

## 1: Class-Conscious "Fighting to unite the international working class in the socialist struggle.

*Class and struggle in Australia: an introduction 3 Human labour, unlike machines, creates new wealth, so labour power is a peculiar commodity: it creates more value than that embodied in it.*

The interests of the vast majority of Canadians are in conflict with the anti-democratic, neoliberal policies of the transnationals and the banks. The working class, due to its size and strategic place in the production of goods and services, is the natural leader of all democratic and progressive forces. It is organized as a consequence of modern production itself into a cohesive, continuously growing force that is compelled to fight back. It possesses no means of production. Its class interests are diametrically opposed to those of finance capital by virtue of its position in the economy. But the working class needs allies to take on and defeat the immense, coordinated power of finance capital. Therefore the trade union movement " its organized contingent " must build unity with other sectors and movements of the Canadian people adversely affected by the domination of finance capital, and which have an objective interest in winning a new democratic course for Canada. To be effective and successful, the struggle against finance capital must have the working class as its core, its driving force and leader. The Communist Party works for the development of a democratic, anti-monopoly, anti-imperialist alliance, uniting all the labour and other democratic movements and led by the working class. Such an alliance can win broad support for alternative policies to curb monopoly power: The Unity of the Working Class The leading role of the working class is the indispensable factor for effective united action of the people against monopoly capital; and the unity of the working class is essential to its ability to carry out that leading role. The working class movement cannot advance on the basis of economic struggle alone. It must challenge and eventually defeat the political power of the ruling capitalist class. To accomplish this aim, the working class needs its own political party. The Communist Party strives to be that leading political party of the working class. A strong and united trade union movement is vital to the defence and advance of the working class as a whole. Canadian workers have built their own trade unions and mass organizations, to protect and advance their economic interests as wage-workers. The unions are their basic organizations of class struggle. The gains made by the trade union movement serve the interests of all working people, the organized and the unorganized. Economic and social gains achieved by the unions help to raise living standards and social conditions for the working class and working people in general. This is why the ruling class systematically wages an ideological campaign to turn working people against the trade union movement. The struggle between the working class and capital has sharpened. The capitalist class and its state have launched an all-sided attack to weaken and destroy the trade union movement. This is a decisive part of the corporate drive to lower real wages and living standards. The struggle against concessions and to enlarge the scope of collective bargaining is an integral part of the struggle against finance capital. The most pressing task facing the organized trade union movement is to unite its ranks around class struggle policies and militant actions to confront the corporate offensive, to bring about democratic and anti-monopoly transformation, and to shift the balance of class forces in favour of the working class and its allies. For a Sovereign, United and Independent Trade Union Movement To combat the power of big business and the transnationals, the trade union movement must become sovereign, united and independent, with the highest level of coordinated strategy and action. It must oppose raiding, and resolve jurisdictional disputes in the interests of affected workers and the movement as a whole. In the face of capitalist restructuring, workers and their unions must demand greater control over the introduction of technological change, the moving or closing of factories, the duration of work time, corporate investment policies, worker retraining, health and safety and pay equity. To win a greater share of the benefits of the new technology, workers and unions must fight for a shorter work week with no loss in take home pay. They must also oppose privatization and fight for the expansion of the public sector. These demands strike at corporate power in the workplace. The trade union movement must defend the interests of all workers, both organized and unorganized, and pay particular attention to those most exploited and underpaid. With the organization of the public sector, the majority of organized workers are now in Canadian unions. However, many Canadian workers are still represented by international unions

headquartered in the U. Therefore the struggle for Canadian autonomy and the independence of Canadian sections of international unions will continue, always based on the vital need to maintain unity of the trade union movement, while ensuring that Canadian workers have the right to make all decisions within their respective unions and the trade union movement as a whole. The trade union movement must resolutely combat all forms of discrimination and intolerance that divides the working class, both within its own ranks and within society as a whole. It must struggle against racism, sexism, homophobia, and against discrimination of youth, older workers, or the disabled. The trade union movement must champion the social and workplace rights of women, and promote their fullest participation within union structures at all levels of responsibility and leadership. It must also cement the class unity between the workers in Quebec and workers in the rest of Canada, and between Aboriginal and non-aboriginal workers; oppose manifestations of national chauvinism; and respect the national and cultural diversity within the working class as a whole. The trade union movement also needs to strengthen its international solidarity with workers and their struggles internationally as a condition for securing its own advances. It must also seek out and build stable and enduring alliances with other democratic and social movements to defend and promote democratic rights, sovereignty, and the socio-economic welfare of working people in general, to oppose neoliberalism, capitalist globalization, imperialism and war. No less urgent is the task of organizing the unorganized majority of the working class, of helping them to lift their living standards and become involved in political action and struggle against finance capital. This includes organizing the growing body of technical, scientific and professional workers, and workers in service industries employing large numbers of women, youth and immigrants. This also involves special efforts to organize part-time, temporary and contract workers, and the organization of the unemployed. It includes active struggle for equality and against workplace discrimination. The rights of unemployed workers must also be defended, and every effort extended to assist them in organizing their ranks and fighting for full unemployment benefits and for decent jobs. The trade union movement must protect the internal union rights of all its members, especially rank-and-file members, and encourage their involvement in all labour activities. It must uphold the principle of inner-union democracy, and oppose bureaucratic and other undemocratic practices that undermine membership participation and control. To advance the overall struggle of the working class, the trade union movement must commit itself to a comprehensive program of independent labour political action, one which mobilizes organized workers into democratic and political struggle, in addition to workplace economic struggles against their employers. Communists in the trade union movement work to uphold the best, militant trade union principles and maximum democratic involvement in decision-making. This involves a long battle for a genuine working class policy, forged in the process of combatting capitalist ideology in the labour movement, and the carriers of that ideology. Historically, the economic base for reformism and opportunism inside the labour movement has been the imperialist exploitation of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples, enabling the imperialists of the exploiting countries to pass on a small share of their super-profits to a section of the workers in the form of higher wages. This formed a basis for cooperation with the capitalist class – class collaboration – and for the strengthening of capitalist ideas. Inasmuch as the Canadian monopolists shared in colonial super-profits, this process has had its effects on the Canadian labour movement. In the post-World War II period, the considerable growth of the productive forces of capitalism, the rising productivity of labour and its intensified exploitation, and the increasing rate of capital accumulation, enabled finance capital to pursue a policy of concessions to working class demands. This encouraged reformist thinking amongst workers, particularly as in the past among those sections of privileged workers given special material advantages. Reformist thinking was also encouraged, as always, by ruling class ideological propaganda and by the relatively privileged pay and life-style of a significant section of the trade union leadership. The capitalist class and the right wing in the labour movement used this extended period of relatively buoyant capitalist development to cultivate the false idea that capitalism has a capacity for continuous social advance, meeting the ever-expanding requirements of the entire people. The wide influence of this propaganda tended to make capitalism acceptable to important strata of workers. However, the economic base for reformism and class collaboration is steadily eroding. As the systemic crisis of monopoly capitalism deepens, big business is placing increasing demands on the

working class, and extracting more and more concessions. This in turn compels the workers to stiffen their resistance. Bourgeois and social reformism is still the dominant characteristic of the labour movement. There is increased militancy, but militancy alone is not yet class and political consciousness. The actual conditions of life for workers under capitalism create the conditions to challenge and overcome illusions about the ever expanding ability of capitalism to deliver the goods. The exploitation of the workers becomes more intense; they wage broader, more militant and united struggles for their needs. The illusions fostered by social reformism come increasingly into conflict with the realities of the class struggle. Thus the battle for working class policy and for working class unity incorporates an ideological struggle against capitalist illusions in the labour movement. The Communist Party conducts a constant struggle against reformist ideology – opportunist ideas that identify the interests of the working class with capitalism. Reformists view the capitalist state as an impartial authority, standing above classes. Reformism in the working class leads to class collaboration – or class partnership – between workers and capitalists. In this way, they politically disarm the working class and adapt the labour movement to the preservation of capitalism. Communists hold that the general laws of capitalism leave workers no alternative but to fight back against the consequences of its systemic crisis, to confront and break the power of finance capital, and ultimately to overthrow the capitalist system and replace it with socialism. While opposing reformism, the Communist Party supports the fight for reforms to protect working people from the effects of capitalist exploitation. The struggle for reforms helps the working class to gain confidence and experience, to strengthen their unity and organization, to deepen their class consciousness, and to shift the balance of class forces in society in their favour. The Communist Party links the struggle for reforms with the revolutionary transformation of society. Social Democracy The main political expression of reformist ideology and class collaboration within the labour movement in Canada is social democracy. Bourgeois parties attempt to operate within and influence the trade union and other mass democratic movements. The state apparatus and its infrastructure, including educational and cultural institutions, the capitalist-owned mass media, and other institutions of the ruling class conduct a daily ideological assault against working people. The Communist Party has continually worked to unite the reformist and revolutionary wings of the working class movement in the struggle for peace, democracy, and Canadian independence, and against corporate rule. It has provoked deep divisions within the New Democratic Party the main expression of social democracy in English-speaking Canada between its right-wing leadership, and an increasingly marginalized section of the membership who retain socialist convictions or even traditional social democratic views. This sharp debate has carried over into the labour movement itself, calling into question the continued political and organizational relationship between the NDP and the Canadian Labour Congress and its affiliates. The Communist Party believes the trade union movement is not well served by having automatic affiliation or permanent organizational ties to the NDP or any other political party, but rather by taking independent political action in mass extra-parliamentary struggle as well as giving support to particular electoral candidates, parties, coalition programs, or policies. These developments attest to the widening gap between the interests of the working class and those of right-wing social democracy. In the day-to-day struggle, Communists work closely with left-wing social democrats and other activists in the labour and progressive movements, and strive to develop united action and cooperation. The Communist Party continues to work for cooperation with the NDP around common issues and reforms, despite the widening gulf between the principles and class allegiance of the two parties. The more effectively the Communist Party works for left and democratic unity and strengthens its independent political activity, putting forward its Marxist-Leninist program and policies, the more the left forces, both within and outside the NDP, can be brought into united struggle for genuine progressive policies. This is the expanding feature of our time. Uniting these forces, together with the working class itself, into broad coalitions to resist the offensive of finance capital will lay the foundation for democratic and social advance, and for the emergence of a fully-developed democratic, anti-monopoly, anti-imperialist alliance. These forces include other classes and social strata whose contradictory circumstances more often, and to varying degrees, bring them into conflict with the interests of big business. Farmers and other primary producers, professionals, intellectuals, and small business and independent, non-monopoly capitalists have common interests in opposing the reactionary

policies of finance capital and its governments. These forces also include progressive currents within the national movement in Quebec. To unite women and men in common struggle against the common enemy, it is necessary to combat sexist practices and ideas which are reinforced by monopoly-controlled media and culture. It is also necessary to combat the growing ideological, organized campaign by neoliberal and other right wing forces seeking to promote backward ideas. The crisis of capitalism affects youth directly, giving rise to increasing militancy and resistance. As the aspirations of youth for a life with a future are undermined by capitalism, young workers, students, and youth of the middle strata increasingly desire change. The struggles of young people are centred around employment and education. Many young people are also opposed to capitalist globalization and imperialist aggression.

## 2: Women's liberation | Green Left Weekly

*Class and struggle in Australia is written in a lively and accessible style and provides an integrated and coherent Marxist account of fundamental features of Australian politics and society. It emphasises that classes are not only objective aspects of society but are also capable of subjective action.*

For courses in political science and sociology. Class and struggle in Australia is written in a lively and accessible style and provides an integrated and coherent Marxist account of fundamental features of Australian politics and society. It emphasises that classes are not only objective aspects of society but are also capable of subjective action. How they behave and consciousness of them is shaped by peoples experience, especially of social struggles. Features Dr Rick Kuhn, a senior lecturer at ANU, has years of experience as a researcher, teacher and political activist. Written especially for those without a background in political science or sociology. Lively and accessible style. Covers the capitalist class, the and working class,es and their most important institutions andplus the place of students in the class structure. Deals with the treatmentoppression of women, homosexuals and racial groups, and their struggles against oppression. Focuses on social conflict, Australian foreign policy and the environment. Integrated and coherent Marxist approach. Offers critiques of mainstream theories. Comprehensive account of inequality and its causes. To have and to hold on to: From exploitation to resistance and revolt: Labour movement leadership Tom Bramble 5. Students in classes Graham Hastings 6. Women, class and oppression Sandra Bloodworth 7. The neighbour from hell: Australian imperialism Tom OLincoln The workers flag is deepest green: He is the author of 1,2,3, What are we fighting for? The Australian student movement from its origins to the s and The origins of the Labor Party. Sandra Bloodworth co-edits the Marxist magazine Socialist Alternative. She has been active in many campaigns including Queensland civil rights , anti-uranium, abortion, and Aboriginal rights campaigns, as well as many trade union strikes. She has written about womens struggles, working class resistance in the Middle East and Australian imperialism. Tom Bramble lectures in industrial relations at the School of Business in the University of Queensland. He has published extensively on the Australian labour movement for the past two decades and has also published articles and books on the union movements of South Africa, New Zealand and South Korea. Diane Fieldes has been a left-wing activist since campaigning against the Vietnam War while at high school. She teaches industrial relations at the University of New South Wales and is active in her trade union, the campaign to free the refugees and Socialist Alternative. He is a former editor of The Battler and Socialist worker , and from was convenor of the Refugee Action Committee, Canberra. His PhD thesis deals with the development of the White Australia policy in the years Graham Hastings is a long standing left activist. Rick Kuhn teaches politics at the Australian National University. His recent publications have addressed issues in Australian political economy and labour history, and the work of the Marxist economist Henry Grossman. He is an activist in his union, the anti-war movement and Socialist Alternative. After several years in family and youth policy in the Australian Public Service, she is now undertaking postgraduate research in anthropology at ANU. In recent years, she has been involved in anti-war, refugee rights and student campaigns. Sam Pietsch became active in social struggles while studying history and political science at the ANU. A native of Canberra, he has finished his compulsory stint in the public service and has returned to the academic world. David Pope has been drawing cartoons for the labour movement and alternative press in Australia since the mids. He is the author of three books of political cartoons, and three books of cartoons on Australian English. Jeff Sparrow is the co-author with his sister Jill of Radical Melbourne: He is the reviews editor of Overland magazine, and is completing a postgraduate degree in professional writing at RMIT. Backcover Copy A framework for understanding Australian society Class and struggle in Australia provides an integrated and coherent Marxist account of fundamental features of Australian politics and society that also addresses rival explanations. It is written for those without a background in political science or sociology in a lively and accessible style. The introduction establishes a framework for understanding Australian society. The first chapters examine the capitalist class, the working class, their most important institutions and the place of students in the class structure. Later chapters deal with the treatment of women,

homosexuals and racial groups, and struggles against their oppression. Conflicts over Australian foreign policy and the environment are discussed in the final chapters. The authors of the chapters have all been involved in studying the relevant issues and political activity over them for prolonged periods. The editor, Rick Kuhn, offers courses on Australian and international political economy, fascism and anti-fascism, imperialism and classical Marxism, at the Australian National University. He has published numerous articles, recently on issues in Australian political economy and the work of the Marxist economist Henryk Grossman. *Class and struggle in Australia* draws on Dr Kuhns years of experience as a teacher, researcher, teacher and political activist.

### 3: Class and Struggle in Australia, 1st, Kuhn, Rick | Buy Online at Pearson

*Class and Struggle in Australia [Rick Kuhn] on www.enganchecubano.com \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. A devastating examination of inequality and its causes in the Howard era, Class and Struggle in Australia is a manual for those who want to understand growing social divisions and to do something about them.*

Rummel This much, at least, we should have learnt from Hegel and Marx: A situation characterized by the absence of manifest social conflict may contain important latent conflicts of interest; the latter may have a relatively great potential to serve as the focus of crystallization of manifest conflicts. This being the case we cannot, in sociology as in peace research, direct our attention exclusively to what "is"--we must at least be equally concerned with that which "could be. This notion is powerful in being dynamic, intuitively persuasive, and appearing to fit well with history. It is powerful in providing in one package a description, an explanation, and a prediction of contemporary problems, and a remedy. His was no equilibrium or consensus theory. The structure itself was a derivative of and ingredient in the struggle of classes. His was a conflict view of modern nineteenth century society. The key to understanding Marx is his class definition. Such ownership vests a person with the power to exclude others from the property and to use it for personal purposes. In relation to property there are three great classes of society: Class thus is determined by property, not by income or status. These are determined by distribution and consumption, which itself ultimately reflects the production and power relations of classes. The social conditions of bourgeoisie production are defined by bourgeois property. Class is therefore a theoretical and formal relationship among individuals. The force transforming latent class membership into a struggle of classes is class interest. Out of similar class situations, individuals come to act similarly. They develop a mutual dependence, a community, a shared interest interrelated with a common income of profit or of wages. From this common interest classes are formed, and for Marx, individuals form classes to the extent that their interests engage them in a struggle with the opposite class. At first, the interests associated with land ownership and rent are different from those of the bourgeoisie. But as society matures, capital i. Finally the relation of production, the natural opposition between proletariat and bourgeoisie, determines all other activities. As Marx saw the development of class conflict, the struggle between classes was initially confined to individual factories. Eventually, given the maturing of capitalism, the growing disparity between life conditions of bourgeoisie and proletariat, and the increasing homogenization within each class, individual struggles become generalized to coalitions across factories. Increasingly class conflict is manifested at the societal level. Class consciousness is increased, common interests and policies are organized, and the use of and struggle for political power occurs. Classes become political forces. The distribution of political power is determined by power over production i. Capital confers political power, which the bourgeois class uses to legitimize and protect their property and consequent social relations. Moreover, the intellectual basis of state rule, the ideas justifying the use of state power and its distribution, are those of the ruling class. The intellectual-social culture is merely a superstructure resting on the relation of production, on ownership of the means of production. Finally, the division between classes will widen and the condition of the exploited worker will deteriorate so badly that social structure collapses: With the basis of classes thus wiped away, a classless society will ensue by definition, and since political power to protect the bourgeoisie against the workers is unnecessary, political authority and the state will wither away. Classes are authority relationships based on property ownership. A class defines groupings of individuals with shared life situations, thus interests. Classes are naturally antagonistic by virtue of their interests. Imminent within modern society is the growth of two antagonistic classes and their struggle, which eventually absorbs all social relations. Political organization and Power is an instrumentality of class struggle, and reigning ideas are its reflection. Structural change is a consequence of the class struggle. However, time and history have invalidated many of his assumptions and predictions. Capitalist ownership and control of production have been separated. Joint stock companies forming most of the industrial sector are now almost wholly operated by non-capital-owning managers. Workers have not grown homogeneous but are divided and subdivided into different skill groups. Class stability has been undercut by the development of a large middle class and considerable social mobility.

Rather than increasing extremes of wealth and poverty, there has been a social leveling and an increasing emphasis on social justice. And finally, bourgeois political power has progressively weakened with growth in worker oriented legislation and of labor-oriented parties, and with a narrowing of the rights and privileges of capital ownership. Most important, the severest manifestation of conflict between workers and capitalist--the strike--has been institutionalized through collective bargaining legislation and the legalization of strikes. His emphasis on conflict, on classes, on their relations to the state, and on social change was a powerful perspective that should not be discarded. The spirit, if not the substance, of his theory is worth developing. Dahrendorf recognizes two approaches to society, which he calls the Utopian and the Rationalist. The first emphasizes equilibrium of values, consensus, and stability; the second revolves around dissension and conflict, the latter being the mover of structural change. Both are social perspectives; neither is completely false, but each views a separate face of society. Unfortunately, he feels, the consensus view has dominated contemporary sociology, especially in the United States, and he sets out to create some balance between the two views by developing and illustrating the theoretical power of a class-conflict perspective. A review of subsequent theoretical works bearing on class is followed by a sociological critique of Marx. These necessary scholarly chores completed, Dahrendorf presents his own view of class. Society grants the holders of social positions power to exercise coercive control over others. This control is a matter of authority, which Dahrendorf defines, according to Weber, as the probability that a command with specific content will be obeyed by certain people. Authority is associated with a role or position and differs from power, which Dahrendorf claims is individual. Authority is a matter of formal legitimacy backed by sanctions. It is a relation existing between people in imperatively coordinated groups, thus originating in social structure. Authority, however, is dichotomous; there is always an authoritative hierarchy on one side and those who are excluded on the other. Within any imperative group are those who are superordinate and those who are subordinate. There is an arrangement of social roles comprising expectations of domination or subjugation. Those who assume opposing roles have structurally generated contradictory interests, to preserve or to change the status quo. Incumbents of authoritative roles benefit from the status-quo, which grants them their power. Those toward whom this authoritative power is exercised, and who suffer from it, however, are naturally opposed to this state of affairs. Superordinates and subordinates thus form separate quasi-groups of shared latent interests. On the surface, members of these groups and their behavior may vary considerably, but they form a pool from which conflict groups can recruit members. With leadership, ideology, and the political freedom and social conditions of organization being present, latent interests become manifested through political organizations and conflict. How does Dahrendorf define social classes? They are latent or manifest conflict groups arising from the authority structure of imperative coordinated organizations. Class conflict then arises from and is related to this structure. The structural source of group conflict lies in authoritative domination and subjugation; the object of such conflict is the status quo; and the consequence is to change not necessarily through revolution social structure. Since authoritative roles are the differentia between classes, classes and class conflict also exist in communist or socialist societies. Classes exist insofar as there are those who dominate by virtue of legitimate positions such as the Soviet factory manager, party chief, commune head, or army general and those who are habitually in subordinate positions the citizen, worker, peasant. The Conflict Helix , which describes my view of class conflict as part of the social conflict process, reveals many similarities between the conflict helix and the dynamic perspectives of Marx and Dahrendorf. This section makes these similarities and some of the differences explicit. The conflict helix begins analytically with a conception of the social space as a field of meanings, values, norms, statuses, and class, where status has the joint meaning of formal positions as in authoritative roles and the informal statuses of wealth, power, and prestige. Marx and Dahrendorf also have beginning analytic conceptions of society. For Marx, it is people distributed on the bases of differentiated property ownership and sources of income; for Dahrendorf, it is differential power, norms, and roles. This subjective culture is purposely ignored by Dahrendorf in his desire to emphasize the conflict dynamics of society. The existence of some shared meanings and values is a prerequisite of class conflict, however, and a breakdown of crystallized meanings, values, and norms can itself generate the conditions for class conflict. A culture in which slave labor is generally believed right, proper,

and sanctioned by the gods, as in classical Greece, will have little associated class conflict. For Marx, meanings, values, and norms were themselves a product of property relations. Their closest counterpart, ideas, were a manifestation of class division. In the helix, the social space is transformed into a structure of conflict insofar as differential locations in the space define opposing attitudes. For me, an attitude is a psychological disposition to want certain goals. Attitudes form a switchboard between needs and active interests; the connections are wired through acculturation, socialization, and personal learning, and experience. It is the reflection of our culture and society, of our social space. These opposing attitudes are more than simply conflicting wishes or wants; instead we have a clash of opposing perspectives. The structure of conflict defines latent conflict groups, in the sense that people who have opposing attitudes are reservoirs for opposing interests groups. Now, I define class according to the relationship of people to authoritative hierarchies in groups. There are two classes, those with authoritative roles and those without, and these classes define opposing attitudes i. Other structures of conflict are not associated with classes, but this is the main one manifested in societal or collective conflict and political struggle. Classes are latent interest groups associated with the authoritative roles of imperatively coordinated organizations. However, Dahrendorf does not distinguish types of groups or dissociate authority and coercion, nor does he deal with the psychological implications of latent interests, feeling it sufficient to treat interests as a sociological category. With this I disagree; for an understanding of the meaning and process of conflict requires a preliminary consideration of perception, expectations, dispositions, needs, and power. To provide such a foundation was the intent of my Vol. *The Dynamic Psychological Field* , and my treatment of field and power in Vol.

## 4: MARXISM AND CLASS CONFLICT

*Class and class struggle. The existence of class struggle is an inevitable result of the division of society into classes. By their very nature, the existence of classes leads to class struggle.*

Each country has its own variations, but the core of the issue is in the conflicts in Western societies. In Australia as in the United States, there is a vaguely-defined class conflict in progress. Essentially, competing groups struggle because they have conflicting core values. Overwhelmingly the people involved in the government, media, health and education sectors come from this class. They have core values that transcend the historic left-right, black-white or even rich-poor divisions. Cosmopolitan values include belief in the importance of education, social moderation of behaviour and attitudes, preventing violence, acting for non-discrimination and empowering the oppressed. Cosmopolitans commonly have travelled and approve multiculturalism. The values reflect the development of Western society from a dominantly Christian and capitalist-colonialist social ethic, the incorporation of Marxist and socialist values in academic culture, to develop the current liberal consensus which sees key values shared by the left and right of politics. Their core values are generally traditional; they approve conventional gender roles and attribute violence and social dysfunction to individual choices more than social forces. Their values are more family-oriented and in some cases Christian-influenced. In general, less time in education and stronger identification with peers means they are unlikely to adopt beliefs that are fashionable among academics and cosmopolitans. Emotive labels are used: Rational discussion on marker issues like gun control is not expected. Win-win solutions are not possible because the terms of debate, set by activists of the cosmopolitan class, are defined in contempt for those who disagree. In Australia, the cosmopolitan value system almost exclusively qualifies entry to public discourse. In the United States the marker issues are not as closed, at least in the public forum. They represent them as morally contaminated. In this kind of politics, symbolic action is approved in contemptuous disregard for evidence. These well-known examples of legislative sanction are founded in moral status display. References Betts, Katharine, *The Politics of Immigration*. Duffy and Snellgrove, Sydney. *The Australian*, 20 March *Houston Law Review* 39,

### 5: 'The catch': refugees to Australia struggle to find work | Australia news | The Guardian

*Populists concede that there important are divisions within Australia and sometimes use the language of class. has obscured Australia's class structure it has sometimes also mobilised people along class lines and justified working class struggles. single parents in poorly paid. coercive union leaders.*

Ronald Reagan, George W. Bush, Hillary Clinton, the CIA, imperialism, sanctions, war, drones, anti-communism, discrimination, and exploitation. The American people are alleged to be a homogeneous bloc of ignorant, indifferent racists who blindly and enthusiastically back the reactionary economic and military policies of their government. However, while there may be an element of truth in some of this, the reality is far more complex. The United States is in fact a society riven with deep class contradictions. It has an enormous and powerful working class and an inspiring revolutionary past and future. In this short work, Alan succeeds in dispelling many common misconceptions about the US and draws on the marvelous traditions of struggle throughout American history. He provides one example after another which show how the ideas of socialism and communism are not alien importations, but rather, have deep roots in the American tradition itself. In a series of short and engaging articles, he brings to vibrant life the heroic revolutionary and labor traditions of this often-maligned country. Historical Materialism Unfortunately, many people regard history as dry and dusty an endless and disconnected recitation of dates and individuals. But history need not be boring or incoherent. In fact, armed with the Marxist method, the study of history sheds a bright light on the present and is indispensable in orienting our perspectives for the future. Far from being monotonous and linear, history is a rich and contradictory process, driven by the struggle over the surplus wealth created by the laboring masses. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms with the property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution. The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure. No longer does it appear to be a more or less irrelevant collection of useless trivia. Instead, the experiences of past struggles of the working class come alive, brimming with lessons for our own struggle to change the world today. American history As a young country, the history of the United States and its meteoric rise to world prominence is compressed into a few intense centuries. The richest country on earth certainly has its vast natural resources to thank, in part, for its position. In its pages, the history of class struggle in the US truly comes alive. Class struggle So just what is the class struggle? Simply defined, the class struggle is the struggle over the surplus wealth created by the producing classes. Will that surplus go towards further enriching the minority that controls society? Or will it go towards improving the quality of life of the working majority who actually produce the wealth? Or perhaps we can live in a world without exploiters, where society democratically determines what is to be done with the wealth we collectively produce? The ruling class is that class which controls the state and owns the means of production of society the land and natural resources, the workshops and factories, the banks. The actual producers of wealth are those who own nothing but their ability to work, and are therefore either owned outright as slaves, tied to the land as feudal serfs, perhaps own a tiny plot of land on which they scrape out an existence while still having to work and pay debts to others, or sell their labor power for a wage to a capitalist. That is the simplified essence of the class struggle. In the modern era, that struggle is above all between the working class and the capitalist class. Class society Ever since humans first developed as a distinct species and branched off from the rest of the animal world, we have organized ourselves in various ways in order to produce the necessities of life. We have come together in an array of socio-economic structures, including primitive

communism, slavery, feudalism, capitalism, and a wide variety of transitional and hybrid forms. For the majority of our existence, we lived as communists in a classless society, albeit on a low technological level. Broadly speaking, there are laboring classes, and those that live off the labor of others. The exploiters and the exploited. The two main contending classes in the class struggle are those who own the key economic levers of society—the means of production—and those who must work the means of production of another in order to survive. Sometimes the class struggle takes place between different layers of one and the same class, and sometimes the lines between the classes are blurred, for example in Spain, where the landlords were also capitalists, the capitalists were landlords, and the Catholic Church was the biggest landlord and capitalist of them all. Or even in New York City today, where Trinity Church is one of the biggest landlords and property owners, and therefore a powerful player in the city par excellence of finance capital. Talk about uneven and combined development—something workers in the Indian Subcontinent are all-too familiar with. All of this applies to the US just as much as any other country dominated by capitalism—you cannot have an exploiting capitalist class without a working class that is being exploited. Long before US capitalism entered its predatory, imperialist phase, the ruling class enriched itself on the vast natural resources and labor of millions of people right here on the American continent. Based on an extremely high level of labor productivity, American workers create vast amounts of wealth for the capitalists, but receive only a small ratio of that back in the form of wages. The effects of a strike of even a small portion of the American workers would be devastating to the profits of the capitalists. For example, just 36, unionized dock workers load and unload every ship on the West coast of the United States. This means that every single container imported to the US Pacific coast from Asia and beyond must first pass through the hands of a relative handful of union workers. Even a one-day strike of these dockers would result in billions of dollars in losses to the capitalists. This is a clear indication of the colossal power of the US working class. And yet, Americans themselves are rarely taught the truth about their own history. There is a very simple reason for this. A brief overview of early American history When Europeans first arrived in what would become the United States, most of the Native American societies they encountered were primitive communists—living communally on a very basic technological level. It was the Europeans who introduced classes into the US. They brought with them elements of feudalism, merchant capitalism, and of course, indentured servitude and chattel slavery. And yet, many readers may be surprised to learn that many of those who first settled in the US were bourgeois revolutionary democrats—people who had fought and failed to overthrow repressive governments in places like Holland, England, Scandinavia, and elsewhere. They were fleeing religious and political persecution. They brought with them ideas that were revolutionary for their time: Many of them also supported religious freedom, freedom of expression, and the freedom to organize. Eventually, the embryo of a native ruling class grew up within the old colonial society. This up-and-coming bourgeoisie did not want to share the riches created by the labor of the American toilers with the King of England across the Atlantic, and eventually fomented a rebellion. It was a class struggle between the nascent US bourgeoisie and the Southern slavocracy on one side, versus the British bourgeois and feudalists on the other. As always in the epoch of bourgeois revolution, although the political and economic benefits went to the bankers, mercantilists, lawyers, and large landowners, the actual fighting was done by the small farmers, proto-proletariat artisans and mechanics, slaves, and indentured servants. The pre-Revolution period of American history was also not without important examples of the class struggle. In 1771, there was the Stono Rebellion in South Carolina, the largest slave uprising in the history of the 13 American colonies. After the revolution, once the British had been expelled and their American supporters expropriated, the new ruling class worked vigorously to consolidate its rule. However, now that they were the oppressors, tax collectors, and profiteers, they faced the wrath of the ordinary people who had fought during the war for freedom and equality. In every one of the 13 former British colonies, economically ruined small farmers and revolutionary war veterans took matters into their own hands in an attempt to establish a more egalitarian society. The rebellion eventually fizzled out, due in part to bad luck and a blinding snow storm. But this wave of struggle against the new economic aristocracy had a big effect on the kind of Constitution and government that was subsequently established in the United States. When the subsequent Whiskey Rebellion broke out in western Pennsylvania from 1791 to 1794, the federal government

moved decisively to put it down, sending 13,000 troops with President George Washington himself at the head of the army. He was determined to send the clear message that popular uprisings would not be tolerated. In the decades before the Civil War, the tensions and differences between the slave-owning Southern ruling class and the rising Northern capitalist class continued to build. War was now the only possible way to resolve the contradictions. The American Civil War was one of the most dramatic examples of the class struggle in the whole of human history. In essence, it represented a revolutionary war between Northern capitalism, which at that time was an historically progressive system, and the slave-owning plantation system of the South—two fundamentally different socio-economic systems that could no longer coexist in the same state and on the same continent. Marx, Engels, and the First International were enthusiastic supporters of Abraham Lincoln and urged him to wage a ruthless war against slavery. Once again, the fighting on both sides was done by ordinary workers, small farmers, sharecroppers, slaves, ex-slaves, and immigrants. Entire workplaces in the North, many with workers organized in embryonic unions, shut down for the duration of the war and joined the Union Army to fight slavery. Many revolutionaries from Europe, including many who had worked closely with Marx and Engels, also joined the Union Army. Once the slave economy was smashed, the historical decks had been cleared for the relentless and merciless flourishing of capitalism throughout the entire country. These were slave-like conditions, but they now labored in the service of capitalist profits. A massive migration began, as millions of former slaves moved out of the South in search of jobs in the rapidly expanding industries of the North and West. The end of slavery meant that the lines of the class struggle in the US became clearer than ever. The class struggle was transformed into a titanic battle between the rapidly growing working class and the ever-richer capitalist class, with the middle layers and remnants of previous socio-economic forms increasingly squeezed out. The American capitalists were now unleashed upon the rest of the continent and eventually on the entire world. This brought with it greater polarization between rich and poor, and more brutal and sophisticated exploitation than ever in the pursuit of profits. Given the ferocious offensive by the bosses, the workers were compelled to organize collectively to defend their interests. In the decades after the Civil War, the organized labor movement gained momentum, a mirror reflection of the rising power of the capitalists. Hundreds of workers were martyred while working in barbarous conditions in the late 18th and early 19th century—conditions all-too familiar for workers today in South Asia. But American workers did not take these attacks on their rights and dignity without a fight. And although none of the many efforts to establish a mass labor party to politically represent the interests of the workers took root, that chapter of the American class struggle is also far from over. The class struggle continues. As the reader can see from this brief introduction, American history is very similar to the history of the rest of the world—it is a history of class struggle. The methods of organization and struggle of the working masses have changed and developed along with the development of the economy generally. But the trend over the centuries has been towards an increasing concentration of wealth on one side, and a concentration of the working class on the other. And although long periods may pass without open conflict, the class struggle is always taking place, sometimes just simmering beneath the ground, other times bursting to the surface and raging openly for whole historical epochs. The millions-strong anti-Iraq war movement in 2003 was more than a protest against the war; it reflected a deep-seated discontent with the status quo. The magnificent movement of millions of undocumented immigrant workers in 2006 showed the enormous potential power of the mobilized working class.

### 6: Class warfare in Australia? We should be so lucky

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In defiance of legal threats, construction and maritime workers walked off the job. Days later the charges were dropped. Even in auto manufacturing, which historically had high-paying union jobs, half of all production workers make under U. In Europe, major capitalist powers such as Germany are using the reactionary European Union consortium as a vehicle to impose vicious austerity measures on weaker countries such as Portugal and Greece, while wages and conditions of workers across the continent are under attack. Meanwhile, in sweatshops from Bangladesh to Indonesia, the Philippines and beyond, millions of workers toil for starvation wages as a thin layer of capitalist-imperialist exploiters rake in fabulous profits. Over the last ten years the devastating effects of the global economic crisis in Australia have been masked by the massive demand for mineral resources, above all by the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state. In fact, outside the resources sector, parts of the economy have stagnated or gone backwards. More than , jobs in manufacturing have been cut and the entire car manufacturing industry destroyed. Today, with the mineral resources boom winding down and the drumbeats of U. To maintain a competitive edge against international rivals, the Australian capitalist rulers are striving to increase the rate of exploitation of the working class at home, pushing for a more atomised and submissive workforce with even less rights. Labour-hire companies have become such a part of the landscape that full-time secure employment is just a dream for most youth today. Some wages have fallen so far, particularly after cuts to penalty rates, that even the Reserve Bank is worried about the effect on the broader economy. On top of this, access to welfare and pensions is being slashed while quality medical care and higher education are out of reach of many working people. Little wonder that a July Australian Council of Social Services report shows that inequality in Australian society is now deeply entrenched. The rules are indeed stacked against working people. Witness the plethora of laws designed to criminalise effective union action such as solidarity strikes and mass pickets. The idea that the interests of the working class and oppressed can met by returning Labor to the government benches in Canberra is a lie. Campaigns designed to tie workers to ALP parliamentary reformism have always been a graveyard for proletarian and social struggles. Pro-capitalist in its leadership and program while based on the unions, the ALP has historically used its links to the proletariat to both lull and keep them in check. Through this mechanism, in times of crisis, such as the two world wars of last century, the ALP has served the ruling class by presiding over the capitalist order. In power the ALP has time and again suppressed worker struggles. On occasion it has also served to co-opt left- moving forces, such as in the early s when the Whitlam Labor government introduced a number of reforms to placate a restive working class. But the potential for a challenge to capitalism was stymied when ACTU and ALP chiefs diverted seething anger into parliamentary impotence. While this offensive has continued to this day, there have been struggles by workers and occasional victories. Even the smallest win against the bosses is to be welcomed. However, as is always the case under capitalism, reforms benefitting working people are only ever a pallid and highly reversible glimpse of what will be achievable once workers have overthrown the capitalist system. The latter will never be achieved as long as the Laborite union misleaders and their ALP parliamentary brethren get away with duping workers that their interests can be satisfied through the ballot box. For example, it bans any attempt to restrict labour hire. It also entrenched the ban on industry-wide bargaining, first set in train by the Hawke-Keating Labor governments Even the use of the term scab to describe these low-life strike-breakers can result in a worker being sacked. The current Labor leader, Bill Shorten, whom the union tops hope to boost into the Lodge at the next elections, was key to ousting Rudd from the prime ministership at the behest of the mining magnates in At the same time he cannot even mouth a promise to restore the right to strike. At bottom this reflects the unitary pro-capitalist outlook of a privileged layer within the workers movement. There can be no common cause between the proletariat, who survive by selling their labour power, and the capitalists, who

grow rich from the exploitation of this labour. With their hands on the levers of production, the working class possesses tremendous social power. In the course of class struggle there needs to be a political fight within the unions to exacerbate the contradictions between the interests of the working class and the policies and actions of their current social-patriotic Laborite leadership. It is through such intransigent political opposition within the unions that the proletarian base of the ALP can be won away from its pro-capitalist leadership and a revolutionary Marxist party forged. A class-struggle leadership of the unions would demand hefty wage increases, tied to, at minimum, real cost-of-living increases. It would demand union control of hiring and training and fight for full-time, permanent jobs, putting the labour-hire parasites out of business. To fight unemployment it would demand a shorter workweek at no loss in pay in order to spread the available work around. Such demands would aim to mobilise the proletariat in struggle around its felt needs and link these struggles to the necessity of liquidating the whole system of wage slavery. History has shown that for the proletariat to be successful in this task it needs a revolutionary vanguard party committed to the fight for workers revolution. No amount of tinkering can change the fact that Arbitration is not, and never can be, an independent and neutral arbiter. Arbitration is part of the state machinery whose purpose is to protect bourgeois rule and profits against the struggles of the working class and oppressed. At the core of this repressive apparatus stand the police, military and prisons. Set up in , compulsory arbitration was from the beginning part of a racist pact forged between the Laborite bureaucracy and the capitalist rulers. This was based on an agreement to drive out, and keep out, all non-white labour, and for protectionist barriers and state subsidies to foster industrial development by the bourgeoisie. The third underpinning of early Labor reformism was integration into the capitalist state and subordination of the working class to it through the mechanism of compulsory arbitration. Together these historic components of Laborite nationalism have always crippled the Australian working class, tying them to their class enemies and setting them up against their proletarian brothers and sisters in other countries. Capitalist governments everywhere enact laws to stop the working class doing what is necessary to defend and improve its conditions. In their fawning over the ACTU campaign, the reformists reveal an outlook that does not go beyond pressuring the union sell-outs to pressure Labor, and the capitalist Greens, to administer a reformed Australian capitalism. But beware these political bandits! For over two decades they have decreed that unions are reactionary organisations that workers should oppose. Equating the basic economic defence organisations of the working class with their pro-capitalist misleaders, the SEP makes common cause with bourgeois exploiters such as Chris Corrigan and Daniel Grollo who want to destroy the unions. This protectionism and economic nationalism is poison to united working-class struggle. All it protects are the profits of the Australian bosses while pitting one section of workers against another. A class struggle leadership would fight for proletarian internationalism. This requires a forthright stand against deportations and for full citizenship rights for all who have made it here. What is desperately necessary is a class-struggle fight that recognises that ultimately the only way to put an end to the miseries of capitalism is through workers revolution. To realise this, the proletariat needs the leadership of an internationalist Leninist-Trotskyist party. Such a party would be a tribune of the people, ready to take up the struggle against all manifestations of capitalist oppression. It would be committed to the fight to smash this system of wage slavery and establish the rule of workers councils on the road to an egalitarian socialist society free of the exploitation, racism and war that defines the capitalist system.

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The ouster of Whitlam in November brought to a head a political crisis that was developing in this country during a decade of intensifying social and class struggle. From the mids, unfolding social revolution in Vietnam sparked massive protests against the Vietnam War and conscription and, combined with powerful proletarian actions, ignited youth and other layers of the population to take up broader struggles, including the fight for Aboriginal rights. Women were propelled into the fight for equal pay and abortion rights, against the deep male chauvinism characteristic of Australian capitalist society. However, the purpose of such left-wing posturing by the leadership was to co-opt the more advanced and restive layers of the proletariat and behead any challenge to capitalist stability and profits. While some declared themselves socialists and even communists, in reality these misleaders constituted a left-reformist layer within the workers movement, whose actual program was limited to ameliorating the worst excesses of capitalist rule. As a consequence they were all the more dangerous an obstacle to the historic interests of the working class. A key element of our intervention was to debunk the lie promoted by Laborites of all stripes that workers can achieve their needs through the parliamentary road. Not only was this a period of heightened proletarian struggle in Australia but also internationally. These years saw mass working-class upheavals shake France in , Italy in and Portugal in . The absence of genuine revolutionary Trotskyist leadership and the betrayals by the pro-Moscow Stalinist Communist parties and social democrats resulted in these struggles being defeated. In Australia, this period saw the biggest upsurge in trade-union unrest since World War I. Class struggle exploded with intensity in , with a near general strike in Victoria. This victory combined with the radical-sounding anti-imperialist rhetoric of the CPA ML attracted many youth, then breaking to the left of the ALP, to the Maoists who were also leading the most militant wing of the anti-war movement. From the mids strikes began to take on a political colouration. The New South Wales branch of the Builders Labourers Federation solidarised with the struggles of oppressed groups such as prisoners, gays, women and Aborigines. This war ended in with the defeat of the imperialist forces and their South Vietnamese puppet regime by the troops of the North Vietnamese Army and southern peasant-based National Liberation Front NLF , leading to the overturn of capitalist rule in South Vietnam and the formation of a unified workers state, albeit bureaucratically deformed from inception by the rule of a parasitic nationalist Stalinist caste. Suffering humiliating routs on the battlefield, the bourgeoisie were doubtless concerned that the military victories of the Vietnamese forces were having a radicalising effect on the proletariat at home. By the number of working days lost to strike activity in Australia had risen to over three millionâ€”over percent higher than in . The Australian capitalist class resolved that measures needed to be taken to contain proletarian struggles. Thus a decisive section of the Australian capitalist rulers, including media magnate Rupert Murdoch, promoted the reformist Whitlam-led Labor Party in the federal elections. From its formation in the s, the ALP has been a bourgeois workers party: It helped that he was a known quantity. Devoted to bourgeois parliamentarism, Whitlam made it clear in the lead up to the elections that taxes on the wealthy would not rise and that he had no intention to nationalise anything. Whitlam was also an enthusiastic and eloquent purveyor of the reformist illusion that the capitalist state could be reformed to meet the interests of the masses. He was aided in his efforts to hoodwink workers by the misleaders in the trade-union bureaucracy. Refurbishing the Image of Australian Imperialism With the ALP under pressure from its proletarian base, the bourgeoisie was prepared to concede, for a time, some concrete reforms in order to placate workers and the oppressed. Young men imprisoned for draft evasion were freed unconditionally. The Federal Government assumed responsibility for Aboriginal health, education and welfare and the first land rights legislation was drafted. Wages, pensions and unemployment benefits rose. A national health service was established, open to all. Spending on education was doubled and university and college fees abolished. Formal independence was granted to Papua New Guinea and immigration for Asian and Pacific islanders was liberalised. These mainly cosmetic moves were designed to project a more tolerant and multiracial Australia in order to promote the interests of Australian imperialism. However, as is always the

case under capitalism, reforms are only ever a pallid and highly reversible glimpse of what will be achievable once workers have overthrown the capitalist system. As we wrote at the time: The market price for oil soon quadrupled and the effects were felt in Australia by early as escalating transport costs filtered through the economy. Inflationary pressures sparked proletarian struggles for higher wages. This referendum was resoundingly defeated not least due to widespread opposition from the working class. Forced to an early federal election in May, the ALP was re-elected with a slightly reduced majority. Whitlam, with the connivance of then ACTU [Australian Council of Trade Unions] head Bob Hawke and other prominent union leaders, continued to push for wage restraint while arguing that some reforms would have to be wound back. Working days lost to strike activity in were double that of As we wrote in Australasian Spartacist No. Wage indexation has not produced the results required. The bosses have increasingly resorted to lockouts, provoked strikes, attempted speedup, and attacked union rights in a campaign of attrition against union strength. On the face of it this might seem odd since Whitlam had long proven himself a staunch defender of the U. On the right wing of the ALP, he only switched his position and called for troops out of Vietnam in, when it became obvious that the imperialist forces were losing. Having been elevated to power on a wave of opposition to the war in Vietnam, Whitlam felt impelled to protest this barbaric war crime which killed some 1, people. His comments coincided with waterfront union bans against U. Santamaria and right-wing union officials associated with it. The Opposition seized on this to claim government financial impropriety. At different points docks across the country were shut down, rail networks were sporadically at a standstill, and building sites were idle. Storemen, meatpackers, miners, clothing workers, journalists, printers, teachers, office and carworkers, shipbuilders, metal and manufacturing workers all walked off the job at different points and often together. Their protests were joined by students. Outnumbered by a counter-demonstration of Labor supporters, Fraser was forced to retreat into parliament house without finishing his speech. There were multiple calls for a general strike by unions across a wide range of industries. The ACTU refused to take up these calls. Massive union shop stewards meetings, representing hundreds of thousands if not millions of workers, were held in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. Proletarian outrage was immense. From the day of his dismissal Whitlam played a prominent role in channeling anger into the ballot box. Preexisting fissures between the hardened anti-communist right wing and left wing in the labour movement were widening. Thus Halfpenny sought to put himself at the head of the struggle in order to derail it. Far from trying to disrupt society the slogans are to return to stability. Hawke and other Labor leaders addressed the rally and it was left to Halfpenny to tell the angry crowd to leave before peak hour to avoid disrupting transport home! Here in the persons of Hawke and Halfpenny you had the right and left wings of Laborite reformism coming together to pour cold water on the militancy of workers and stabilise capitalist rule. Even so, some 15, reportedly refused to disperse instead marching to the stock exchange. Against the sell-out Labor-loyal tops, an internationalist Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party with deep roots in the proletariat could have had a decisive impact. Such a Leninist party will be built in this country by splitting the working-class base of the ALP from the pro-capitalist leadership, centrally through the political fight to replace the social-democratic union misleaders with a class-struggle leadership of the unions linked to a revolutionary workers party. In the process the most advanced layers of the proletariat will be broken from Laborite nationalism, loyalty to the capitalist state, and illusions in parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy, and won to the communist program and party. The bourgeoisie controls social wealth and Parliament serves its needs, as the political organ for working out how best to maintain and reinforce its class rule. It is democracy for the capitalists, and they will never allow it to be used against their basic interests. Workers control of hiring! This demand, along with the call for a general strike, sought to exacerbate the contradictions between the aspirations and objective interests of the working class, centrally organised in the trade unions, and the policies and actions of their misleaders. Ultimately the purpose behind sharpening this inner differentiation would be to politically destroy the ALP through splitting it into its pro-capitalist and proletarian elements, the latter being organised or led by a Leninist party. Through our intervention we aimed to break workers and leftist youth from Laborism and bourgeois parliamentarism, pointing them in the direction of a fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat. A political general strike, no matter how limited and defensive, necessarily would have challenged Laborite parliamentarism. It gave a form

of political support to a capitalist government, echoing the position of our reformist opponents, who masquerade as socialists and have a policy of strategic support to Labor and support bourgeois governments. For example, French and Greek Trotskyists raised similar calls in in the unstable conditions of post-war Europe. The Mensheviks instead embraced the counterrevolutionary bourgeois forces leading to them being swept aside in the Bolshevik October Revolution, which created a victorious workers state. As the article on the British crisis soberly explained, a general strike poses the question of state power and can easily lead to a revolutionary situation. Marxists do not play at revolution. The leadership of the British labour movement, like its counterpart in Australia, was consciously anti-revolutionary and would betray a general strike if it seriously challenged capitalist state power. Thus, taking account of the objective need for a general strike, the illusions workers still had in British Labourism, and the treacherous leadership of the working class, we explained: On the other hand it would be criminal for a revolutionary organization to accept, unchallenged, this leadership of the TUC—of proven, professional class collaborators—during a general strike. It is necessary to organize directing bodies for the general strike that would allow the masses to check and frustrate the policies of the TUC, that would go towards becoming a kind of dual power within the general strike movement. This in turn could have opened the potential for higher forms of proletarian organisation such as broader workers councils or soviets. In reviewing our intervention into the tumultuous events surrounding the fall of the Whitlam government, we of the Spartacist League of Australia, a section of the International Communist League Fourth Internationalist, are fighting to politically arm the cadre of a future Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party, part of a reforged Fourth International. For a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia!

### 8: Pearson - Class and Struggle in Australia - Mr Rick Kuhn

*Class and struggle: in Australia / edited by A devastating examination of inequality and its causes in the Howard era. Class and struggle in Australia is a.*

Social classes and class struggle in Australia Introduction Introduction According to Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto published in 1848, the history of all hitherto existing societies has been the history of class struggles. Is this society still fundamentally divided by class and driven by class struggle? Appearances can sometimes be deceiving. This is where a Marxist analysis can be useful, to search beneath the veneer of our liberal-democratic society, and look at what actually makes it tick, at who creates the wealth in this society, who owns it and in whose interest political power is exercised. What is social class and why is it so important? What is social class? Many sociologists – those who can see no further than the capitalist system – will tend to define class as a matter of income, as a way of categorising society by simply looking at what people earn, or a matter of status or how they are looked upon by society. Another way of saying this, is asking whether you own part of the means of production or not, and if you are an owner, then how much? Do you own a TV station, a string of factories or a chain of newspapers, for instance – or perhaps you own a significant stake in all three? Perhaps you own a major transport company, are managing director of an international mining corporation, or the CEO of Coles-Myer? If so, you are part of the capitalist class, the class which owns and controls the vast amount of productive capital in this society. So where do you and I fit in? Most likely, you are part of the majority of the Australian population – someone who gets up in the morning and goes to work, whether at a factory, a mine, a government department or a KFC. You do the work you are assigned, a small cog in a larger wheel. At the end of the week, you receive a wage or a salary. You are part of the working class, some two-thirds of the Australian population, whose only productive asset is their ability to work whether as a nurse, a carpenter, teacher or labourer – their labour power – which they must sell to an individual capitalist, or the state, in order to receive a wage and make ends meet. Of course society is not quite that simple. There are also intermediate layers, people who own small farms, or a small business, who primarily rely on their own labour power, or that of their family, and maybe a couple of employees. As a social layer, this petty bourgeoisie is continually being driven into bankruptcy by large capital, only to appear in some other sector of the economy in some other form. So while the deregulation of hours for shopping giants Coles and Woolworths has driven many small shops to the wall, the rise of the technology industry has spawned a whole range of new, individual contractors. Some individual professionals are also petty-bourgeois – some doctors or lawyers who own their own small practice, for instance. Why is class so important? Liberal sociologists tell us that class is just one of the ways that we can divide society, alongside ethnicity, gender, religion or social outlook. Class is just one among many ways to categorise people – no more important than any other. By weighting the dice in this way, they can easily come to the conclusion that the working class in a country like Australia is getting smaller, almost ceasing to exist, and that we are all middle class now. Blue-collar occupations, which comprised over half of the workforce in 1970, are now only one-third of it. The decline in the manufacturing industry in Australia has had a massive impact. In many cases, their control over their own work is even less than that of blue-collar workers, and often their wages are lower also. Of course there are exceptions. Some small sections of salaried people receive such large incomes, often including significant perks, as well as shares and other property, that they should be considered a part of the capitalist class, or at least its intimate ally. The likes of judges, for instance, or permanent heads of government departments, or CEOs of major companies fall into this category. Then there are also salaried people, the nature of whose jobs places them outside the working class. Socialists see police and prison officers in this category for instance. Their role in society – as agents of state repression – puts them outside the working class. But that still leaves around two-thirds of the population, who, when defined by their relation to the means of production, are members of the working class. Objectively these people own no stake in production other than their ability to labour – whether with their hands or their brain. They are forced to sell this ability to capitalists or the state, and in return receive a wage. The capitalists provide them

with the tools of their trade, the materials they work on or sell and take the profit for themselves. Marxists call this exploitation. Workers receive only a portion – in most cases a very small portion – of the wealth they create, in the form of wages. The majority of that wealth – also called surplus value – is expropriated by the capitalist class. What do Marxists mean by ruling class? As Anatole France put it: When you or I disagree with what the government is doing, we might swear at the TV. Better still, we might join a demonstration, even join a political party like the Socialist Alliance, and by joining with others, make our voice a little stronger. But when Rupert Murdoch disagrees with what a government is doing, governments take fright. The weight of daily newspapers in every state capital city buys a lot of power. Because the politicians generally know their place. And then there is always the state – that faceless body of police, soldiers, judges, screws and bureaucrats – which implements the law in a way that invariably seems to protect the interests of those with the most to protect.

### Class and class struggle

The existence of class struggle is an inevitable result of the division of society into classes. By their very nature, the existence of classes leads to class struggle. The division of society into classes appeared in human history at a point when the production of a stable social surplus – in other words, the ability to produce more wealth than would normally be consumed by the society in simply staying alive – became commonplace. This started around 15,000 years ago with the development of agriculture. The surplus was not enough to guarantee everyone a better existence, and so there emerged a struggle over who was to get it. The division of society into classes means that one class is exploiting the labour of another and therefore expropriating the social surplus created by the productive class for themselves. In capitalism the exploitation is more hidden. Surplus value – the value a worker creates in excess of their wage – is extracted at the point of production, seamlessly. In this way the employment contract can seem an equal one – workers bring their labour power, employers bring their capital, and both go away appropriately paid. This is how high school economics explains it. But the division between what portion of social production goes to one class or the other is not fixed. And so, throughout history, we have seen a continual struggle between classes, over which one will have the larger share of the wealth. Much of the standard of living that workers in Australia enjoy, as well as our civil rights, were won through this struggle – class struggle. Class struggle is endemic to class society. As Marx and Engels put it in the Communist Manifesto: This role is played by the state. And the state is there to defend the interest of the most powerful class in any society, the class with the greatest wealth, who can exert the greatest power – the ruling class. Under capitalism, as Marx and Engels point out in the Manifesto: But the state only works at the level of repression in the last instance. Capitalism and capitalist relations seem to reproduce themselves as though naturally in this society, as though they were common sense and there were no alternative. And so the school system, the courts, the bureaucracy and the parliament, all enforce and bolster this idea, discouraging any idea of stepping outside of the free and democratic system that we have.

### Ideology

The idea that capitalism is eternal, that inequality is natural, and that competition is necessary, are central ideas that govern mass behaviour under capitalism. Capitalist ideology – by which we mean the system of ideas that presents capitalism, parliamentary democracy, social inequality, and respect for power as natural and common sense – is crucial to the smooth running of capitalism in an everyday sense. Institutions as basic as the family, the church, school, and other social institutions, set up and reinforce these ideas in our heads from cradle to grave.

### Limits to democracy

Nevertheless, part of liberal capitalist ideology is the idea that we live in a democratic society, and while democracy under capitalism is rather limited, it is real. We are permitted to vote once every three or four years. We are permitted to protest in between times. We are even permitted to establish our own parties, and to run on whatever policies we might choose, and of course, the candidate with the most support gets elected, and the party with the most candidates elected forms government. However wealth intrudes even here, to have its voice heard louder than you or I. This is the way the capitalist class – the ruling class – make sure that whichever government gets elected, it serves their general interests. And what about the workplace, or the school or university, where most of us spend the better part of our waking lives, or else stuck in traffic going to and from? How much democracy is there? Try asking your boss for a vote on how much the workers should get paid against how much profit the company makes – and see how far you get. Of course, limited as they are, democratic and civil rights are not illusory, and must be defended at all costs. In certain

circumstances, socialists can use this democratic space to advantage, at least in getting a greater hearing for our politics, but in some cases in winning elections, and being able to offer a pole of attraction, and make an argument to masses of people from the parliamentary platform. Vladimir Lenin, the leader of the Bolsheviks in Russia, understood this. Even in the limited franchise of the Russian parliament – the Duma – after the defeat of the revolution, Lenin insisted that the Bolsheviks stand candidates, and that those that were elected use their parliamentary seats as a platform from which to educate the mass of people on what the government was really doing and so build support for socialism. The Scottish Socialist Party is another example of how socialists can effectively use parliament to build support for socialism. In Australia, the Greens dominate the electoral space to the left of Labor at the present time and are likely to do so for the foreseeable future, until and unless they attain some share of power and come under pressure to either implement their radical policies or bend to the will of capital. Either way, the openings will then be larger for socialists. Nevertheless, it is still important to pose a serious socialist alternative in elections. Nevertheless, with so much wealth behind the parties that support capitalism and against a socialist electoral alternative, any notion of electing a majority of socialists to a state or federal parliament and wielding power is an unlikely one, to say the least. And even if a majority of socialists were elected to parliament, the permanent and unelected portions of the state – the police, judiciary bureaucracy and army – defend capitalist property and would attempt to frustrate a socialist parliamentary project by any means necessary. It will not sit idly by and simply accept its own democratic displacement. The history of coups against left-wing governments is an example of this capitalist self-defence when democracy makes the wrong decision. Limits to democracy Limits to democracy Nevertheless, part of liberal capitalist ideology is the idea that we live in a democratic society, and while democracy under capitalism is rather limited, it is real. How can the working class change society? Is socialism just a utopian idea after all? Were Marx and Engels just starry-eyed dreamers? Should we just accept a little amelioration of the system around the edges?

### 9: Class and Struggle in Australia | Rick Kuhn | The Co-op

*Despite a refusal to talk about real class politics in the media, the class struggle is alive and well in Australia and low-level class war is a daily reality for many workers.*

Messenger The Conversation is running a series, Class in Australia, to identify, illuminate and debate its many manifestations. Here, Sharon Friel considers the points where class and health interact. The unequal distribution of power, money and resources also creates health inequities. Australians who are socially disadvantaged by income, employment status, education and place of residence, and Indigenous Australians, also have a higher risk of chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease and cancers, and depression. Differences in health outcomes at the population level are not explained by genetic variation or because of some mythical deviant behaviour particular to people in lower social class groups. These health differences are both avoidable and unfair. Embracing complexity People need the basic material requisites for a decent life, they need to have control over their lives, and they need a voice in decision-making processes and implementation of policy and programs that affect them. Economic and social policies generate and distribute political power, income, goods and services. And who you are will affect your access to quality and affordable education and health care, sufficient nutritious food, good work and leisure conditions, among other things. Together these factors constitute what determines your health and social health inequities. But much of the responsibility of the social inequity that leads to different health outcomes lies elsewhere. Health is affected by policies in other sectors, such as education, taxation, transport, and agriculture too. Education, for example, equips people with the resources needed throughout life to achieve a secure income, provide for family, and cope with disease. Children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to do poorly in school and drop out early. They usually grow up to be adults with lower incomes and are less empowered to provide good health care, nutrition, and stimulation to their own children. This is how disadvantage is transmitted through generations. Decent work, including wages that reflect the real cost of living, is also important for health. Work can provide financial security, social status, personal development, social relations and self-esteem, and protection from physical and psychosocial hazards. In , the top 20 CEOs in Australia earned more than times the average wage. Because we live in a rapidly globalising world, we now need to consider the effects of trade on lives and health as well. Australian data show adverse job conditions high job demands and complexity, low job control, job insecurity and unfair pay are worse for mental health than being unemployed. Another is to recognise the numerous entry points and opportunities to improve health and quality of life. Clearly, reducing health inequities is not something that can be achieved overnight. It requires a long-term view, and sustained political will. The intersectoral nature of the determinants of health inequities demands a holistic response. It requires ministers from all policy domains to each consider the impact of their decisions on the social well-being and health of all Australians. The apparent focus on productivity at any cost, and the control of public discourse by a powerful business elite suggests we have a long way to go before we can create economic and social conditions that support all people to achieve their potential. See the other articles in the series Class in Australia here.

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