to disrupt the Sandinista armed forces. Contra military attacks are escalating in Nicaragua because of the apparent success of the Contras’ efforts to disrupt the Sandinista armed forces. Contra military attacks are also on the increase in El Salvador where the FMLN began to intensify its military activity. The period from September 5, 1983, has been one of rapid advance by the FMLN, and the very size of the FMLN and its rapid growth in the Sandinista army is an indication of its ability to inflict serious damage.

The FMLN has been the most effective and most successful opposition movement in Central America, and its military successes have contributed to a decrease in U.S. military aid to the region. The FMLN has also been involved in the internal political process, which has led to the breakdown of the People’s Democratic Revolution in Nicaragua.

The CISCAP campaign has also been successful in raising awareness about the U.S. role in Central America and the need for a nonviolent solution to the conflict. The CISCAP campaign has been successful in mobilizing support for nonviolent solutions to the conflict and in pressuring the United States government to end its support for the Contras.

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Hayden changes Party policy

As Israel defence officials have admitted to the need for a political solution to the multifaceted nature of the conflict in the Sinai, the Defence Minister's visit to the Sinai and his comments have helped the Israeli army to gain a foothold in the area.

The latest situation was clarified on 9th October by Lieutenant-Colonel Hassan Ghanim, who is the Defence Ministry's senior officer in the area, and confirmed by the head of the North Sinai regional government, Mr. Ibrahim El-Sherif.

Franz Timmerman

President Israeli Human Rights Commission, Victoria

The statement was made during the recent visit to the Middle East by Australian Foreign Minister Bill Hayden, who visited Israel and Jordan, and followed a similar statement made on September 29th last year by the Australian Jewish News reporter who is in Israel.

Hayden visited the Sinai and the West Bank on his tour of the region, and is expected to return to Australia on Friday. The trip was seen as a sign of Australia's growing interest in the Middle East peace process.

Hayden said that the Israeli government had made a significant effort in the past to improve its relations with the Palestinians, and that the Israeli military had made a major contribution to the security of the region.

The statement was welcomed by the Australian government, which has been trying to improve its relations with Israel and the Palestinians.

The Palestinians

The positive side of Hayden's visit to the Middle East included his stated intention to focus on the political and economic aspects of the peace process.

In Egypt on January 21, members of Hayden's delegation were welcomed by the President, Mr. Egypt, and were accompanied by the Commander-in-Chief of the Israeli army, General Elad Weizman.

The trip to the Middle East was seen as an opportunity for the Australian government to strengthen its relations with the region.

Labor Militant, March 1984

middle east

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Labor Militant, March 1984
Economic News

Meaning of takeover scramble

While most of us were buying bigger cars and bigger houses, Australia’s largest companies were fighting it out with each other in the stock exchange. The first ten years of the recession saw some of Australia’s largest companies fight for control of each other. Today, the scramble is probably still on, but the stakes are higher.

Elders, for instance, have been trying to take over CUB, the largest brewing company in Australia. They succeeded in 1981, but CUB retaliated by trying to take over Elders. The result was a huge battle of share prices, and the companies have been locked in a constant struggle since.

Job losses

Under the conditions the prices and incomes accord workers are supposed to be given some degree of job protection, and are allowed to engage in economic planning through the structure of industry advising councils. Others, however, are openly repressing employees from taking any action that might be construed as "rationalisation" within the new regime. When large corporations like Elders, CUB, and United Breweries control the economy, it can be difficult for workers to fight for their rights.

The merging of two empires

The merger of Elders CUB and United Breweries is one of the most significant events in Australian business history. The companies have combined their resources to form a new giant, and the implications for the economy are enormous.

Some consequences

The merger has had a significant impact on the Australian economy. It has created a new giant, and the implications for the economy are enormous. The merger has also had an impact on workers, with job losses expected.

National Labor Council

Brisbane's long standing Labor City Council is under attack by the National Party. By the end of the year, the council will have to face the electorate in a general election. The National Party has been gaining momentum in recent months, and is expected to make a major impact in the election.

Helen Russell

Helen Russell, member of the National Party, has been a strong advocate for the National Party. She has been campaigning tirelessly for the party, and has been a strong voice for the party in recent months.

Legalisation

There is also aaron movement to legalise political parties. The National Party has been pushing for the legalisation of parties, and has been raising the issue in recent months.

The Labor Council itself, however, has not been averse to the idea of a national political body, and has been actively working towards the legalisation of parties. The Labor Council is expected to make a decision on the issue in the near future.
Mental health care

The Editor, Labor Militant,

Dear Sir,

I enclose your consideration on an article on mental health care written in response to Comrade Les Taylor’s article on the subject in your last issue.

I feel that any instrument to socialist policies requires that we support disadvantaged groups striving to control their own lives. In the field of mental health, this means supporting Reintegration, the union of intellectually disabled people, in its fight to cut back the large institutions; and unless the union is prepared to accept this as the basic aim of care in this State they are going to find themselves in conflict with the people they are supposed to be serving. It is only when the Party were to be asked to oppose the Aboriginalisation movement because of the threat of the jobs of staff in the mission.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Bourke

Member, Brunswick Branch, Victoria

There is a conflict between Victoria and South Australia that your report has now been referred to the level of segregation of intellectually disabled people is an obstacle to the implementation of the concept of ‘integrated living with all those people involved in the community. In both States this conflict has been attacked by sections of the union movement who have attempted to portray it as an anti-worker cut-cutting exercise. The article by Les Taylor in the August Labor Militant represents a classic example of panto-mimeering on this theme. If this kind of propaganda is to be effective it needs to delay the push to community living at the very least. Les Taylor has a willingness to delay the implementation of the proposed program and now seems to be trying to provide a more恭维 view of the ‘integrated living’ concept.

The argument is that people with mental handicaps are to be segregated but they need to live in the community. ‘Instead of the people being provided for you should be the people providing for the community living.’

Mr. Taylor’s words, the shifts into community homes might well be interpreted as being part of the creation of a well-organized community-based system of care for the mentally handicapped. ‘It would be a tragedy if people were to be kept in institutions because they are afraid of the community.’

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reviews

The Socialist Objective

The Socialist Objective
A laborite's review of socialist labor
Edited by Bruce McEveagh
Hale & Iremonger, Sydney

Sixty years after the "socialist objective" was adopted by the Labor Party in 1931, it was reaffirmed at the last National Conference in the following form:

The Australian Labor Party is a democratic socialist party whose objective is the objective of the democratic socialistisation of industry, production, distribution and exchange, to the extent necessary to eliminate exploitation and other anti-social features of these fields.

Now, for socialists even that must mean the overthrow of capitalism.

Richard Archer

National Auntisal (NSW) branch

Because under capitalism exploitation is not the name of the game. Nor, of course, for Social Democrats--those who believe a reformist approach will ultimately bring about change. Problem: the possibility exists for a non-exploitative capitalism brought about by enlightened government intervention and regulation.

And it is this Social Democrat interpretation that is dominated by a need to "achieve the political and social values of equality, democracy, liberty and social cooperation in the labor market," without the necessary support for a non-exploitative capitalistic system.

However, after the October 1975 election, the Australian Labor Party does not have this support, and the Social Democrat interpretation is in retreat.

The papers canvass the issues of what socialism means; the various barriers to its acceptance; long-term strategies to overcome these barriers; how to approach different political movements; the role of the worker in the movement; the role of the worker in the movement; the role of the worker in the movement; and the role of the worker in the movement.

The book fails, or does not better, to get down to the level where militant socialists can plug in.

And it is left unanswered by these papers are the questions: "What does it mean to be a socialist in the Labor Party?" and "What is the politics of Socialism in a Party that is dominated by the Social Democrats?"

Unless these questions are answered, the political difference between the two is left unmet. In other words, it is no good just outlining the different policies and programs if they don't contain an effective strategy by which power is to be taken from the right wing of the Party. If you don't have that political strategy, you will be overcome politically and this is precisely what has happened to the current Labor government. This is what is written is good, and at least unobjectionable, but the level at which it is pitched.

continued from page 27

Labor Militant, March 1984

New national youth paper

THE SOCIALIST OBJECTIVE

Labor & socialism

edited by Bruce McEveagh

THE SOCIALIST OBJECTIVE

Labor & socialism

edited by Bruce McEveagh

Committee Against Repression in the Pacific and Asia

Statement of Aims

1. To aid in defending victims of political persecution and injustice in the countries of Asia and the Pacific, regardless of their particular beliefs, affiliations or associations, and to provide whatever assistance is possible for their families.

2. To organise such actions as may be possible within Australia to put pressure on any Asian and Pacific governments to stop restrictions on the publication of dissenting reports and to respect the right to free speech and free association to respect the role of law in all political cases, to the extent possible.

3. To inform and arouse public opinion in Australia on the repression imposed by military, authoritarian and even constitutional regimes in Asia and the Pacific which do not provide genuine democratic rights.

4. To co-operate with organisations in Asia and the Pacific and other countries which have similar purposes.

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What's Left in Tasmania

The Left in the Tasmanian ALP has always had something of a schizoid nature. Rivaling up Left on national and international issues such as uranium and foreign policy, but bringing almost identical to the conservative forces on domestic political matters such as the Franklin Dam.

After the Left's victory in 1975 in getting major rate changes for the country, the campaign within the Left has been the consolidation of this position by playing the numbers game, while placing little emphasis on the development of progressive policies or the building of a strong movement to ensure that such policies were implemented.

Often members of this "Broad Left" defended their support for conservative measures such as the defeat of the "no dams" argument from the 1981 referendum on energy issues by invoking the spectre of the National Civic Council (NCC). While there is much to justify wakiness, the Left has been in disarray ever since the expulsion of Harradine in 1975 and Unich in 1978.

On a deeper level, the reason for this domestic conservatism has been the nature of the "Broad Left" itself. As cynics have often noted, the "Broad Left" is very broad without much Left (hence its nickname "the Broad"). Progressive policies would act as a disintegrating force upon such a broad coalition, paradoxically, while the Broad continued to place so little emphasis on policy, it was destined to remain conservative.

This policy paralysis resulted in policy development being left to the Parliamentary Labor Party (read public servants) and independent Left members with a sprinkling of the more progressive members of the Broad. These tensions were important in the dam issue, which effectively paralysed the Party and resulted in the eventual disintegration. The handful of unionists who were the real power brokers of the Broad took a weak line from the outset, allowing the labour movement to move into an unhappy alliance with the establishment: the Hydro Electric Commission (HEC), the media, the Liberal Party and the Legislative Council. It was a bad idea from the start. And it's one of the reasons why the Broad has been so successful.

Interestingly, at the same time on the mainland, progressive sections of the labour movement were challenging new power projects and industries associated with the "resources boom," such as in the Hunter Valley, NSW, and the activities of the State Electricity Commission in Victoria. These placed little emphasis on the labour-intensive manufacturing sector. While the environment movement made some mistakes in its strategy, it remained the only group capable of promoting the real issues in the energy debate nationally.

The realisation that the energy debate is the conservative movement's mobilising technique to mobilise thousands of people in previously sleepy Tasmanian centres, while the morale and membership of the ALP (then in government) took a nosedive branches which in 1980 had a regular attendance of 25 or so to struggle with a quantum of size in 1981. Members of the Broad still prefer to claim that the people who left were not really committed members of the ALP, rather than face up to the major mistakes that the ALP made.

Following the virtual annihilation of the ALP at the May, 1981 State election, the ALP National Executive intervened in the Branch, suspending all office holders and supervising the writing of new rules prior to the return of control at the October, 1981 State Council.

There was an influx of new members prior to the State Council and following the election of a Federal ALP government and the High Court decision to protect the Franklin River. Many of those people were keen to rebuild the Branch and get it committed to some progressive policies. Following the failure of the old Left to develop policies, a new group, the New Economic Directions Forum (NEDF) was formed, primarily to gather together people who were concerned with the development of policy.

The membership of this group was a schizoid affair, consisting of new members, old independent leftists along with people from mainland Left factions who had moved to Tasmania and were looking for the Left. Part of the price for having the group totally open was the attendance of right wing people. Its initial focus was to promote people on to the policy committees by using its collective voting power.

Due to its poorly delineated lines of accountability, one member co-ordinating liaison with unions took it upon himself to do a deal with the right wing where they would support NEFD candidates for the policy committees, with the NEFD supporting the Right's candidate for the Vice-President position. While it seems that most NEFD candidates did not deliver their votes, it illustrated the problem of the new group being exploited by the right wing.

Despite this problem, many of the policy committees comprised NEFD candidates as well as some progressive Democratic Socialists (DS) members (the former Broad) while the Right displayed little interest. Additionally, some NEFD candidates gained support from the DS.

The success of this grouping was in the initial stages of reconstruction was largely due to the fact that the size of the State Council was increased from 80 to 200 delegates, with the branches given direct representation. While the DS gained control of most of the machine positions at the State Council, the battle between the incumbent Secretary, Terry Austen, and the DS candidate, Eugene Alexander, dominated the debate. Alexander won, but the 1996 vote was a far cry from the days when the DS could claim to control 80 per cent of the Council.