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## AUSTRALIAN CAPITALISM

Towards a Socialist Critique

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manned by former officials of foreign offices and armies, informed by official (often secret) sources, foreign policy analysts quickly produced apologies for the Vietnam War. Faced with the collapse of that theory, found wanting in practice, a second tendency emerged to propose tactical revisions. Neither school confronted the reality of imperialism. But if the former were correct in their assertion – liberation movements are a threat – they were wrong in their formulation – terrorism and aggression. The latter are accurate empiricists – it is revolution – but prognosticate wrongly – the conditions *do* exist elsewhere. A new mystification for imperialism emerged, one not discredited by historical error yet not substantially different. Its slogan – Trust the ALP.

On 18 September Premier Dunstan revealed that the State Commissioner of Police had refused to implement the government's recommendation that an intersection be cordoned off when occupied. Paranoic about disorder, leftists and hair, the police exposed the limits of governmental power and determined to crush the rally. They did so with great efficiency an hour after Dunstan had left for Canberra and a dinner engagement at the U.S. embassy.

In reality, the peace movement has had no discernible effect on government policy. Nor can it be assumed that the ALP will change the established pattern of Australian perceptions and policies towards imperialism. The movement against imperialism will need to rely on its own resources, which are certainly growing. Short of accepting that Asians will liberate themselves and leaving it to them, the prospect appears to be a continuation of protracted cultural warfare the success of which will come too late to assist the Indo-Chinese people, but which may save Papuans from the rigours of having us defend them.

## Glory without Power

HUMPHREY McQUEEN

The idea of the Government getting into power, as is sometimes said, and then taking advantage of the fact that they are in power to do all sorts of revolutionary and impossible things never occurs to the Labour man in Australia.

John Storey, N.S.W. Premier, 1920.

In *A New Britannia*<sup>1</sup> an attempt was made to fulfil Antonio Gramsci's demand that the history of a political party should be the history of an entire society, from a monographic point of view. Thus it traced out the social forces which combined to form the Australian Labor Party and which so effectively integrated the party into capitalism. In order to demonstrate this integration the narrative went up to the period around the First World War. On questions such as racism, defence and state activity it became clear that the Labor Party was not a passive receptacle but was the active advocate. The present essay is designed to continue this exercise by expanding upon one aspect of the Labor Party's integration. Rather than concentrate completely on the obvious – that the ALP is organizationally and ideologically log-bound within capitalism – the present purpose includes

1. Humphrey McQueen, *A New Britannia*, Penguin Books, 1970. The present essay can be understood only as a complement to this larger work. But both need to be seen in the larger context sketched out in my essay 'Laborism and Socialism' in Richard Gordon (ed.), *The Australian New Left*, Heinemann, Melbourne, 1970. All three are by nature exploratory.



a preliminary survey of the party as an articulator of false consciousness for the labouring classes.

Six manifestations of the ALP as an agent for integrating the workforce within capitalism will be considered:

1. the quest for legitimacy;
2. the uses of Australia's race-war syndrome;
3. the façade of its socialist objective;
4. the vagaries of the 'money power', especially in relation to the Great Depression;
5. the internal organization as a juggernaut devouring idealism and energy;
6. the experience of being in office.

On no point can the discussion be exhaustive, nor should this list be seen as a complete catalogue. It is essential to realize that it is only on rare occasions that Labor's policies and practices are undertaken with the conscious awareness of their integrative role. For ALP leaders to be fully cognizant of the effects of their activities they would need to possess a view of society in terms of class conflict instead of as 'community versus sectional interests'; but it is partly because they lack a marxian class analysis that they behave in the way they do.

### 1. Quest for Legitimacy

While no single year, such as 1890, can be identified as a turning point for the labour movement in Australia, the Labor parties were not merely the organized expression of a set of previous demands for better wages, shorter hours, a state bank and the break-up of the big estates. In the very act of their coagulation the forces calling for these policies began to undergo the vital metamorphosis from protest groups into a political party which sought what it perceived as power within Australian society. Each colony-State proceeded at its own pace though after 1901 all were accelerated by the fortunes of the Federal Labor Party.

As outgrowths of the old Liberalism the Labor parties retained much of its ideological architecture and were consequently greatly influenced by the belief that the British constitution abhors classes. Conservatives took this as an argument against any form of direct class representation and opposed Labor parties *per se*. By the 1880s this held little if any sway over the Australian labouring classes who were becoming more and more certain that 'class interests needed class sympathies to fight for them'. In this they had the support of most liberals: labour should return its own members who, with the wisdom that comes from experience, could even be taken into Liberal ministries. But direct class representation did not justify direct class rule.

Totally devoid of any appreciation of the marxist theory of the state, the Australian labour movement found this a difficult problem to solve. As one of a number of great interests in society did labour have any right to rule by, of and for itself? It is customary enough today to hear anti-Labor spokesmen claim that the ALP should not be allowed to rule because it is divided and/or because its policies are dangerous. But it is less common to hear the charge that Labor should not be allowed to rule because it is sectional and consequently does not have the interests of society at heart. Yet in the years 1890-1910 this was the primary theoretical obstacle in Labor's path. How it overcame this problem to become accepted as a valid constitutional alternative is the first element in the story of the ALP's activity as an integrating force within capitalism.

The inheritance of class passivity which dominated the Australian labour movement before 1890 meant that even when it was directly and openly assaulted by the state during the strikes of 1890-94 its overwhelming response was to recapture this past: the state had been temporarily seized by capitalists and what it required was a return to neutrality. This was made clear in the telegrams which the secretary of the Australian Labour Federation, Albert Hinchcliffe, sent to Queensland's Treasurer, Sir Thomas McIlwraith, in September 1890 at the height of the maritime



strike. Hinchcliffe appealed to McIlwraith to forget that he was a member of the Employers' Association and claimed that everything would be alright if the state officials (the police) were left to do their job instead of being replaced by volunteers.

As repression continued the labour movement grew more adamant in its demand that the state be restored to its role of arbitrator. But these appeals left the Labor Party with its sectional nature confirmed. Inexorably, Labor as a party had to break through this self-image. This it did by transforming its view of the state from a neutral arbitrator to a neutral instrument. In the words of Arthur Calwell, Labor's great achievements 'were based upon this central doctrine: that the state belonged to the people and should be used freely and consciously by the people as the instrument for their own betterment and progress.'<sup>2</sup> Labor's confidence in its right to rule depended on its ability to surpass but still encompass its specifically labour constituency. So at the very heart of the Labor Party rests this suppression of any class identity. But if it was not to lose its working-class supporters it had to convince them that they too were the 'people', and not a class.<sup>3</sup>

2. A. A. Calwell, *Labor's Role in Modern Society*, Lansdowne, Melbourne, rev. ed., 1965, p. 30.

3. At an *abstract* level there was an alternative: Labor could have set about delineating the proletarian consciousness of the workers towards a revolutionary solution. This is mentioned not as a possibility rejected but in order to set the actual course of events in bolder relief. This criticism of the nature of the Labor Party's submergence of class interests into the national interest does not deny the necessity for a revolutionary party to represent the national interest if it is to gain power on behalf of the working class. As Marx and Engels observed:

'For each new class which puts itself in the place of one ruling class before it, is compelled, merely in order to carry through its aim, to represent its interest as the common interest of all the members of society, that is, expressed in an ideal form; it has to give its ideas the form of universality, and represent them as the only rational, universally valid ones.' (*The German Ideology*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1968, p. 62.) No one has yet succeeded in devising a formulation for this in metropolitan capitalist societies like Australia.

Given the experience of the Australian labouring classes in the nineteenth century this was not too difficult. Partly because it was founded after the industrial and bourgeois revolution, and partly because of the gold-induced boom of 1860-90, Australia succoured a consensual political and social system in which the perception of class was not sharply defined even by 1900. And by the time proletarian consciousness gained strength in the early years of this century the Labor Party had secured its organizational tribute with which it repelled and/or absorbed proletarian protest. Moreover, there were certain demands which, while dear to the hearts of the labourers, were concerned with the fate of Australian society in general. Foremost among these was the 'White Australia' policy. So when Labor adopted its first Federal Objective in 1905, the cultivation of an Australian sentiment based on the maintenance of racial purity was primary.

Other labour demands were amenable to this transition: the plea to cure unemployment through public works could become a call for national development; appeals for the break-up of the big estates attracted small farmers as well as being 'developmental' and a cure for unemployment; pressures for protection could unite employers and employees against foreign products. 'White Australia' needed an armed Australia and Labor's defence programme underlined its community concerns. That national development and defence could combine is demonstrated by Prince's recent study of Commonwealth Railway policy.<sup>4</sup> Writing of Fisher's 1910-13 attempts to alter the Constitution, Prince shows these to be part of an overall plan 'to implement a scheme of national railway planning for defence reasons.' Since this defence was directed at Asia, specifically Japan, some Senate critics considered that the commencement of the trans-continental line from Darwin southwards was, to say the least, dysfunctional.

Undoubtedly the most important single factor in Labor's assumption of this national role was the experience of being

4. E. J. G. Prince, *Threat Perception and Domestic Policy Response*, unpublished MA thesis, Monash University, 1970.



in office. Initially this was in some form of coalition so that the electorate and the party could have time to adjust to the altered position. The precise method of acclimatization varied from State to State. Dawson formed a minority ministry for six days in Queensland in 1899 and a form of coalition was entered into in that State with the Morgan-Browne and Kidston governments of 1903-7. Daglish headed a minority government in Western Australia from 1904-5. In Victoria in 1900, Labor leader Trenwith accepted a portfolio in a Liberal administration with the acquiescence of his party. Tom Price headed a Labor-Liberal Coalition in South Australia from 1905-9. Spence's comment on Price's period in office had wider application: 'the rich anti-Socialists soon discovered that the Socialist Premier ... could be trusted with big business affairs.'<sup>5</sup>

But it was in Commonwealth affairs that the major breakthrough took place with the formation of Watson's minority government in 1904. As if to reassure himself as much as his opponents, Watson appointed the Victorian liberal, H. B. Higgins, as his Attorney-General. For as L. F. Fitzhardinge has put it: 'The importance, in the long run, of Watson's Government lay not in anything it did, but in the fact that it accustomed people's minds to the conception of a Labor Government...'<sup>6</sup>

These early governments were probably more important for the comfort they gave to the wavering Labor sympathizer. Their effect on the Labor Parties was to heighten their expectations and increase their confidence. It was to take longer periods in office in their own right to complete Labor's transformation from a pressure group to an Ark of the National Covenant. Of course the Labor Party was convinced of this long before the electorate. In November 1903 the Victorian Labor weekly, *Tocsin*, proclaimed that 'the word "Labor" is synonymous with "Australian".... With-

5. W. G. Spence, *Australia's Awakening*, Worker Trustees, Sydney, 1909, p. 226.

6. L. F. Fitzhardinge, *William Morris Hughes: A Political Biography*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1964, vol. 1, p. 163.

out a Labor Party nationality is practically impossible.' It went on to present the consequences: 'The Labor Party is the National Party; therefore it cannot be the representative of any coterie or clique. The Labor Party stands for all Australians. Its ideas and aspirations are as wide and expansive as the seas that wash the Australian shores.' This was confirmed by the Report of the 1905 Federal Conference which said 'every interest in Australia was represented except the interest of the parasitic classes.' Over thirty years later John Curtin affirmed that 'Labor is not a Class movement; the Party belongs to the whole people.' Thus Labor overcame its sectional inhibitions by realizing its populist reality.

It was not simply for want of an alternative that the electorate returned Labor to office in the course of the three greatest crises that twentieth century Australian capitalism has encountered - the two world wars and the depression. It was also in part recognition for Labor's peculiar appeals. The very policies which had enabled Labor to present itself and to perceive itself as a national party were most relevant to the three crises.

## 2. Race-War Syndrome

Before the outbreak of the First World War, Labor had been largely successful in its unjustified attempts to appropriate to itself the defence preparedness of the Commonwealth. Deakin's efforts had been hamstrung by the 'Braddon Blot' which ended in 1910, the year Labor gained absolute control of both Houses of the Commonwealth Parliament. This enabled Fisher to spend far more lavishly and Commonwealth defence expenditure rose 300 per cent between 1910 and 1913. To a large extent Labor paid for and reaped the benefits of policies initiated by Deakin but there can be no doubt that in the minds of a large majority of the electorate, Labor had emerged as the 'Defend Australia' party. So when war broke out a month before the 1914 elec-



tions it was natural for Labor to receive the highest percentage vote it has ever obtained in a Commonwealth election.

But Labor could not escape the fatal duality of its achievement. The more successful it was at denying its augmented and recently self-aware working-class component, the greater danger it ran of splitting if this contingent found itself being neglected. This was particularly true of the early years of the First World War when unemployment rose and real wages fell. The first victim of this dilemma was George Pearce, the Minister of Defence who was unofficially expelled by important sections of the Victorian Party early in 1915. Wider disillusionment followed the abandonment in December 1915 of the Powers Referendum which would have given the government control of prices. Thus, almost a year before Hughes walked out of the caucus meeting after the defeat of conscription, *Labor Call* asked 'Is the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth a Labor Member or the representative of the Chamber of Commerce and the Employers' Federation?'

Moreover, it appeared as if Hughes and Pearce were prepared to sacrifice the 'White Australia' policy. Nothing was further from the truth but, to a sizeable portion of Labor supporters, conscription presented precisely these dangers: either coloureds would be needed to replace whites at the work-place as in France; or Australia would be so depleted of defenders that Japan would find her an easy prey. For as *Labor Call* put it as early as August 1915:

The White Australia question is going to be Australia's *bête noire* in the near future. How is Australia going to prohibit Indians or Japs, our allies, entering her gates? We don't hear much about the monkey and the turbaned man, nowadays. The caricatures in the *Bulletin* and the other comics are missing.

Hughes may have been able to ride out the storm around his economic policy; but without the appeal to racism he was unable to hold to him all the centre and right. Hughes lost control of the Labor Party when he was deprived of

racism as a weapon just as Labor lost its electoral supremacy because it could not sustain its community defence appeals in the face of sectional economic demands: conscriptors of the last man went one way while collectors of the last shilling went the other.

Labor's resurgence in 1940 returned to this point. As the custodian of 'White Australia', the Labor Party (despite its quasi-pacifism of the 1930s) held distinct advantages once the military threat came from Japan. The electorate could trust Labor to be implacable in its opposition to a 'Yellow Peril'. A pro-war advertisement in *Labor Call* (April 1942) confirmed this: 'We've always despised them,' it said, 'now we must smash them.' Even Labor's socialist reputation was of assistance in a war against an extreme right-wing enemy. After showing that only the Labor Party could have gained a smooth passage for conscription, manpower control and mass immigration, Sir Robert Menzies, in *Afternoon Light*, concludes: 'The accession to office of the Labor Party had, therefore, some valuable results.' (pp. 58-9.) Menzies neglected to point out that Chifley justified post-war immigration to his xenophobic followers by suggesting that if the scheme failed 'Asian countries will undoubtedly be looking at us and there will be increasing pressure for an outlet for their populations.' The distinguished biographer of Chifley describes this playing on racial paranoia as shrewd,<sup>8</sup> but whether one considers it shrewd or vile will depend upon one's attitude to racism. What is certain is that it was but one incident in a long tradition of Labor leaders reinforcing racial antagonisms in Australia.

7. Labor was not alone in its anti-Japanese racism at this time. After waging a fierce battle against European chauvinism in the 1920s and 1930s, the Communist Party produced a pamphlet entitled *Smash Japan* in which a Japanese officer is described as having a 'physique . . . in tune with his dwarfed, twisted soul . . . Ridiculously small, bow-legged, repulsive to look at, his teeth stuck out at an angle of 45 degrees through thick lips which he never stopped licking.' The pamphlet ends with a plea for proletarian internationalism.

8. L. F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley*, Longmans, Melbourne, 1961, p. 320.



Twice in the first half-century of its existence Labor capitalized on themes which it found agreeable to friend and foe alike. Post-Russo-Japanese War fears of Japan had driven the Labor Party into policies on defence which brought it support in a war against Germany in 1914. When the party split it lost its claim to rule on behalf of the community. But its hold on 'White Australia' enabled it to come again in another war when the danger was from a right-wing Asia. Since 1947 it has lost this advantage because the perceived Asian threat now comes from the left, specifically from China. This alteration in the international concert could not be anticipated and Curtin set the tone for Labor's post-war foreign policy when he told the 1943 N.S.W. ALP Conference 'that this land may remain free only by Australia remaining the policeman in the Pacific.'

Of course, Labor did not intend to operate unilaterally for it remembered General MacArthur's words of April 1942:

There is a link between our countries which does not depend upon the written protocol, upon treaties of alliance, or upon diplomatic doctrines. It goes deeper than that. It is that indescribable consanguinity of race which causes us to have the same aspirations, the same ideals, and same dreams of future destiny.

And, hopefully, the same enemies. However, as the war ended Evatt became alarmed at the Potsdam Ultimatum to Japan and pressed for a harsher settlement. During the next four years he strove for a firmer basis for U.S. commitment to Australian security. While the failure of his negotiations for a continued American base on Manus resulted from the terms he demanded, these were designed to ensnare America permanently in Australia's defence. That Evatt lost out is no indication that he wanted to; quite the reverse. In 1952, R. G. Casey, who was by then External Affairs Minister in the Liberal government, described Evatt's intentions as an attempt 'to get a broad regional arrangement in the Pacific with the United States of America.... That, if I may

say so with great respect, was a perfectly justifiable thing to attempt.... Had it come off, it would have been a feather in his cap.<sup>9</sup>

Evatt was still angling for a precise U.S. commitment late in 1949 when he paraded the extreme Acheson line against the recognition of the People's Republic of China. But Evatt's pre-1956 stance on this issue reveals a far more simple aspect of the integrating functioning of the ALP as a parliamentary party. From October 1949 to well into 1955 Evatt was prepared to excite the fear of Asia in the hope of winning votes either at the polls or in caucus. Describing Evatt's 1949 attitude as 'contrived, almost "professional anti-Chinese Communism"', Albinski correctly sees that the result of Evatt's electioneering was to condition the country against recognition.<sup>10</sup> In 1952 Evatt pandered even more assiduously to *News Weekly's* 'Ten Minutes to Midnight' hysteria by leading the attack on the government's decision to permit his erstwhile Secretary for External Affairs, John Burton, to attend a peace meeting in Peking. During the 1954 election campaign Calwell warned that if Menzies was re-elected there might be a Chinese Communist Embassy in Canberra. Twelve months earlier he had fondly recalled the Party's original objective of 'racial purity'.

In pursuit of their earlier successes, Labor leaders have endeavoured to conjure up a right-wing Asian menace. Evatt's 1954 policy speech contained asides against Japan; Arthur Calwell has been actively stirring against the Japanese for years, as well as continually screeching against Indonesia. Just how tortured Labor leaders can make the Asian threat is revealed in this interchange during the 1959 House of Representatives debate on the future of West Iran:

9. J. I. Dedman, 'Encounter over Manus', *Australian Outlook*, vol. 20, no. 2, August 1966.

10. Henry S. Albinski, *Australian Policies and Attitudes Towards China*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1965, p. 44.



Calwell: Even if we were prepared to trust Dr Soekarno, Dr Subandrio and the others who are in power in Indonesia today, could we trust another Indonesian government, if the Communist party were to come to power in Indonesia? If that were to happen, of course, our plight would be grave indeed.

Haylen: What about the Japanese?

Calwell: If Indonesia took over West New Guinea, there would be nothing to prevent the Indonesians from allowing the Japanese or some other people - Chinese Communists or some other potential enemy of this country - to flood in and become a menace to the future security of the people of Australia...

As a right-wing chauvinist Calwell's first thought was what would happen if Indonesia went communist. Haylen, a man of the left, endeavoured to deflect this with an interjection which merely enabled Calwell to slide into his speech on an all-embracing Asian menace.<sup>11</sup>

Because they reject any practical alliance with the revolutionary sections of the Asian people, the ALP's attacks on Indonesia and Japanese fascists validate amongst its followers the claim of a general Asian threat. Seen in this way Calwell is as responsible as anyone for the popularity of Australian aggression in Vietnam.

But neither Calwell nor any Labor strategist has been able to devise a formula which would enable the Labor Party to regain its privileged position as the defender of European society in Australia.<sup>12</sup> Labor's 'socialist' reputation means that it is perceived as being softer towards a

11. Leslie Haylen, *Twenty Years Hard Labor*, Macmillan, Melbourne, 1969, provides further evidence of racist ambiguity on the part of the Labor Left. Cf. p. 101 and pp. 104-10.

12. An opinion poll (*Herald*, 13 October 1970) asked '... what chance is there Japan will soon again become a great menacing power...?' 38 per cent thought there was a big chance, 38 per cent thought there was some chance, 18 per cent thought there was no chance. Labor leaders who write their policy speeches to fit in with 'what the people want' might find this useful.

left-wing Asian threat than are the Liberals. Ernie Bevin's formula that 'Left can talk to Left' has worked to Labor's disadvantage in Australia since the end of the Second World War. Nothing illustrates the irreconcilable nature of this dilemma more than does the continued existence of the DLP which is the tangible proof that Labor is not perceived as a truly national party.

As the authentic shade of Labor past, Jack Lang presented the problem with an explicitness that few, if any, Labor politicians can face. In a *Century* editorial (20 August 1965) significantly entitled 'White Australia and Communism', he wrote:

The Labor Party is now in the hopeless position where its former supporters believe that it has reneged on White Australia and is prepared to accept Black Australia or Yellow Australia rather than become involved in the inevitable war of colour, when black and yellow men will seek to exterminate the white peoples, even if it means that the earth will be as denuded of people as planets in outer space seem to be.

Outside the corrupt hierarchies of the AWU it is improbable that this view would find many ALP supporters, but it was precisely this view which more than anything else gave Labor so many of its past victories. It was race war which legitimized Labor as a national party, and in the process Labor helped to enshrine a reactionary nationalism as a central concern of Australian political life.

To some extent Labor's success in this regard can be gauged from the criteria against which it is considered legitimate to measure its performance and evaluate its ideas. It is 'unreasonable' to criticize the Labor Party for not combating racism with proletarian internationalism or opposing war with a general strike. Perhaps Kautsky could be found wanting in his response to the First World War because he had given undertakings which he did not fulfil. Australia's Labor leaders had made no such promises. They promised to lead Australia in race war, and this they did. No political scientist would accept as valid a comparison in which the



gap between 'standard' and 'behaviour' was so enormous, and where the fulfilment of promise was so complete.

It may well be 'unreasonable' to make such a juxtaposition and it certainly neglects the mitigating circumstances of history. But 'reasonable' is a relative term and if it is unreasonable to criticize Labor on these grounds given the society in which it has operated, this in itself is evidence of the triumph of a given set of values. So pervasive and puissant are these values that the comparison has not only been 'unreasonable' but inconceivable. Labor succeeded not merely in having its claims to national responsibility widely accepted, but it has been subsequently preserved from a critique of the values inherent in these claims, largely because the values remain so acceptable to the society at large, and so useful to its political opponents on the right. It is almost as if the very recognition of this usefulness has prevented Labor's critics on the left from investigating our 'Yellow Peril' syndrome for fear of opening a new Pandora's box of race paranoia.<sup>13</sup>

Labor's success at containing discontent within limits congruent with the continuance of capitalism could never have been achieved if Labor had not at certain points and in some ways been experienced as a force antagonistic to capitalism. In addition it is necessary for this antagonism to have been partly genuine, for the workers would hardly

13. This was brought home to me by my own reluctance to include these paragraphs on the grounds that they stretched matters too far. Further indication of the dominant position of racism could be gained by asking why the Communist Party did not practise revolutionary defeatism against Japan after 1942. Of course, there were differences between Czarist Russia and Australia on the one hand, and Germany and Japan on the other. But were the differences perceived as political or racial? And since not entirely racial, to what extent did racism allow communists to avoid the political arguments against the war?

As a basis for reconstructing the political argument see Noam Chomsky, 'The Revolutionary Pacifism of A. J. Muste', *American Power and the New Mandarins*, Penguin Books, 1969; and my 'The Sustenance of Silence', *Meanjin*, vol. 30, no. 2, June 1971.

fall victim to the brazen wink of untrue propaganda if something within their experience did not correspond to it; or at least if it did not exaggerate some aspect of their actual existence. This is not to denigrate the usefulness of the radical legends – Ward, Fitzpatrick, Turner, Gollan – in securing widespread acceptance of the ALP as a force capable of social negativity. No less important in this respect are the professional anti-communists whose propaganda has not only detached some support from the ALP but has equally kept alive amongst the party's socialist sections the hope that at least some of the allegations of hidden communists might be true.

Yet it is to the realm of less mediated experience that attention must be directed if the success of the ALP as an integrative force is to be understood. In this connection an examination of Labor's attitudes and practices in relation to socialism and to 'the money power' will be presented.

### 3. Socialist and/or Paper Tigers

Labor's claims to socialism continue to act as an important force against the emancipation of the proletariat from electoral domination by the ALP. The spuriousness of these claims will be demonstrated as will the partly conscious recognition by ALP leaders of the integrating effects their so-called socialist objective has had. Labor's socialism to the end of the First World War has been dissected in *A New Britannia*, so that ground will not be traversed here.

As a source of social dislocation the First World War produced a shift to the left by a sizeable section of the Australian workforce. Partly as a consequence of this, the ALP altered its platform in 1919 to include what was the most radical demand it has ever made:

Emancipation of human labour from all forms of exploitation, the obtaining for all workers the full reward of their industry by the collective ownership and democratic control of the



collectively used agencies of production, distribution and exchange.

This conference also holds 'a record for the number of successful motions favouring nationalization of particular industries.'<sup>14</sup>

But Labor's new objective was not primarily an indication of a leftward shift. Rather it was an attempt to contain this movement. For as E. J. Holloway pointed out at the time:

discontent in the ranks of Labour is due to the fact that people are looking forward to getting something new, and Conference should make the Objective more up to date. . . . It will be the fault of those responsible for shaping these things if the active spirits are lost from amongst us.

Holloway was thinking in purely electoral terms, but the effect of his proposal extended far beyond the ALP's parliamentary prospects to encase the burgeoning socialist movement. Holloway did not have to perceive the full implications of this matter. By concentrating on the demands of parliamentarism he had the effect of conscribing new ideas within the prevailing system.

At the 1921 conference a starker objective was adopted: 'The Socialization of Industry, Production, Distribution and Exchange.' The 1919 manoeuvre had failed to ensnare the socialists so further verbal acrobatics were demanded. Scullin defended the Objective with the claim that 'If there was any Conference in history trying to prevent revolution by force, this Conference is doing it at present.'<sup>15</sup> But the

14. L. F. Crisp, *The Australian Federal Labour Party 1901-1951*, Longmans, London, 1955, ch. XIV; D. W. Rawson, *Labour in Vain?*, Longmans, Melbourne, 1966, ch. 5.

15. Commenting on the 1921 Objective some thirty years later, A. A. Calwell was even more explicit: 'It was determined that the spurious claims of the communists to be a working class party . . . must be resisted, and it was thought that the change in the Objective . . . would . . . achieve the desired result.' See S. R. Davis and others, *The Australian Political Party System*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1954, p. 67.

ALP could not compromise itself entirely for the integration of its troublesome left, so the 1921 Objective was immediately qualified by the addition of the Blackburn interpretation which pointed out

That the party does not seek to abolish private property, even of an instrument of production, where such instrument is utilized by its owner in a socially useful manner without exploitation.

The N.S.W. Branch of the ALP waited ten years before endorsing the new Objective; even then the adoption was, in the words of Jack Lang, 'a matter of political expediency'.

The business of explaining away the Objective had hardly commenced. Theodore told the *Worker*, 13 July 1922, that while the Objective was socialism, the platform and methods were not but were palliatives tending towards socialism. Yet even the methods proved too socialist, and the 1927 conference watered down every section of the 1921 proposals and entirely removed the call for an elective Supreme Economic Council.

Not even the depression of the 1930s forced the ALP along the path of socialism. Scullin opposed bank nationalization on the grounds that the 'time was not ripe' for plunging the economy into further turmoil. His solution was 'to maintain our equilibrium, play the game, meet our obligations, and, when possible, evolve a better system.' Lang remained as hostile to socialism as ever and fought furiously if sometimes covertly against the Socialization Units.<sup>16</sup> Lang's tactician, Harold McCauley, had devised a scheme 'to ride the socialist tiger until it dropped from sheer exhaustion.' At the 1931 N.S.W. ALP Conference the Socialization Units succeeded in having socialism taken from the realm of an ultimate objective and placed at the head of the party's fighting platform. This forced Lang's hand and Mc-

16. Robert Cooksey, *Lang and Socialism*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1971.



Cauley decided that they should move for the rescission of the 'socialism in three years plan' by arguing as scientific socialists against the utopianism of the Units. Donald Grant quoted the *Communist Manifesto* and concluded that 'If Mr McNamara is right, then Karl Marx is wrong.' Cooksey sums up the outcome thus: 'For less than twenty-four hours the New South Wales Labor Party had been formally committed to "socialism in our time" as policy; never before or since has an Australian Labor Party been so committed.' Six months later Lang told his supporters that

... the revolution has come - is being fought now, and will continue a little into the future. (Cheers.)

It has come without our streets being barricaded, without the accompaniment of fire-arms, but in the way the Labor Movement has always said it would come, by Act of Parliament. (Applause.)

The Chifley executive in N.S.W. agreed with Lang about the undesirability of socialism and in 1933 recommended to its State Conference that the 1921 Objective be replaced by the 1905 one.

During the Second World War Curtin made a number of specific pledges against nationalization. Referring to the 1944 reconstruction powers referendum he pledged that 'No question of socialization or any other fundamental alteration in the economic system arises.'<sup>17</sup> Or as Calwell told the Federal parliament on 30 April 1942: '... this government will never inject any socialism into the economic structure ... except with the concurrence of the Opposition.' The 1943 Federal conference was more demanding and carried resolutions calling on the government to nationalize essential industries - especially transport. Another motion demanded nation-wide campaigning for socialism. The only action [*sic*] on this was a decision to produce 'a comprehensive publication to be officially recognized as a standard treatise on Socialism for Australia.' This was found to be impracticable.

17. W. J. Waters, 'Labor, Socialism and World War II', *Labour History*, no. 16, May 1969.

Folk-lore about the 1946-9 Labor government was well expressed by Les Haylen when he wrote: 'It was Chifley who took the holy ikon of Socialism off the walls of Caucuses and marched with it into the House.' When one considers the central position given to banking in pre-1940 Labor propaganda, what might be surprising is that Chifley did not go straight out for nationalization in the first instance; but as Crisp points out: 'If the private banks had settled down and worked harmoniously within the 1945 banking legislation, Chifley would never have moved for their nationalization.' On the wider question of nationalization, Chifley's attitude can be seen from these statements:

Representations have been received from various trades unions regarding the nationalization of coal mines and the iron and steel industry, and, in reply, I have pointed out that the Commonwealth Parliament has no power under the Constitution to nationalize those industries, even if the government wished to do so. Therefore, it is sheer nonsense to talk of the Government's plans for nationalizing such industries. (12 November 1947)

And,

The Government has never made out a list of industries that might be, or should be, nationalized in the interests of the community. Any decision of that kind can be made only in respect of particular industries in the light of circumstances existing at the time. (30 September 1949)

So as to 'allay some doubts which had been aroused by political opponents as to whether it had binding force' the Blackburn interpretation was reaffirmed at the 1948 Federal Executive meeting. As an indication of the ALP's relative political stance at this time it is interesting to recall that Blackburn had been expelled from the party and his widow sat in the House of Representatives as a left-wing critic of the government.

Labor had found great comfort in the High Court's decision that bank nationalization was unconstitutional. Significantly it did not put the matter to a referendum, although



it has sedulously fostered the belief that nationalization can be achieved only by a referendum. Yet Professors Geoffrey Sawyer, Ross Anderson and Julius Stone have pointed out that this is not necessarily the case at all. Or as the Chief Justice, Sir John Latham, who gave a dissenting judgement at the time, wrote in 1957: Section 92 'is not, as many think, an absolute protection against nationalization and the creation of Government monopolies in trade and commerce'.<sup>18</sup>

No one has worked harder at propagating the line that there can be no nationalization within the Constitution than has E. G. Whitlam.<sup>19</sup> But this is no cause for concern, he argues, as nationalization has become increasingly irrelevant because of the expanding number of large foreign-owned firms! What is needed now, he says, is 'internationalization', by which he means that the Australian government should enter into partnership with U.S. imperialism. For as he told the American-Australian Association in New York on 14 July 1970: 'I think there are advantages for American investors to have Australia as a factory in the eighteenth century sense of an off-shore factory for South-East Asia.'

Although the ALP shed most of its extreme right wing in 1955-7 there has been no left trend in its policies. As far as socialism has been concerned the official objective adopted in 1957 is weaker than any since before 1919: 'The socialization of industry, production, distribution and exchange to the extent necessary to eliminate exploitation and other anti-social features in those fields.' Joe Chamberlain who is often considered a man of the left presented his interpretation of the party's newly-acquired 'Democratic Social-

ism' in his 1957 presidential address to the ALP Federal Conference in terms so vague that any person born since 1900 would have difficulty disagreeing with them. He defined Democratic Socialism as

- Security in all its forms in the home.
- The breadwinner working usefully in the community and being remunerated at a level which will enable him to discharge the responsibilities of family life.
- His wife divorced from the drudgery of housekeeping as she can well be by the application of modern science.

In his 1961 and 1963 policy speeches Calwell went out of his way to declare that a Labor government would not attempt any nationalization in its first term of office.

It is when the ALP's 'socialism' is compared to that of right-wing British Labour opinion that it can be seen most clearly for what it is. One needs to read Evan Durbin's *The Politics of Democratic Socialism* to appreciate fully the hollowness of the ALP's socialism and the extent to which it has once more succeeded in having its practices accepted as the standard of evaluation. For as Crisp concluded: '... the Party has been infirm of purpose and spirit, spasmodic of effort and perhaps too ill-equipped intellectually in some directions to ensure continuity of success where advances have been initiated.'<sup>20</sup>

#### 4. The Money Power

Opposition to 'the money power' is a traditional populist appeal. Because it counterposes a tiny minority of bankers against the people it avoids class analysis and is highly compatible with the ALP's self-perception as the community's protector. In *The Commonwealth Bank of Australia*, Robin Gollan has shown the extent of this style of thinking in his study of the origins of the Commonwealth Bank. But the 'money power' syndrome did not lose any influence as a

18. For a fuller discussion of this question, see A. L. May, *The Battle for the Banks*, Sydney University Press, 1968, pp. 96-7.

19. E. G. Whitlam, *Labor and the Constitution*, Victorian Fabian Society, Melbourne, 1965. Examination of Whitlam, Hawke and Dunstan as proponents of 'technocratic socialism' has been deliberately excluded from this chapter but can be found in Rowley's chapter in this volume; in John Lorie, 'The Dunstan Government', *Arena*, no. 25, 1971; and in my 'Living Off Asia', *Arena*, no. 26, 1971.

20. Crisp, op. cit., p. 298.



result of the bank's establishment in 1910. *The Kingdom of Shylock*, which Anstey published during the First World War, was a blast (peppered with anti-semitism) against bankers and bondholders:

So the nation can levy men – but not Money. Men may die – Money lives. Men come back armless, legless, maimed and shattered – Money comes back fatter than it went, loaded with coupons, buttered with perpetual lien.

Given this background it was hardly surprising that social credit ideas found a ready audience in the labour movement. So great was this appeal that at the 1933 Federal ALP Conference, Forgan Smith, Premier of Queensland, was forced to advocate complete socialization in order to lessen its attractiveness. When Chifley decided that Australia should join the International Monetary Fund his caucus broke apart and approval was secured finally by thirty-three votes to twenty-four. Despite his training in economic history, Dr J. F. Cairns is still ascribing the world's ills to a 'kind of "international imperialism of money"'.<sup>21</sup>

The 'money power' provides a most instructive field for investigation of the inter-relationships between the ideas of capitalists and those whom they oppress. Marx pointed out that the capitalists themselves have a money fetish as they too believe it is a magic source of their power. Here is a situation where the same idea is accepted by both the 'hegemonic' and the 'corporate' classes, yet for both it is an ideology which can even impede the profit-making activities of capitalists as it did in the 1840s and, for vastly differing reasons, in the 1930s. It is significant that the one economic function absolutely allowed to governments by the conservative philosopher, Michael Oakeshott, is 'the maintenance of a stable currency'.

21. *Non-Violent Power*, October 1970, p. 7; perhaps Cairns' devotion to the 'money power' explains why he finds Marx inadequate as a social thinker. Cf. the interesting but dubious thesis of Robert Skidelsky in relation to the British Labour Government of 1929–31 (*Politicians and the Slump*, Penguin Books, 1970).

Once again it would be excessively simple-minded to see this concentration on the 'money power' as a deliberate plot to direct attention away from the real causes of oppression. That this has been one of its effects is undeniable. But it has a far more subtle influence: having preached of his adversary's omnipotence for years, the 'money power' advocate becomes mesmerized by it so that it operates as a self-confirming prediction rendering him ineffective when faced with the need to do it battle. Moreover, the failure to defeat it is not something for which he can be blamed given the basic premise that the 'money power' is diabolically resilient. Such defeats merely confirm the validity of the analysis.

Acceptance of the 'money power' does not necessarily involve people in the belief that there is an actual committee – 'Gnomes of Zurich' – who control the world. There will most often be some concentration on a particular institution or person but this will be buttressed with a complex of theories and precepts concerning the proper functioning of the financial system. Transgression against these rules will, of course, result in the active displeasure of those to whom care of the system has been entrusted and it is at this period that the bondholders will materialize as an identifiable enemy of the people. Talk of balanced budgets, the need for confidence and against repudiation are no less evidence of a 'money power' analysis than are its blatant expositions. In 1915 when Fisher dismissed Anstey's attack on the war budget by wagging his finger and repeating 'Finance, finance, finance', both were acknowledging the same 'hidden god'.

Similarly, in coping with the depression of the 1930s, the Scullin government's orthodoxy was simply the obverse of Lang's repudiation. Moreover, both saw themselves acting on behalf of the *community*: Lang presented himself as the defender of 'the bred and born Australian' from the foreign bondholder; Scullin and his supporters were no less anxious to serve the 'nation'. This was in line with Scullin's entire outlook. His 1929 election speech was praised by the *Australian Manufacturer* (26 October 1929) as intensely patri-



otic, containing 'no reference to class warfare', but being 'national in . . . outlook and atmosphere.' As Prime Minister, Scullin frequently pressed for a bi-partisan approach to the nation's problems and offered to drop every plank in the ALP's platform if someone would suggest a way to end the depression. Important elements in the party supported this attitude and the *Westralian Worker* (19 June 1931) advised its readers to remember 'that while Mr Scullin has a duty to the Party he has an important duty to the country and the obligations of the office he holds.'<sup>22</sup> Notice that when it is no longer possible to posit the 'people' as the highest good, their place is taken by an even finer abstraction – the 'nation'. For if the 'people' must take precedence over a class, the 'nation' is the final appeal for ending any and all protest. Thus Scullin rejected Lang by accusing him of dishonouring the nation.

Scullin's every move was constricted by his subservience to financial orthodoxy. He went to England to restore confidence; he reappointed Sir Robert Gibson as Chairman of the Commonwealth Bank Board to maintain confidence; and as Warren Denning wrote of him, 'he regarded himself as no longer a Labor Prime Minister; but as a man to whom the whole nation was looking for sanity, conservation and success.' Of course, Scullin was exceptional by virtue of the position he occupied but his response was no personal aberration. His methods would have been followed by any Labor Prime Minister as a consequence of the social analysis upon which they operated. Such was the logic of their position that the government which had marked its accession to office late in 1929 by announcing a Christmas gift of a million

pounds to relieve distress among the unemployed remained to preside over a twenty per cent cut in old age pensions.

State ALP premiers were no less subservient, although in the days when the States' activities were more extensive than those of the Commonwealth, they had far greater responsibility for the direct administration of the Premiers' Plan. In Victoria, E. J. Hogan's government was disowned by the Melbourne Trades Hall Council; although this was an unprecedented censure the Premier was unmoved and rejected a request to attend a THC meeting and instead spoke at the annual dinner of the Chamber of Commerce. His approach to the unemployed, whom he forced to work at non-union rates, was summed up when he told the Assembly in December 1931 that it was no inconvenience to sleep in the open on nights like these (unless his police arrested you for vagrancy).

Discussing Lionel Hill, the Labor Premier of South Australia, Sir Lloyd Dumas (ex-Chairman of Advertiser Newspapers Ltd) relates in his autobiography that whenever a Premiers' conference was held in another capital city either he or Sir Walter Young (then a director of Elder Smith & Co. Ltd) would try to be there 'in case a new point came up which the Premier would like to discuss. . . .' Dumas continues:

Apart from Sir Walter Young, I think Lionel Hill consulted me more than anyone else. For months he used to telephone me at least twice a week, and sometimes he would come round to my house for a talk.<sup>23</sup>

Eventually Hogan and Hill were both forced out of the ALP but their policies were not a whit different from those of Scullin who was probably saved from a similar fate by being outflanked on the right by Lyons. Certainly there is no reason to believe that Lang or Theodore would have acted differently. Lang invented his plan to outmanoeuvre Theodore

22. Warren Denning, *Caucas Crisis*, Cumberland Argus, Parramatta, 1937. *Labour History*, no. 17, 1970, was a special issue on the Great Depression in Australia – of particular use in the preparation of this section were the articles by Robertson, Hart, Cook, Bezins and Hopgood. L. J. Louis, *Trade Unions and the Depression*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1968, is the only full-length study of State politics at this period and as such is invaluable.

23. Lloyd Dumas, *The Story of a Full Life*, Sun Books, Melbourne, 1969, p. 54.



in a N.S.W. ALP faction brawl while Theodore supported his own plan for less than eight weeks before returning to the demands of the orthodoxy that he had vigorously implemented as Premier of Queensland from 1919 to 1925.

The crisis which the depression provoked did not put an end to the other features of Labor's integrative functioning as outlined in this essay. Attachment to parliamentary place prevented a double dissolution in 1930 while Denning, who observed developments at first hand, noted that 'Those who became Ministers were so fascinated, so infatuated with their unfamiliar roles that they held to their places in a desperate determination.... They overlooked in their almost childish joy, certain deep and vital political considerations.'

Economic nationalism revived and the ALP once more placed its hopes in high protectionist tariffs from which both capitalists and workers would benefit. This produced a situation which Denning described thus:

Canberra became a happy hunting ground for tariff 'touts'... whose purpose it was to impress on the government and the party the dire importance of Australian-made silk stockings, or razor blades or toilet paper, receiving the whole of the Australian market; and where ever two or three people were gathered together in a quiet place it was an easy wager that one of them was a Labor member, and the others high tariff advocates.<sup>24</sup>

Tariff levels almost doubled between November 1929 and April 1931.

With the adoption of the Premiers' Plan early in 1931 the basis of the protectionist argument gained a new direction to become 'equality of sacrifice'. Just as during the high tariff onrush there was to be a sharing of the benefits, under the Premiers' Plan there was to be a sharing of the burden. In propagating this view Labor was merely expressing the fundamental principle of its political career by which it had sought to envelop all divisions in the community for over four decades. Faith in its national role never faltered for, as

24. Denning, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

*Labor Call* said in September 1934, two days before the ALP's share of the national vote dropped to its lowest point since 1901: 'Each party in politics represents a particular interest, and the Labor Party's particular interest is the welfare of the whole people.'

The burden of this critique of the ALP during the depression is not that it should have been more tactically astute, or more morally sensitive. It certainly is not intended to execrate individual leaders as such. The point is this: in the midst of the gravest internal crisis that Australian capitalism has encountered, the ALP was organically incapable of understanding what was happening, and of making any moves to build socialism. Instead it retreated into its populist nationalism and strove to keep its erstwhile and remaining supporters safely within this tradition. Its entire experience had conditioned it for this role and it in turn assisted in conditioning workers to expectations consistent with its capacity and intent.

##### 5. Internal Organization

Integration into our capitalist polity proceeds differently for the non-politician who has his political energy emasculated by the great paradox of ALP activism: the more involved one becomes in party affairs the further one is removed from politics. The young idealist who joins the ALP to create a better world, perhaps to achieve socialism, will most likely find his enthusiasm burnt up in debates – not over issues like Vietnam or public ownership – but over how many election signs to erect, how many personal appeals to issue and how many how-to-vote cards to print. And the greatest of these is fund-raising: silver-circle clubs, donation sheets and barbecues. The more a member has to offer the more the machine will take, for it has an insatiable appetite for volunteers – branch, State and Federal committees all demanding officers and organizers.

Not only is the ALP the prime advocate of welfare statism, it is also a transmission channel for its policies and



practices. The closest many ALP members ever come to discussing issues is at the municipal level where kerbing and channeling, transport schedules and playground facilities turn branches into little more than progress associations. It is at this level that corruption is most prevalent – with the ALP being a mask for real estate interests. Achievement of public office will usually remove the activist even further from the substantive issues of his society. Aldermen, who are mostly part-time, expend a good deal of their effort performing functions that paid officials should carry out.

This applies equally at the State and Federal level where MPs operate as liaison officers for government departments and as unofficial welfare workers; occasionally, as with the late Jim Fraser in the A.C.T., the member will deliberately restrict himself to these functions. Senators are freer of these pressures because their re-election is largely impersonal, but for members with identifiable constituents the need to operate as quasi-ombudsmen is considered vital and no matter how much members complain of 'the fêtes worse than death', they dare not refuse.<sup>25</sup>

The success of this style of non-politics is evidenced by Duthie in Wilmot, while nominally ALP members like Grassby and Patterson can hold rural seats if they act as spokesmen for the collective grievances as well as the individual concerns of the farmers. All this is undoubtedly very helpful for electoral success but it is irrelevant to even non-revolutionary politics. The decision to work within the system produces not a static arrangement but rather sets in motion a tangle of organizational linkages which initially impede and ultimately transform any party which has accepted their rationality.<sup>26</sup>

25. If all this sounds trivial and dull I have succeeded in conveying an essential component of the means by which the ALP integrates deviant politics.

26. The classic study of the anti-democratic functioning of social-democratic parties, Robert Michels, *Political Parties*, Free Press, Glencoe, 1958, is interesting within its narrow limits but falls victim to the criticism of Antonio Gramsci's *The Modern Prince*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1957.

By way of compensation the ALP activist is offered the prospect of policy-making at State conferences. On paper the rank-and-file member has a direct chain of control to the legislative programme of a Labor government; he votes for conference delegates who determine the platform upon which the parliamentary candidates will be judged and to which they are pledged on pain of automatic expulsion. This model breaks apart at almost every linkage. Even supposing that a rank-and-file representative has succeeded in adding a plank to the ALP's platform, this does not mean that it will be implemented. The ex-president of the N.S.W. branch, Charlie Oliver, gave the most realistic appraisal of this in his address to the 1964 State conference:

The parliamentary party could not under any circumstances be in the position of having to act upon instructions of the executive, the Party Conference or any other body. . . . The resolutions at . . . Conference instructing the parliamentary Labor party, are to be taken only as expressions of opinion.

This is not how matters are supposed to operate, but Oliver spoke from long experience and with great authority. Several years earlier when the executive had endeavoured to direct Premier Cahill, he told the press that the views of 'little men do not worry me'. The politician exercises an influence over the ALP far greater than he ever will over the nation – or even over parliament.

In the cloying rhetoric that masquerades as the ALP's ideology there is one truth which, more than any organizational factor, has secured the integration of proletarian discontent: *the weapon of unity*, which succeeds because it is founded on the very real need for unity if the capitalist class is to be destroyed, or even if its offensives are to be withstood. But it is for neither of these considerations that unity is evoked within the ALP – indeed, quite the reverse. Appeals to unity have anaesthetized the vital class contradiction within the political labour movement; they have imprisoned the proletariat in the parliamentary system and thus helped to deform its whole development. The ALP's



iron caucus discipline is but an organizational expression of this.

In practice, unity has resulted in the coalition of social forces which inhabit the Labor Party operating as a popular front in which the lowest common denominator becomes its highest political demand. For, as Calwell said: 'Ten years, twenty years or even fifty years means a very little wait for the Labor Party for the winning of popular approval in their present or modified form, of its political principles.'<sup>27</sup> And so a procession of Labor leaders has slunk past chanting the words of Cardinal Newman:

*I do not ask to see the distant scene, one step enough for me.*

#### 6. Fruits of Office

In his discussion of the British Labour Party, Miliband points out that it 'has not only been a parliamentary party; it has been a party deeply imbued by parliamentarism.'<sup>28</sup> This applies equally to the ALP but with a vital addition: not only has the ALP rigorously confined itself to parliamentary activity and opposed industrial action to gain political ends, but it has also attempted to prevent industrial action to gain industrial ends.<sup>29</sup> At every level and for every demand it has sought to circumscribe mass pressures within the organizational structures of the state. This it has called socialism.

27. Davis and others, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

28. Ralph Miliband, *Parliamentary Socialism*, Merlin Press, London, rev. ed., 1972. For other material on the British Labour Party see Tom Nairn's articles in *New Left Review*, nos. 27, 28 and 60; Leo V. Panitch, 'Ideology and Integration: The Case of the British Labour Party', *Political Studies*, vol. XIX, June 1971.

29. For a fuller discussion of the role of arbitration see Sorrell's chapter in this volume; also my 'Labor versus the Unions', *Arena*, no. 20, 1969. It is essential to remember that the ALP could never have operated as it has if the trade unions had not been integrated as well.

Attachment to the parliamentary system can never be a fixture in the collective consciousness of Labor Party supporters. It must exert its influence afresh with each new member just as its genius will be revealed more fully the further up its hierarchy the member proceeds. The vision of truth offered by the parliamentary system is quantitatively different for its various participants although all must subscribe to the formula 'Being in office equals being in power.' Indeed, a difference does occur to those who achieve cabinet rank, as Gordon Childe contended:

The Minister faced with the actual responsibilities of governing, administering the details of his department, surrounded by outwardly obsequious Civil Servants, courted by men of wealth and influence, an honoured guest at public functions, riding in his own State motor car, is prone to undergo a mental transformation.<sup>30</sup>

Confronted with these new and fascinating activities, is it any wonder that a minister mistakes his ritual for decision-making, his speeches for social forces, his minted documents for transmogrified reality? But this higher experience intensifies the paralysis of his critical faculties by opening up a seemingly infinite complexity of administrative procedures.

Complete revelation comes only to the handful who become Prime Minister; Scullin explained his resignation as Leader of the Opposition thus:

I have come to believe that a man who has been Prime Minister suffers a handicap as Leader of the Opposition. He is expected to press the Government in every possible way; to insist upon statements on sensitive international matters; to call loudly for the tabling of international communications. But I know how delicate such matters can be, and how obliged a government may have to be, for some time at least, silent. Another leader would feel more free.

30. V. G. Childe, *How Labour Governs*, Melbourne University Press, 2nd ed., 1964, p. 25.



While this degree of enlightenment is a special preserve, its essential characteristic is common at every level of parliamentarism. The burden of Scullin's argument is indisputable – once the premises of parliamentarism have been accepted. Seen in this light, the hesitancy and vacillation associated with Labor leaders are not personal quirks but rather the logic of their entire political praxis.

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