

THE YEAST IS RED

A HISTORY OF *THE BAKERY* (OFF-CAMPUS CENTRE OF THE MONASH
UNIVERSITY LABOR CLUB 1968-1971)

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An ASIO operative at Monash complained in 1970 that he was expected to find evidence of direct communication from Peking to The Bakery. He had indeed penetrated far into the Labor Club structure; far enough to know that this idea was wholly without substance. As ASIO explained to him, their task was to identify enemy agents so they might be quickly removed at the outbreak of hostilities.¹

The Yeast is Red is a case study of the Australian new left of the late sixties. The new left initially emerged as part of a movement of growing opposition to the Vietnam War. The war shattered the previously dominant framework of 'Cold War' assumptions and profoundly altered the Australian political culture.² Even though Vietnam and the associated conscription of male youths was the catalyst for the youth radicalisation of the sixties which produced the new left, the new radical consciousness was caused also by the effects of the social and cultural changes of the period. While actively opposing the foreign war, theorists of the new left began to develop an original and sophisticated critique, based partly on the demand for more participatory democratic forms, of their own society. Vietnam, an increasingly unpopular involvement, became a metaphor for what was seen as a suffocating and conformist malaise at home.

Over recent years, the Vietnam issue and its effect on Australian society has received overdue academic attention. Despite the fact that, for at least part of its history, the movement in Australia against the Vietnam War was driven by student radicals, the new left itself has received scant critical and academic treatment. The specific contribution of this important movement, both to the anti-war movement and to the tradition of Australian radicalism, has rarely been clearly distinguished.

Some provisional definition and clarification would be appropriate at this point. 'New left' is a term bursting with different, and often contradictory, meanings. The term 'new left' first entered the lexicon as the self-definition of former Communists who, in the context of the post-1956 crisis of Stalinism, rejected both social-democracy and orthodox communism ('the old left') and sought a humanistic version of Marxism. The first Australian 'new leftists' belonged to this tradition and established the independent socialist journals *Arena* and *Outlook*.³ This tradition will

¹ Paul Francis Perry, *The Rise and Fall of Practically Everybody – an account of student political activity at Monash University, 1965–72*, p. 4.

² Barry York, Power to the Young in Verity Burgmann and Jenny Lee (eds.), *Staining the Wattle – A Peoples' History of Australia Since 1788*, Melbourne, McPhee and Gribble/ Penguin, 1988. See also John Murphy, *Harvest of Fear – A History of Australia's Vietnam War*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1993, pp. XIX, XX11. See also Goran Therborn, From Petrograd to Saigon, *New Left Review*, March–April 1968.

³ Murphy, *Harvest of Fear*, *op. cit.*, pp. 123–125. See also Rex Mortimer, The Benefits of a Liberal Education (from *Meanjin* 2/1976), in Frank Moorhouse, *Days of Wine and Rage*, Penguin, 1980, pp. 327–342. See also Andrew Milner, *The Road to St. Kilda Pier*, Sydney, Stained Wattle Press, 1984, pp. 28, 84 (footnote 41).

be referred to below as ‘the old new left’. The ‘new left’ which forms the subject of this thesis was created by the subsequent generation - the so-called ‘generation of 1968’ - and is more properly termed, in contrast, ‘the new, new left’. To spare the reader this verbal atrocity, I have adopted consistently the appellation ‘the new left’ when referring to the movement of late-sixties radicals, bearing in mind that there was never a political Chinese wall between representatives of the two generations and that in Australia they were often mutually supportive, even to the extent where some younger elements finished their political careers in the embrace of the elders. A further complication is that some radicals, such as the youthful Monash University ‘Marxist-Leninists’ who I have argued were essentially ‘new leftist’, came to disown this title when it was appropriated, as a club name, by their campus rivals. The use in the text of ‘New Left’ refers to this New Left Group and the ideas commonly associated with it.

The ‘new left’ of the late sixties did however possess its own distinguishing characteristics. It was not primarily a ‘generational’ phenomenon - “young people can be very old if they start with very old ideas”, said Isaac Deutscher - but one that was defined by a new practice and style breaking with that of the ‘old left’ which had ‘failed to touch directly the everyday life of the masses in capitalist society or encourage them to take direct action against the system which oppressed them.’⁴

It is difficult to draw strong conclusions about the subsequent relations between strands of the ‘old left’ and ‘new left’ (or more specifically between ‘old new left’ and ‘new new left’) in Australia. Harmony, mutual growth and conflict co-existed. The new left was not homogenous. Some elements shared the ‘old left’ love for the printed word; others were totally voluntaristic.⁵ Ideological affiliations cut across generational divisions, as in the case of the mutual contempt of the moribund Eureka Youth League and the rampant Monash Labor Club. The Chinese ‘Cultural Revolution’ held special fascination for ‘old’ and ‘new’ left alike. To many, Maoism appeared superior to Soviet and other mechanistic ‘Western Marxisms’ in its voluntarism - the radical rejection of a ‘stages’ interpretation of history. The Chinese distaste for ‘material incentives’ and industrialism tapped into emergent anti-technocratic feeling in the West and suggested a new morally pure socialism. To many youthful radicals in the early seventies the hero was not a dashing and

⁴ Interview with Robin Blackburn, *Australian Left Review* 24, April–May 1970, p. 10. See also Isaac Deutscher, *Marxism and the New Left* (1967), *Marxism in Our Time* (ed. Tamara Deutscher), London, Jonathan Cape, 1972, p. 65. For the Australian debate, see Rowan Cahill, *Notes on the New Left in Australia*, Sydney, Australian Marxist Research Foundation, 1969; Kelvin Rowley, *Our New Left Still Needs Analysis*, *Tribune*, July 9, 1969; Peter O’Brien, *From the New Left*, *Ergo*, June 20, 1969; Warren Osmond, *Student Revolutionary Left*, *Arena* 19, 1969; Michael Hamel-Green, *The Student Movement in Australia: a History*, *Revolution*, March 1971, pp. 8–9; Stephen Alomes, *Cultural Radicalism in the Sixties*, *Arena* 62, 1983; Richard Gordon and Warren Osmond, *An Overview of the Australian New Left*, in Richard Gordon (ed.), *The Australian New Left: Critical Essays and Strategy*, Melbourne, Heinemann, 1970.

⁵ See Interview with Robin Blackburn, *op. cit.*, p. 11; Irving Louis Horowitz, *American Radicalism and the Revolt against Reason*, in I.L. Horowitz, *Ideology and Utopia in the United States 1956–1976*, London, Oxford University Press, 1977.

debonair guerilla, but the Maoist leader Ted Hill, a grey, stolid and seemingly humourless barrister.

However, the sixties did produce a generation alienated to the core from its own society, with a 'generational consciousness' and a specific 'youth culture' which helped make the new left. The point is that this revolt took on the appearance of a generational revolt because of the rejection of a particular kind of society in a particular way at a particular moment in its development.⁶ On the Australian left, as elsewhere, notions of a 'new vanguard' composed of students and youth fighting together with the oppressed of the third world, as distinct from the former proletarian vanguard, had gained ground. The anti-technocratic new left theory of Alain Touraine, Herbert Marcuse, and Theodore Roszak spoke of new contradictions in a way that profoundly influenced youth.⁷ Inspired by Marxist humanism, one specifically new left critique of Australian capitalism denounced the 'mass society' as essentially anti-human, irrational and repressive and provided moral force to the struggle being waged on the campuses and in the streets.⁸

Though the period 1967-1970 was marked by the resurgence of the left in Australia, there has been little intellectual reflection on this historical experience by those who participated in it. Overseas, the various anniversaries of '1968' have provided the opportunity for the rise of a cottage industry among scholars. Here,

⁶ Agnes Heller, Existentialism, Alienation, Post-modernism: Cultural Movements as Vehicles of Change in the Patterns of Everyday Life, in Andrew Milner, Philip Thomson, Chris Worth, *Postmodern Conditions*, New York, Berg, 1990. See also Ken Mansell, *The Origins of Student Radicalism – A Study of the Sixties*, The Australian Centre, Melbourne University, 1991 (unpublished). See also Samantha, Jill Jolliffe and Alice's Restaurant, *Go-Set*, October 4, 1969, p. 23 ... "our generation... the oldies" (Jolliffe); Philip Mendes, *The New Left, The Jews and the Vietnam War*, North Caulfield, Lazare, 1993, pp. 33–4 (and endnotes 145–154); Bob Connell, Middle-Class Youth: A New Base for the Left?, *Arena* 31, 1973; Denis Freney, review of Jerry Rubin, "Do It!", *Tribune*, July 22, 1970, p. 6; Barry York, Power to the Young, *op. cit.*; Barry York, Baiting the Tiger: Police and Protest During the Vietnam War, in Mark Finnane (ed.), *Policing Australia – Historical Perspectives*, New South Wales University Press, 1987, pp. 172–3; Barry York, *Student Revolt! Latrobe University 1967–73*, ACT, Nicholas Press, 1989.

⁷ Alan Anderson, The Foco Story, *Tribune*, September 2, 1970, pp. 6–7; Denis Freney, The Surfie Communes, *Tribune*, September 2, 1970, pp. 6–7; Denis Freney, Who are the Weathermen?, *Tribune*, August 19, 1970, p. 7; Andrew Milner, The Road to St. Kilda Pier, *op. cit.*, pp. 53–54. See also Fredric Jameson, Periodizing the Sixties, in Sohnya Sayres et al (eds.), *The Sixties Without Apology*, University of Minnesota Press, 1984, pp. 180–89.

⁸ Douglas Kirsner, Protest and Anaesthesia, in *Meanjin* 3, 1968, reprinted in Jenny Lee, Philip Mead, and Gerald Murnane, *The Temperament of Generations (Fifty Years of Writing in Meanjin)*, Melbourne University Press, 1990. See also Herbert Marcuse, Affluence and Freedom (from talk given in London, end of 1967), *Lot's Wife*, July 23, 1968 (two pages, including introduction); Alan Roberts, A Preliminary to the Reading of Marcuse, *Arena* 18, 1969 (speech in Brisbane); Alan Roberts, The Vanishing Sigh – Marcuse and Religion, *The Australian Rationalist*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1969; John Playford, The Myths of Pluralism, *Arena* 15, 1958; Doug Kirsner, One Dimensional Democracy, *Arena* 16, 1968; John Playford, Comment on Totalitarian Theory, *Arena* 14, 1967; Rick Gordon, Monash – Repressive Tolerance and the Failure of the Left, *Lot's Wife*, March 5, 1970, pp. 12–13; Warren Osmond, Australia Too?, *National U*, June 24, 1968, p. 2; *Grassroots* (SDA), June 12, 1969.

interpretations, other than those merely trying to terminologically settle the question of where 'the sixties' start and end, have been few.⁹ The vacuum has been filled by diluted variations on a theme first articulated by the Berkeley University Sociology Professor Lewis Feuer. Following the outbreak of the momentous student revolt under his feet at that university in 1964, Feuer utilised Freud's notion of the 'Oedipus complex' to suggest that rebel students were merely neurotics expressing a displaced oedipal revolt against their fathers, with the university Vice-chancellor as surrogate. It was perhaps not surprising when students were describing their universities as insane that the attribution of psychological imbalance would eventually be levelled at them. But such psychologism, attributing serious political motivation to base, vain and egotistical personality traits, is a methodologically impoverished substitute for genuine analysis. Unfortunately, Feuer's ghost still stalks the corridors of our academies. He has been a useful, even if unacknowledged, ally in the modern pastime of 'trashing the Sixties'.¹⁰ A whole phalanx of conservative defenders of the status quo have resorted to the same worn-out nostrum: the radical in Australia is psychologically crippled, or at the very least stupid and immature.¹¹ In a recent work, Robin Gerster and Jan Bassett set out to deconstruct myths about the sixties. Their book, *Seizures of Youth*, which owes its title and much else besides to Feuer, has been widely and heavily criticised as an exercise in myth-making. Projecting onto an idealistic age the narcissistic values of the eighties, they suggest that the anti-war protests of the sixties were pranks, and conclude Chapter Two of their study with the assertion that 'male vanity' formed the key element of the 'age of disobedience'.¹² *The Yeast is Red* will show the shallow basis for this assertion.

⁹ Paul Piccone, Reinterpreting 1968: Mythology on the Make, *Telos* 77, Fall 1988, pp.7–43. See also Peter Pierce, 'Never glad confident morning again': Australia, the Sixties and the Vietnam War, in J. Grey and J. Doyle (eds.), *Vietnam: War, Myth and Memory*, Allen and Unwin, 1992, p. 69; John Tranter, Growing Old Gracefully: The Generation of '68, *Meanjin*, Vol. 37, No. 1, April 1978; David Cauter and Eric Aarons, The Unforgettable Year 1968, *Australian Left Review* 104, April/May 1988; Adele Horin, The Anti-War Veterans (1968 – Twenty Years On: A Look Back), *The Age*, June 25, 1988; Kristin Williamson, Radical Changes, *The National Times*, December 7–13, 1984; Kristin Williamson, More Radical Changes, *The National Times*, December 14–20, 1984.

¹⁰ Lewis S. Feuer, *The Conflict of Generations – the Character and Significance of Student Movements*, London, Heinemann, 1969. See also Lewis S. Feuer, The New Marxism of the Intellectuals, five pages re-printed as "ALP Club News", Vol. 2, No. 1, March 1969 (Sydney); John Playford, Apostle and Apostates, *Dissent* 19, Autumn, 1967; *Lot's Wife*, June 10, 1969 / June 26, 1969. For comment on the "trashing of the Sixties", see the pertinent remarks in Sayres et al, *The Sixties Without Apology*, *op. cit.* (introduction by editors, p. 8).

¹¹ Frank Knopfelmacher, Review of Ronald Conway's 'The Great Australian Stupor', *Newsweekly*, November 17, 1971, pp. 8–9. See also Ronald Conway, Vietnam Revisited – Twice!, *Quadrant*, May 1987. For a 'slanging match' at Monash University on this theme, see *Print* 49, Friday June 27, 1969: "Yesterday's 'Australian' quotes Prof Westfold as saying student radicals are adolescents and psychotic...true – "the only sane people are the "maladjusted"... it is those who conform to an insane society like Prof Westfold who really belong in the madhouse"; *Print* 58, July 15, 1969 – Chancellor Sir Douglas Menzies called 'Mad Ming'. See also Greg Sheridan, The 1960's God That Failed: this Loathsome Generation, *Quadrant*, November 1989.

¹² Robin Gerster and Jan Bassett, *Seizures of Youth – The Sixties and Australia*, Melbourne, Hyland House, 1991, p. 102. For the mainly negative reviews of this book, see Peter Beilharz, Sneering at the Sixties, review of 'Seizures of Youth', *Australian Book Review*, No. 141, June 1992; Dennis Altman,

Recent scholarly work emanating from the Australian War Memorial has been obsessed with demonstrating that the Australian anti-Vietnam war movement was merely 'derivative' of American protest trends.¹³ *The Yeast is Red* considers the possibility that the borrowing from overseas traditions (such as the inspiration gained from events in France) had positive and liberating aspects for a movement struggling to rise above the 'dung-dreary mindscape' of a limited native 'tradition'. In the hands of Gerster and Bassett the borrowing of slogans from the United States is treated as if it were as culpable as John Gorton's kow-towing to Washington and is thus used to construct retrospectively an apologetic argument for the Liberal Government's war effort.¹⁴

Donald Horne in his study of the sixties, *Time of Hope*, could not accommodate the notion of 'revolutionary' under the rubric of the 'permissive' self-indulgence he believed characterised the age and abused the sixties new left as 'romantic revolutionaries'. The new left, of course, totally rejected the utilitarian logic that the social system (particularly its 'repressive de-sublimation') should be accepted as given and it articulated an alternative notion of realism best expressed in the French student slogan 'Be realistic - Demand the impossible!'¹⁵ John Murphy in his recently published *Harvest of Fear* includes a section on the 'New Left' even though he did not trouble to interview anyone of that tendency and tends to echo the old left (Communist Party of Australia) view of the so-called 'ultra-left'. Murphy slips into the psychologistic mode himself when he describes the 'ultra left' achieving 'cathartic' release at violent demonstrations and he cynically interprets the inspiration provided by Che Guevara as a romantic 'cult'.¹⁶

Inconclusive Evidence from the Rebellious Decade, review of 'Seizures of Youth', *Australian Society*, October 1991; Tim Blair, Sizing Up the Sixties, *Truth*, November 2, 1991; Dave Nadel, review of 'Seizures of Youth', unpublished; Alan Wearne, Looking Back at our Lost Innocence, *The Age*, November 23, 1991; John Herouvim, The Pitfalls of Iconophilia, review of 'Seizures of Youth', *Overland* 126, Autumn 1992; Rob Watts, 'Bringing Them Home': Vietnam and the Sixties Revisited, *Journal of Australian Studies*, No. 34., September 1992; Robin Gerster, Who Owns the Sixties?, *Quadrant*, No. 295, April 1993; Rowan Cahill, Another View of the Sixties, *Overland* 129, Summer 1992.

¹³ J.Grey and J.Doyle (eds.), *Vietnam: War, Myth and Memory*, Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1992.

¹⁴ Gerster and Bassett, *op. cit.*, p. 68. See also J. Grey and J. Doyle (eds), *Vietnam: War, Myth and Memory*, *op. cit.* (Introduction). For a slightly different view on "derivativeness", see Humphrey McQueen, The Suckling Society, in J. Arnold, P. Spearritt and D. Walker, *Out of Empire – The British Dominion of Australia*, Melbourne, Mandarin, 1993, p. 102. See also Letter from Janita Laver (SDA Brisbane), SDA Indigenous, *National U*, April 22, 1968, p. 4.

¹⁵ Donald Horne, *Time of Hope*, Sydney, Angus & Robertson, 1980, pp.52, 54, 58, 60, 178–79.

¹⁶ Murphy, *op. cit.*, pp. 236, 250–1, 257–58. Contrast with *Grassroots* (Students for Democratic Action, Adelaide), Vol. 2, No. 1, October 9, 1968: "Che Guevara was murdered by the CIA in Bolivia one year ago today. We don't intend to apologise or excuse what liberal academics like to call the "New Left personality cult" growing up around Guevara; given the choice of cults we would prefer him to Seymour Lipset or Robert Dahl." See also Anon, Why we put photos of our heroes on the wall, *Brisbane Line*, August 22, 1968.

As a case study *The Yeast is Red* has focused on the off-campus centre at 120 Greville Street in Prahran. 'The Bakery' was the organisational headquarters during 1969-70 of the Monash Labor Club, perhaps the most militant component of the Australian new left. This was the period of the most concentrated and militant new left activity, one that witnessed concerted effort on the part of radical students to construct a broad off-campus alliance capable of challenging the norms of the social system. In 1967-68 the movement of new radicals seemed poised to play a major role in Australian political life. Student protest had begun to revitalise the left as a whole. Three years later the organisations of the new left lay in ruins and the broader student movement had subsided. The events associated with The Bakery in Greville Street Prahran were inextricably related to this demise. *The Yeast is Red* offers an interpretation of the meaning of everyday events at The Bakery, believing that a focused narrative of this locale – The Bakery and the Monash left as a special case – will illuminate the broader subject of the failure of the new left.

The choice of a particular focused locale as the setting for this analysis allowed the construction of a meaningful narrative revealing the development of a new left organisation in time and place, a project infinitely more rewarding and revealing than the pogo-stick ride from continent to continent that forms the approach by Gerster and Bassett. The psychologism of these authors is in part the lazy result of not having gone to the primary sources, the everyday lives of the real historical actors. They claim psychological insight but have not seriously engaged with the actors' thoughts and feelings, and therefore cannot understand their actions as social events.

This case study entitled *The Yeast is Red* was based on painstaking research of historical source materials made by the social actors themselves. I do not accept the fashionable thesis, beloved of certain literary critics, of 'the death of the author'/'the supremacy of the text'. I believe that historical writing must explore (as 'structures' of social relations) the ideas, dispositions, even feelings, of the social actors, understood as the living subjects of history. In this respect, the methodology of *The Yeast is Red* differs fundamentally from that of *Seizures of Youth*. It is not restricted to a semiotic analysis of images, a psycho-sociology of the television screen or photographic studio. Gerster and Bassett have been competently criticised elsewhere for veritable 'iconophilia'.¹⁷ In Gerster and Bassett, two kinds of texts are privileged as sources for interpreting the meaning of the sixties - the contemporary photograph (or television image) and subsequent literary (novel) texts which take the events of the sixties as their subject matter. These 'sources' are quite inadequate taken by themselves, as Gerster and Bassett do. It is extraordinary that literary references could be passed off as an adequate base of evidence for the historical account which they attempt. They are particularly inadequate as sources about the Australian new left. Unlike Jerry Rubin and other Americans spotted from the Gerster and Bassett pogo-stick, the Australian new leftists did not primarily rely on television to create images. The Australian new left expended enormous energies on the production of 'printed' words and the expression of ideas to convey political meaning; *The Yeast is*

¹⁷ John Herouvim, *The Pitfalls of Iconophilia. op. cit.*

Red has been constructed around the many hundreds of news sheets, roneoed bulletins, underground newspapers, and theoretical magazines produced during the period. The Gestetner, like the one in the backroom of The Bakery, was the potent symbol of the age, not the camera. It is therefore mainly through this evidence that a study of the actors, and the events of everyday life, is constructed. Gerster and Bassett were not interested in the ideas of members of the new left; they totally eschewed their literary productions and thus they have turned them into cardboard cut-outs of real people.

Because it is so focused, short and exploratory, *The Yeast is Red* does not pretend to tell the whole story. It has not tried to do justice to Latrobe or Melbourne Universities, nor to the new left in other states. It is more of a social history than an intellectual history of new left ideologies. A definitive account of the new left, as of the sixties, would necessarily have to incorporate a sociology of the period to adequately explain origins and social relations. *The Yeast is Red* does however insist on a concrete analysis of concrete factors in everyday life as the first step in avoiding shallow interpretations. Gerster and Bassett rely on newspaper photographs. As with the histories of minority groups in general, many of the key experiences of members of the new left were 'hidden' - not considered important enough to feature by an essentially sensationalist media. The startling absence of any reference to The Bakery left in Sally Wilde's *The History of Prahran* is testimony to the fact that even local newspapers, like typecast local histories, conservatively ignore the 'hidden' and the 'marginal'.¹⁸

In 1992, the author revisited The Bakery in the now 'yuppified' Greville Street and was struck by evidence of the passage of time. The building had been 'lobotomised', reduced literally brick by brick in stature to a boutique. Like buildings, our own participation in the past can be lobotomised and scrambled. We might invert the remark made by the wit who said that those who remember the sixties did not live in it, and suggest that those who lived in the sixties might not remember it. What credence can be attributed to their memories if they do?

This thesis uses oral history as a tool; it is not an oral history. It draws on my own personal reminiscences. I was a resident of The Bakery from April to September 1969, and I was a participant in some of the events described in this study. It would be dishonest, unnecessary and foolish to deny this. Rather, this 'knowledge' has been treated as an experimental advantage. Built in to the narrative (and indicated by special font in the text) are 'diary' entries composed from my own recollections. They serve as an abbreviated form of oral history, designed to create a sense of immediacy (of 'being there') in the manner of a simulated novel text, and which hopefully does not detract from the detached 'objective' stance of the historian as a seemingly omniscient narrator. Because human memory degrades over time, and is subject to lapses and attitudes which reformulate events (such as the romanticisation potentially present in feeling positive about the past), the memories in the diary have been carefully controlled by supporting documentary, archival

¹⁸ Sally Wilde, *The History of Prahran* Volume Two, Melbourne University Press, 1993.

evidence. The result is a feasible model of a 1969 Diary found in the archives.¹⁹ *The Yeast is Red* allows the participation of a number of ‘voices’ which are identified for the reader by changes in font.²⁰

¹⁹ For a discussion of the use of oral history, see John Murphy, *The Voice of Memory: history, autobiography and oral memory*, *Historical Studies* 22, 1986, pp. 157–75. The recently published oral history by Greg Langley exhibits some of the pitfalls of oral history when not backed up by documentary sources. The interviewees themselves make errors with regard to the dates of particular events (e.g the confusion of July 4 demonstrations... see for example p. 116) and Langley allows the errors to pass. See Greg Langley, *A Decade of Dissent*, Allen and Unwin, 1992.

²⁰ Firstly, the author of 1994 as “omniscient narrator”; secondly, the constructed Ken Mansell of 1969 speaking through the diary; thirdly the voices of 1969 speaking through materials that found their way into archives; fourthly the participants of 1969 speaking today and representing a version of the past in their recollections to the author who selects and shapes those recollections. The constructed flashes to international events which are interspersed in the text of Chapter One are simulated thought processes meant to represent images that might have occurred to the new leftists of Greville Street in the course of 1968. The account of the meeting at the Cellar in Brisbane in late 1968 is again a construction and represents the thoughts of a member of Brisbane SDA who, after having imbibed a William Morris utopian novel, imagines herself in the place of an equivalent visitor to twentieth-century Brisbane.

PRELUDE

THE MONASH LABOR CLUB

The response of Monash students to Vietnam was initially not so remarkably different from that of the established peace movement. Early opposition to the war was isolated and defensive. In the struggle for legitimacy the methods of the established peace movement - the protest placard and the pamphlet appealing through reasoned discourse to the 'liberal conscience' - prevailed. All sections of the movement rested their hopes on the election of a Labor Government. Labor's disastrous defeat in November 1966, following so soon after the tumultuous welcome accorded to President Lyndon Johnson, was a body blow that left the established peace forces depressed and disoriented. The student protestors, paradoxically, drew strength. During Johnson's visit, savage violence was meted out to demonstrators by American and local security forces. This had a catalytic 'radicalising' effect on the Monash contingent and was then reinforced by the bitter experience of the election debacle. The leading elements of the Monash Labor Club turned their backs on parliamentarism and embraced a notional 'revolutionary socialism'. Objectionable phenomena such as the Vietnam War were seen as an expression of the essential features of capitalism rather than merely mistaken policies reversible through reform.

The Monash activists urged greater and greater militancy in response to the escalating Vietnam conflict. They became increasingly disgruntled with the policy and style of the peace movement. The Labor Club's anti-war activity on and off campus soon brought it into conflict with the Monash administration. The University Administration was treated as if it were an instrument of big business and the State. It soon began to act in a way that lived up to this reputation. At issue was the University's attempt to suppress dissent by disciplining certain political activities on and off campus. The Labor Club first rallied wider support by mobilising students against the granting of an honorary degree (soon after the hanging of Ronald Ryan) to the Premier of Victoria, Sir Henry Bolte. However, it was the Club's establishment of a fund in July 1967 to collect 'unspecified' aid for the National Liberation Front - maintained defiantly in the face of community outrage and special Federal legislation - which earned most notoriety. Sydney students had begun collecting medical aid for civilians in NLF-held areas of Vietnam in 1966 but direct financial ('unspecified') aid to the NLF (the first \$500 of which was sent in August 1967) was widely interpreted as military support for the 'Viet Cong' and carried the connotation of 'treason'. The Commonwealth Government responded by bringing

down the Defence Force Protection Act. The Act was defied and Monash students continued to collect for the NLF, setting off another skirmish with the Vice-Chancellor.

Measured in terms of audacity and impact, the Labor Club's 'Aid the NLF' campaign was the most important political intervention ever undertaken by an Australian student political club. Debate on Vietnam 'moved to the left', the ranks of protestors grew and support for national liberation struggles against imperialism became accepted as a legitimate part of the anti-war struggle. The established peace movement was forced to debate the issue of support for the NLF. The following year specifically pro-NLF demonstrations were held by student groups in Australian cities, the regular march route in Adelaide even being dubbed the 'Ho Chi Minh Trail'.

The Labor Club began with three hundred members in 1968, the year that Monash first erupted in full-scale revolt. A 'Mock Crucifixion' staged on April 11 by the innocuous Tiddlywinks Association provoked an unprecedented furore and offered the pretext for disciplining students. A press report of a proposed new draft discipline statute suggested that Monash was considering introducing moves to punish students for acts of misconduct outside the university ('double jeopardy') and sparked the first of many sit-ins in the Monash administration building. An apparent backdown by the Administration relaxed tensions but at a deeper level a new source of conflict had emerged: the mischievous genie called 'Student Power'.

The Campaign for University Freedom (CUF) formed and rallies were held daily in the upstairs foyer of the union. The SRC disbanded and gave way to the Monash Association of Students, the apparent embodiment of the 'new left' ideal of 'participatory democracy'. Notions of 'student power', implanted as much by press speculation (and comparisons with Europe) as reasoned discussion, were as yet inchoate. In the heady days of May/June 1968 however, when Monash seemed a mirror image of Columbia and Nanterre, it was possible for radicals to glimpse a new reality - a radicalised university igniting the wider society. Even while Melbourne University still represented quiescent stolidity, events at Monash were forming an imbroglio in which fact, illusion, image and action, the forces of repression and the forces of revolt, wrestled together, and from which were heard the most sweeping predictions and self-fulfilling prophecies. As a university of accelerated growth and technocratic pretension, Monash had invited direct comparisons with Berkeley. Now its world reputation as a centre of 'revolution' became a factor of some significance as the protagonists of two counterposed conceptions - 'the community of scholars' and 'the red base' - strove to smother or accentuate it.

In Vietnam, the Tet Offensive, launched by the NLF on January 30, 1968, destroyed the credibility of Johnson's Vietnam policy. Students in lecture theatres were able to watch LBJ's tearful 'abdication' from the Presidency on closed-circuit television. To the Monash Labor Club, Tet represented a further indictment of the Gorton Government's position and vindication of their own position. A revitalised anti-Vietnam movement advanced on a wider front with students taking up a leading

position and using increasingly militant tactics of resistance. In Melbourne, the formation of the Draft Resistance Movement in January marked the onset of a new confrontative phase. Nationally, fury at the imprisonment of draft resisters and the Gorton Governments 'pimping provisions' led to a national mobilisation of students (and a sit-down at the Lodge in Canberra) and to a spate of 'sit-ins' in Commonwealth offices. But the events in Melbourne outside the United States Consulate on the evening of July 4 took matters into an entirely different dimension. The crackdown came not from the Vice-Chancellor but from the repressive apparatus of the state, raising the need to size up the limits of student action, seek allies and move off-campus. Violence was on the agenda: things were getting serious.

CHAPTER ONE

THE YEAST

The Yeast

The Monash Labor Club proudly wore as a badge of honour its reputation as Australia's most infamous group of student radicals. Monash University, located in the suburban backwater of affluent Melbourne's far south-east, might have seemed a most unlikely breeding ground for revolutionaries, but was soon inviting comparisons with Berkeley and the Sorbonne. By 1967, it had become the centre of dissent against the Vietnam War. The savage violence that was meted out to demonstrators by American and local security forces during the visit of President Lyndon Johnson in October 1966 had a catalytic 'radicalising' effect on members of the Monash contingent and the Labor electoral defeat of November 1966 only further encouraged the ideas of 'revolutionary socialism'. Also, in 1967 the Labor Club became embroiled in a veritable 'war to the knife' with the University's Administration. It established a fund in July 1967 to collect 'unspecified' aid for the National Liberation Front (NLF) of South Vietnam and maintained collections defiantly in the face of community outrage and special Federal legislation in the form of the Defence Force Protection Act.²¹ The massive Tet Offensive launched by the NLF in February 1968 undermined the Vietnam policy of the ruling Liberal-Country Party coalition in Australia, and was interpreted by many as a vindication of the originally outrageous views of the Labor Club. It also revitalised the anti-Vietnam movement.

The story will begin in Greville Street, Prahran, Melbourne, in 1968. The Victorian architecture of the public buildings at the Chapel Street end of Greville Street offered a glimpse of Prahran's past prosperity. Greville Street itself had clearly seen better days. This was a street of contrasts. On the one hand it hosted Liberal Party rooms and Wesley College; on the other there were signs of decay: unfriendly shops with empty, blindfolded windows, and an old, deserted Bakery overwhelmed by the growing empire of the nearby Gawith's Bread Factory in Balmoral Street. Larrikin 'Squizzly' Taylor lived in Greville Street; the unemployed marched in it and had free speech fights on the Chapel Street corner. Perhaps Greville Street was always meant for square pegs.²²

²¹ An autonomous Aid Committee (chaired by Peter Price) was set up and in August sent the first \$500 of direct financial aid to the NLF representatives in Cambodia (the first \$1000 of medical aid, collected at Monash, being sent to the London Doctors' Committee, headed by Lord Boyd Orr). The Defence Force Protection Bill was introduced on August 30 and stipulated a penalty of two years prison or fine up to \$2000 for aid to the NLF. The Act banned all collections except through the Red Cross (which did not send medical supplies to the NLF). The Victorian Liberal Party State Council claimed that students raising funds for the NLF should be gaoled for treason – see *Outlook*, Vol 11, No 4, August 1967, p.3.

²² See Sally Wilde, *The History of Prahran*, Volume Two, 1925–1990, Melbourne University Press, 1993, pp. 125, 127, 213. See also Allan Souter, Alice's Restaurant – you can get ANYTHING you want?, *Lot's Wife*, Vol. 9, No. 12, September 25, 1969; *Half-Baked* (n.n), September 26, 1969 –

January 31...National Liberation Front (NLF) South Vietnam launches Tet (New Year) Offensive.

Jill Jolliffe, a twenty-three-year-old Monash University Arts student, moved from Murrumbeena to 60 Powell Street, South Yarra with her boyfriend Ron Lawson. Ron, a few years older and a storeman, had met Jill when he walked in on a student party in Caulfield after drinking at a local pub. On the second of February, Jill, decked out in the uniform of student activists - knee high boots, tatty jeans, and leather bikies jacket - entered the Powell Street Post Office accompanied by Ron. They made out money orders to a Doctor's Committee in London, and broke the law of the land - the Defence Forces Protection Act.²³ A little later, Jill and Ron moved to Greville Street. They took out a lease and rented rooms behind and above the tailor's shop at Number 111.

March..... students occupy Rome University. Students riot Warsaw.

On April 2, young Warren Osmond, an honours student, walked from his rented room above the tailor's shop at 111 Greville Street, crossed St Edmonds Road, and sent off his money order to the NLF. Osmond, brought up in a well-to-do Christian Science family and barely twenty, had already carved out a reputation as the most prolific and exciting journalist at Monash. Returning to his room, and gazing across at the clump of shops opposite, Osmond ruminated over an article submitted to his New Left broadsheet 'Root and Branch' - 'An Appeal for Generalised Profanity'.²⁴

April 4 Martin Luther King is shot.

April 11 German militant student leader Rudi Dutschke is shot after campaign against him by Springer Press.

April 23 Columbia University occupation begins, New York. Red Guard factions battle, Tsinghua University.

May 10 Night of Barricades, France explodes in revolt.

Valentine Franks found an empty shop at 116 Greville Street and rushed to tell his friends Peter Bland and Valerie Palmer. The three moved in and Peter, faced with having to register for conscription, began putting Vietnam War material in the

Mayor of Prahran, Chris Gahan, calls Prahran police station "a rat infested hovel" (WHAT? NO PIGS?).

²³ Information from 'NLF Aid' file (public statements)/Monash Labor Club Records in possession of Mr Albert Langer, North Fitzroy, 1993. Physical description of Jill Jolliffe in Bruce Hanford, Alice's Restaurant of Prahran, *Broadside*, September 4, 1969 - short, 24, blue eyes, brown hair, jeans.

²⁴ *Root and Branch*, No. 5, April 3, 1968 - authorised by W.Osmond, P.O Box 188 Prahran for New Left Group (Article in this issue by Chris Hector on the "Mock Crucifixion" - "An Appeal for Generalised Profanity"). Osmond had moved in with Jolliffe and Lawson after they secured the lease at No. 111.

window. One afternoon a woman from over the road came across and introduced herself - it was Jill Jolliffe.²⁵

June 1 'We shall fight, we will win - Paris, London, Rome, Berlin' ('Black Dwarf' headline). Italian universities are occupied.

June 5 Robert Kennedy is shot.

In 1968, Monash erupted in full-scale revolt over the issue of a proposed new draft discipline statute. Students staged the first of many 'sit-ins' in the Monash administration building.²⁶ But the riotous events outside the United States Consulate in Prahran on the evening of July 4 took matters into an entirely different dimension. The crackdown came not from the Vice-Chancellor but from the repressive apparatus of the state, raising the need to size up the limits of student action, seek allies and move off-campus. Violence was on the agenda: things were getting serious.²⁷

July Prague snubs Warsaw Pact

July 30 Fifteen radicals - charged with 'rioting' on July 4 - appear Prahran Court, Greville Street.

Plans were well underway for the launching of the national 'new left' underground newspaper *The Brisbane Line*, to be edited in Brisbane by Monash's own Dave Nadel. Darce Cassidy of the Monash Labor Club (who earlier had been Melbourne editor, along with Humphrey McQueen, of *Oz*) was the Melbourne agent and he did not want the paper's distribution to fall into the clutches of the Communist Party of Australia. Valerie Palmer remembers

One Saturday morning I was there happily having my breakfast when Jill just barged in with Humphrey McQueen. Paid no heed to me - sitting in my kitchen, having my breakfast in my dressing gown - and very arrogantly marched up and down through the kitchen and everything, saying "Oh well, (looking around) what do you think of this place? Would this be appropriate?"²⁸

Ron Lawson recalls the view from the other side of the street:

²⁵ Interview with Valerie Sutherland (Palmer), Brunswick, November 22, 1992. Valerie Sutherland later became an active participant in the revolutionary Worker Student Alliance (WSA) when it was formed in 1970. Valentine Franks and Peter Bland also became WSA members.

²⁶ See M. Hyde, *It is Right to Rebel*, Canberra, 1972, pp. 51-67. See also *The Age*, May 15, 1968. On May 16, a general meeting of two thousand students voted for the first ever 'sit-in' in the administration building (Hyde, pp. 58-9).

²⁷ See *Farrago*, March 22, 1968, p. 23 for the statement by a visiting American academic that student riots could happen in "Bolte's city".

²⁸ Interview with Valerie Sutherland (Palmer).

We were almost over the road from the Bookshop because you could go into the front bedroom, look down into Greville Street and you could see the shop. I walked into the front room one night and Jill and Peter were in the shop getting it ready for the opening day. When I saw what was going on I thought "Christ! I've got to say something". They were putting up red flags and posters of Mao and Fidel. I thought "Jesus! In little downtown Greville Street?" So, I raced down and tried to tone things down I suppose ... I think it was toned down ... a little bit...we put Brigitte Bardot on a motorbike in the front of the shop and they relegated Fidel and Mao to the back.²⁹

The Reverend Leo Ball, a seventy-five-year-old Anglican, member of the Communist Party and crusader for communitarianism, purchased a thirteen-room, two-storey Victorian brick mansion (Clifton House) at 50-52 Albion Street, Prahran. Casting about for a willing flock of young converts to help him renovate, Leo pounced upon Jill Jolliffe and harangued her about the superiority of his way over that of the Monash Labor Club. Valerie and her two friends were eventually manoeuvred out of the shop and inveigled to live, alongside the alcoholic prostitutes using it as a refuge, at the stately old house. While Leo bustled about among the weeds and paint tins with the most earnest expression on his crinkled face - like a 'manic Gandhi in Bombay bloomers' - the two Vals and Peter became the first enrolled members of one of the first Australian 'urban communes'.³⁰

Jill Jolliffe found her way to the older radical figures in Prahran - the Reverend Frank Hartley at the Prahran Methodist Mission, Greek activists Con George and Dennis Skiotis, and in Greville Street - the Generys. Chemist Paul was a communist; old Bill Genery, who ran a boot repair shop at No. 54 on the other side of the railway gates, was an entomologist, astronomer, survivor of the Industrial Workers of the World. Jill supported Communist pensioner Fred Farrall, who stood successfully for Windsor Ward on August 22, pledged to fight for pensioners. Farrall refused to indulge in the crayfish and lobster at council banquets and sat against the wall eating fish fingers. Mindful that Prahran had Melbourne's highest concentration of Greek migrants, Darce Cassidy scurried off in search of a Greek typewriter and Jolliffe visited Con George in Windsor for the translations.³¹

August 21 Warsaw Pact troops invade Czechoslovakia.

August 28 Chicago Riots.

²⁹ Interview with Ron Lawson, Taradale, December 13, 1992.

³⁰ Personal recollections. Also interviews with Ron Lawson and Valerie Sutherland (Palmer). See also Peter Cock, *Alternative Australia – Communities for the Future*, Melbourne, 1979, pp. 29, 30; *The Sun*, December 28, 1968; *Tribune*, October 30, 1968, p. 6; *Tribune*, January 15, 1969, p. 4; *Tribune*, February 26, 1969, p. 11.

³¹ Interview with Ron Lawson. See Wilde, *op. cit.*, pp. 72–73. Phone Interview with Con George, Kallista, on Sunday evening, December 19, 1993.

After the election, Jolliffe, disguised as the spurious ‘Pahran Workers for A Democratic Society’, issued a ‘Pahran Manifesto’ - ‘Roll up! Roll up! Come and see the Great Society in Action’ - and put out several issues of *The Pahran Worker* (authorised by S.Dangerfield of 101 Shirley Grove).³²

Rebels of the older generation burst from the gaping wound of depression Australia. Those of 1968 were seeping from the pores, from some unnameable internal haemorrhage of society, nailing up obscene posters. How incongruous this shop in its little clump near the Station Hotel; Aubrey Beardsley among the Tarax, Spotless and Marlboro? When there were already other bookshops - Hall’s, Grant’s. But who else would cater for the new left, the Underground? Least of all the Communist International Bookshop with its gigantic sales of ‘Sputnik’, the Soviet *Readers’ Digest*. Jill and Ron moved in, calling their new home ‘Alice’s Restaurant Bookshop’ after the Arlo Guthrie song. The business was off and crawling by September, surviving only through credit and its near-monopoly of imported pop posters.

Oct 3 *Anniversary of death of Che Guevara. Students killed Mexico City*
Oct 8 *Police injured Tokyo*

How many of those staring, whispering and muttering at the “‘Grouse clobber” said Barry McKenzie wearing an NLF badge’ knew that the proprietress had written to the Black Panthers applying for their endorsement of the shop as the Afro-American Embassy in Australia?³³

October 27... Grosvenor Square Demonstration, London.

The Monash movement was complemented by the emergence of similar campus-based movements elsewhere in Australia, as students involved in opposing conscription and the Vietnam War extended their analyses to other issues and their

³² Leaflet authorised by S.Dangerfield, 101 Shirley Grove East St. Kilda (August); Leaflet (“The Pahran Worker”) authorised by S.Dangerfield, 101 Shirley Grove East Kilda, n.d circa September 1968 (Greek translation); *The Pahran Worker*, No. 3 (authorised by Dangerfield); Leaflet (“The Pahran Worker”) n.d, circa September 1968 – in three versions; “Pahran Manifesto” “authorised by Pahran Workers for a Democratic Society”; *Tribune*, September 4, 1968, p. 4; *Print* No. 16, Monday, March 31, 1969 – FRED PREFERS FISH FINGERS; *Tribune* April 2, 1969, p. 4.

³³ Interview with Ron Lawson – “They never did this sort of thing at the Communist bookshop, the International...it was just a bookshop wasn’t it?” See also Bruce Hanford, Alice’s Restaurant of Pahran, *Broadside*, September 4, 1969; *Brisbane Line*, August 29, September 5, 1968; *Lot’s Wife*, September 3, 1968; *Print*, September 6, 1968; *Farrago*, March 22, 1968 – Review of Arlo Guthrie’s “Alice’s Restaurant” first record...’enormously popular in U.S for obvious reasons...title track 18 minutes, 20 seconds...is “superbly zany”. See also Leaflet (letter to comrade) announcing establishment of Alice’s Restaurant Bookshop (n.d, circa October 1968?)/ signed Venceremos/ “we have applied to the Black Panther group in America for their endorsement as the Afro-American embassy in Australia, a symbolic gesture in view of our proximity to the American Consulate in Commercial Road.”

critique to the social system as a whole.³⁴ Consciousness of the potential of students to act as a social force in their own right encouraged action off-campus. ‘Extra- and intra-university’ struggles³⁵ became intertwined and reinforced one another. In Adelaide, Students for Democratic Action (SDA) was established in March 1968 in the midst of an electoral reform crisis of the South Australian Parliament. The Society for Democratic Action (SDA), formed at the University of Queensland in August 1966, led street marches against the Traffic Regulations that had restricted anti-war protest and created successful examples of the ‘worker-student alliance’ before this idea had become the vogue.³⁶ In Sydney the new organisation Students for a Democratic Society revived forgotten traditions of civil disobedience. The student protestor hardened. Confrontation raised the temperature, as a new rage overwhelmed an older ribald, ‘underground’ tradition.

The movement of politicised youth that had emerged under the rubric of the ‘new left’ in 1968 was diverse rather than fragmented, and had indefinable boundaries. In each city, hard lines had not yet been drawn and eclecticism could still be seen as a virtue, and as a basis for concrete action. Links were being made and optimism abounded. Travel between cities increased. The Vietnam Action Conference in Sydney (January 1967) furthered links between student radicals around the country and it was the progenitor of other national conferences which supplemented traditional modes of contact such as the conferences of the Australian Student Labour Federation. As 1968 drew to a close revolutionary socialist figures from all states began planning a new national alliance to be formed in the New Year.³⁷ The formation of the Revolutionary Socialist Alliance at a Conference in Sydney at the end of January reflected the growth throughout 1968 of new forces to the left of the traditional ‘socialist’ parties and appeared to satisfy their need for a linking organisation.³⁸

³⁴ See Rowan Cahill, *Notes on the New Left in Australia*, Australian Marxist Research Foundation, Sydney, April 1969, pp. 9–11.

³⁵ Dan O’Neill, (Ed.) *Up the Right Channels*, University of Queensland, 1970, p. 111.

³⁶ Initially in the form of the ‘FOCO’ Youth Centre and later taking other forms. See Dan O’Neill, The Growth of the Radical Movement, *Semper Floreat*, March 17, 1969, p. 12; Brian Laver, Challenging the Power Structure, *Tribune*, March 12, 1969, p. 6; Dan O’Neill, Worker-Student Alliance?, *Tribune*, March 5, 1969, pp. 6–7; E.A.Bacon, Students and Workers’ Mutual Needs, *Tribune*, March 12, 1969, p. 7.

³⁷ See Ken Mansell, Notes on the Fragmentation of the New Left, (unpublished) 1975, based on original archival material in the possession of the author.

³⁸ Alan Roberts claims that the January Conference was “incredibly tense”. Interview, Alan Roberts, January 16, 1994. Undoubtedly the main mover behind the formation of the RSA was Denis Freney, follower of the veteran Greek Trotskyist Michel Pablo, advocate of “autogestion” (self-management), prolific author of roneoed bulletins, and an activist known to his worst enemy as “the perambulating gestetner of the Left, author of 231 separate open letters and other pieces of duplicated ephemera.” See Bob Gould, Honeymoon Over – The Decline and Fall of the Left Coalition, *The Old Mole*, No. 3, June 29, 1970.

On Wednesday November 27, Monash Labor Club members held a General Meeting at the Bookshop in Greville Street and may have noticed that only two doors away there was an old empty Bakery shop, victim of the relentless drive in bread production towards automation, slicing and wrapping. Just before the New Year a group posing as respectable art teachers approached the owner, took out a two-year lease, filled the show window with pottery and prints, and began to clean.³⁹

Red Base Headquarters

Around the country ‘off-campus’ centres were initiated by new left radicals as an attempt to project into the broader communities of the working class and as ‘cultural’ bases for extra-university action. These centres replaced the earlier pattern of campus-bound clubs dependent on private households for organisational needs. Australian students in Carlton, Glebe and Prahran looked to exemplars at Berkeley, Nanterre and Notting Hill.⁴⁰

Neither ‘The Bakery’, established by Monash radicals, nor the ‘Centre for Democratic Action’ associated with ‘Students for a Democratic Society’ in Melbourne, were the first of their kind in Australia. The pioneers were ‘youth centres’ - ‘Resistance’ in Sydney and ‘Foco’ in Brisbane, both reflecting the cross-fertilization of ‘old left’ forces (Sydney Trotskyists and Brisbane Young Socialist League) with ‘new left’ students. ‘Resistance’, headquarters of the youth organisation of the same name, was set up early in 1968 at 35 Goulburn Street and used by the Sydney University Labor Club and the Vietnam Action Campaign. At its peak in the latter half of 1968, ‘Resistance’ drew much of its strength from the vigorous street-level merchandising of the ‘Third World Bookshop’ - advertised as ‘Sydney’s New Left Bookshop’ and first among equals when it came to selling radical journals, underground newspapers, badges, posters and incense. ‘Foco’, a Sunday night youth club (or ‘politicised discotheque’) established by the Society for Democratic Action and the YSL at the Brisbane Trades Hall, began in March 1968 and was an instant success among students and young workers. It regularly attracted over five hundred and inspired emulation in other cities.⁴¹

³⁹ *Monash Labor Club Newsletter*, circa mid-November 1968, written by Mike Hyde: Monash Labor Club General Meeting, Wednesday, November 27 at Alice’s Restaurant – to decide about the Vacation (Alice’s Restaurant Left Bookshop – opening Monday 25 November, 1968.). See also Sally Wilde, *The History of Prahran*, Volume Two, Melbourne University Press, 1993, pp. 148–9; Lucy Hunter, *A Summer Place – Lucy Goes to the Bakery and Gets a Bun in the Oven*, *Lot’s Wife*, May 8, 1969, p. 7.

⁴⁰ See, for example, Tom Hayden, *The Politics of the Movement*, in Irving Howe (ed.), *The Radical Papers*, Anchor Books, New York, Doubleday, 1966, pp. 362–377.

⁴¹ The word “foco” was the name given by Latin American Marxist revolutionaries to their secret guerilla base headquarters. ‘FOCO’ combined a disco dance-floor with poetry-readings, talks, drama and film. 650 had joined by second night (‘ETC’, YSL Discussion journal, April 1968, p. 3). See also Alec Robertson, “Visits a Guerilla Camp in Brisbane’s Sierra Maestra”, *Tribune* August 21, 1968, p. 6; Alan Anderson, *Tribune*, September 18, 1968; *Tribune*, July 31, 1968; *Tribune*, September 25, 1968; *Tribune*, October 23, 1968; *Target*, (Young Socialist League) Vol. 7, No. 4 September/October 1968, pp. 14–15.

1968....*News from Nowhere* has become available in Australia. William Morris describes a socialist from 1890 Hammersmith being paddled across the Thames to a twenty-first century utopian wonderland of repose. Such a visitor, stumbling by chance into our own millennium, would instead notice, in the political habits inspired by utopian imaginings at these mushrooming off-campus centres, a manic intensity. The visitor is first taxied to the corner of Turbot and Roma Streets in Brisbane on a Thursday night. He steps down into a huge old warehouse ('The Cellar', off-campus organising centre for the left), happening upon a speech by one Brian Laver, a young man who is the subject of some adulation for his silver-tongue, reporting on his trip to Czechoslovakia. In an adjoining room several thousand 'guerilla' news sheets are being 'Gestetnered' for campus distribution; a pamphlet is being printed on a nearby off-set press. Pinned to a notice-board beside a 'Reward - Jesus Christ - Wanted for Sedition' poster is a program of Drama, Film and Music evenings.⁴²

Later, in Adelaide, members of the 'Society for Democratic Action' established the 'Black Dwarf Centre' at 34 LeFevre Terrace, Nth Adelaide, in February 1969. There they produced *Grassroots* newsletter and the *Black Dwarf Bulletin*, and ran 'The Black Dwarf Coffee Lounge' on Sunday nights after their weekly general meetings. In Sydney, the university Labor Clubs took over an old shop at 67 Glebe Point Road, Glebe in March 1969 to strengthen their campus activity and to supplement locally the film, drama and music at 'Resistance'.

⁴² Interview with Dave Nadel, Northcote, October 13, 1993. Interview with Di Zetlin, Northcote, June 27, 1993. See 'News From Nowhere' in *Three Works by William Morris* (with an Introduction by A.L.Morton), Seven Seas Books (German Democratic Republic) 1968.

CHAPTER TWO

WHERE THE YEAST IS RED

Walk Right In, It's Around the Back

Dr Mathieson doesn't get up in drag very often - only when he wants to avoid being identified shopping at Alice's Restaurant Bookshop.⁴³

The infantile braggadocio of the advertisements for Alice's Restaurant Bookshop, tucked away in the corners of 'Lot's Wife', may have been meant to compensate for their postage-stamp size. Here was a style that defiantly mocked the prevailing notion that being genuinely 'underground' meant being bashful. The shop window flaunted Fidel Castro and projected images to affront 'good taste'; it invited the Vice Squad's interest. This little shopfront in Greville Street with the strange posters on display became quickly known as a site of subversive 'counter-culture'. The commercial methods were unusual for the time - going into debt to build up stock; selling hundreds of cheap, second-hand paperbacks and periodicals; entering the text-book market; and incorporating a lucrative side-line: the Monash Labor Club bookstall on campus.

By the time of Alice's 'Monster Sale' in March, the shop had managed to gather together in one place a veritable gallery of New Left monsters. Lying innocently on long tables and propped up awkwardly on stick-figure paperback stands were works by Regis Debray, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Herbert Marcuse, Che Guevara, Raymond Williams, David Cooper, Lenin, Mao Tse-tung, Eldridge Cleaver, Perry Anderson, Antonio Gramsci, Robin Blackburn, Louis Althusser, Patrick Seale and Maureen McConville, and Australia's John Playford. Interspersed among the books were boxes of colourful and witty badges, exhorting one to 'Light up a Consulate' and 'Serve the People', or proposing 'Up the V.C' and 'Gorton for Cheviot'. On offer were NLF flags, shopping bags adorned in the NLF colours of blue and red with the yellow star, little packages of one-hundred 'Support the NLF' stickers for the lamp-posts around Prahran, and little E.P vinyl records, for \$1.25, of Vietnamese and Chinese liberation songs sung in English. The majority of customers came not for these, nor for the 'intellectual' fare - the newspapers *Granma*, *Oz* and *Ergo*; periodicals from the United States (*Challenge*, *Village Voice*, *Guardian*, and *Militant*) and Britain (*Black Dwarf*) - but for the 'personality posters', a new cultural craze item. When it came to hanging up Brigitte Bardot, Jimi Hendrix, Oscar Wilde, or Marlon Brando (alongside Huey Newton, Emiliano Zapata, and Mao Tse-tung), no-one could beat Alice.⁴⁴

⁴³ *Lot's Wife*, March 20, 1969, p. 20. Dr Matheson (correct spelling) was the Vice-Chancellor of Monash University.

⁴⁴ Interview with Ron Lawson. See also Samantha, Jill Jolliffe and Alice's Restaurant, *Go-Set*, Saturday, October 4, 1969, p. 23. See also *Half-Baked* 1, February 1969; *Lot's Wife*, March 4, 1969, p. 16; *Half-Baked* 2, March 5, 1969; *Print* 10, Thursday March 20, 1969; *Print* 14, March 27, 1969; *Lot's Wife*, April 3, 1969, p. 22; *Print* 20, April 10, 1969; *Print* 27, April 24, 1969; *Print* 34, May 8, 1969; *Print* 39, May 15, 1969; *Print* 46, June 23rd 1969; *Print* 48, June 26, 1969; *Print* 55, July 8, 1969; *Print* 63, July 22, 1969; *Print* 82, September 18, 1969; Poster ('Grouse Clobber') in author's

Where the Yeast Is Red⁴⁵

‘The Bakery is a sort of Whole Earth place now. If only they’d known the things we’d done in the bread ovens at the time’.⁴⁶

‘Walking into a newly-decorated room one day, the landlord, a retired baker, confronted a small group frozen under a large portrait of Ho Chi Minh. ‘Ah’, he said, ‘I see you’ve got a picture of Ho Chi Minh up. Well it’s not the first time he’s been in a bakery, he was a pastrycook in Paris you know.’⁴⁷

In 1967, residents of Jasmine Street, South Caulfield, had regularly been forced to endure the loud strains of Joe Hill’s union songs belted out by the Almanac Singers, or the triumphal cry of a room full of tipsy revolutionaries bellowing the anti-fascist song ‘Freiheit!’, coming from their student neighbours in No. 7 (a household dubbed ‘the headquarters of the Caulfield Cong’). In 1968 the singing, and the Monash Labor Club gestetner, moved - with Darce Cassidy - to Number One Shirley Grove, East St. Kilda, and the tradition continued.⁴⁸

Darce Cassidy may have simply grown tired of scrubbing claret stains out of his carpets, but there were evidently more substantial reasons for the establishment of The Bakery at this time. The events of 1968 - which had culminated in savage attacks on student leaders both on and off campus - undermined any notion of students as politically self-sufficient. For Marxist-influenced students the idea of linking up with the broader masses was an urgent issue. An actual headquarters in a central, suburban, location offered students a way out of the Monash ghetto. The Bakery was cheap, accessible from Monash, close to Alice’s Restaurant Bookshop, and located in Fred Farrall’s working-class heartland of Prahran, it suggested the possibility of ‘mass work’.⁴⁹ The Bakery also provided a means for retaining contact with radical graduates, thereby preventing the isolation of tertiary-educated, ‘non-student socialists’. In November 1968, two months before the establishment of The

personal collection. See also detail in Allan Souter, Alice’s Restaurant – You Can Get Anything You Want, *Lot’s Wife*, September 25, 1969; Samantha, *op. cit.*; Hanford, *op. cit.* See also *Ergo*, No. 1, March 24, 1969 – published by Bob Ellis, fortnightly, distributed by Third World Bookshop Sydney (35 Goulburn St) and Alice’s Restaurant, 116 Greville St Prahran.

⁴⁵ Heading *Half-Baked*, No. 1, n.d, circa February 1969, parodying the title of the popular Red Guard anthem “The East is Red”.

⁴⁶ Darce Cassidy, interviewed by Philip Mendes, October 7, 1990. Tape in possession of Mendes but loaned to author.

⁴⁷ Lucy Hunter, A Summer Place, *Lot’s Wife*, May 8, 1969. The pastrycook was Thomas Gordon Dobie who, with his wife Victoria, bought the property on July 6, 1967 (see Title, State Titles Office).

⁴⁸ The common element was Cassidy (see below). It was he who had moved from Jasmine Street to Shirley Grove, owned the Folkways records, and used the Gestetner most often. See *Print*, March 10, 1967; *Print*, March 14, 1967. The Monash Committee for Aid to the NLF was based at Jasmine Street.

⁴⁹ See Hunter, *op. cit.*

Bakery, the Monash Labor Club's theoretical magazine warned of the 'dangers of graduates moving out into society at large and succumbing to the temptation of La Dolce Vita'.⁵⁰ The newly-formed Revolutionary Socialists organisation, set up "to cater for off-campus activities and particularly for the non-student left" now had a ready-made headquarters.⁵¹ On March 5, the Labor club news sheet announced:

Together with an organization called the 'Revolutionary Socialists' we have just established a large off-campus headquarters at 'The Bakery', 120 Greville Street, Prahran. This place will (as soon as its fixed up) be always open for people to drop round and do some revolutionary work and will be a center for many club activities - particularly those concerned with developing joint student-worker action which will be one of our major concerns in 1969.⁵²

The club's Vice-President - and its most notorious member - penned these lines as dawn approached to catch the freshers at orientation:

'Apart from living quarters for five people.... upstairs, this place also has a large loft, shop front and party/meeting room together with a smaller cellar and office/work room as well as a shed and garage outside. It is next door to Alice's Restaurant Bookshop and will be used as a center for many Monash Labor as well as Rev Soc activities. *Print* and other pamphlets will be produced here and it is hoped that many other left organisations will use it as a headquarters. It should help get the Monash left out of its University ghetto and in particular assist in developing student- worker unity'.⁵³

'Dobie's Bakery' was a two-storey, brick Victorian building situated at 120 Greville Street, opposite Grattan Street and on the corner of a little lane shared with a 'Spotless Dry-cleaners'. Directly opposite was a shop that sold bread rolls. The property extended as far (119 feet) as the end of the lane. Inside, The Bakery space was shaped like an inverted 'L' in that it incorporated the area behind the enigmatic 'upholsterers' located at No.118. A red fabric curtain hung down a few feet back from the front window. The glass was adorned with the sign 'Dobie's'. One entered a sparsely-furnished room, about twenty-five feet by twelve feet, carpeted with sea-grass matting. Bright red, blue and yellow (NLF colours) woodwork in the shop-front and a huge red banner ('Revolutionary Socialists' in yellow letters) strung up across the white wall down one side, relieved what otherwise would have been a stark introduction. Hidden beneath the sea-grass was

⁵⁰ Editorial, *Analysis* No. 3 (n.d, approx November 1968).

⁵¹ Interview with Dave Nadel, July 7, 1993. See also Philip Mendes interview with Darce Cassidy, October 7, 1990; Hunter, *op. cit*; *Monash Labor Club Newsletter*, I, March 10, 1969 - "The Rev Socs are a new organisation intended to cater for off-campus activities and particularly for the non-student left (inquiries D. Cassidy)."

⁵² *Print* 1, March 5th, 1969.

⁵³ *Monash Labor Club Newsletter* No. 1, March 10, 1969, consisting of "personal suggestions" sent out by A. Langer, Vice-President, from Greville Street, typed 3.25- 6.00 a.m in morning.

a trapdoor, and stairs leading down to a cellar. Once used for storing flour and yeast barrels, the cellar became the office for *Print*, the Labor Club daily. An alcove in the wall separating the front room from the back rooms allowed one to pass through a little darkened area concealing two stairways, both leading to the living quarters above - the spiral one at the left being relatively steep compared to the stairway on the right. Straight ahead through the alcove was the cavernous room used for 'Rev Soc' educational and parties. The original timber floor had been replaced by concrete in 1959. The room was about twelve feet wide and extended for about forty feet to the large oven at the very rear. To the right after the alcove and directly behind No.118 was a work area, separated by a wall from the oven room and not quite as long, containing Gestetner and silk-screen apparatus. A door led out to a side pathway, the laundry, outside toilet, and a small courtyard at the back of the building.⁵⁴

Early days at The Bakery left little time for 'play power'. The grim necessities of renovation cut across the pleasure principle. The atmosphere of The Bakery was dispersed with flour dust, from its former productive use as a bakery. Working bees to clean and decorate the empty old building were held every evening and weekend. The industriousness of the student worker bees conformed to the Communist ethic of Stakhanovism, this time with Stakhanov recast in a Chinese context as 'the little old man who moved the mountain.'⁵⁵ During this time, political meetings were held at The Bakery almost every night during the week, and at weekends - general meetings of the Labor Club and of its committees, meetings of the 'July 4 Action Committee' preparing for the defence of Albert Langer and Dave Rubin, meetings of the Student Worker Co-ordinating Committee, sessions of the educational series run by the 'Revolutionary Socialists', and meetings of the secondary students' organisation 'Students in Dissent'.

The Revolutionary Socialists - 'Half-Baked'

The organisation known as the Revolutionary Socialists in Melbourne seemed to be selling itself short when it called its roneod periodical *Half-Baked*. The title turned out to be doubly ironic. It was the organisation itself that was really half-baked. Perhaps there was something basically wrong with the dough mix.

The Bakery was explicitly set up as a centre for the Revolutionary Socialists organisation. The documentation in *Half-Baked* itself, and the material produced by the Monash Labor Club, suggests that the position of the Labor Club was supposed to be a subordinate one in running The Bakery. A writer in the Club newsletter complained of the low number of Labor Club members at Bakery working bees with the admonishment that:

⁵⁴ The author's personal recollections. See also Lucy Hunter, *op. cit*; Hanford, *op. cit*.

⁵⁵ Stakhanovism was a movement in Stalinist Russia which held up the heroic labour of the exemplary worker Stakhanov as a role model for all Soviet workers. 'The little old man who moved the mountain' was a Chinese translation of this idea.

...the Labor Club uses the Revolutionary Socialist Centre at Greville Street ... (it is) only fair that we help fix it up and maintain it ...⁵⁶

The Revolutionary Socialists organisation was not merely a creation of the Labor Club, despite somewhat simplistic suggestions to the contrary.⁵⁷ Those most prominent in the meetings to explore the idea of a new revolutionary socialist alliance were actually non-students such as Humphrey McQueen, Alan Roberts and Darce Cassidy.⁵⁸ During the period in which the Revolutionary Socialists could be said to have existed as an organisation of any kind - the period of roughly three months between February and May 1969 - the notion of being associated with a new national, ostensibly revolutionary, movement seems to have attracted a sizable group of aspiring revolutionaries to The Bakery. Membership of 'Rev Socs' was "open to all those who believe that revolution is an essential pre-condition for socialism", rather than on an attachment to a narrowly-based sectarian shibboleth. Thus, the group initially contained radicals from diverse points on the far-left spectrum. During the early series of Educational Discussions held by the 'Rev Socs' in the large backroom of The Bakery adjoining the oven, there was evidence of a burgeoning new left intellectual culture, a healthy catholicism in political attitude. Maoists, Trotskyists, Pabloites, anarchists, and even Communist Party sympathisers matched it in debate and harangue, giving rise to the hope that this Bakery, a true revolutionary furnace, would produce its own distinctive ideological bread. But the 'educationals' were and remained the 'Rev Socs' only consistent and significant activity. Holding the group back from full flight was the fact that so few who paid their dues continued to remain active. Much of the everyday administrative work of Bakery Management fell to Darce Cassidy.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ *Monash Labor Club Newsletter*, March 31, 1969. See also *Half-Baked*, No. 1, February 1969 (n.d) – The Bakery....where the Yeast is Red...newly acquired headquarters of the Revolutionary Socialists. See also *Monash Labor Club Newsletter*, No. 1, March 10, 1969 (Langer) – "The Bakery has been acquired by the 'revolutionary socialists'"; *Half Baked* 3, late March 1969 – Bakery: "Revolutionary Socialists" Centre; *Print* 39, May 15, 1969; *Print* 14, March 27, 1969 – Bakery shared by Rev Socs and MLC. See also *Bulletin No. 1 of 'July 4th Action Committee'* n.d circa February 1969 – the Revolutionary Socialist Alliance and associated groups now possess a centre at 120 Greville St Prahran. Lucy Hunter in May described The Bakery as the Revolutionary Socialists Headquarters, and wrote that the Revolutionary Socialists established the Bakery, taking out a two-year lease; see Hunter, *op. cit.* Darce Cassidy, interviewed by Philip Mendes, October 7, 1990 is quite explicit that the Bakery was established for Rev Socs.

⁵⁷ Philip Mendes writes "The Labor Club also established an off-campus political movement called the Revolutionary Socialists (later to become the Worker-Student Alliance) which was based at The Bakery in Greville St, Prahran." See Mendes, *The New Left, The Jews and the Vietnam War 1965–72*, Melbourne, Lazare, 1993, p. 27 (and endnote 118). See also Julie Ockenden, *Anti-War Movement and the Student Revolt at Monash: An Examination of Contending Ideologies 1967–1970*, BA Hons. Thesis, Monash, 1985, p. 61 – 'the Labor club set up permanent headquarters for revolutionary activity in Prahran' (see also p. 74).

⁵⁸ Ron Lawson interview. According to Dave Nadel, McQueen and Cassidy then believed in starting a new party, not supporting the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist). Interview with Dave Nadel, July 7, 1993.

⁵⁹ Personal recollection. See also *Half Baked*, No. 3 (n.d late March, 1969) – fees on a monthly basis at least 1% of member's annual income, i.e \$3000 per year, \$3 per month. See also Hunter, *op. cit.*

Cassidy, an ABC journalist and former editor of *Wednesday Commentary* at Sydney University and *Print* at Monash, was an experienced activist and fine orator, but more practical than theoretical. He was generous, outgoing, friendly, and liked by most of his associates; he was also deadly serious, with few peers in his ability to organise other people.⁶⁰ Cassidy had been excluded, for what appear to be political reasons, from a course at Monash in 1968 and had left his student days behind for the time being. He had helped organise a Labor Club residential Conference at Warburton Chalet, April 27/28, 1968 on the subject of 'Which Party for Socialists?' Both he, and close personal friend Humphrey McQueen, with whom he had been invited to control the Melbourne operations of *Oz* magazine in 1967, were then dedicated to building a new revolutionary organisation, to the 'left' of the ALP and distinct from both Communist Parties.⁶¹

McQueen, formerly of Brisbane, had arrived in Melbourne at the same time as Cassidy - August 1966 - and been active in the Youth Campaign Against Conscription and the Vietnam Day Committee; however he was self-consciously now dedicating himself to 'theoretical practice' and developing a sophisticated 'new left' historical critique of the Australian Labor Party that in 1970 would be published as 'The New Britannia'.⁶² He played a key role as a theoretical inspiration in the 'Rev Socs' and as the author of its inaugural statement, the *May Day Manifesto*.⁶³

Of the thirteen items listed for discussion on the agenda for the 'Rev Socs' general meeting on April 30, the item given most attention was a draft of the 'Manifesto' - with which the 'Rev Socs' hoped to make a big splash on May Day.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Interview with Dave Nadel, July 7, 1993.

⁶¹ Dave Nadel claims Cassidy and McQueen differed from Albert Langer on this (see Nadel interview July 7, 1993). See Ockenden, *op. cit.*, p. 4 for Cassidy's history. *Lot's Wife*, April 18, 1967 has photograph of Cassidy and some biographical details.

⁶² Donald Horne, *Time of Hope*, pp. 142–143 describes the role played by McQueen in "the revolution in the writing of Australian History". McQueen had been editor of "Semper Floreat" and was suspended from Queensland University in 1962 after the publication of an article on unconventional sexual behaviour (see *Farrago*, August 3, 1962). McQueen delivered a withering attack on the Australian Labor Party at Warburton Chalet. See *Print*, April 11, 1968 (Alan Roberts and McQueen gave papers).

⁶³ It has been suggested, by Donald Horne, in *Time of Hope* that McQueen was the "foundation chairman" of the 'Rev Socs', but this is doubtful and could not be substantiated. Note error in Horne, pp. 142–3 on the date of the formation of RSA: (Horne – McQueen the foundation chairman in 1968 of a revolutionary socialists' organisation in Melbourne).

⁶⁴ *The Socialist Imperative – A May Day Manifesto* ("Manifesto produced by a group of Revolutionary Socialists who operate from an action centre known as the Bakery."). See Alf Louvre, 'The New Radicalism: the politics of culture in Britain, America and France, 1956–1973', in Bart Moore-Gilbert and John Seed (eds), *Cultural Revolution? The Challenge of the Arts in the 1960's*, Routledge, London, 1992, pp. 64, 69. Louvre mentions the 1968 May Day Manifesto produced by Raymond Williams and comrades in Britain, the Port Huron Manifesto of Tom Hayden and SDS, Jerry Rubin's Yippie Manifesto. See the "Manifesto of Socialists for Victory" distributed at the 1967

The language of the Manifesto is notable for linking imperialism in the ‘underdeveloped’ world with the imperialism of ‘everyday life’ in the advanced capitalist countries. The emphasis is characteristically ‘new left’ in demanding the satisfaction of personal life, not greater material rewards:

Students and teachers are not striking to achieve ‘more of the same’ but demand a new purpose in education (an end to ‘education for industry’), with schools run democratically and ‘the content of courses freed from the confines of capitalist thinking.

The ‘Manifesto’ declared that the very culture of ‘everyday life’ in Australia made revolution necessary and possible:

Every area of our lives is perverted by the demand to make profit...the case for revolutionary socialism in Vietnam is obvious ... the case for revolutionary socialism in Australia is no less compelling....the collected garbage of our present culture can only be removed by revolution....events in France this time last year showed that revolution in advanced capitalist countries remains possible...revolutionaries need strategy to exploit such ruptures... begin now when revolution is not on the immediate agenda... establish organisational and ideological forms which unite those fighting imperialism in the jungles, the factories and the schools.⁶⁵

However, the ‘Manifesto’ was a swan song for the ‘Rev Socs’. After initial optimism, the ‘Rev Socs’ evaporated as a discernible organisation in Melbourne.⁶⁶ The organisation failed to establish a clear identity, particularly with regard to the national Revolutionary Socialist Alliance. Some members saw the Melbourne ‘Rev Socs’ as a branch outpost of RSA. A contingent of Melbourne radicals attended the RSA January Conference in Sydney. The Melbourne ‘Rev Socs’, with the aim of securing resolutions, even ‘launched moves for a caucus of all Rev Socs’ at the Sydney (Left Action) Conference on the evening of April 4.⁶⁷ But these links with

Melbourne May Day March. See also *Half-Baked* 3, n.d, late March 1969; *Print* 28, April 28, 1969; Agenda, General Meeting, Revolutionary Socialists, April 30, 1969.

⁶⁵ “The Socialist Imperative – A May Day Manifesto” (“Socialism – human needs uppermost...compare Melbourne – tow trucks arrive at an accident before ambulance.... violent revolution is a necessary precondition for socialism...”). See also “Vote Labor?” – Leaflet by Revolutionary Socialists for October 1969 Federal Elections – basic statement on parliamentarism and the ALP – “the tow trucks arrived before the ambulance because its more profitable to mend broken machines than to mend broken bodies.”

⁶⁶ Cf Hunter, *op. cit* – “But most of the Revolutionary Socialists would now regard themselves as much more than the post-graduate version of the Labor Club....As the Bakery develops the Revolutionary Socialists are beginning to become the parent organisation that unites diverse groups of students and workers initially around a geographical area and (hopefully) around a political program in the long run.”

⁶⁷ *Half-Baked* No. 3 (n.d late March) – ‘Rev Socs’ to participate in Left Action Conference, but not to sponsor it. See ‘Draft Statement for the Revolutionary Socialists’ January 1969; *RSA Draft Constitution*, January Conference 1969.

the RSA were always tenuous. The very heterogeneity of political tendencies in the 'Rev Socs' at The Bakery meant adherence to a notion of 'revolutionary socialism' rather than to a specific organisation, and certainly not to one which could be seen to be largely a Sydney creation anyway.⁶⁸ The ideologically committed Maoists in Melbourne were becoming increasingly vocal and hegemonic at The Bakery by May. Regarding the Revolutionary Socialists at The Bakery as a recruiting ground and 'front' for advancing the cause of their own tendency the Maoists were wary of the Trotskyism inherent in the RSA and only slightly more well-disposed towards the 'anarcho-Guevarists' of the SDA in Brisbane who had thrown in their hand with RSA. The nick-name 'Rev Socs' conveniently symbolised Melbourne's detachment.⁶⁹ The 'Rev Soc' identity was thus timidly local - just enough to arouse the faithful behind a huge red banner on May Day - but as a structure the organisation was threadbare. Cassidy's inflammatory rhetoric against the 'peaceniks' of the anti-war movement and ALP politicians, in the aptly-named 'Half-Baked', was not matched by a specific 'Rev Soc' practical involvement. The 'Rev Socs' was simply overwhelmed by a new wave of local activism at The Bakery - the Prahran Peoples' Movement.

⁶⁸ Frank Burden, a member of "Rev Socs" who had been given the responsibility of having the Bakery phone "in his name", can remember feeling affronted to discover that "Rev Socs" was a "pseudo-organisation" in Melbourne. Interview with Frank Burden, Northcote, June 15, 1993.

⁶⁹ See Len Esdaile, *Red Line 2*, February 7, 1969.

CHAPTER THREE

ALL FIRED UP

Burn, Temple of Gold!

The preceding chapter introduced the reader to the locale of 118-120 Greville Street, Prahran and to the Revolutionary Socialists organisation of 1969. The following chapter begins by ‘stepping back’ momentarily to 1968, which can be separated from 1969 only by the most arbitrary schema, and affords a glimpse of certain key features of that formative, indeed epochal, year. The Bakery, as a physical entity, was merely a vessel. Churning within it, however, were the creatures of 1968, attempting to emulate the astonishing events of Paris and themselves detonate a working-class revolt in the conditions of Australia. Activists at The Bakery participated in the strategy typical of new leftists - the struggle to control the circumstances of their own lives was oriented to the occupation of space - and, like new leftists elsewhere, their activities were met with a concerted, and often violent, reaction by the Establishment.

By May 1969, the loft at the rear of the kitchen on the top floor of The Bakery, not yet a library, had been turned into a rough living area, used by visitors from other states. When Kathy Kelly returned temporarily to Adelaide, the only item left behind on the mattress she had used was a yellow, roneoed pamphlet. It seemed a little incongruous that the pamphlet, an Adelaide student reprint of two articles about France in 1968 by Andre Gorz, had been discarded. It was so well-thumbed. Though why bother to hold onto such an intangible subject, so indistinguishable from a dream? ⁷⁰ As one influential text on May 1968 put it:

... 1968 did not fail because it was too weak and secondary an event, a mere accident unworthy of comparison with the great dates. It failed because it was too big, and too novel, and inevitably dwarfed most of the circumstances around it. It was heavy with a significance too great for our times to bear, a premonitory significance which the events of May could only sketch in outline, like a vivid, troubled dream experienced just before waking.⁷¹

The task of coming to terms theoretically with such a momentous event seemed so daunting that it took almost a year - a series of ‘Rev Soc’ discussions on France began at The Bakery on May 5 - for radicals in Melbourne to follow up their initial fascination. The French upsurge had been ‘totally unexpected’.⁷² Not even the outbreak of student revolt in other Western European centres earlier in 1968 had given the left cause to predict it. It seemed impossible to deny that the ‘riots’ in

⁷⁰ Author’s personal recollection.

⁷¹ Tom Nairn, Why It Happened, in Angelo Quattrocchi and Tom Nairn, *The Beginning of the End – France, May 1968*, Panther, London, 1968, p. 104.

⁷² Nairn, *op. cit.*, Chapter One – ‘The Totally Unexpected’.

Paris, news of which were flashed to Australia even as Monash students were themselves storming the citadels of power (on campus and at the Prime Minister's Lodge in Canberra), represented a genuinely pre- revolutionary situation:

France seems to be on the edge of a new revolution today. The scene in Paris is terrifying. Rioters have killed a policeman in Lyons. And across France, in the small hours of this morning, revolt is spreading ... Now there are so many riots going on at once in Paris that police with their teargas bombs, guns and batons don't know where to go next.....Several thousand students armed with axe handles, wooden clubs and iron bars stormed the high iron gates of the Bourse, the Paris stock exchange. They smashed their way in shouting 'Temple of gold, temple of gold!' They ran to the roof, hauled down the French tricolor and burnt it. They hoisted the black flag of anarchy and the red flag in its place.⁷³

For the Left in Australia, the events of May 1968 required serious reflection. For some, they appeared to be the harbinger of a revolution of a new type - a revolution against industrial ('technocratic') consumer society (not just capitalism) made with cultural weapons. 'May' resurrected almost forgotten utopian traditions. Graffiti on the walls of Paris celebrated the role of imagination and desire, and denounced the alienated norms of everyday life (the 'Spectacle'). Cutting across and complicating neat class divisions was the generational aspect evident in the May revolt. 'Youth' emerged as a political category in its own right, with young workers and students (including the extraordinary involvement of students in the 'lycees') the most active force. The Communist Party of France, when it ridiculed those fighting on the barricades as 'children of the bourgeoisie' and 'Daddy's darlings', could be identified with 'Daddy's generation' holding the line against revolution.⁷⁴

⁷³ John Williams and Roland Pullen, Bourse Burns in Night of Terror, *The Herald*, May 11, 1968. See also, Background to "Les Grandes Riots" (translation into English from 'Paris Match'), *Honi Soit*, June 4, 1968, pp. 11-13; *National U*, June 24, 1968, p. 11 - Monash student John Jenkins reports from riot-torn Paris, heading - "The Sixth Republic?". See also Letter from Paris (May 25), *Rabelais*, June 17, 1968, p. 4 - "a true revolution" ; *Farrago*, June 28, 1968, p. 1; Miles Kupa, Reflections on the Paris Rebellion, *Farrago*, June 28, 1968, p. 5; The Student Revolt in Europe - A Rational View, *Honi Soit*, June 4, 1968, p. 8; *Rabelais*, June 17, 1968, p. 12; Dennis Altman, The Paris End of Collins Street, in *Coming Out in the Seventies*, Penguin, 1980, pp. 126-128 (from 'Oz' July 1968) - a fantasy, a revolution in Victoria, starting at Monash; Michael Hamel-Green, Vietnam: Beyond Pity, *Dissent* 25; Grant Evans, review of Seale and McConville's book 'French Revolution 1968', *Rabelais*, March 20, 1969, p. 11. See *Underground*, Vol 2, No. 5, March 21, 1969, for the sit-down demonstration in the city planned by the Latrobe University Labor Club to mark the anniversary of the "22 Mars movement" in France.

⁷⁴ In Australia, the Communist Party of Australia initially echoed the French Communist Party line, which earned the opprobrium of the 'new' left and further prised open existing fissures on the 'old' left. And though May had seemingly confirmed the validity of their proclivity for advanced demands even the various components of the 'new' left had differing responses. Student radicals in Adelaide and Brisbane seem to have been more profoundly affected. SDA in Adelaide put one Paris slogan - "imagination is revolution" - on the masthead of its news-sheet "Grassroots" and regularly used others. For SDA the revolution prefigured by May was a "cultural as well as political" affair necessitating a break from the model of the "Leninist" party and the building of a "mass hegemonic movement". See *Grassroots*, Vol. 2, No. 2, March 1969 - "Liberation is when the last capitalist has

The Monash Labor Club, obviously aroused by May, concluded that the events pointed to the need for 'new Leninist parties.'⁷⁵ All radical political tendencies were agreed on one thing - that the single most important lesson of May was the possibility and necessity of a worker-student alliance:

Another important event which profoundly influenced radical students everywhere was the 1968 French Revolution. Students, formerly cynical about the working class of the advanced capitalist countries as a force for social transformation, came to see that student-worker co-operation was necessary for the achievement of radical ideas.⁷⁶

The French events had apparently endorsed the 'old' left belief in the revolutionary potential of the working class. However, the idea that students could act as a 'vanguard' was now more confused, because the nature of the relationship between students and the 'working class' seemed even more problematic. (In France, the leading role had been played by technicians and 'cadres' of the 'new working class', not industrial workers). Nevertheless, it was accepted that students were capable of acting as a 'detonator' of proletarian revolt.

Fighting Together - the worker-student alliance

They were there before us.....now we can fight together⁷⁷

been hung with the guts of the last bureaucrat"; *Grassroots*, Vol 2, No. 1, October 9, 1968 - "During the May Revolution in France earlier this year one inspired student wrote on a wall in the Latin Quarter a poem which began - "Be realistic - demand the impossible". Another important revolutionary tradition which drew strength from May was that of anarchism which was hostile to the notion of any kind of Party (vanguard or otherwise) and instead stressed the importance of "autogestion" (self-management). This was to be the main influence in the development of SDA and RSA in Brisbane. See "Imagination Will Rule - Towards a Red Base" (SDA leaflet, Brisbane, n.d, circa mid-1969). The leaflet, addressing the question of power in the university, recommends the reading, among other materials, of Nairn's *The Beginning of the End*. See *French Revolution 1968, eyewitness account of May 1968*, published by the Red and Black Bookshop and Revolutionary Socialist Alliance (links with Solidarity in U.K). See 1969 Rev Socs Manifesto - 'The Socialist Imperative' - for reference to the importance of France, May 1968 - "Events in France this time last year showed that revolution in advanced capitalist countries remains possible."

⁷⁵ *Print* 30, August 22, 1968, with reference to the invasion of Czechoslovakia - "new Leninist parties will emerge from this and the French events of June". See also *Print*, May 16, 1968; special Issue of *Print*, May 19, 1968; *Print*, June 11, 1968; *Monash Labor Club - May Day Declaration*, May 4, 1969: "...pessimism about opposition to 'neo-capitalism' is no longer admissable. Mass action against capitalism, involving workers and their allies, is more than ever possible and effective. The events of France in 1968 also pointedly raised the question of the role and nature of official Communist Parties and Trade Unions."

⁷⁶ Students, Workers and Chryslers, *Ergo*, May 8, 1969, p.10. See also Workers and Students, *Brisbane Line*, September 5, 1968, pp. 6-8.

⁷⁷ Editorial, *Student Guerilla* (Brisbane SDA), No. 14, July 4, 1968.

Students should not work with the hope of having a ‘French Revolution’ in a few months.⁷⁸

For Monash radicals however, local developments, rather than those in Paris, may have been more formative. The Labor Club had made a turn to the trade unions in Victoria in the first months of 1968, arguing against student ‘scabs’ during a postal strike; the club marched behind its red banner on the March 12 union demonstration against amendments to the Essential Services Act.⁷⁹ The club established a Fiji Solidarity Committee, and staged a sit-in at the office of Professor Donald Cochrane, in response to Fijian airport workers. But apart from Dave Nadel’s admonition about the need for ‘student-worker co-operation’ there is little to suggest that the need for links with workers was an overriding preoccupation at Monash at this time, or throughout 1968.⁸⁰

The Student-Worker Co-ordinating Committee (SWCC) of the Monash Labor Club grew out of the efforts to promote contacts with Victorian unions during 1968. A correspondent to *The Brisbane Line* wrote that SWCC members had ‘... talked to the leaders of the Meatworkers, Wharf Labourers, Builders Labourers and Boilermakers Union, among others’.⁸¹ Students began speaking at job meetings and cooperated with unionists over the July 4 protest. A much more serious effort was made in 1969. “... Development of student-worker unity should be our most important activity this year”, wrote Albert Langer.⁸² SWCC meetings were held regularly at The Bakery, with unionists sometimes in attendance.

Because the Monash Labor Club saw itself as representing an extension of the Australian Labour movement within the University - “working within the fundamentally bourgeois environment of universities we work in support of the Labor movement outside”, wrote the author of SWCC’s first *Solidarity* news sheet for 1969 - and its prime task as educating students rather than pretentiously

⁷⁸ Michael Connolly in *Brisbane Line*, September 5, 1968.

⁷⁹ For the postal strike, see Dave Nadel, *Students and Workers, Lot’s Wife*, April 8, 1968. See also *Tribune*, March 13, 1968; *Tribune*, March 20, 1968.

⁸⁰ It was in fact radical students in Brisbane and Adelaide who set the pace in forging such links. Brisbane SDA had notched up some real successes – joint action with unions established an important youth centre (‘FOCO’) and resulted in victories for civil liberties on the streets of Brisbane. A flushed SDA sponsored a conference in January 1969 to discuss “perspectives for student-worker action”. In Adelaide, SDA established a Student-Worker Co-ordinating Committee (SWCC) “committed to working for socialism” as early as May 1968, prompting the Police Commissioner to express alarm at the “Paris-style alliance” that had been forged. In Sydney links were made in 1968. A savage police attack, resulting in 110 arrests, against an anti-conscription demonstration on April 11, 1969 (curiously coinciding with a similar attack in Adelaide), back-fired on the Askin State Government when students and workers produced 70,000 copies of a four-page pictorial broadsheet and jointly organised a repeat demonstration, to specifically denounce police repression, only twelve days later.

⁸¹ Michael Connolly, Report on Melbourne SWCC, *Brisbane Line*, September 5, 1968, pp. 6–7. See also *Print*, August 1, 1968.

⁸² *Monash Labor Club Newsletter* No. 1, March 10, 1969.

'educating' workers , it is not surprising that much of the contact with workers and their issues occurred on campus. Representatives of the Tramways Union and the 'Wharfies' spoke to student audiences in April, and *Print* regularly informed its audience about union issues.⁸³

It was the gaoling of Tramways Union leader Clarrie O'Shea on May 15, 1969 that broke this pattern. In parallel with their counterparts in other states, students in Melbourne moved off-campus to engage with workers on the streets and at strike meetings, creating what one writer called 'a new unity'.⁸⁴ The O'Shea events were the closest Australia has come in the post-war period to emulating 'the French May'. Outrage at the gaoling of a leader whose union had dared defy the hated 'Penal Powers' led to strikes and stoppages throughout Australia.⁸⁵ Occurring as it did on the very anniversary of the French outbreak, the mass meeting of workers at Olympic Park on May 16 was the occasion for *Print*, issuing its own 'call to the people', to rhetorically, and cleverly, link Melbourne and Paris, and O'Shea with Jean-Paul Marat. Pointing out that 'workers and students have a common interest in obtaining guarantees of democratic rights and in fighting repression', the leaflet excelled itself by parodying the full, eccentric title of Peter Weiss's play 'Marat/Sade' and condemning: "The Prosecution and Jailing of Clarrie O'Shea as performed by the Officers of the Arbitration Court under the direction of the Capitalist state".⁸⁶

Despite these promising beginnings for the denizens of The Bakery the contact with workers remained confined within a small number of traditionally militant, 'blue-collar' unions - principally the Builders' Labourers' Federation and the Waterside Workers' Federation (WWF, or 'the wharfies'). Relations with the latter were made more difficult by the WWF's negative reaction to Albert Langer's decision to conduct his own defence in the Langer-Rubin trial, and by the following disturbing events at Williamstown Court. A demonstration of workers and students at Williamstown Court on September 19, 1969, to support draft resister Laurie Carmichael Junior, turned violent, giving the Melbourne 'Herald' another sensational headline - 'Mob Battle Police'.⁸⁷ One week later, outside a courthouse

⁸³ *Solidarity* No. 1 (published by the Monash Labor Club Student-Worker Coordinating Committee), March 14, 1969.

⁸⁴ Joe Palmada, *Industrial Perspectives*, *Australian Left Review* 3, June-July, 1969, p. 9. See also *Tribune*, May 21, 1969, p.1.

⁸⁵ J.Arrowsmith, *Abolish the Penal Powers, Freedom's Fight of '69* (pamphlet), Victorian Trades Hall Council, August 1969.

⁸⁶ *Print* 40, May 16, 1969 – article on O'Shea jailing May 15. See Peter Weiss, *The Persecution and Assassination of Marat as performed by the inmates of the Asylum of Charenton under the direction of the Marquis of Sade*, London, John Calder, 1965. Note the comparison of officers of the Arbitration Court with lunatics. See also *Print* 26, April 22, 1969.

⁸⁷ *The Herald*, September 19, 1969. See also *Print* 84, September 22, 1969; *Print* 85, September 23, 1969; *Print* 86, September 25, 1969 – "the People's Power is in the Streets"; *Lot's Wife*, October 9, 1969.

surrounded by a ‘thick blue line’ of police, students and union officials (who had collaborated with police in moving the students away from the Court) abused one another, with Albert Langer particularly singled out for verbal attack by ‘Curly’ Rourke of the WWF.⁸⁸

Subsequently, a motion of censure against Labor Club members was passed at a WWF meeting. Looking back over 1969, Jill Jolliffe wrote ruefully that the motion, which she believed had resulted from the political machinations of factions within the WWF in response to the ‘dedication’ of Labor Club members ‘doing political work on the wharves’, “represented a serious rift at a time when we had been making the first steps towards establishing some sort of alliance with the working class”. Jolliffe was careful to insist that the criticisms made by the Labor Club at Williamstown were correct but that the right to make them had not yet been earned. The rift was a “political difference within the working-class movement” rather than a “rift between students and workers as some of our political enemies would maintain”.⁸⁹

Space Wars

Late capitalism signifies the end of time, and space as its replacement. In Mahler’s time, at the turn of the century, the question still concerned historical transformation, progress, development, all linked to the contradictions of capital accumulation. In the sixties, this had become a struggle over turf with the seizing of the streets, of the Sorbonne, of the ideological state apparatuses themselves.⁹⁰

In 1984, the editors of an anthology of writings about the sixties proposed that a fundamental, world-wide shift in the nature of ‘protest’ movements had occurred in that decade - a shift from wresting concessions to encroaching upon the domain of power itself: the ‘participatory democracy’ of ‘student power’ and ‘workers’ control’:

⁸⁸ See “The Thick Blue Line”, *The Herald*, September 26, 1969. See also *Print* 87, Monday September 29, 1969; *Tribune*, October 1, 1969, p. 12; *Newsweekly*, October 1, 1969, p. 3; “Worker-Student Voice”, October 1969 (Melbourne Workers’ Committee in co-operation with militant students); *Tribune*, October 1, 1969, p. 5. See also “Police Praise Union Demo.”, *The Sun*, September 27, 1969 (has photo of Langer/Jolliffe).

⁸⁹ Jill Jolliffe, *Student/Worker Attitudes: Petty-Bourgeois and Proletarian* (written at end of 1969). The Monash Labor Club was not the only section of the Australian new left to run foul of union officialdom. Dedicated work on the part of students to break down social barriers was met with a campaign of vilification calculated to arouse prejudice against student ‘privilege’. In Brisbane, radical students were subjected to an investigation by the Trades and Labour Council after the Labor Day March on May 5, and students on Labor Day in Adelaide (October) had to accept censorship of their slogans. See *Tribune*, June 11, 1969 – FOCO – “to be vacated for alterations” (see details).

⁹⁰ Sohnya Sayres, Anders Stephanson, Stanley Aronowitz, Fredric Jameson (eds.), *The Sixties Without Apology*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1984, introduction, pp. 2–3.

The struggles of the sixties, on the other hand, brought popular intervention into the apparatuses themselves: students, workers, middle strata transgressed the boundaries of power, symbolically taking the streets. Demonstrations were not framed as marches ON power. One occupied instead. Students took over buildings at the universities in Frankfurt, London and Berkeley ... Virtually every ideological state apparatus thus became contested terrain.⁹¹

The generation that formed the 'new left' invented a new style of radical politics and political activism, but its aims also transcended (sometimes coincided with or supplemented) those of the 'old' left (the claim for recompense from government and employer).⁹² The motif of the sixties 'new left' was the 'struggle over turf', aptly captured in the metaphor of the guerilla, and in Rudi Dutschke's phrase 'the long march through the institutions'. In Australia what had started, in the mid-sixties, in the case of the anti-Vietnam war movement, as an attempt to 'reactivate public discourse' and assertively 'use' public space became by the late-sixties an aggressive encroachment upon public space - an occupation, firstly of the streets. A myriad of confrontational anti-war actions, often dramatic but seemingly isolated, culminated in the great Moratorium of May 1970. It was an occupation of cities.⁹³

The political activity of youth bypassed the traditional institutions. Parliamentary politics, wrote Bob Connell, seemed 'sterile and irrelevant.' Many held political parties in contempt, including Labor which was 'middle class' and compromised over Vietnam.⁹⁴ Outside the halls of power, the action taking place on the streets so outstripped theory that 'participatory democracy', the grand new left notion of spatial politics, remained a mere slogan, even while it was being practised

⁹¹ Sayres et al, *op. cit.* Young radicals in Australia stood alongside the traditional institutions of the labour movement, but as the report in the *The Age* of May 5, 1969 suggests, the style of the new contrasted with that of the old. Describing "the May Day when youth seemed to take over altogether", the report adds: "that much was pure May Day traditional. But behind them came the young ones, long-haired, bearded, almost every one in the regulation undress of the rebellious student... chants and flags for the NLF." Max Beattie, "Workers and Students Unite for May Day Parade", *The Age*, May 5, 1969 (Description of May Day 1969).

⁹² Inspired by overseas example (not just U.S), outraged beyond words by Vietnam, and injecting into political discourse the elements of the "personal". See Dennis Altman, *The Personal is the Political: Social Movements and Cultural Change*, in B. Head and J. Walter, *Intellectual Movements and Australian Society*, Oxford University Press, 1988, pp. 308–309.

⁹³ See Murphy, *The Harvest of Fear*, *op. cit.*, pp. 119, 140–161, 248–249; Horne, *op. cit.*, p. 64; Dennis Altman, *Coming out in the Seventies*, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

⁹⁴ R.W.Connell, *Labor in the Age of Whitlam*, *Outlook*, April 1968; and *Labor in the Age of Whitlam*, Part 2, *Outlook*, June 1968. See also Horne, *Time of Hope*, *op. cit.*, p. 63. Editorial, *Outlook*, Vol.13, No. 5, October 1969 – suggests there is trend away from traditional political forms (including parties) – "radical activity has bypassed political parties". See also *Print* 87, Monday September 29, 1969; *Print* 89, October 10, 1969.

so extensively. ‘Participation’ did not mean involvement in the established game but rather its disruption or disturbance - a complete change of rules.⁹⁵

The critical issue which led to the challenge to the legitimacy of state and government institutions was the issue of conscription. The initial courageous acts of defiance - draft card burnings and other forms of non-compliance against the draft and the Vietnam war - became a mass movement of civil disobedience, a mass movement that embarrassed and helped to remove the long-standing Federal Liberal government. It contained an incipient threat to a rejected way of life.⁹⁶ Civil disobedience by definition is the occupation of space, whether undertaken on a mass scale or as daring individual acts - acts in ‘contempt of court’, hunger strikes, acts of harassment against politicians and other officials, escapes, or as a raid on the stock exchange. Occupation took different forms: symbolic, tactical, defensive, theatrical. An occupation of media space, billboard space, gaol space, the space in the offices of government ministers. The period after 1967 saw a proliferation of ‘sit-ins’ (the occupation of buildings) and ‘sit-downs’. Protestors chained themselves to gates. They conducted ‘freedom rides’ into ‘enemy’ space and established ‘draft sanctuaries’ to protect their own. ‘Teach-ins’, ‘talk-ins’ and ‘town meetings’ aimed at occupying a space in public debate; graffiti, posters, badges and ‘guerilla theatre’ sought visual space.

In the light of these reflections, the much-vaunted ‘confrontationism’ of the Monash Labor Club can be interpreted as typically ‘new left’ in character, despite the accompanying ‘old left’ rhetoric. The Labor Club, often concentrating on parochial, concrete exposures, adopted a ‘shock therapy’ approach. The May 1967 action, of bringing a live piglet (‘Sir Henry Pig’) onto campus to protest an honorary degree for Premier Bolte, and fertilizing the lawn with the graffito ‘No Pedigree for Pigs’, anticipated the ‘Yippies’ and established a tradition. The establishment of the NLF Aid fund, and the National Vietnam Teach-in held at Monash in 1967, were both intrusions into the space of foreign policy, as was the regular Vietnam ‘Talk-in’ conducted in the Central Business District on Saturday mornings. The ‘sit-in’, originally applied over library conditions, became a standard tactic and the impetuosity of the Monash Labor Club sparked off a celebrated ‘sit-down’, in May 1968 on the road outside Prime Minister Gorton’s Canberra Lodge.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Horne misinterprets the purpose of disruption as mere opportunist participation in ‘the spectacle’. See Horne, *Time of Hope*, p. 57 – theatricality – ‘the way to get publicity was to organise disruption’ (see also p. 9). Compare Andrew Milner, *The Road to St. Kilda Pier*, *op. cit.* p.89.

⁹⁶ The most complete and satisfactory treatment of the movement against conscription is the article by Michael Hamel-Green, *The Resisters: A History of the Anti-Conscription Movement 1964–1972*, in P. King (ed.) *Australia’s Vietnam – Australia in the Second Indo-China War*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1983, pp. 100–128.

⁹⁷ Warren Osmond, *Shock Therapy*, *Dissent* 21, Spring, 1967. See also Ockenden, *op. cit.*, pp. 4, 8; Hyde, *op. cit.*, p. 18; *Tribune*, May 3, 1967. On the NLF Aid issue, see material in Langer files of Committee to Challenge the Defence Forces Protection Act. On the Teach-in, see Curthoys in Pemberton, *op. cit.*, p.148; *Lot’s Wife*, October 10, 1967. For the Talk-ins, see *Tribune*, April 17, 1968 – ‘The Label Proves a Talking Point for Peace’. The Lodge demonstration resulted in 69 arrests. See *Tribune* May 22, 1968, p. 8; *Lot’s Wife*, June 11, 1968, p. 7; *Farrago*, June 14, 1968, p. 3; Mavis Robertson, *Inside*

In 1969, Jill Jolliffe launched two actions from Greville Street - both incursions into occupied space - both of which would be incomprehensible if we had not looked beyond this precise location and grasped the characteristic traits of a new political and cultural style of which these actions were a part.

Diary.

March 1969. It was an incitement of the most flagrant kind. An incitement to action. An alien was invading our space. His presence would have been more welcome if he had been a Martian: this one was the worst kind possible - a square-jawed, barn-storming, tub-thumping, bible-basher from the heartland of world imperialism. Billy Graham was the sort of preacher that it was simply impossible to ignore. This was his 'Second Coming'. The previous visit to Melbourne, in 1959, had seen a record crowd of 130,000 people pack like sardines into the Cricket Ground. As a thirteen-year-old, I had squashed into a seat on the top tier of the Southern stand, watched a tiny figure strut on the stage, and heard his mind-numbing oratory burst through the speakers. As thousands moved forward onto the oval, I too felt the psychological tug to make my 'decision for Christ'. In the ten years that had elapsed the war in Vietnam had turned us all into preachers - for the souls of our fellow youth. Not only was Graham 'an enthusiastic advocate of LBJ's Vietnam Policies' who 'deflects criticism from the true source of great evil - the entire social system', his style offended us to the core. His appeal was packaged in such a form as to appeal specifically to the youth.

It was 'a most massive offensive to capture the minds of young Australians, an assault carried out with the drive and efficiency of a major military attack'.⁹⁸ He was on our turf and we radicals were going to get him. Ours was an unashamedly passionate response to the crusade's 'dictatorship of emotion.' We saw parallels between the idiosyncrasies of his oratorical style and those of Hitler, between the modalities of German totalitarianism and the modern system of mind control dubbed 'the Spectacle':⁹⁹

'Hitler is Alive and in Christ!' ...Cunningly disguised as a Christian, Hitler stalks the streets accompanied by the army of brutal, slogan - shouting, 'White-shirts'. Allegedly reforming swinish sinners, Hitler in fact intends to use his powers of oratory in the cause of Christian National Socialism ... 'This time I shall not fail', stormed Hitler, 'God is on my side'.¹⁰⁰

on the Canberra Sit-in', *Tribune*, May 29, 1968, p. 5; V.C.H, *Vox*, June 1968, p. 6; *Rabelais*, June 17, 1968, p. 12.

⁹⁸ Letter to *Tribune*, May 29, 1968 from D.Taylor, Rose Bay. See also "Crusading with Billy", *National U*, May 3, 1968, p. 12; Trevor Ashton, Evangelism Incorporated, *Lot's Wife* March 20, 1969, pp. 8-9; *Tumbrial*, No. 1, 1969, p. 1 - "Christ is Groovy".

⁹⁹ Ian Weeks, A Second Coming, *Arena* 18, p.25. See also Gabriel Lafitte, *Farrago* March 21, 1969, p. 11. For "the Spectacle", see Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, Paris, Situationist International, 1967.

¹⁰⁰ *Rabelais*, March, 6, 1969, p. 16: "God however has disclaimed all responsibility for Hitler. "Its nothing to do with me" said the balding, grey-headed Jehova. "I can't be responsible for every twit

Huge billboards (You must hear Billy Graham) began appearing all over Melbourne. Set against a red and black background, Graham's visage resembled Hitler's - without a moustache. This is where the idea came from. Raiding parties, armed with tins of black paint and brushes broad enough to encompass the arc between the two nostrils, set out from The Bakery and swept about the suburbs in the wee hours. We sat down on the sea-grass in Jill Jolliffe's bookshop one night, in the shade of the more congenial countenances of the personality posters, and mapped out the elements of a guerilla raid onto enemy terrain. You had to be especially invited. The lights were dimmed, the door onto the street closed. For his meetings, Graham had seized a symbolic space - the Myer Music Bowl, where on November 28, 1965, Jim Cairns had called for an Australian 'resistance movement'. Ten women from the 'Save Our Sons' (SOS) organisation had protested at one of the meetings with placards inscribed 'Vietnam is Hell'. But that was not our style.¹⁰¹

While the affinity group prepared in secret, the Labor Club trumpeted the 'demo' at Monash in inimitable fashion - 'A Mass Monash Conversion for those interested is planned for this Friday night at the Music Bowl - Hallelujah my Socialist Brethren!' On the Friday evening, the commandos arrived at Alice's Restaurant before six o'clock to pick up their entrance tickets and bundles of a six-page roneoed booklet (with Graham giving Hitler salute), printed at Greville Street and containing direct questions for Graham and the words of Joe Hill's 'Pie in the Sky'. Graham concluded the first part of his sermon, and the thrall of beatific silence descended. From among the ranks of the multitude which had moved forward to the podium there suddenly erupted the most terrible cacophony of anti-war slogans. The police were drawn to the disturbance like flies to a dung-heap. Jim Marchment bit into a policeman's hand like a savage dog. Jill Jolliffe, who 'threw a bundle of pamphlets in the air and shouted loudly' was later arraigned before the Supreme Court for 'disturbing religious worship'. I was pounced upon for shouting 'Napalm!'¹⁰² .

.....

Print described the Crusade as 'more akin to a Nuremberg Rally than religious worship' and the "sight of these guilt-ridden people massing forward for conversion" as 'horrifying.' On April 29 the City Court, deeming that Graham's meeting was not after all a religious service, threw out the charges against Jolliffe. "History has absolved me", she said.¹⁰³

that uses my name in vain!" See 'Rabelais' for picture of billboard with a moustache painted on Graham.

¹⁰¹ *Print* 10, Thursday, March 20, 1969 – Anti-Billy Graham Crusade meeting at Alice's Restaurant Bookshop tonight at 8 p.m/ enquiries at Labor Club bookstall. See also *Tribune*, March 19, 1969, p. 2.

¹⁰² See *Print* 8, March 17, 1969; *Print* 11, March 21, 1969; Monash Labor Club leaflet/brochure (6 pages) – "What does Billy Graham Stand For?"; "Billy Graham Rally not Worship", *The Age*, October 12, 1969. See also Helen Hill and Helen Fletcher, Impressions of the Crusade, *Lot's Wife*, March 20, 1969, p. 9.

¹⁰³ *Print* 30, May 1st, 1969 – City court on April 29 throws out charges of 'disturbing religious worship' on the grounds that the Graham meeting was not a religious service; *Print*, No. 12, March 24, 1969: 'Onward Christian Soldiers'.

Earlier, on April 11, at a 'fiery graduation ceremony' at Monash University, Jolliffe (alongside Jim Marchment) burnt her degree:

I am burning this degree as an expression of opposition to the belief that this piece of paper should make me a privileged person in this society, the view that because I have met certain formal requirements set by the establishment, I should earn \$60.00 per week while the broad masses should subsist on a basic wage or a pension. I dispute the belief that this degree makes me more human, more intelligent, more moral or should allow me to legislate for others ... I also burn this degree as an expression of solidarity with those people working in factories, who, because of the way the economy of this society is geared, have no opportunity to obtain a formal education.¹⁰⁴

'All Coppers Are Bastards' ¹⁰⁵ - Reflections on Violence

But the politics of opposition in America was serious business...the most the average protestor in Australia ever faced was a fine and a night in the cells... ¹⁰⁶.

... cultural change has been overemphasised, sure we acknowledge the bourgeois hegemony, but a counter-hegemony isn't the answer...even Albert admits hegemony.¹⁰⁷

'REMEMBER THE SABBATH AND KEEP IT HOLY' - Prahran 6/7/70 - In dramatic early morning raids today the Victorian Government launched an energetic campaign against Sunday baking. A building ostensibly used for political organising in Greville St Prahran (but actually a secret Sunday Bakery) was overrun by Health Inspectors (cunningly disguised as police). In a statement issued immediately afterwards, the residents announced that a pillowslip, a large quantity of cotton wool, the cardboard inside of a toilet roll and several back copies of *Print* had been seized (this is fair dinkum) and demanded their immediate return as these ingredients cannot possibly be used for illegal

¹⁰⁴ Jill Jolliffe, Statement issued to the press, April 11, 1969, cited in *Print* 21, April 14, 1969. See also *Underground*, 3/1, May 1969. Dave Nadel claims that Marchment, contrary to what is suggested in the leaflet cited by the author, did not actually burn his degree at all, but burnt a piece of paper that looked like his degree.

¹⁰⁵ Rallying cry, July 4, 1968.

¹⁰⁶ Jeffrey Grey, Memory and Public Myth, in Jeffrey Grey and Jeff Doyle (eds), *Vietnam – War, Myth and Memory*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1992, p. 147.

¹⁰⁷ Michael Hyde at the Bakery, quoted in Bruce Hanford, Alice's Restaurant of Prahran, *Broadside*, September 4, 1969.

baking but were obviously vital in the manufacture of high explosives.’¹⁰⁸

“We shall tolerate dissent as long as it is ineffective” - John Grey Gorton, July 15, 1968.¹⁰⁹

The President of the Monash Labor Club, Mr Michael Hyde, said today that violence by the Australian government must end; or else the government would have to face the consequences of its actions ... Mr Hyde said that if the government disagreed with the action being taken by the Vietnamese people, it should voice its dissent through the proper channels¹¹⁰

The great Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, while incarcerated in one of Mussolini’s prisons in the thirties, outlined a concept of ‘hegemony’ which emphasised the way the bourgeois class was able to maintain rule over society without resort in the first instance to ‘coercion’. For Gramsci, ‘coercion’ and ‘consent’ were distinct but interpenetrating modes of bourgeois domination.¹¹¹ ‘Hegemony’ became an influential idea within the new left in 1968. Ironically, it was during that same year of assassinations, ‘Chicago’ and July 4 that coercion had its way with consent. Violent films (‘Bonnie and Clyde’, ‘If’) and violent songs (‘Street Fighting Man’) hit the jackpot. The grim reaper of violence was stalking the new left.¹¹²

Diary

April 18 Party last night at Leo’s Commune (50-52 Albion Street South Yarra). Gate-crashed by a team of basher thugs.

June 10 After the Vice Squad raid Albert installs an ‘intercom’ at the front door in Greville St. Not conducive to a drop-in atmosphere. The buzzer is forever going off in the kitchen and we are all getting very fit rushing down the stairs to unlock the door.

July 20 Woken last night 3.30 a.m by crashing glass. The front window smashed in by a half-brick.

¹⁰⁸ *Print*, July 9, 1970.

¹⁰⁹ See *Farrago*, June 20, 1969, p. 10.

¹¹⁰ *Print*, July 10, 1968. See also *Tribune*, July 17, 1968, p. 2.....‘*Print*’ quotes Hyde (MLC President) paraphrasing Gorton’s statement on the right to dissent (see also report in *Student Guerilla* 16, July 18, 1968).

¹¹¹ See Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, Lawrence & Wishart, 1974; Perry Anderson, The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci, *New Left Review* 100, November, 1976 – January 1977.

¹¹² George Mendelson, Cine Violence, *Farrago*, October 4, 1968, pp. 16–17. See also Roger Milliss, review of Lindsay Anderson’s ‘If’, *Tribune*, November 12, 1969. See also Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching – Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1980, p. 200.

August 8 Another death threat to 'All Revolutionary Socialists'. This one has a pressed dead centipede. We don't trust any one. ¹¹³

Jill Jolliffe thought she was expressing an orthodox revolutionary socialist view when she told a reporter from the teenie 'pop' paper *Go-Set* in October 1969 that "our society is run on violence ... revolution is the only way to establish a humane society today".

Jolliffe, like most of her new left contemporaries, abhorred violence for its own sake, regarding it as a necessary (and defensive) evil. Her view of violence can be gleaned from her review of the superficially 'revolutionary' film 'If'. She regarded the film as basically 'fascist'. Her admiration for the lyrics of 'Street Fighting Man' by the Rolling Stones was based on the recognition of the need for martial arts skills as defence against police violence. In the period 1968-1970 this was not an uncommon attitude, as activists bore the brunt of violence more often than they handed it out.¹¹⁴

Jolliffe and her Bookshop were the subject of unremitting harassment throughout 1969. On October 11, she was hauled before the Supreme Court over the Billy Graham affair only four days after appearing with Ron Lawson in the Prahran Court to face her third obscenity conviction.¹¹⁵ Charges of 'obscenity' had become a common theme in police action against the new left, with Vice Squad interest in *The Brisbane Line*, and the Third World Bookshop (Sydney) and Red and Black Bookshop (Brisbane) being raided for Michelangelo and Beardsley posters.¹¹⁶ Paraphrasing the Mayor of Prahran (Councillor Chris Gahan) who had likened the Greville Street police station to a 'rat-infested hovel', the author of *Half-Baked* cried:

Save Alice - Call the Flick Man ... some of the rats from the Prahran hovel have been infesting Alice's Restaurant Bookshop recently and

¹¹³ For Albion Street, see *Print* 24, Friday April 18, 1969. For centipede, see Hanford, *op. cit*; Souter, *op. cit*; Interview with Marie Fiske, Footscray, August 25, 1993.

¹¹⁴ "Samantha", Jill Jolliffe and Alice's Restaurant, *Go-Set*, October 4, 1969 - "... (we) will have to take over by violence." For Jolliffe's attitude to 'If', see her paper 'Student /Worker Attitudes', *op. cit*, 1969.

¹¹⁵ *Print* 89, October 10, 1969. See "Billy Graham Rally not Worship", *The Age*, October 12, 1969. Ron Lawson remembers that the artist Kevin Lincoln (a member of Rev Socs) also appeared in Prahran Court on an obscenity charge at this time, after the Vice Squad spotted pencil-drawn nudes of Lincoln's wife being displayed on the walls of Alice's Restaurant Bookshop.

¹¹⁶ *The Brisbane Line*, September 5, 1968; *Print*, September 5, 1968; Denis Freney, *A Map of Days - Life on the Left*, Melbourne, Heinemann, 1991, p. 252; *Tribune* December 3, 1969, p. 3. Dave Nadel, the editor of 'The Brisbane Line', has pointed out to the author that in Melbourne, Cheshire's Bookshop and Alice's Restaurant Bookshop were both fined for selling 'The Brisbane Line' because the paper was in breach of the Victorian electoral law. Nadel says that he conformed to Queensland magazine laws but the paper did not include, as required by Victorian law, a statement about responsibility for electoral comment.

have left behind them a series of summonses. One seeks to have the 'Chancellor has no clothes' poster destroyed...a Bakery delegation will carry the banned poster in court.¹¹⁷

Jolliffe submitted that the 'Chancellor' poster was 'a satirical poster aimed at remedying a moral evil in this society - the prostitution of places of learning to big business and the war machine' and concluded that for every poster burnt there would be one hundred more.¹¹⁸

Prahran police, who had earlier threatened Bakery residents, appear to have shown only contempt towards the Bookshop when its windows were attacked with paint and a roofing tile by terrorists. Their response to the pitching of a bomb - an American Claymore anti-personnel grenade (aimed at harming people not property) which did not detonate - at the shop was to suggest that the Revolutionary Socialists made the bomb themselves.¹¹⁹ As an eyewitness participant at the time I can be sure that was not so. Late in the evening of May 31, while a secondary students' (Students in Dissent) party raising money for Langer and Rubin was in progress, The Bakery itself was raided by detectives from the Licensing Branch. They charged Langer, who was studying in Alice's Restaurant Bookshop with his Riot Trial only thirty-hours away, with selling liquor without a licence.¹²⁰ Far more dramatic raids were to occur at both The Bakery and the Centre for Democratic Action in 1970 in what, to the residents, appeared to be a campaign of political persecution.¹²¹

Terrorist attacks against the new left occurred spasmodically; harassment by the State Special Branches occurred on a regular basis.¹²² These disreputable means

¹¹⁷ *Half-Baked*, n.d, September 26, 1969.

¹¹⁸ *Half-Baked*, October 10, 1969; *Print* 87, September 29, 1969; *Underground* Volume 3, No. 2, June 1969; Samantha, *Go-Set*, *op. cit.*, October 4, 1969.

¹¹⁹ *Ergo*, March 24, 1969; *Ergo*, June 20, 1969, p. 2; Allan Souter, Alice's Restaurant - You Can Get Anything You Want?, *Lot's Wife*, Vol. 9, No. 12, September 25, 1969, p. 5; Bruce Hanford, Alice's Restaurant of Prahran, *op. cit.*; *Print* No. 65, July 25, 1969. Note - Souter claims Claymore was thrown on August 4. Hanford also claims August 4 (*Print* claims July 22).

¹²⁰ *Newsday*, December 4, 1969 ("Langer on party drink charge"); *The Age*, December 5, 1969; *The Herald*, December 4, 1969.

¹²¹ See *Print*, July 9, 1970. See also *Struggle* 1, August 5, 1970, p. 3 - CDA and Bakery both raided by the cops... heading - "Pigs Raid Bakery and CDA". See Letter, *Tribune*, July 29, 1970, p. 11 about police raids on two radical centres in Melbourne. See also *National U*, March 3, 1969 - Attempt to close down SDS Headquarters under Health Act; Peter Eakins, Chummy, these 7.30 a.m. raids..., *The Herald*, July 17, 1970... "axe-wielding police"; *Action*, No. 11, October 2, 1971... heading - "Security Men in Series of Raids" - versus 57 Palmerston Street, DMZ Prahran.

¹²² For Special Branch outside the 'Cellar', harassment of SDA (Brisbane) by cops, parties raided etc, see Dave Nadel, Take Up Thy Headquarters and Walk, *Student Guerilla*, No. 18, July 2, 1968; Dave Nadel, Gorton Gets Jitters - Open Season on Dissent, *Student Guerilla*, No. 16, July 18, 1968; *Student Guerilla*, No. 2, March 11, 1969. See also Hunter, *op. cit.*, for visits to the Bakery by "Sgt Sullivan's Lonely Hearts' Club Band" (Commonwealth Police) ("Note in the book at the Prahran cop shop that the Bakery tenants are uncooperative with police").

were merely one part of the panoply of power and persuasion. Right-wing Liberal parliamentarians fulminated against ‘communist manipulation’, calling for a Royal Commission into ‘student unrest’. In May 1969, Federal Attorney-General Bowen ‘uncovered’ a ‘plot’ to take over universities and schools. Denis Warner, writing in the *Melbourne Herald*, commenting on the ‘degree of success’ of ‘extremist students’ and speculating on the possibility of an actual ‘insurrection’, pointed to the reference to ‘violent revolution’ in the Rev Socs May Day Manifesto produced at The Bakery in Greville Street.¹²³ This was the response of a conservative establishment being challenged on an increasingly large number of political and cultural fronts. The Government’s Vietnam policy was rapidly losing credibility and the State had been required to take over from university administrations the task of disciplining student off-campus dissent. Jeffrey Grey’s ‘average protestor’ may have ‘on average’ only been fined or stayed in police cells overnight, but the new left movement in 1969 was profoundly affected by unremitting harassment. The Universities collaborated with the National Service Act, providing information about students to the authorities, and they were also a site of security surveillance against radicals and radical organisations. An increasing number of arrests were made and magistrates began increasing fines.¹²⁴

The ‘occupation of space’ was often necessarily clandestine or nocturnal. Two young men (Ken Mansell and Adrian Desailly) were caught painting a railway bridge in Northcote with a ‘Free Zarb’ sign in March 1969. They were kept overnight in the local cells, and transported to Pentridge for a ‘roughing-up’. Demonstrators gathered at The Bakery the following Saturday morning before travelling to Northcote to finish the incomplete message ‘Free Z....’. Robert Tillet, a young poet from Adelaide and editor of *Mok* magazine, was given a savage three months gaol sentence in Northcote Court for completing the sign. A meeting of Monash students donated \$100 to his defence. The original painters were fined \$200 each and the Magistrate, A.H. Pfeifer (SM), questioned their sanity. War parties set

¹²³ Denis Warner, YES it can happen here, *The Herald*, July 25, 1969. See also Hugh Armfield, Militant Student Plan to Grab Schools, *The Age*, May 5, 1969; *Tribune*, May 21, 1969; *Ergo*, May 8, 1969; *Print* 32, May 6, 1969.

¹²⁴ See Capture of Longbottom, Seige of Sydney University, *Tribune*, August 7, 1968. See also Andrew Moore, A Secret Policeman’s Lot – The Working Life of Fred Longbottom of the NSW Police Special Branch, in John Shields (ed.), *All Our Labours – Oral Histories of Working Life in Twentieth Century Sydney*, Kensington NSW, NSW University Press, 1992, pp. 193–226. The numerous cases of apparent victimisation included the case of Philip Sandford who spoke at the Bakery on July 7, 1969 about the reasons for his deportation from the United States; the case of Sue Stewart, a Bakery resident, excluded from Monash in 1970; and the case of Langer himself, one of a number of student leaders suspended or expelled in 1970–72. Jill Jolliffe wrote in September 1971 that attacks on Darce Cassidy in Maxwell Newton’s “Melbourne Observer” were like those of the Springer Press against Rudi Dutschke. See Jill Jolliffe, Maxwell Newton’s Gutter Press, *Direct Action* 10, September 1971. Government’s banned books, posters, films and dramatic performances. There were cases of activists being bashed and even more cases of activists being gaoled. See ‘Rising Opposition to Rightwing Uni Bash Strategy’, *Tribune*, May 28, 1969.

out from The Bakery - again in the wee hours - this time to paint the Magistrate's footpath and fence.¹²⁵

Diary

March 1 Stopped at the Urquhart St bridge to write 'Free Zarb'. The same street where Adrian was punched by an intruder last March. Picked up by police and taken to Northcote cells. Stinks of piss. Taken to Pentridge in the morning. Given crew cuts. Warders kick my poisoned foot.

March 7 Party at Bakery. People who don't know me think I am a conscript (my crew cut and green shirt from army disposals).

March 8 Demo for us today at the Bridge. Left Bakery at 10 o'clock. Robert Tillet from Adelaide was arrested for completing our sign.

March 11 Tillet jailed three months.

March 12 4 a.m Raiding party leaves Bakery for Pfeifer's house in East Malvern.¹²⁶

Police violence and brutality increased. Many demonstrations turned into 'police riots', in what appears to have been a co-ordinated offensive, backed up by tough new Government legislation.¹²⁷ The Melbourne demonstration outside the United States Consulate in Commercial Road Prahran on July 4, 1968 - the most violent Australian protest within living memory - shocked police, public and peace movement alike. The cutting of the American flag from its mast sparked off a free-for-all. Some days after the event, fifteen participants were charged with riot, commencing a bitter debate within the broad anti-war movement as to the wisdom and effectiveness of militant tactics. The Monash Labor Club appeared to have been pitted against everyone else. 'It was not a mock demonstration last night', *Print* declared proudly on July 5. The demonstration had received world coverage and been 'effective' in exposing the government. The New Left Group was aghast: Warren Osmond wrote that the protest had not been effective at all and Richard Gordon lambasted the Labor Club's 'Mock Revolution.'¹²⁸

¹²⁵ John Zarb was gaoled in October 1968 for two years for "failing to obey the call-up". He objected to a particular war (Vietnam), and became the first conscientious objector to be gaoled in a civilian prison. He was released in August 1969. See *Print* 4, March 10, 1969 for the arrest of Tillet.

¹²⁶ In the lead up to the July 4 demonstration 1970 a plan was hatched by Bakery activists involving the organisation of cells of militants to occupy the offices of CRA (ConZinc Rio-Tinto) in Collins Street. The cells were organised at the Bakery, and clandestine, nocturnal, planning meetings occurred on the tenth floor of the Monash mathematics wing. Personal recollections of the author.

¹²⁷ See Barry York, Baiting the Tiger - Police and Protest During the Vietnam War, in Mark Finnane (ed.), *Policing in Australia: Historical Perspectives*, *op. cit.*, p. 171. See also Murphy, Harvest of Fear, *op. cit.*, pp. 213, 265-6.

¹²⁸ *National U*, July 8, 1968....'East Coast Rocks to Violence' (heading); *Print*, July 5, 1968 - "It was not a mock demonstration last night". See also *Print*, July 16, 1968; *Print* 53, July 4th, 1969. See also Editorial, "Students and Political Effectiveness", written by Warren Osmond, in reply to *Print*, July 5, in *Lot's Wife*, July 23, 1968, p. 4; Richard Gordon, "The Mock Revolution of July 4", *Farrago*, July 12, 1968, pp. 1-2; 'Four Views on Violence (on July 4)', *Lot's Wife*, July 23, 1968, p. 21; Ockenden, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-64; S. Macintyre and K. Rowley, "A Labour Club View", *Farrago*, August 2, 1968, p. 2; Kelvin Rowley, Radical Politics in the Apolitical Society, *Farrago* July 26, 1968; Stuart Macintyre, Should I demonstrate?, *Farrago*, July 5, 1968.

At Prahran Court in Greville Street on July 30, 1968, Langer (riot) and ‘wharfie’ Dave Rubin (wounding) were committed to stand trial before judge and jury. Langer’s trial eventually commenced on June 2, 1969, after an abortive trial in December. From the moment of his summons on May 15, The Bakery was dominated by preparations for the trial. Carloads disappeared into the night to paint railway lines with the slogans ‘No Jail for Demonstrators!’, ‘No Political Prisoners!’ and ‘Free Rubin and Langer!’ Langer’s totally unorthodox guerilla defence and aggressive oratory had the prosecution on the back foot from the outset. The jury could not finally agree, leading to a new trial in August and eventual conviction on a charge of obstruction.¹²⁹

The Labor Club rejected individual terrorism outright along classical Marxist lines, but violence against property (smashing the windows of the ‘class enemy’) was supported, as was retaliation. Responding to the brutal April 11 police attacks on marchers in Adelaide and Sydney, the author of *Print* wrote:

... to be arrested is in itself futile, the first principle of guerilla warfare is that the guerilla survives to fight another day. With this in mind, let ‘hit and run’ be our motto in future struggles.¹³⁰

The tradition of ‘July 4’ continued in Melbourne, with the 1969 demonstration outside the Consulate even more violent than the last. Next day, the ‘People’s Liberation Army’, emanating from The Bakery, smashed twenty Consulate windows.¹³¹

¹²⁹ See *Print*, July 29, 1968; *Tribune*, August 7, 1968, p. 2; *Tribune*, August 14, 1968, p. 4; *Rabelais*, March 6, 1969, pp. 8–9; *Tribune*, July 17, 1968; *Farrago*, September 6, 1968, p. 8; *Tribune*, December 11, 1968; *Print* 29, April 29, 1969; *Print* 40, May 16, 1969; July 4th Action Committee – *Bulletin* No. 1; No Political Prisoners pamphlet No. 1, May 1969; *Worker-Student Voice*, October 1969, contains address of A. Langer to the Court in 1969; *Tribune*, June 4, 1969; *Print* 41, June 10, 1969; *Tribune*, June 11, 1969, p. 3; *Print*, No. 42, June 12, 1969; *Print* 43, June 13, 1969; Diane Wienecke, Langer Trial, *Lot’s Wife*, June 26, 1969, p. 4; *Print* 44, June 16, 1969; *Print* 45, Friday June 20, 1969; Letter sent out from Bakery, August 20 1969 on the “incarceration” of Langer in Pentridge, awaiting sentence (after third trial). See *Tribune*, August 13, 20, 27, 1969 for the Rubin Trial...fined \$150...gets off riot/malicious wounding.

¹³⁰ Quote from *Print*, No. 21, April 14, 1969. For statement on “individual terrorism”, see *Print*, July 9, 1970. La Trobe students discussed the idea of a militia. See *L’Enrages*, (La Trobe Labor Club), Vol. 1/15, July 24, 1969, on forming a revolutionary Students Militia. See also *Print* 12, March 24, 1969; *Print* 16, Monday, March 31, 1969; *Wednesday Commentary* 5/5, circa March 1969.

¹³¹ *Print* 54, Monday July 7, 1969; *Print* 55, July 8, 1969; *Farrago*, July 11, 1969; *Tribune*, July 16, 1969; *Aquarius*, No. 1, p. 15 (...quote from ‘The Australian’, July 7, about Peoples Liberation Army attacking US Consulate....and poem by Bill Beard on July 9 about US Consulate windows); David Brous, Report, *Lot’s Wife*, July 10, 1969, p. 4; *Tribune*, July 9, 1969.

CHAPTER FOUR

TOWARDS THE CORRECT LINE

The violence levelled at the Monash Left encouraged an over-emphasis in both theory and practice at The Bakery on the weight of violence as a political factor. Educational discussions centred on the problem of state repression and superstructural aspects of ‘consent’ were rarely considered. Corresponding to this theoretical regression was a turn inward organisationally. Clandestine forms were adopted within both the Labor Club and the movement of secondary students. The gradual process producing ideological homogeneity at The Bakery, leading to the eventual total dominance of the Maoist tendency, was furthered by the bifurcation of activity into ‘lectures by gurus’, and local Prahran campaigning uninformed by the theories.

The Young Communist League

Red is the East, Rises the Sun, China has brought forth a Mao Tse-tung.¹³²

Unlike the bourgeoisie we have nothing to be ashamed of - the truth is on our side, we are not conspirators but rely on the correctness of our position winning the people’s support.¹³³

I dreamed I saw Ted Hill last night¹³⁴

History was not supposed to discover the clandestine organisation known to its members as the ‘Fawkner Park Young Communist League’ (YCL). In February 1969, fifteen hardened ‘Marxist-Leninists’ held ‘a burst’ of three Saturday afternoon meetings in Fawkner Park, Prahran, opposite the Fawkner Club Hotel, not far from the U.S Consulate. Until the following January, no-one else knew. It was ‘...one of the best kept (perhaps the only kept) secrets in the left’.¹³⁵

Prior to the beginning of Term 1 at Monash, members of the group discussed material submitted to their secret bulletin *Bolshevik* (later *The Red Line*) circulated to members only.¹³⁶ A Central Committee Editorial stressed that once general

¹³² Opening lines of ‘‘The East is Red’’, Maoist Chinese anthem in praise of Mao Tse-tung. See *Revolutionary Songs of China*, supplement to *China Reconstructs*, 1968.

¹³³ ‘‘Peter Collins’’, Comments and Criticisms, *The Red Line* 3, February 15, 1969, p. 5.

¹³⁴ Monash student parody of the Earl Robinson song about the famous American labour organizer – songwriter Joe Hill. According to Dave Nadel, the spoof was written by Albert Langer.

¹³⁵ *YCL Internal Bulletin*, No. 1, January 9, 1970 has articles about the ‘‘Fawkner Park YCL’’.

¹³⁶ *The Red Line* 2, February 7, 1969; *Bolshevik*, Internal Bulletin of the Young Communist League, No. 1, February 1st, 1969.....Editorial on ‘why the bulletin?’.....Peter Collins: The Need for Cells.....Peter Collins: On Theoretical Study.....Len Coleman: Student-Worker Alliance; *The Red*

meetings were dispensed with, the bulletin "...would become the main means of internal communication". Members were urged to use 'noms de plume', to not leave *Bolshevik* 'lying around carelessly', and to treat the Revolutionary Socialists headquarters in Prahran 'with extreme caution'. Another contributor suggested avoiding telephone conversations and advised using public telephone booths only. One member, looking back twelve months on, wrote that while security had been over-emphasised:

"...the idea of meeting in a park was useful in that it stopped embarrassing walk-ins (such that this organisation has been plagued with)".¹³⁷

The YCL was the creation of the hard-line faction (associated with Kerry Miller and Albert Langer, Michael Hyde, Dave Nadel) which had emerged within the leadership of the Monash Labor Club. The views freely expressed in the secret bulletin offer a revealing glimpse into the 1968 mind of 'Peter Collins'. Collins argued that student struggles could act "... as a detonator for mass working class action". However, at Monash, which had 'the most advanced student movement in Australia', left-wing students were isolated from the student mass, and the student movement was isolated from the working-class movement. The policy of 'confrontation' over university issues had degenerated into a 'strategy' of "hoping for (or provoking) blatant repression and then mobilising a campaign for democratic rights". Criticising "the blind subjectivist methods of the past", Collins called for a concrete investigation of the "reality in which we are working" and a new revolutionary cadre organisation "linked with all aspects of the various struggles". To aid 'mass work' and discourage the 'left bloc' mentality, Collins recommended a basic YCL structure of small 'cells' operating at a Faculty level at Monash - able to develop course critiques and "run rings around the administration".¹³⁸

'Len Esdaile' applied the theory of 'cells' to YCL functioning within the 'decentralised committee structure' of the 'Revolutionary Socialists' organisation at The Bakery:

Most of the people living in the rev socs HQ will be League members and should do a good deal towards setting the physical tone of the place

Line, Internal Bulletin of the Young Communist League, No. 2, February 7th, 1969.....Security.....Rev Socs and League Cells.....Secondary students Underground.....Monash 1969.....Let us Prepare for Armed Struggle etc; *The Red Line*, Internal Bulletin of the Young Communist League, No. 3, Saturday, February 15th, 1969.....tactics for the peace movement.....teachers.....comments on previous issues.....'Print' in 1969.

¹³⁷ Greg McCrae, The YCL of January – February 1969, *YCL Internal Bulletin* 1, January 9, 1970, p. 8. See *Bolshevik* 1, February 1st, 1969; *The Red Line* 2, February 7, 1969; Peter Collins, Comments and Criticisms, *The Red Line* 3, February 15, 1969.....comments on security (note point about treating the Revolutionary Socialists Headquarters in Prahran "with extreme caution").

¹³⁸ Peter Collins, Comments and Criticisms, *The Red Line* 3, February 15, 1969, p. 7; Peter Collins, 'Work at Monash in 1969', *The Red Line* 2, February 7, 1969; Peter Collins, 'The Need for Cells', *Bolshevik* 1, February 1st 1969; Greg McCrae, The Propaganda Cell, *The Red Line* 2, February 7, 1969. See also *Hammer and Sickle*, No. 1, published by Monash Communists, September 17, 1968; *Monash Labor Club Newsletter*, circa mid-November 1968.

(e.g types of posters on the wall, literature left lying about, and sort of music played at parties) ... We should participate in those rev. soc activities that we can use to our own ends and even when we can't divert the activity itself to our own ends it can often be used as a means to put our line across.¹³⁹

Because the first residents at The Bakery were all YCL members the ethos of Marxism-Leninism was pervasive from the outset, at least in the upstairs rooms. Militant, sonorous anthems sung by Chinese mass choirs, such as the sycophantic 'Sailing the Seas Depends upon the Helmsman', were available on E.P record and were played until the vinyl melted. A bust of the Chairman himself, like a Buddha, stood on a mantelpiece. Huge colour posters decorated the walls. *China Pictorials* hung in the toilet. Wearing bright red and gold Mao badges, some residents even whetted their appetite at the meal-table by reading grace from the Little Red Book.¹⁴⁰

Red Guard slogans were tossed about in Print, the 'Monash Peoples' Daily', with as much abandon as were ink-soaked leaflets in The Bakery's Gestetner room at three o'clock on a Monday morning, suggesting that Maoism at The Bakery was entirely derivative. Rather, Marxism-Leninism at Monash did not arrive fully-blown from Peking as it was also created though conflict with other student left tendencies. When the self-consciously 'intellectual' New Left Group was formed from within the essentially activist Labor Club early in 1967, the incipient rift between activists and theoreticians became institutionalised as a factional divide.¹⁴¹ To members of the New Left Group, Mao's nostrums were patently insufficient for revamping Marxist theory to take account of developments in the industrialised, liberal-democracies of the west. The New Left attacked the crude 'base/superstructure' model of traditional 'old left' Marxism and drew on sources as diverse as the Frankfurt School social theorists Herbert Marcuse and Erich Fromm, the British

¹³⁹ Len Esdaile, 'The Revolutionary Socialists and League Cells', *The Red Line*, 2, February 7, 1969 – "The rev. socs are a useful recruiting ground for YCL members (particularly if we are to get more non-student members). It is also a place where we can observe the development of persons who are being considered for League membership." See also Molly Bloom, 'Secondary Students Underground', *The Red Line* 2, February 7, 1969.

¹⁴⁰ Personal recollections of author. See also Albert Langer in *Monash Labor Club Newsletter*, No. 1, March 10, 1969 – resident "at present Dave Birrell, Mike Hyde, Albert Langer and Kerry Miller". See also Hunter, *op. cit.*

¹⁴¹ See K.Mansell, *The Fragmentation of the Australian New Left* (unpublished) 1975 – "there was already the premonition of a split in the student left in Melbourne, where some had already foreseen that their "most arduous task" would be to develop a radical critique of the society, seeing the Australian left as desperately "short on critique and long on prescription" (W. Osmond, *Tribune*, July 10, 1968). On the other hand, there were those who preferred the criticism of weapons and felt that they had discovered both the critique and the prescription in the time-honoured formulae and ideological certainties of Marxism-Leninism, and in the anti-state violence of July 4. The Labor Club and the New Left Club at Monash began to draw apart, but without a fight. This meant that, until their ideologies formed properly, they would continue to overlap and gell in many areas." See also Andrew Milner, *The Road to St. Kilda Pier*, *op. cit.*, pp. 45–51 – "Marxists Chewing Polysyllables" – on intellectual New Leftism (Arena, New Left Club).

Marxists Tom Nairn and Perry Anderson, the ‘anti-psychiatry’ of Ronald Laing, as well as Antonio Gramsci’s concept of ‘hegemony’. The Group criticised the Labor Club as ‘crude’ and ‘vulgar’, lacking theory, and for confusing militancy with genuine radicalism. Nevertheless, for the time being, some activists held joint membership of the two groups and there was an intermingling of members at The Bakery. The functional division was a stand-off most of the time, interrupted occasionally by a vituperative volley of polemical sniper-fire.¹⁴²

Relations with Melbourne University Labour Club were never smooth. ‘Melbourne are all freaks and monsters who are taking the capitalist road, but their parties are O.K’, said Print in 1967.¹⁴³ Doug Kirsner, the President of the Club in 1967, remembers Darce Cassidy referring to him as a ‘freak and monster’.¹⁴⁴ In mid-1968 the Labour Club at Melbourne split and a group of anti-war activists based at the Centre for Democratic Action (CDA), 57 Palmerston Street Carlton, formed Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). The SDS style of action relied on moral conscience rather than book theory and owed more to Gandhi, Thoreau and Bertrand Russell than to Marx. As such it affronted the Marxists at Melbourne University and offended the Monash Maoists who made savage and patronising remarks about the ‘self-immolation’ of the frequently-arrested Harry Van Moorst. Though Langer had been concerned ‘to prevent hostility developing’, the idea of ‘infiltrating’ SDS had been contemplated, and Esdaile even defined the role of the Revolutionary Socialists as “a non-University organisation to run a centre in competition with CDA ...” This was disunity of the new left in Melbourne: not yet fragmentation.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Warren Osmond, Australia’s Communists Look for a Niche in History, *Lot’s Wife*, June 13, 1967, p. 4; *Root and Branch*, No. 1, March 6, 1968; *Root and Branch*, No. 2, March 15, 1968; *Root and Branch*, no. 5, April 3, 1968; *Root and Branch*, April 4, 1968; *Root and Branch*, April 30, 1968; *Root and Branch*, May 16, 1968; *Root and Branch*, No. 8, June 25, 1968. See also Richard Gordon and Warren Osmond, An Overview of the Australian New Left, in Richard Gordon, ed., *The Australian New Left*, Melbourne, Heinemann, 1970, pp. 3–39; Warren Osmond, Toward Self-Awareness, in Richard Gordon, *op. cit.*, pp. 166–216. See also Ockenden, *op. cit.*, pp. 11, 30–36, 39, 46; *Print*, March 5, 1969 – joint membership with New Left Group encouraged. For ‘sniper-fire’, see Albert Langer, Criticism and Self-Criticism, December 1, 1969 (not published, circulated at Bakery, four pages, roneod); Albert Langer, *Rough Draft/Sketch of Introduction* (to book eventually to be published as M. Hyde (ed), *It is Right to Rebel*, December 22, 1970).

¹⁴³ *Print*, April 27, 1967.

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Doug Kirsner, Carlton North, July 1, 1993.

¹⁴⁵ For details on the formation of SDS on August 24, 1968, see *Farrago* September 6, 1968; *DRM News*, n.d, circa end March 1968; Michael Hamel-Green in Langley, *op. cit.*, p. 96; Michael Hamel-Green, The Politics of Passivity – Apolitical Radicals in a Political Society, *Farrago*, October 4, 1968; Michael Hamel-Green, Vietnam: Beyond Pity, *Australian Left Review*, No. 24, p. 53; Terry Counihan and Kelvin Rowley, Pipe-Dream Revolutionaries, *National U*, May 12, 1969. For the Monash Labor Club’s attitude to SDS, see *Print* 5, March 11, 1969; *Print*, No. 13, March 25, 1969; *Print* 18, April 2, 1969; *Print*, April 10, 1969; Ockenden, *op. cit.*, pp. 74, 75–76; *Lot’s Wife*, March 20, 1969, p. 3; *Lot’s Wife*, April 3, 1969, p. 5; *Lot’s Wife*, May 8, 1969, p. 9; *Ergo*, April 14, 1969, p. 11; Albert Langer, *Monash Labor Club Newsletter* 1, March 10, 1969; Peter Collins, Comments and Criticisms, *The Red Line* 3, February 15, 1969; Len Esdaile, The Revolutionary Socialists and League Cells, *The Red Line* 2, February 7, 1969; A. Langer, Criticism and Self-Criticism, December 1, 1969; Greg McCrae, Tactics for the Peace Movement, *The Red Line* 3, February 15, 1969. Dave Nadel has

According to Dave Nadel (alias 'Greg McCrae'), a YCL ally of Langer though hardly a Maoist, both Darce Cassidy and Humphrey McQueen viewed 'Rev Socs' as the germ of the new party they believed was necessary. But, Langer believed the party already existed in the form of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) and saw the YCL as becoming its youth wing.¹⁴⁶ As 'Peter Collins' explained:

We cannot and should not attempt to build a new revolutionary party capable of leading the working class ... but ... build a revolutionary organisation capable of giving correct Marxist leadership to the various student and youth struggles in which we are actually engaged.¹⁴⁷

Clandestinity brewed mistrust - in Petrograd, and in Prahran. Nadel remembers McQueen expressing anger and a sense of betrayal upon his discovery of the YCL. Matthew Prescott (alias 'Lou Brown') who was the inaugural secretary of the Student Worker Co-ordinating Committee remembers being admonished by Langer at a meeting at The Bakery early in 1969. Langer and Rubin were disagreeing over the tactics for their joint 'riot' trial:

I came to the conclusion that you couldn't just have all the students saying - 'This is what we're going to do Dave, and too bad'. So, I differed with it, and I was then reminded by Albert of the oath that I'd taken at the secret meeting, and Mick De Young who was there pounced on this and said 'what is this secret organisation? It's unconstitutional in the Labor Club anyway'.¹⁴⁸

The Little Red Moles

If you have to hide this paper then you are not free comrade.¹⁴⁹

SID approaches the problems in schools with a revolutionary attitude... we believe in confronting the system and forcing it to expose itself rather than making the most of it and trying to work within it...to change the education system we must change the society which creates it¹⁵⁰

pointed out to the author that this picture of apparent hostility directed towards SDS is "only half the story" and needs to be qualified somewhat - "In the early days, Albert, myself, and the Monash Labor Club gave moral support and advice to Harry, and Michael Hamel-Green. We saw them as activists and therefore preferable to Grinberg and Kirsner."

¹⁴⁶ Interview with Dave Nadel, Ascot Vale, July 7, 1993.

¹⁴⁷ Peter Collins, Work at Monash in 1969, *The Red Line* 2, p. 8.

¹⁴⁸ Interview with Matthew Prescott, Northcote, April 5, 1993. Interview with Dave Nadel, Northcote, October 13, 1993.

¹⁴⁹ *Armpit*, De La Salle College, circa September 1969.

¹⁵⁰ Leaflet advertising SID Party, March 8th, 1969, Greville St.

Before 1968 there had been few precursors of political revolt among Australian adolescents. Camberwell High School students picketed Parliament over the death of the first conscript in Vietnam, and a class of Form Four boys in Box Hill staged a sit-down strike on the college oval over conscription. These were but little sparks. Before 1968 had concluded, a prairie fire was raging over the issue of political activity in Victorian secondary schools. The far-flung ‘conspiracy’ of ‘underground’ news sheets had appeared in places as far apart as Highett, Chadstone, Croydon, Mentone, Caulfield, Camberwell, Doveton, Bon Beach and Mordialloc.¹⁵¹

Prompting from older activists nurtured the revolt. Dr Jim Cairns sent out an invitation on June 21 for young people to attend a discussion in his own home on ‘the current student protest movement’ and later he helped students organise a series of ‘Youth Action’ meetings. The first ‘underground’ news sheet - *Ubique Underground* at University High - was a creation of Monash Labor club activists and the relationship of the club to rebellious secondary students - ostensibly symbiotic rather than domineering - continued. When the organisation Students in Dissent (SID) was formed it produced *Tabloid Underground* as a general publication aimed at connecting the dispersed ‘hot spots’ in Victorian schools. The Labor Club’s Gestetner in Darce Cassidy’s garage was made available for printing. At Highett High, *Treason* appeared with the Cassidy motto ‘power comes out of the barrel of a Gestetner’ emblazoned on its letterhead. SID meetings were held at Labor club households, where one would have been able to lay hands on SID’s ‘great leader’, the ubiquitous and mysterious fugitive dubbed ‘Fabian Willmore’ (an alias for University High student Geoff Gold). ‘Fabian Willmore’ was an elusive figure even to the school student activists and grist for the mill of official panic.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ For the early secondary students' protests, see *Guardian*, June 2, 1966; Denis Freney, How Vietnam Changed Australia, in D. Bullen, C. Ray, D. Freney, *Ten Years After Liberation*, Sydney, 1985, p. 7; *Tribune* December 6, 1967. For the prairie fire in 1968, see Mendes, *op. cit.*, p. 32 (and Footnote 140); Nonie Sharp, Students in Dissent: Action and Reaction, *Arena* 17, Summer 1968–69, p. 42; John Playford Collection, Student Underground Papers, Melbourne, n.d., circa November 1968 (a complete reproduction of student underground papers circulated in Victorian secondary schools up to October 28, 1968). The underground news sheets that appeared in Melbourne schools in 1968 were *Ubique Underground* University High; *Treason* Highett High; *Peon Underground* Chadstone High; *Technical Underground* Sandringham Technical School; *Tirade* Croydon High; *Sentinel Underground* Melbourne High; *Reform* Camberwell High; *Fallout* Mentone Girls High; *Folklore Underground* Caulfield High; *Student Power* Doveton High; *Pravda* Peninsula; *Oricle* Mordialloc – Chelsea High; *Omega*.

¹⁵² Letter from Dale Sutherland (convenor) (for Cairns) to author, June 21, 1968; Mendes, *op. cit.*, pp. 31 (and Footnote 139), 48–49, 56; Transcript of interview with Geoff Gold by Philip Mendes, p. 3; *Lot's Wife*, July 23, 1968, p. 8; *Tabloid Underground*, first issue, n.d., circa early August, 1968. For parliamentary and press rebuke of Cairns, see ‘Dr Cairns patron of student papers’, *The Age*, October 22, 1968; School Heads Hit Back at Dr Cairns, *The Herald*, October 22, 1968; Apology Sought from Cairns – He Called Teachers ‘stick-in-the-mud’, *The Age*, October 23, 1968. The first issue of ‘Ubique Underground’ was distributed by Kerry Miller and Albert Langer as an agitational sheet at University High on June 24 (see interview with Geoff Gold, in Mendes, *op.cit.* p. 55). For relations with Monash Labor Club, see *Tabloid Underground*, first issue, circa early August 1968; *Folklore Underground*, Caulfield High, issue 2, September 17, 1968; *Treason*, Highett High, first issue 1968; SID ‘Guerilla Map’ to October 18, 1968, SID meeting at 1 Shirley Grove; *Print*, October 17, 1968; Jeff Wells, The Riddle of the Many Mr. Willmores, *The Sun*, October 18, 1968; The 007 of Schools, *The Herald*, October 17, 1968; *Fallout*, Mentone Girls High, first and second issues, 1968. June 1968

The influence from the older activists is indubitable, but the widespread suggestion of a (communist) conspiracy moulding malleable young minds to revolt was simplistic, reliant on some spurious notion of original infantile innocence. This kind of explanation is unable to account sociologically for why so many were predisposed to revolt in the first place. The fact that the invariably colourful news sheets were often analytically incisive - 'mature and positive' wrote one reviewer - was an indication of the depth of 'the generational political consciousness' that developed in the sixties. To parody Barry York - Australian secondary students had good reason to rebel, irrespective of their elders.¹⁵³ Moods created by rapid politicisation rubbed explosively against the strictures of school paternalism. The spur for the formation of the 'Underground', and the *raison d'être* of clandestinity, was the extent of actual repression and censorship in the schools, against political comment in particular but also on matters as 'personal' as hair length. For SID, the motif of 1968 was 'freedom of speech'. As at Monash, the authorities stepped up repression rather than accommodate the demand for participation in the 'space' of the school. The unfortunately-named 'Pravda' news sheet was investigated by security police and at Melbourne High School, Michael Eidelson became the first of a number of SID members to be suspended or expelled.¹⁵⁴

was also the occasion for an attempt by Melbourne University students associated with the Centre for Democratic Action to initiate a secondary schools' movement. Secondary Students for Democratic Action (SSDA) formed in August and operated from SDS headquarters (Centre for Democratic Action) at 57 Palmerston Street Carlton, but it achieved neither the notoriety nor the momentum of SID and was dissolved in June 1969. See Two-page leaflet - "Vietnam - SSDA" - authorised by Julian Shaw, 21 Red Bluff St, Black Rock, n.d ; SSDA leaflet on "The Private School System", authorised by Julian Shaw, 21 Red Bluff St, Black Rock, circa late 1968.

¹⁵³ Barry York, *Student Revolt! Latrobe University 1967-73*, Nicholas Press, ACT, 1989, p. 17. For "generational political consciousness", see York, *ibid.*, pp. 21-27. See also Adolescent Rebellion, *Lot's Wife*, September 3, 1968, p. 3. For notions of conspiracy, see Peter Coleman, *School Power in Australia - is Your Child Being Manipulated by Political Operators?*, Sydney 1970; B.A. Santamaria, The Crisis in Education, *Newsweekly*, March 12, 1969, p. 16. For 'mature and positive', see Nonie Sharp, Students in Dissent: Action and Reaction, *Arena* 17, Summer 1968-69, p. 44.

¹⁵⁴ For paternalism, see Helen G. Palmer, The Schools: Paternalism or Participation, *Outlook*, December 1970; H.G. Palmer, Students Underground, *Outlook*, 6, 1968; Nonie Sharp, Education / The Old School Tie ups, *Arena* 18, 1969; Helen G. Palmer, Student Power, *Outlook*, June 1968. On "freedom of speech", see *Tabloid Underground*, issue 5, n.d, circa late October, 1968; *Tribune*, October 30, 1968; *Tirade*, Croydon High, July 22, first issue, 1968; *Tabloid Underground* first issue, n.d, circa early August 1968; *Sentinel Underground*, Melbourne High, first issue September 1968; *Ubique Underground*, first issue, June 24, 1968; *Ubique Underground*, Issue 3, July 22, 1968; *Ubique Underground*, Issue 5, August 19, 1968; *Ubique Underground*, Issue 6, n.d; *Reform*, Camberwell High, first issue; *Student Power* (Doveton High, Doveton High School Action Committee), first issue, October 28, 1968. On "security police", see *Ubique Underground*, Issue 8, October 3, 1968; *Ubique Underground*, Issue 7, September 11, 1968. For the Eidelson case, see Mendes, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-32, 48-49 (and footnotes, 136, 142, 143); The Head Puts His Case, *The Sun*, October 18, 1968; Above-ground student demonstration flops, *The Age*, October 22, 1968; *Tribune*, October 30, 1968; *Tribune*, October 23, 1968, p. 2; *Tribune*, September 24, 1969 - student Paul Jackson expelled from De La Salle College for distributing student "underground newspapers" - member of 'Socialist Secondary Students' (formerly SID).

Believing that high school movements in other states had followed its example, SID moved into The Bakery. The new headquarters seemed to have tentacles: a spate of new underground leaflets appeared in 1969, in places as unlikely as Geelong Grammar, as well as in working class schools. Each gave its address as Greville Street.¹⁵⁵ Even before the 1969 university year had begun, secondary students were using The Bakery as a protected haven where leaflets could be discussed and printed, and as a contact centre for new recruits. Anyone desiring to contribute to the news sheet at his or her school (or start a new one), anyone wanting to join the local Liberation Front, first had to contact The Bakery - enough to deter any prying parent or principal. The constant threat of expulsion hung over SID rebels; Paul Jackson's expulsion from De la Salle College is a case in point. The 'Merrilands Action Committee', in *Spark* explained one of the reasons for clandestinity:

The purpose of this news sheet is to provide an instrument whereby students can express their opinions on matters which concern them, both in the school, and around the world. They should be given the opportunity to do this without any fear of reprisal for their opinion. In order to maintain the sanctity of freedom of expression, all those concerned with publishing this news sheet will remain anonymous. This is not through fear of action being taken against them but the knowledge that if they are stopped from providing this facility, who will?¹⁵⁶

Clandestinity had some advantages too:

The very act of bringing out an uncensored news sheet which isn't afraid to attack the administration or anything else (even if only mildly) is a rebellious act in the normal Victorian school and stirs up argument and controversy. From our point of view CONTROVERSY AND STRUGGLE ARE GOOD since it is then that people are jolted out of complacency and re-examine their old ideas.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ SID claimed that similar organisations in other states had sprung up to follow its example. Whether this was in fact the case is difficult to determine. The movements in Adelaide and Brisbane certainly started after that of Melbourne. The scope of 'High School Students Against the War in Vietnam' (HSSAWV) in Sydney was enormous – 20,000 copies of the first issue of *Student Underground* were produced, covering 80 schools. See *Wednesday Commentary*, September 18, 1968. Before long, HSSAWV claimed to have 800 contacts in about 90 schools. See also *Treason*, last issue, 1968 – report on Sydney (100 schools/400 members). 1969 news sheets in Melbourne were *Spark* Merrilands; *Partisan* Aspendale Tech Liberation Front; *Red Shield* Fawkner High Action Committee; *Out of Apathy* Northern Suburbs Underground; *Action* Noble Park High School Liberation Front; *Underground Voice* Box Hill Tech Liberation Front; *Opmet* Geelong Grammar Underground; *Pornographic Sandals* East Preston High; *Armpit* De La Salle; *Manifesto* Elwood High; *Review*; *Crap* Flemington High Underground; *Treason* Highett High Treason Committee; *Uni High Underground*.

¹⁵⁶ *Spark*, Merrilands, first issue, circa April 1969. For Paul Jackson case, see *Armpit*, De la Salle, Issue 2, 1969, circa September 1969 (*Armpit* challenges teachers to answer charges at the Bakery); *Manifesto*, Elwood High, first issue, n.d, 1969; *Uni High Underground*, Issue 10, circa October, 1969.

¹⁵⁷ *Tabloid Underground*, circa December 1969...outlining the theory behind the effectiveness of the underground (or 'guerilla') news sheet.

One hundred secondary students marched in solidarity to the Music Bowl when teachers held a stopwork there on May 6, 1969. SID's beef was not with teachers per se: only with those like Mrs Reynolds ('waging a vendetta against the sixth form'):

...this campaign against student rights - especially by YOU Mrs Reynolds - must cease at once or strong action will inevitably follow.¹⁵⁸

The news sheets ran on shoestring budgets and imposed financial constraints. 'Fabian Willmore' wrote to members urging them to buy posters, badges and books at Alice's Restaurant Bookshop - 'to finance another year of revolutionary subversion in schools'. Another leaflet reported glowingly on Alice's posters - 'Dylan, Hendrix, Beardsley, and Raquel Welch.' SID held parties at The Bakery. One leaflet advertising a 'Party in Sexy Prahran' had a hammer-and-sickle on the letterhead. A fancy black and gold poster, silk-screened in The Bakery work room, had the slogan 'Is Your School Revolting? - Join the Underground, 120 Greville Street'. There was disappointment that, despite such enticements, SID meetings (held on Saturday or Sunday afternoons at The Bakery) were sometimes poorly attended. This problem stemmed from the dualism inherent in SID's philosophy of organisation which stressed the equal importance of both local (school-level) organisation and central (Greville Street) contact. Centrally, SID organised interventions to support teachers on strike, to march on May Day and July 4, and to raise funds for the NLF. But the decentralised aspect took precedence, belying any 'leninist' rhetoric. By late April 1969, SID was claiming the existence of underground committees in twenty high schools.¹⁵⁹ These underground 'action committees' had a privileged role in the SID theory of organisation, sometimes being counterposed to the notion of (passive) 'membership'. When former members of the defunct SSSA, newly recruited to SID, extolled the latter's superiority, they highlighted the 'action committees':

S.S.S has no official 'membership' - basically it is an amalgamation of school action committees. The school action committee is the instrument of struggle! ¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ *Red Shield*, Fawkner High, issue circa June 1969 - Mrs Reynolds has been waging a vendetta against the Sixth form. For SID at the Music Bowl, see *Student Power*, Doveton High, May 20, 1969; *Print 32*, May 6, 1969; *Uni High Underground* 4, May 5, 1969; *Uni High Underground*, 5, circa May 1969; *Tabloid Underground*, n.d, circa May 1969; Leaflet from SID, Greville Street, urging students to Strike! in support of teachers, 28th of May, 1969, n.d.

¹⁵⁹ *Tabloid Underground*, Issue circa late April, 1969; compare *Treason*, last issue 1968 - claims 35 newsheets/300 members in SID.

¹⁶⁰ S.S.S (Socialist Secondary Students) was the name taken by SID after April (approximately) 1969. For the comments by the former SSSA members, see *Tabloid Underground*, circa September 1969 (SSS has no official "membership" - basically an amalgamation of school action committees: their role - to raise the level of students' political consciousness, and agitate for student rights - underground or 'guerilla' newspaper - SSS has 'factions'). See also *Tribune*, September 24, 1969 - SSS... an amalgamation of action committees in secondary schools; *Tabloid Underground*, circa

Diary

April 19. SID meeting afternoon. I wound my way down the spiral staircase. I had been reading leaflets from a folder left on the kitchen table by one of the SID kids. There was a meeting in progress. A hullabaloo. 'The membership of SID is more militant than it was last year', three SID members had written.¹⁶¹ It was true. The change of name - to Socialist Secondary Students - pointed to the difference. No longer dissenting, demanding freedom, long hair. Now confronting, enacting freedom. Liberation fronts on the long march. Self-consciously 'revolutionary' and polemicising against 'capitalist democrappy'.¹⁶² The kids were about to begin a discussion on 'Reform or Revolution?'. Two books on the May 1968 revolution in France had been suggested as background reading.¹⁶³ The book *Obsolete Communism* by 'Danny the Red' (the German anarchist Daniel Cohn-Bendit who had helped foment the revolt in Paris) was a sore point. Julian Shaw, the 'enfant terrible' of Highett High, had been profoundly affected by it, just as many SID kids had been affected by the French May. The struggle of the lycee 'action committees' in Paris had struck a chord in the antipodes - the term itself was now being used by SID cells in Melbourne schools.¹⁶⁴ Julian and Albert Langer were at it again: good-natured, hammer and tongs debate. Lenin and the vanguard party, or the spontaneity of Danny the Red? Julian was baby-faced, impish with a perpetual smile. He stood up to Albert just as he stood up to Fred Farmer his principal. Highett High had been in a state of 'perpetual political debate'. Julian and three others ran for office as prefects while pledged to abolish the prefect ('pig') system, and were elected. When the principal sacked them, *Treason* counter-attacked with the headline 'Farmer Fred and his farmyard friends - the pigs'. Julian had a badge for Anzac Day - 'Best we Forget' and called for 'God Save Ho Chi Minh' at morning assembly. He set up the Interschool Athiest Fellowship and the Interschool Communist Club to counter the Christians.¹⁶⁵

December 1969...we work with Revolutionary Socialists and Monash Labor Club.....start an 'action committee' in the place where you work or study.

¹⁶¹ Three members - "Suggestions for SID in 1969", n.d, circa February 1969..."the membership of SID is more militant than it was last year."

¹⁶² *SID Newsletter*, 1 April 11, 1969; *Ubique Underground*, Vol 3, No. 3, n.d, circa early 1970 - "all power to the High School Soviets!" ... "Capitalist Democrappy or Peoples Power".

¹⁶³ *SID Newsletter*, 1, April 11, 1969.

¹⁶⁴ *Armpit* 2, circa September 1969...quote about "Action Committees" in the French May...quote from Trotsky ("the action committee is the instrument of struggle")

¹⁶⁵ *Print*, No.15, March 28, 1969; *Tabloid Underground*, circa late April 1969 - "Highett High is in a stage of perpetual political debate"; *Treason* 1, 1969; *Treason*, Issue 2, 1969; *Treason*, Issue 3, circa April, 1969: attacks "Farmer Fred and his farmyard friends...the pigs" (Fred Farmer); *Treason*, Issue 5, 1969; *Treason*, Issue 7, 1969; *Treason*, Issue 8, circa September, 1969; *Uni High Underground*, Issue 2, March 17, 1969; *Underground Voice*, Box Hill Tech, Issue 3, 1969 - burn the Australian flag on Anzac Day; *Uni High Underground*, Issue 5, circa May 1969, n.d - Cut off Gorton's Penal Powers!!...Interschool Communist Fellowship.

SID members bathed in the mystique of Ho Chi Minh and pointed to the continued heroism of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam. In April 1969 SID began to collect aid for the NLF. But the inspiration of the 'French May' was arguably as important as Vietnam. SID leaflets reprinted Paris revolutionary wall slogans. "The people of Australia, especially secondary students, must learn from the experiences of their French comrades", said an SSS leaflet on school children in France.¹⁶⁶

Most of us know that in France last year a revolution very nearly took place...surely it is important for us to know MORE about this...it is true that last year's revolt was very brief, but it had world shattering significance for all western capitalist societies like ours.¹⁶⁷

For May Day, and to mark the first anniversary of the French revolt, SID published a leaflet completely in French - 'marchons avec SID' - explaining the views of Cohn-Bendit for the benefit of 'etudiants de francais'.¹⁶⁸ Some SID groups had at first been quite comfortable quoting Trotsky or identifying themselves as 'libertarian socialist'. Over a period of time however, Maoist slogans began to predominate. The best example was Shaw's *Treason* which was before long resplendent with third-worldist iconography. Back at Shirley Grove, an organisation which originally prided itself on 'mental muscles' ended its days brandishing the ice-pick of Albanian dictator Enver Hoxha.¹⁶⁹

'Free U'

¹⁶⁶ Leaflet by SSS, Greville Street, n.d, re-printing chapter from Seale and McConville book *The French Revolution 1968* on school children in the French May. Note 'Seale and McConville' was one of the main texts suggested by 'UHS Socialists' in their 'alternative course' notes for social studies at University High, late 1968, see Socialist Broadsheet, No. 1. 'Seale and McConville' was also on the reading list for the SID discussion at the Bakery, April 19, 1969.

¹⁶⁷ *Tabloid Underground*, n.d, circa December 1969. See also *Uni High Underground*, 1, 1970 (n.d, circa February 1970); *SID Newsletter*, 1, April 11, 1969. *Out of Apathy* 2, (Northern suburbs underground), 1969 has slogan from Paris wall, May 1968 - "Examinations = servility, social climbing, hierarchical society"; *Armpit*, De la Salle, circa August 1969, quotes slogan from Sorbonne wall; *Treason*, last issue for 1968...report on France (red and black flags); *Treason* 10, November 1969...reference to France.

¹⁶⁸ FR (Cours de Francais Revolutionaire), Annee 1, Numero 1, May 1969.

¹⁶⁹ For the earlier libertarian tendencies, see *Treason* (Highett High), last issue for 1968; *Treason*, 1, 1969; *Treason*, first issue 1968; *Action* (Noble Park High School Liberation Front), 1, 1969; *Armpit* (De la Salle), circa August 1969; *Armpit*, 2, circa September 1969. For the third-worldist iconography, see *Treason*, 6, 1969; *Treason*, 9 (late November 1969); *Treason*, 10, November 1969; *Treason* 3/11, circa September 1970. For authorisations by "Enver Hoxha", see two issues of SSS news sheet *Seize the Time* (late April 1971, late May 1971)...late-April: Hoxha, ice-pick, Bayside WSA 21 Red Bluff Road Black Rock; *Flame* (SSS-WSA), n.d, circa mid-1971, authorised Hoxha.

A favourite Marcusean argument is that we are repressed not by violence so much as by tolerance. This is not without its truth.¹⁷⁰

.... very interesting political discussions held at 120 Greville Street Prahran each Monday evening. Come and see all of Melbourne's Communists, Maoists, Trotskyites, Stalinists, Castroites and Guevarists at each others' throats.¹⁷¹

Workers in Australia had been traditionally unable or unwilling to participate in the class-based higher education system of universities. However, the 'independent working-class education' which flourished in institutions such as the Workers Educational Association (WEA), the Victorian Labor College, and the Communist Party's Marx School characteristically involved a top-down authoritarian relationship between teacher and pupils - a stark polar contrast with the proletarian autodidact in the public library. Even the early 'new left' tended to adopt the model of bringing the 'experts' in, such as at weekly Club lunch-time general meetings, or when a 'Karl Marx Symposium' was held at Melbourne University in 1967.¹⁷²

The flicker of upheaval on Australian campuses in 1967 was accompanied by the beginning of a 'new left' critique of the modern mass university. The Free University of Sydney ('Free U'), a utopian experiment inspired by Mario Savio and Paul Goodman and established before 'student power' had allowed radicals to contemplate rapid change within the university, began holding classes in December 1967 in a slum house in Calder Road, Darlington. Bob Connell wrote:

The Free U was founded because there were people deeply dissatisfied with what went on in the courses they had taken or taught. In the mass universities, teachers are sharply distinguished from students; those who know teach those who don't. As a necessary consequence, the courses are largely about what the teachers know already. When you walk in the front door of the Free U, you leave outside the formal distinction

¹⁷⁰ "Georges Sorel" (pseudonym), Reflections on Violence, *Analysis* No. 1, July, 1968, p. 1. *Analysis* was the theoretical magazine of the Monash Labor Club.

¹⁷¹ *University High Labour Club newsletter*, circa May 1969 (?).

¹⁷² See *Australian Left Review*, No. 6, 1967 for "Karl Marx Symposium", to mark the centenary of the first volume of *Capital* – organised by Australian Left Review and Melbourne University Labour Club.....in both Sydney and Melbourne, July/August 1967. The inclusion of Marxism in university sociology courses – a concomitant of the accelerated growth of the universities in the sixties – and the launch of independent socialist journals (*Arena*, *Outlook*) disturbed old patterns. In late 1967, the theoretical magazine of the Communist Party of Australia sponsored an Australian Marxist Research Foundation in an attempt to overcome the theoretical ossification of forty years. The 'old new left' journals *Outlook* and *Arena* sponsored a "joint" research fund of their own in 1967.

between students and teachers. The subjects of discussion, the objects of enquiry, are decided collectively by all the people in the group...¹⁷³

The Bakery equivalent of Free U, if that is not stretching the comparison too far, did not begin with gentle musings over the impersonality of the mass university but rather with reflections on violence. Soon after blood had been spilt on July 4, 'Georges Sorel' wrote in the new Monash Labor Club journal *Analysis* that:

The fact of violence has made the theory of violence an issue.¹⁷⁴

The editor of *Analysis* wrote:

¹⁷³ Bob Connell, Inside the Free U, *Free U No. 1*, February 1969. For the 'new left' critique of the modern mass university, see Terry Irving, The Free University, *Honi Soit*, October 22, 1967. See also R. Cahill, B. Connell, B. Freeman, T. Irving, B. Scribner (for the Committee for a Free University), The Lost Ideal, in *Free U, No. 1 – Journal of the Free University of Sydney*, February 1969 (which also includes Terry Irving, The Mass University, *Outlook*, February 1968; Terry Irving, The Free University as Utopia, *Outlook*, April 1968; Bob Connell, Inside the Free U; Bob Connell, Free Uni and the Student Movement; Free U: Retrospective, *Honi Soit*, October 22, 1968.) On the Sydney 'Free U', see also *Outlook*, Vol. 2, No. 6, December 1967, p. 3; Terry Irving, The Mass University, *Outlook*, Vol. 12, No. 1, February 1968; Terry Irving, The Free University as Utopia, *Outlook*, Vol. 12, No. 2, April 1968; Ann Curthoys, The End of the Free U, *Arena* 20, 1969; Rowan Cahill, Notes on the New Left, *op.cit.*, pp. 14–15; Heather Pearson, An Open Uni, *Old Mole* 8, March 8, 1971, p. 11; *Honi Soit*, June 4, 1968; *Sirius*, March 24, 1969, p. 6; Rowan Cahill, Free University Experiment at Sydney, *National U*, September 29, 1967, p. 3; Brian Freeman and Bob Connell, Free University, *National U*, March 18, 1968, p. 2; *National U*, March 18, 1968, p. 5; Brian Freeman (Sydney University) in *National U*, April 1, 1968, p. 4; *National U*, April 1, 1968, p. 3; *National U*, October 14, 1968; *Farrago*, March 15, 1968, p. 4; *National U*, April 28, 1969, p. 11; Eric Aarons, *What's Left?*, Penguin, 1993, p. 179. Sydney Free U survived until 1969, with a list of courses that included such subjects as "Atrocities", "The Universe", "Dance Expression" and "The Brain". (Down the road at Goulburn Street, 'Resistance' ran forums on West Coast Rock, McLuhan and C.Wright Mills, Film, Marcuse, The Youth Revolution). There were several attempts to emulate Free U. Towards the end of February 1969, at Palmerston Street, Melbourne SDS ran a Free High School and also started courses (with "convenors" rather than lecturers) in Non-Violence, Poetry, Education, Anarchism, Marcuse, McLuhan and Mass Media, Modern Literature, Comparative Urban Cultures. SDA in Adelaide had set up a Radical Education and Research Committee in August 1968 to produce alternative booklists for arts courses and distribute key texts of Western Marxism. Early in 1969, SDA began running a 'Free U' at 34 LeFevre Terrace in North Adelaide, with as many as seven sessions in nine days, on topics as diverse as Art and Society, Educational Change, The Third World, New Theology, Marxism, and The Brain. Brisbane SDA ran a 'Free U' on campus in 1968 and, consistent with its magnificent proclivity for organising conferences, continued with educational programmes at "The Cellar" throughout the long vacation into 1969. Material gathered in these sessions became the stuff from which Queensland University students, in all faculties, constructed their magnum opus of 1970 – *Up the Right Channels*, the most systematic critique of a university ever attempted in Australia.

¹⁷⁴ Georges Sorel, Reflections on Violence, *Analysis* 1, July 1968 – "We must adopt proper revolutionary procedures in regard to meetings, decisions and the use of nom-de-plumes. This must not become conspiratorial or theatrical. But the state is threatening us with jail. We must take its threats seriously and protect ourselves. Moreover, we must realise that the kind of action undertaken on July 4 will not succeed again." Dave Nadel identified "Georges Sorel" as Humphrey McQueen.

Up until now the Labor Club has been primarily an activist body, a militant body. No problem presented itself which could not be accounted for by further action. All problems were problems of organisation, of getting the numbers. But the July 4th action has altered all this, when mindless militancy reached its acme. It can be repeated in quantity, but it can never be repeated in quality. Violence and prosecutions around July 4th have made a theoretical analysis, explanation and program essential ... if the members had never before read Lenin or Marcuse on the state and on tolerance, they will now read them with an added urgency. And with an insight that can only come from necessity.¹⁷⁵

Regular Monday night discussions, held under the auspices of the Revolutionary Socialists ('Rev Socs') started at The Bakery on March 3, 1969 and continued through to July. The series began with classes on 'The State' conducted by Alan Roberts and Humphrey McQueen which ranged over the nature of the state, the role of revolutionary violence (the recommended reading material for which included works by Lenin, Sorel, Ardrey, Lorenz, Marx, Engels and Trotsky), and the historical experiences of the Labour Movement with the State in Australia.¹⁷⁶

Diary

March 10 There were about one hundred people crammed into the back room of The Bakery tonight, from the stairs to the oven. Most of us on floor, cushions. Backs to the brick wall. A very unusual lecture broken into eight parts. Main debate is whether the class struggle intensifies under socialism.

March 17 The normal program of classes is postponed for tonight's debate on 'China's Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution' - a showdown for the 'soul' of The Bakery between Albert Langer and Alan Roberts. Mick De Young tells Richard Buckdale that it is not possible to have a 'correct line'.

March 24 Everyone wants to know what Humphrey has been up to. He announces that he is writing a book - a new interpretation of labour history. Like E.P.Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class*. What about 'practice', Humphrey? "It is practice", Humphrey replied. "Theoretical Practice!"

March 31 John Playford class on 'Neo-Capitalism'.

April 21 Doug White - Universities and the State.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵ Editorial, *Analysis* 2, n.d, circa August 1968. See also Editorial, *Analysis* 1, July 1968 - on the need to raise theoretical level; Albert Langer, Universities and Student Rebels, *Analysis* No. 1; Warren Osmond, 'Universities: The Critical Weakness', *Analysis* No. 2 - on Gramsci, role of intellectuals, theoretical weaknesses of Monash Labor Club, disagreements with Langer.

¹⁷⁶ Leaflet by 'Rev Socs'...Series of classes on the State....starts March 3, 1969; *Rev Socs Lectures on "The State"* - No. 2: Revolutionary Violence (McQueen)...includes Ardrey, Sorel, Trotsky, quote from Luxemburg, Fanon; *Rev Socs Discussion series*, No. 4 - Historic Experiences with the State: the Australian Labor Movement and the State in Australia.

¹⁷⁷ *Print* No. 8, March 17, 1969; *Print* 16, Monday March 31, 1969; *Monash Labor Club Newsletter*, 1, March 10, 1969; *Half-Baked* 3, n.d, late March, 1969.

After a month interrupted by the Left Action Conference and May Day, the discussions continued in May with a series of evenings devoted to 'France - A Year Later' (an attempt to grapple with 'new contradictions in capitalism') and in June with chapters from the Penguin Special - *The Incompatibles: Trade Union Militancy and the Consensus*.¹⁷⁸ Attendances fell considerably and an interval of three months elapsed during which discussions were not even held at all. The series started up again on Wednesdays in October and continued to Christmas, accompanied however by increasingly audible mutterings of discontent with the academic 'guru' model. Earlier, an alternative model of study had been fashioned in the Maoist 'underground' at The Bakery which, ironically, had more in common formally with the Sydney Free U exemplar than did the Rev Soc series. 'Peter Collins', criticising the 'book worship' of 'New Left' intellectuals and basing himself on the methods advocated by Mao Tse-tung for integrating study with practice, argued for the importance of serious individual study (and small group study in YCL cells) to supplement the 'Rev Soc' seminars.¹⁷⁹

Diary

November 24 Arrived at Bakery today carrying a copy of *One-Dimensional Man* by Herbert Marcuse. I had to sneak it in. Peter Bland wanted to know what I was doing reading that muck.

On December 10, Ken Gooding from the Politics Department at Monash University bravely ventured to speak at The Bakery on the topic of Herbert Marcuse, a doyen of the 'New Left'. Marcuse, a Marxist philosopher who had participated in the German revolutionary events of 1918, and who had worked as an operative of the Office of Strategic Services (forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency) during World War Two, was viciously attacked as a 'cop' in a 1969 issue of *Challenge*, the Maoist newspaper of the Progressive Labor Party in the United States. He had become a major target in the war against the 'New Left' and any residual catholic attitudes at The Bakery seem to have been burnt at the stake with him. On April 2, *Print* mocked the language of *New Left Review*, repeated the 'Marcuse as cop' jibe and offered a prize to the candidate 'who writes the best essay on 'Neo-Hegelian super Marcuseanism and the dialectic before Herzen.' A crusade for the 'correct line' replaced free intellectual inquiry.¹⁸⁰ It is here that we trace the origins of another,

¹⁷⁸ Alexander Cockburn and Robin Blackburn, *The Incompatibles: Trade Union Militancy and the Consensus*, Penguin, 1967. See *Half-Baked* 4, April 19, 1969 – May 5: 'New Contradictions in Capitalism', first of a new series of discussions on France a year later; May 12: the role and nature of a revolutionary party; May 19: role of workers and students; May 26: developing revolutionary perspectives in Australia; June 2: first of a proposed new series on 'Civilisation at the Crossroads' (automation, biology and communication)/ Reading list for May series: Nairn/Quattrocchi, Bourges, *New Left Review* 52, Gorz (*Strategy for Labor*), Seale and McConville. See also *Print* 46, Monday June 23, 1969; *Print* 59, Wednesday July 16, 1969; *Half-Baked* 5 (n.d).

¹⁷⁹ "Peter Collins", On Theoretical Study, *Bolshevik* 1, February 1st, 1969.

¹⁸⁰ For the essay prize, see *Print*, No. 18, Thursday April 2nd, 1969. See also *Australian Rationalist*, Vol 1, No. 3, 1969, p. 31 – on article in *Vanguard*, July 3rd, 1969 attacking *Australian Rationalist* as

and perhaps more fundamental, source of fragmentation of the new left - a division into 'practitioners (of class war)' and 'theorists' (following in the footsteps of McQueen). In May 1970 at Sydney University the new genus of 'socialist scholar' put itself on display at the first Socialist Scholars Conference in a development that would some years later reach its apotheosis in the cult of Louis Althusser and the structuralist canon of French thought.

Bring the War Home! - The Prahran Peoples Movement

Prahran in 1969 was a working-class community with a high proportion of elderly pensioners, factory workers and Greek migrants. Although the Labor Club had decided as early as March to build on the Jolliffe initiative and 'advance the demands of the revolutionary masses in Prahran', the campaign did not actually begin until July. Over a period of several months a series of twelve roneoed leaflets - *The Prahran Worker* - were produced, sometimes with Greek translation, and distributed in public gathering places like Prahran Market. Announcing the idea of a March against Poverty in Prahran on July 22, *The Prahran Worker* asked:

Where is the war? The real war is here in Prahran, Richmond, Fitzroy, Collingwood, Sunshine, not in Vietnam.¹⁸¹

Implicit in the slogan 'Bring the War Home' which gained widespread currency in the new left at this time was the notion that to defend the Vietnamese revolution one had to make one's own. The Vietnam War served as a metaphor for a situation seen as calling for drastic measures closer to home. As a writer in *Print* put it:

Capitalism does not only kill Vietnamese peasants. It kills Australian pensioners and migrants here in Prahran and Fitzroy...¹⁸²

'bourgeois' for carrying article by Marcuse. See also Letter from Alan Roberts on Progressive Labor article "Marcuse: Cop-out or Cop", *Australian Rationalist*, Vol 1. No.3, 1969. See also editorial, *Analysis* No. 2, 1968... "Some students consider themselves superior, more mature, even more revolutionary, because they know what Trotsky said to Bukharin at 20 minutes past three on Tuesday June the 22nd, 1927."

¹⁸¹ *The Prahran Worker*, Vol 2, No. 1, July 15, 1969. Suburbs in Brisbane, in one case, were substituted for suburbs in Melbourne: "Bring the War Home - the real war is here in Australia, in Spring Hill, West End, and South Brisbane, not in Vietnam..." (*Enrage*, Vol. 1 No. 2, March 1970, news sheet of RSSA Brisbane). Note origin of the slogan in SDS, USA. See also *Poster - Bring the War Home Now! Fight Poverty*.... March July 22; *Leaflet - Bring The War Home Now! March against Poverty*. March July 22 to Prahran Town Hall, free transport provided. The real war is here in Prahran...; *Print* 63, July 22, 1969.

¹⁸² *Print* 88, October 3, 1969 - 'Support the March against Poverty' - "Most students don't live in places like Fitzroy, St Albans, Prahran..." "BRING THE WAR HOME NOW... the real war that should be fought is right here in Australia." The same theme, of "bringing the war home", is also the subject of *The Prahran Worker* Vol. 2, No. 7. For the March 1969 decision, see *Monash Labor Club Newsletter*, March 31, 1969 - Prahran Peoples' Council - Labor Club committee on March 25 decided that a committee should be formed to advance the demands of the revolutionary masses in Prahran. NB: 'Prahran Worker' is on the agenda for discussion at Rev Socs General meeting, April 30, 1969. See also *Print* 61, July 18, 1969.

The Prahran Peoples' Movement aimed to mobilise migrants, workers and pensioners against 'inequality, injustice and poverty ... necessary to capitalism ... and ...expose the rightwing business interests presently on the council, and to lay the basis for the beginning of a mass peoples' movement in the depressed areas of Prahran (those areas besides Toorak Village and Upper South Yarra)'. The attack focused on the 'Zara's of the world' and the Liberal (Party) councillor Charles Lux whose propensity for sumptuous meals was contrasted with Fred Farrall's humble diet.¹⁸³

The Bakery became a 'foco' for sorties into neighbouring streets, with groups leaving The Bakery in the evening to speak in Prahran homes. Greek migrants were invited to a smorgasbord 'Fancy Lunch' one Saturday afternoon, given help with their tax forms, and asked to distribute *The Prahran Worker*. Late in the afternoon on Tuesday July 22, several hundred people marched down High Street, from Punt Road to the Prahran Town Hall in Chapel Street, to raise the issue of poverty.¹⁸⁴

On July 29, *Print* announced that Michael Hyde, 'chairman' of the Monash Labor Club, would stand for election in the Prahran Council elections as a 'Revolutionary Socialist'. Hyde, a 23-year-old, was a minister's son from MacLeod High who had studied at Pasadena Junior College in California in 1964-5 and 1965-6 and been influenced by Students for a Democratic Society. Hyde returned to Australia in early 1967 as a radical pacifist but before long became a committed Maoist. Disciplined by the Monash Administration for collecting medical aid for the National Liberation Front on campus in 1967, Hyde nevertheless travelled to Cambodia in January 1968 to hand over funds for the NLF. Hyde had an unusually dashing image for a Maoist - brash, gregarious, good-looking, with a touch of charisma.¹⁸⁵ His campaign platform pinpointed the important issues as housing

¹⁸³ *The Prahran Worker* Vol. 2, No. 1, July 15, 1969 – mentions Farrall versus Lux over sumptuous meals. See also *The Prahran Worker*, Vol 2, No. 3; *The Prahran Worker*, Vol 2 No. 9, mid to late-August – attack on Charles Lux and wife, Liberal Party; *The Prahran Worker* 2/1, July 15, 1969 – Government starves old people at home, exploits workers ...” See also *The Prahran Worker* 2/2, circa July 18, 1969; *Print* 63, July 22, 1969; *Print* 88, October 3, 1969; *Print* 67, July 29, 1969. Zara Holt, who had been married to Harold Holt, owned a “boutique” in Toorak. See *The Prahran Worker*, Vol 2, No. 7, Saturday August 9 (with Greek propaganda included) – diatribe against Zara Holt.

¹⁸⁴ The march was repeated on Saturday morning, August 9th. For July 22, see *The Prahran Worker*, Vol 2, No. 1, July 15, 1969; *The Prahran Worker*, Vol 2 No. 2, circa July 18, 1969; *Print*, No. 66, Monday July 28, 1969; *Print* 68, July 31, 1969; *Print* 69, August 1st, 1969; *Print* 60, July 17, 1969; *Print* 73, August 8, 1969. For August 9, see *The Prahran Worker Special* (late July, early August) – support socialist candidate Hyde, August 9 march and watch for La Mama Street Theatre (and band) in the streets of Prahran; *Print* 73, August 8, 1969 – March against Poverty, Saturday 10.30 a.m from corner of Punt Road and High Street with La Mama Street Theatre. For the Greek tax forms – *Half-Baked*, n.d, circa late-July 1969; *Print* 60, July 17, 1969; *Print* 61, July 18, 1969.

¹⁸⁵ See Bruce Hanford article in *Broadside*, *op. cit.*, for a portrait (albeit hostile) of Hyde at the Bakery in September 1969. See Langley, *op.cit.*, pp. 42, 89–90; *The Brisbane Line*, August 29, 1968. Dave Nadel remembers that Hyde brought back some copies of the SDS founding manifesto – the famous “Port Huron Statement” – and showed them to him when Nadel was manning the Labor Club stall one day in early 1967.

demolition, factories, housing commission flats, pensioners, education, and abortion law reform. *The Prahran Worker* openly admitted that on such a platform Hyde stood little chance of election, but it criticised the mentality of electionism - 'don't vote, organise', wrote the author of one issue - and argued for an entirely different approach to politics in Prahran: it was necessary to move out of the limits of the council (which only "divides up the cake for local business interests"), unite and organise to set up a community-based organisation representing the 'power of people'.¹⁸⁶

An issue of *The Prahran Worker* distributed in late August and used as a poster had the hand-drawn image of a blind-folded man carrying a donkey! The representation is of the 'Prahran people' carrying the Prahran Council:

Poverty, loneliness, inequality - throw them off! join the struggle!
Support Hyde.¹⁸⁷

It is a fascinating image, combining elements from two distinct and contradictory iconographic traditions - one belonging to the Industrial Workers' of the World (I.W.W, or 'Wobblies') and the other to various brands of populism. In contrast to the efforts by 'Rev Socs' to wrestle intellectually and creatively with class categories, the Prahran campaign generated a spontaneous 'populism' that meshed easily with the 'Serve the People' rhetoric of Maoist students. As if clinging, under such pressure, to the vestiges of a 'class line', the issues of *The Prahran Worker* are also suffused with symbols of the most elementary syndicalism (and a backward-looking theory of revolt through 'immiseration') - the image of a worker hanging by a chain from the neck; the words of Joe Hill songs; the words of a song written by the octogenarian Greville Street bootmaker and former 'Wobbly' Bill Genery; and a report from a woman in a local confectionary factory explaining that her exploitation helped keep the 'oysters and champagne flowing in Toorak'.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ *The Prahran Worker*, Vol. 2, No. 7, August 9, 1969 - "Bring the War home Now!" For the issues, see *The Prahran Worker Special* (n.d. circa late July, early August, 1969). See also *Print* 67, July 29, 1969. See also *The Prahran Worker Special* (n.d. circa late July, early August, 1969) - Socialism and Prahran - aims of the "Prahran Peoples' Movement" - decision to run a revolutionary socialist candidate and why; *The Prahran Worker*, Vol 2, No. 8, August (Greek translation).

¹⁸⁷ *The Prahran Worker*, Vol. 2, No. 9, mid to late August, 1969.

¹⁸⁸ Maoist slogan "serve the people" on 'how to vote' card in "rev soc" colors. See also *The Prahran Worker*, Vol 2, No. 4 (late July, early August 1969) - "Serve the people, not the dollar." See also Poster - "Chains for Toilets - not workers" (from *Black Dwarf*) - "march Saturday August 9, 10.30am, corner Punt/High"; *The Prahran Worker*, Vol 2 No. 5 (late July, early August 1969) - report from woman in local confectionary factory (Aileen Sinclair in Red Tulip?)...work two days for themselves and three for the boss...keeps oysters and champagne flowing in Toorak...ordinary people must gain control over their own lives...words of Joe Hill's "Organise, oh toilers"; *The Prahran Worker*, Vol 2, No. 6 (early August 1969) - starts off with famous quote from Tom Barker...conscripted and why it is harder for working class people to resist it...(note this issue not mentioned in program in 'PW Special') ... PPM will give aid, support and advice on conscription...Song from Bill Genery ("Polly we can't use you dear"); *Print* 88, October 3, 1969 - on march against poverty - words from songs 'Preacher and the Slave' and 'Weevils in the Flour'.

Running in South Yarra Ward against a solid Labor candidate (Chris Gahan) on August 28, Hyde (who used the 'Rev Soc' colours of red and gold on his how-to-vote card) was destined to receive a lower vote than if he had opposed a Liberal. There was nevertheless a note of bitterness in *The Prahran Worker's* mock exultation:

There are 82 Revolutionary Socialists in South Yarra.¹⁸⁹

In a more critical exposition, Jill Jolliffe looked back in December on the campaign, and wrote:

The most glaring error was the artificiality of the campaign - the attempt to persuade people to a political position without having any political base in the area. We had not worked with them politically, at any level, prior to this; we were utter outsiders in Prahran for all effects and purposes, and 'student' attitudes (which the campaign ended up reinforcing) had certainly overruled the possibility of integrating with the masses.¹⁹⁰

The 'Rev Socs' as a group had not initiated the Prahran campaign and it was simply overwhelmed by the 'Prahran Peoples Movement'. The Prahran campaign, once begun, took on a life of its own, and the 'Rev Socs' was subsumed by it. Wednesday nights at The Bakery, which had been given over to 'Rev Soc' educationals, became the occasion for *Prahran Worker* meetings.¹⁹¹ 'Rev Socs' - the very abbreviation pointing to its inchoate condition - continued to exist

¹⁸⁹ *The Prahran Worker* (No.10?) September, 1969. This figure of 82 votes represented 7.5% of the voters in the ward. There were 1000 votes for Chris Gahan, the new Mayor (replacing Lux) (primary issue is 'commercial and industrial expansion'). See also *The Prahran Worker* Vol. 2, No. 7, Saturday August 1969; Red and yellow "How to Vote Card" for Michael Hyde versus C.Gahan ("Serve the People"); *The Prahran Worker* (No. 11?) - with Greek translation (signed by Hyde and Hartley); *Tribune*, October 8, 1969, p. 12 - photograph of poverty march October 3, shows Aileen Sinclair, 'Jacko' Kevans; Leaflet (circa mid-December 1969) by "Prahran Worker Committee for Local Democracy" backing Angus McIver versus John Holdsworth in Prahran ward bi-election.

¹⁹⁰ Jill Jolliffe, *Student/Worker Attitudes: Petty-Bourgeois and Proletarian*, ronoed, n.d, late 1969.

¹⁹¹ The Prahran initiative seems to have been presented as a fait accompli to the "Rev Socs". See leaflet "To All Revolutionary Socialists" (n.d, circa mid-July 1969); *Print* 63, July 22, 1969 - important meeting of Rev Socs Thursday to discuss Rev Soc/ Labor Club commitment of Socialist candidates in Prahran Council elections; *Half-Baked* 5, n.d - Prahran Council campaign ... Liberal Council in a working class area... opportunity for people to engage in genuine mass work in Prahran (especially the Rev Socs)... "*Prahran Worker*" to be distributed at the market on Saturday morning. A meeting on July 24, sometime after the Prahran anti-poverty campaign had already started, decided to set up the "Prahran Peoples' Movement". See *Half-Baked* (n.n, n.d, circa late July, 1969) - last Thursday night's (July 24) meeting about Prahran Worker campaign was successful (Prahran Worker meetings on Wednesday nights from now on - Revolutionary Socialists will be subsumed in these meetings) - a committee formed for the Prahran Worker news sheet, another to co-ordinate speaking in Prahran homes; *Print* 89, October 10, 1969 - the Prahran movement and Revolutionary Socialists meeting Bakery next Wednesday on Federal elections (course on Marxism, Wednesday night also).

nominally but by November even the pretence that Bakery leaflets had anything to do with it had been dispensed with altogether.

CHAPTER FIVE

IN THE BAKEHOUSE

Cultural forms at The Bakery remained fixed in an old mould, with ‘working class’ songs the filament that never ceased to burn.

Solidarity Forever, For the Party Makes Us Strong

There was this style of women that was very different from the mainstream. Jolliffe, Jill Cassidy, Chrissie Sandford. It was one that I was very attracted to...there was great life and energy there, but it wasn't me. I was perceived as a bimbo. I wore make-up, I wore short skirts. After we'd occupied the bookshop at Monash over the sacking of Free, I just found myself being able to say very economically why I was there, what the issues were. I remember Jill Jolliffe saying to me 'I saw you interviewed on 'This Day Tonight' and I could see the incredible surprise that I had been able to articulate intelligently why I was there.'¹⁹²

Diary

May 16 (Friday) 1969:

The mood is ebullient, ecstatic; The Bakery is bubbling tonight as people arrive for the party. The music comes from the back room, and most of the drinking will take place there, but soon the whole downstairs area is full. Someone is singing 'Solidarity Forever' above the din. Worker-student unity seems really tangible at last. Yesterday Dave Rubin and Langer received their summonses. Today, a massive show of strength at Olympic Park for O'Shea, after which students and workers stood shoulder to shoulder against the police outside the Industrial Court. Rubin is here with fellow 'wharfies' Ted McCormick and Jack 'The Hat' Davidson. Dave and Ted are brawny, Jack 'The Hat' is small. They are receiving the hospitality they themselves have shown on Sunday nights at 28 Balaclava Road. Wharfies and beer cans are more welcome here than hippies and pot. Long-hairs are unreliable. Pot is a gift to the cops. The Monash left got going before Haight-Ashbury. We brought a pig onto campus before Jerry Rubin ever did. But no-one is turned away. Chris Hector is here and the 'Melbourne Push' takes up half-a-room. If you go outside to the toilet (perhaps never to return), ears ringing from 'Street Fighting Man', you get a full blast as well from Leggett's Ballroom - a waltz wafting across from over the back fence. Whoever is putting the records on must be schizoid. 'I Heard It Through the Grapevine' is followed by 'I'm Gonna Roll the Union On'. Same country; different style. You always fall back on the old 'class war' songs to make you feel mentally good. No-one's asked for 'The East is Red' yet, or 'Sailing the Seas Depends upon the Helmsman' - to storm the heavens with. People often sing themselves at these parties. Two of the most popular battle cries, from Adrian Mitchell's Parisian lumpen-proletariat, are 'What's the Point of a Revolution Without General Copulation' and 'Marat We're Poor'. A group over by the stairs has just finished the rousing final stanza - 'We want our Revolution Now'. Half the party joins in. Dave

¹⁹² Interview with Carey Prescott (Forrest), Belgrave, February 26, 1993.

Nadel does not have a strong voice but he knows the Labor Club ditties backwards, such as the risque:

Ky's a paper tiger
Hitler was his king
Down with neo-fascists!
Long live Ho Chi Minh!
Harold Holt get fucked
For sending us to war
We're not bloody going
You can bet your balls!

or Mike Zerman's 'Mickey Mao Club', written as an anti-Maoist ditty but subsequently embraced by them, at least on lighter social occasions:

Who's the charismatic leader
All of us agree
M-A-O, T-S-E, dash T-U-N-G
Mao tse-tung, our favourite boong
Forever let us hold the red flag high High! High! High!
Come along, join the throng and join the CCP
M-A-O, T-S-E, dash T-U-N-G ¹⁹³

Zerman read the Sheila Rowbotham poem about women in *Black Dwarf* and *Ergo*. He's standing as a candidate for Women's Liberation (for Sexual Liberation as well) in the Public Affairs Committee elections at Monash. A male! Something is going on. The changes and contrasts are producing ... neuroses. People come to The Bakery parties every two or three weeks to let it all hang out. Humphrey came into the Bookshop yesterday and pointed up at the Oscar Wilde poster on the wall. There was a phone call for me tonight - a proposition. I hid behind the big couch in the lounge room upstairs while she barged around The Bakery looking for me. Last week I was attacked in my sleeping bag on the old sea-grass matting. Beth Phayer showed me the pamphlet *Problems of Womens Liberation* by Evelyn Reed. She and Wes Hall have brought along Mike O'Grady, Bill Treacy, and Bill Landeryou from the Storemen and Packers'. They brought Bob Hawke who made a pass at Jill Cassidy and was knocked back. The two Jills (Jolliffe, Cassidy) carry themselves with a swagger. On the other hand, you have Liz Elliott and Carey Prescott - both here tonight, both articulate and committed. Liz is with Grant Evans. She was crowned

¹⁹³ Dave Nadel remembers the song about Ky as having been written by Mick de Young of the Labor Club. For other Monash ditties, see interview with Nadel, July 7, 1993. For Leggett's Ballroom, see Sally Wilde, *The History of Prahran, Volume Two*, *op. cit.*, pp. 262-5; Hunter, *op. cit.*; *Print* 40, May 16, 1969 - party tonight at Bakery. See also Catherine Lowy, Peter Weiss - from 'German Jew' to 'Marxist Propagandist', *Melbourne University Magazine* 1968, pp. 78-82, including first paragraph on alienated state of French students - "we are all German Jews" - and *Marat/Sade*; Rainer Taeni, review of *Marat/Sade*, *Meanjin*, Vol. 27, No. 1, 1968; Dennis Altman, *Homosexual*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1972, p. 96 - "whats the point of a revolution without general copulation"; *Farrago*, March 15, 1968, p. 14 - "the most important film of 1968"...starts Dendy, Brighton, March 21; 'Symposium on *Marat/Sade*', *Arena* 17, 1968; David Williams (ed.), *Peter Brook - A Theatrical Casebook*, London, Methuen, 1991, pp. 61-72; Ian Turner, Report from "Swinging London", *Overland* 42, Spring 1969...mentions *Marat/Sade* approach - "we want our revolution now".

'Miss Melbourne University' last week; Carey, 'Monash Miss Freshette 1968', is with Hyde.¹⁹⁴

Nadel's still going:

You can bring Mao
With a dimpled brow
But don't bring Liu Liu
You can bring Lin with the dimpled chin
But don't bring Liu Liu.....
He's just the kind of smartie
To break up every Party
Hullabalooloo - don't bring Liu Liu
Leave him to Brezhnev!¹⁹⁵

September 19 (Friday) 1969:

The Bakery social life has become routine. The first of the Friday night folk/coffee nights was on August 1st and they are now held every week, organised mainly by myself and Dave. Tonight, Gayle and myself are singing, about to do the two favourites - 'Rebel Girl' and 'Ballad of Ho Chi Minh'. This last song is especially poignant tonight. The 'hero of a generation' is dead. People have been coming in from Greville Street, standing or sitting politely for a few minutes, and then passing suitably anointed into the back room for coffee and more immediate pleasures. No-one moves now. Mike Hyde loves the Joe Hill song and was laughing a minute ago. Now he is ashen. Two weeks ago he officiated at a special memorial service for Ho. There are about twenty comrades left when I start belting out, to Gayle's thumping guitar:

Far away across the ocean
Far beyond the sea's eastern rim
Lives a man who is father of the Indo-Chinese people
And his name it is Ho Chi Minh

Everyone knows and sings the chorus - Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh...Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh.
¹⁹⁶ Tomorrow afternoon some of these people will return for the regular Saturday

¹⁹⁴ Election supplement, *Lot's Wife*, June 10, 1969, p. 14; *Ergo*, April 14, 1969, p. 4; Beth Phayer – A Modern Pankhurst, *Our Women* (Union of Australian Women), September–December 1969; Evelyn Reed, *Problems of Womens Liberation*, New York, Pathfinder Press, 1969; Hawke at Bakery, see interview with Nadel, October 13, 1993; *Lot's Wife*, March 26, 1968 – photograph of Carey Prescott, Miss Freshette; *Farrago*, May 16, 1969, p. 9....photographs of Miss University, Liz Elliott.

¹⁹⁵ 'Liu Liu' is Mao's rival Liu Shao-Chi; 'Lin' is Lin Piao.

¹⁹⁶ *Ballad of Ho Chi Minh*, by Ewan McColl, 1954; *The Rebel Girl*, by Joe Hill. Original 1969 reel-to-reel tape (and later CD) of *Ballad of Ho Chi Minh* being sung by author at Bakery is in the possession of the author. For *Ballad of Ho Chi Minh* sung by the author at May 1970 Moratorium in front of 80,000 people, see *Print*, May 11, 1970. See also *Lot's Wife*, September 11, 1969, p. 5 – photograph of Mike Hyde at Memorial Service for Ho Chi Minh, at Monash. National Anthem (Liberation March) of the National Liberation Front, available on record from Alice's Restaurant Bookshop. For the Friday night folk coffee shop, see *Print* 57, Monday July 14, 1969; *Print* 59, Wednesday July 16, 1969; *Print* No. 69, Friday August 1st, 1969 – Coffee Lounge at Bakery, opening tonight 7–12, for 50c drink coffee and listen to some of Melbourne's best folk music ... Meet the people of Prahran and forget all your hang-ups, on every Friday night; *Print* 73, Friday August 8th,

afternoon smorgasbord luncheon in the shopfront, prepared mainly by Bakery resident Marie Fiske. To just talk and be personal.

Daily at Dawn

The signature tune of this period was the rhythmic thump of helicopters in Vietnam, a noise whose eerily similar counterpart was provided by the hundreds of Gestetner machines running off the leaflets of the anti-war protest movement.¹⁹⁷

‘I had a pair of white jeans that were my best jeans. I would make sure they were clean and wear them. I’d catch the train from Blackburn to Richmond station and change trains and go to Prahran. It would take me a long time to get there. It was one of the highlights of my week. You would walk in the front of the shop. There were stairs that went down to a basement and a Gestetner and typewriter in there.’¹⁹⁸

By far the most regular and demanding (and for the residents, the most intrusive) of all Bakery activities was the production of the Labor Club’s news sheet - *Print*. On March 4, 1969 the editors of *Print* announced that the bulletin was ‘going daily!’ and explained that the ‘increased production of *Print* was a result of the increasing tempo of the student movement at Monash and throughout Australia’.¹⁹⁹

Print (a roneoed creation on two sides of a single foolscap sheet) was inevitably a nocturnal preoccupation, a ‘three o’clock enterprise’, with a ‘dedicated night-staff’ who would first rack their brains in The Bakery cellar, then type up flimsy stencils on a rickety typewriter before entrusting them to the ‘high speed Gestetner’ at the rear of The Bakery.²⁰⁰ The inspiration for *Print* had originally come from Darce Cassidy who took over (and re-named) the Labor Club’s spasmodic *Left Hook* in 1966 and inflamed the Monash campus with the venomous style he had used at Sydney University as editor of *Wednesday Commentary*. Cassidy had applied some of his own professional skills in developing a sophisticated theory of ‘guerilla journalism’ based on the idea that ‘going for the jugular’ could tactically aid the

1969; *Print* 83, September 19, 1969; *Print* 89, October 10, 1969; *Half-Baked*, n.d, circa late July, 1969; *Half-Baked*, October 3, 1969; *Half-Baked*, October 10, 1969; Leaflet, Bakery, late November 1969.

¹⁹⁷ Peter Pierce, ‘Never glad confident morning again’, in J. Grey and J. Doyle (eds), *Vietnam: War, Myth and Memory*, *op. cit.*, p. 69. ‘Daily at Dawn’ title from *Print*, 51, July 1, 1969.

¹⁹⁸ Interview with Megan Miller, Northcote, October 8, 1993. Megan was an activist with SID.

¹⁹⁹ *Print* 1, March 4, 1969.

²⁰⁰ Words in quotation marks taken from 1969 issues of *Print*. *Print* had four separate editors for 1969: Terry Maher edited the Monday edition, Bob Gingold edited the Tuesday edition, Geoff Gold edited the Thursday edition, and Dave Nadel edited the Friday edition. *Print* did not appear on Wednesday. Peter Butcher had his name on all issues because he was Secretary of the Club. Nadel remembers that each editor had his own team – ‘my team was Phil Buckle (gestetnering and some writing), Bronwyn Silver (typing and some writing) and myself (writing).’

more general confrontation ('power grows out of the barrel of a Gestetner').²⁰¹ As a technical production, the impoverished *Print* bore the same relation to streamlined dailies as Vietnamese peasants to a B-52, but this, and the occasional adolescent slur (for example, 'Sir Arthur Rat' for the Victorian Chief Secretary Sir Arthur Rylah), hardly detracts from the consistency and intensity of its daily political critique, impressive even twenty-five years on.²⁰²

Residents living over these conditions found the going difficult. A former resident of 7 Jasmine Street recalls:

Most of the people who should have been in The Bakery, having already lived at Jasmine Street or Shirley Grove, were not going to touch it with a forty-foot barge pole. None of us would have lived in The Bakery. No-one should be asked to do that for more than one year out of every five.²⁰³

I ended up with the same attitude as well:

I was invited by Darce Cassidy to move in. There were five bedrooms, a kitchen, bathroom, and a loft above the oven. I slept in a sleeping bag on seagrass matting, deliberately and proudly Spartan. There was absolutely no privacy whatsoever. You would be preparing your dinner and the phone would ring or someone would arrive. Albert had constructed an 'intercom' connected to the kitchen wall so that you would hear the front door bell ring and ascertain who it was without racing down the stairs then across to the front of the building every time. You had to lock the front door because you never knew who might want to come in. *Print* was sometimes written in the kitchen and the editorial sessions were often there when we were trying to eat our meal. You would get caught up in discussions about the next day's *Print*. Usually two or three people wrote in tandem and then typed it up in the cellar. It was the year of the first really major occupations. It was really on, day in and day out. They would stick the stencil on the Gestetner and run it off in thousands of copies. It was usually about 3.00 a.m. when the cranking finished. My bedroom was not directly above the Gestetner,

²⁰¹ For the role of Darce Cassidy, see 'Report on Left Hook/Print 1966-67' (for Monash Labor Club AGM 1967), in MLC Internal Records, Langer Collection – need for more "tongue in cheek and satirical style" like 'Wednesday Commentary'; *Print*, 8 March, 1967; Ockenden, *op. cit.*, p. 13, pp. 81-82; *Lot's Wife*, April 18, 1967, pp. 2-3; Darce Cassidy, The Might of Darce Cassidy's Pen, *Lot's Wife*, May 9, 1967, p. 9 (defence of 'Print'); *Print*, June 11, 1968; Darce Cassidy, Guerilla Journalism, *Analysis* No. 2, 1968; Darce Cassidy, 'Print' – *Newspaper or Propaganda Sheet*, n.d., circa November 1968 – "Print must be produced regularly at a set time and place, so that late stories may be phoned directly to the editor"; Len Esdaile (Cassidy?), 'Print' in 1969, *The Red Line* 3, February 15, 1969.

²⁰² Cf R.E.Young, Advice to a Student Activist, *Lot's Wife*, September 11, 1969, p. 10 – criticism of 'Print': "perfect example of the arcane mutual reinforcement of the extremist left".

²⁰³ Interview with Dave Nadel, Ascot Vale, July 7, 1993.

but it was close enough. The place was left in a terrible state sometimes.
Nobody would see me sweeping up all the dust and the mess.²⁰⁴

²⁰⁴ Ken Mansell interviewed by David MacKenzie, Coburg, August 14, 1992.

CHAPTER SIX

CRUMBLING

Oh Crumbs! Fragmentation of The Left Coalition

I realise that in some regards this study is dated; written before the April Left Action Conference it could not fully take into account this landmark in the history of Australian socialism, nor certain developments that took place on the student left during those four days.²⁰⁵

Diary

1969 February 25. The Bakery has a dingy, disjointed feel about it this afternoon. The first work bees created chaos. Clothes and boxes piled up in corners. Chairs askew. Unpainted walls. The most exciting thing to happen today was the telegram that arrived, delivered about 5 o'clock from the post office up the street. Cryptic if you are not up with the latest internequine wrangle in the Socialist Students Alliance.

LANGER 120 GREVILLE ST PRAHRAN VICTORIA
OUTSIDE AGITATOR GOOD STOP CAREFUL
NATIONAL SDS CONFERENCE PLANNED MAY BY
MCIVOR MITCH²⁰⁶

The Australian Student Labour Federation (ASLF) had existed as an umbrella organisation for all university socialist clubs since before the Second World War. The role of the Monash Labor Club - an energetic johnny-come-lately to ASLF - had grown in importance. Three of its members were among the sixteen arrested in Canberra during the May 1965 ASLF Conference - one of the first ever 'sit-downs' against the Vietnam War. In September 1966, the Victorian Branch of the ASLF elected Nadel as President and Langer as Secretary. With the largest delegation (nineteen) at the May 1967 Conference in Sydney, Monash took over the ASLF National Executive for 1967-8 (with Nadel as President and Mick De Young as Secretary).²⁰⁷

²⁰⁵ Rowan Cahill, *Notes on the New Left in Australia*, preface.

²⁰⁶ Mitch Thompson telegram to Albert Langer 120 Greville Street Prahran, sent on February 25, 1969... arrives Prahran post office (Greville Street).

²⁰⁷ See Minutes of ASLF Victorian Branch (First Council meeting), September 6th, 1966 at Melbourne University; Official Organ of the ASLF Victorian Branch, No. 1, December 1966; ASLF Report by Martha Campbell - report on 1967 ASLF Conference, held at Sydney University, first week of the May vacation; *Left Forum* (Sydney University Socialist Club), September 1966 - includes ASLF Report; Report of ASLF International Secretary to ASLF Conference, Adelaide, May 23-26, 1966; *Farrago*, June 16, 1967, p.3; Constitution of the ASLF Victorian Branch. For the 1965

The May 1968 national ASLF conference, with one vicarious eye on Paris and the other on the recent Monash insurgency, reflected the tenor of that extraordinary month. Thirty-eight delegates to the Conference held their first conference session on May 20 in the Canberra lock-up. The Conference was billed as an Activists affair and the decision to break away from ASLF and form the Socialist Students Alliance (SSA) reflected revolutionary impatience with the ALP clubs and the desire to replace traditional ASLF voting rituals with nationally-coordinated action.²⁰⁸ The first SSA Conference, scheduled for February 17-21 at the University of New South Wales, was a farce and resulted in an immediate split (between the Sydney SDS/Resistance axis and the combined forces of SDA Brisbane, SDA Adelaide and Monash) over the question of responsibility for the poor turn-up and the nature of the next Conference in May. The National Executive of the SSA 'anti-Sydney' forces operated from Langer's seat at the kitchen table at The Bakery and it was from there that its interstate bulletin *The Outside Agitator* was addressed to all SSA and ASLF branches on February 23. Fear that Sydney would carry through with its threat to hold a 'broad' ASLF Conference at Melbourne University in May prompted vigilance and a telegram from Mitch Thompson in Brisbane warning of the possibility of a May SDS Conference organised by Melbourne University activist Ian McIvor.²⁰⁹

Diary

sit-down in Canberra, see Ann Curthoys in Langley, *op. cit.*, p.30; Mendes, *op. cit.*, p.25 (and footnote 108).

²⁰⁸ See letter from Mick De Young of ASLF Executive, May 1968, on the May 20–24 Anti-Vietnam Activists' Conference in Sydney (at 'Resistance'); letter from De Young on ASLF-Activists' Conference, May 1968; Cahill, *Notes on the New Left*, p. 13; *Lot's Wife*, September 3, 1968, p. 3; Letter from Cassidy, August 13, 1968 on a national "student power" journal ... asked to prepare format following May Conference.... Tentative title – "Point"...To be produced under the auspices of ASLF and SSA; Letter from Cassidy, August 28, 1968 on SSA National Journal – first issue of "Point" due September 15, with articles by McQueen, Osmond, Nadel, DeYoung, Cassidy. For the session in the lock-up, see *National U*, June 10, 1968, p. 3–38 delegates to the ASLF Conference held their first conference session in the lock-up in Canberra, May 20, 1968. The conference was scheduled to begin in Sydney at Resistance on the 20th after a demonstration the previous day for incarcerated Denis O'Donnell but his last-minute removal from Holsworthy to Canberra meant that the delegates protested instead at the Prime Minister's Lodge. Arrests on the 19th forced them to conduct the first session in the lock-up.

²⁰⁹ *The Outside Agitator*, No. 1, February 23, 1969....interstate bulletin of the Socialist Students Alliance, National Executive, 120 Greville St, Prahran; Discussion Bulletin of the Sydney Section of SSA/ASLF, No. 1, Easter 1969 (four pages, written by Jim Percy, explaining history of ASLF and SSA, and 'Sydney' view of split in SSA); *Sirius*, March 24, 1969, p. 3; *Democrat*, Vol. 4, No. 2, March 18, 1969 (Sydney University Democratic Club); Leaflet advertising Student Power Conference, Resistance, December 28–29, 1968; Mitch Thompson/Brian Laver letter from SDA (Brisbane) to Socialist Students Alliance – suggested program for Student/Staff Power Conference, February 12–16, 1969; *Sydney University Labor Club Newsletter* January/February 1969; *Resistance Newsletter*, No. 17, January–February 1969; Document of the Socialist Students Alliance on SSA 1969 Conference, February 17–21, 1969, University of NSW.

May 26 University vacation. The SSA Conference began at Monash today. Mitch Thompson distinguishable with Che Guevara-style black beret. Some delegates call at The Bakery.

May 28 Demonstration at the City Square for Langer. Loud chants of 'No Political Prisoners!' 'Free Rubin! Free Langer!' Peter O'Brien of Adelaide SDA leads stampede towards the Stock Exchange.

June 2 Langer trial started. Everyone buoyed-up by Albert's oratory. During the lunch break we get wind of Gorton opening the new Casey wing at RMIT today. Dick Shearman from Brisbane RSA raced to Victoria Market for a box of red, ripe tomatoes. Gorton has just returned from Washington where he told Nixon 'We will go a-Waltzing Matilda with You.' Shearman handed round the tomatoes and when Gorton rose to speak we all launched them at him, singing raucously 'We'll go a-bombing and burning with you' to the tune of 'Waltzing Matilda'. Talk about spontaneity!²¹⁰

For some time, members of the 'new new left' - the 'generation of '68' - had defined themselves in relation to the 'old left', in particular the Communist Party of Australia which was seen as moribund dead-wood. It was the one thing that the Trotskyists, Maoists, Anarchists and 'New Left' had in common: notional affiliation with a 'left coalition' to the left of the CPA's 'Coalition of the Left'.²¹¹ Tensions in the Revolutionary Socialist Alliance and the ructions of the SSA indicated fragility in this 'left coalition'. The Left Action Conference broke it apart. Following its twenty-first Congress in 1967 the Communist Party of Australia developed an orientation widely perceived as representing a 'turn to the left.' On the part of the 'new left', distrust with regard to the motives and sincerity of 'the left turn' was widespread.²¹² The Communist Party had responded to the French events of May

²¹⁰ See "Face to Face: The PM and Student Hecklers", *The Herald*, Monday June 2, 1969. For Shearman, see Stewart Harris, *Political Football*, Melbourne, Goldstar, 1972, pp. 204-5 - Shearman, 21 in mid-1971, Marxist-Leninist Communist...tough, bitter, compelling and powerful speaker etc.....suspended Queensland University 1970. See also *Outlook*, June 1969....Gorton says Australia will go "Waltzing Matilda with U.S.". See also Gerster and Bassett, *op. cit.*, p. 74. See also *Monash Labor Club Newsletter* 3, April 14, 1969 - RSSA Conference to take place at Monash, May 26-30 ("procedure almost scuttled by the Gould freaks"); Document of Revolutionary Socialist Students Alliance, Sunday May 25, 1969 - *Bulletin No. 1*; Draft Manifesto of the Revolutionary Socialist Students Alliance (for discussion), circa April 1969.

²¹¹ Darce Cassidy interviewed in Mendes, *op. cit.*, p. 33; Interview with Dave Nadel, July 7, 1993; Bob Gould, The Honeymoon Over - The Decline and Fall of the Left Coalition, *Old Mole* 3, June 29, 1970; Ann Curthoys, Blood Sports on the Left, *Arena* 97, Summer 1991; Denis Freney, The Goddess of History and Dust Bins in the Sky, *Arena* 98, Autumn 1992.

²¹² For the CPA's 'left turn', see Ken Mansell, *Communist Strategic Concepts - the Communist Party of Australia 1963-1972*, BA Hons. Thesis, Latrobe University History Department, 1980; Andrew Milner, *The Road to St Kilda Pier*, pp. 35-36; Eric Aarons, *What's Left?*, p. 198. See also L. Aarons, *Tribune*, October 22, 1969 - 'Wide Angle' column...(heading) "A Crisis of confidence Right at the Top"; Eric Aarons, Aspects of Socialist Strategy, *Australian Left Review*, No. 4, 1969, p. 44; *Tribune*, July 9, 1969 - Editorial: "We are with the Defiant Ones". The 1967 Congress was a moment of decisive importance in the abandonment of the CPA's Stalinist past, leading to the adoption of policies that had much in common with the policies of elements of the Australian 'new left'. The party explored the ideas of "workers control" and "self-management", pioneered trade

1968 by initially echoing the line of the Communist Party of France. To refurbish its image and consolidate its position with emerging new forces, the party (along with a large number of sponsors, many of whom were radical students) organised a Left Action Conference, held in the Teachers Federation Auditorium, Sussex Street, Sydney from April 4-7, 1969, and attended by seven hundred and ninety-one people.²¹³ In September 1968, the Monash Labor Club, along with other new left groups such as the Brisbane and Adelaide SDA's, had not been considered worthy of an invitation to the Conference. It certainly made a splash there. One commentator later wrote:

‘Franc Tireurs’ Albert Langer and Darce Cassidy and their Bakery Battalions were prominent in the audience in self-inflicted guerilla role, conducting People’s War in their jungle greens against all and sundry on the platform.²¹⁴

The club was savaged for its negative attitude before, during and after the Conference - the point of final rupture between the ‘New Left’ and ‘Marxist-Leninists’ at Monash. Diane Wieneke of the ‘New Left’ suggested that the Labor Club’s ‘disruption’ and ‘arrogance’ had discredited it and embarrassed its own members. Jill Jolliffe, attacking the CPA for manipulating the Conference and erstwhile Prahran house-mate Warren Osmond for allowing himself to be

union actions such as the famous “Green Bans”, and helped popularise thinkers such as Gramsci, previously unknown to the Australian left. For the distrust, see Letter from Ian Morgan and Dave Nadel, *Lot’s Wife*, October 18, 1966; Doug White and Geoff Sharp, Views on Theoretical Propositions, *Discussion Journal* (CPA) No. 1, March 1967.

²¹³ Conference attendance figures – 515 males, 425 from Sydney, 187 from Victoria, 51 from Queensland, 159 industrial workers, 188 tertiary students. See Report by Mavis Robertson to the CPA National Committee (and discussion), Discussion (CPA), July 1969, pp.34–39. See also Kelvin Rowley, Left Action Conference, *Farrago*, March 21, 1969, p. 10; L. Aarons, Wide Angle – “The Ball is Right at the Left’s Feet”, *Tribune*, April 2, 1969; L. Aarons, Wide Angle – “Charting a Way to Sink the Old Order”, *Tribune*, March 26, 1969; Cahill, *Notes on the New Left in Australia*, *op. cit.*, p. 19. Two of the major conference aims were “to advance methods of action against the present controllers of Australian society” and “to discuss strategies of action for a radical change in Australian society.” Historically, the Conference was important for revealing the extent to which the Australian socialist (non-ALP) left had gone onto the offensive, believing itself now capable of building a movement that could challenge for power. Calling for the movement to “cease to conceive of itself as oppositional....” and develop a “more sophisticated concept of ‘power’”, Dan O’Neill presented a key-note paper arguing against both parliamentary and Bolshevik strategies. See Dan O’Neill, Strategy for Action. See also *Tribune*, April 16, 1969, pp. 6–7; Laurie Aarons, Report, *Lot’s Wife*, April 24, 1969, p. 6; *Tribune*, April 23, 1969, pp. 6–7; Rowan Cahill, *Notes on the New Left in Australia*, p. 19; Geoff Sorrell, Audrey Blake, Len Fox and Helen Palmer, Left Action Conference, *Outlook*, Vol. 13, No. 3, June 1969; *Tribune*, April 16, 1969, p. 5 – main Conference Resolution on Action; Alec Robertson, The Best Conference I’ve Been To, *Tribune* April 16, 1969, p. 5; *Tribune*, April 30, 1969, pp. 2–3; *Tribune*, April 9, 1969, p. 1; Freney, *A Map of Days*, *op. cit.*, pp. 238–239; *Australian Left Review*, No. 3, June–July, 1969; *Ergo*, May 8, 1969, p. 5.

²¹⁴ Bob Gould, *The Honeymoon Over...*, *op. cit.*, p. 8. See photograph of Dave Nadel, *Tribune* April 9, 1969 (showing Nadel, with Zapata moustache, at the Conference microphone). For the original invitation excluding the Monash Labor Club, see Letter, Laurie Aarons to International (Denis Freney), September 1968; Denis Freney letter to Laurie Aarons, October 27, 1968 (both letters reprinted in *International* 4, 1968).

'manipulated', replied that "the struggle for socialism is not a dinner party".²¹⁵ The Conference allowed the CPA to link up with an 'entire cohort of new left activists.' But it was also the catalyst for a process of fragmentation of the new left. The split in SSA left Brisbane Revolutionary Socialist Students Alliance (ex-SDA) as the main ally of the Monash Labor Club, but the Left Action Conference exposed their differences over 'self-management' (as against 'dictatorship of the proletariat') and the Brisbane students were temporarily won to a position in sympathy with the Communist Party. Monash Labor had been stranded without an ally in the new left and this further encouraged the drift towards the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist). The beneficiaries of 1969 were therefore the organisations of the 'Old Left'. The two parties had together pulled off a 'generational coup'.²¹⁶

Diary

1969 April 2 Car broke down Holbrook. Adrian Desailly and Geoff Hogg on board. Lost five hours.

April 3 Slept at 67 Glebe Point Road. Jolliffe here too.

April 4 Every one caucusing frantically.

April 5 Monash speakers up and down like yo-yos. Cassidy shocks everyone with his speech against 'Christian-Marxist Dialogue'. Bill Dowling says Stalin was right to kill the Kulaks. Howls of indignation.

April 7 In Sussex Street pub Geoff Hogg and Mavis Robertson (Conference organiser) discuss what Djilas said in *Conversations with Stalin*. Geoff says 'You don't believe that rubbish, do you?' He quotes Enver Hoxha. Shocks Mavis.

April 8 Car ran off road on the Hume, nearly killed Hogg, Jolliffe, Kerry Langer.

²¹⁵ See Diane Wieneke, Monash Labor Club at Sydney Conference, *Lot's Wife*, April 24, 1969, p. 6; Reply to Diane Wieneke by Langer, It Seems that Last Issue, Several Socialist Toes Were Severely Trodden, *Lot's Wife*, May 8, 1969, p. 8; Jill Jolliffe/Keith Jepson, Here are Two Sore Replies, *Lot's Wife*, May 8, 1969, p. 8; *Monash Labor Club Newsletter* No. 3, April 14, 1969; *Vanguard*, April 10, 1969, p.4; Doug Kirsner, Report on Left Action Conference, *Lot's Wife*, April 24, 1969, p. 6; Warren Osmond, Left Action Conference: A Personal Explanation, *Analysis* Vol. 2. No. 1, April 1969; *Print* 9, March 18, 1969; *Print* 15, March 28, 1969; *Print* 18, April 2, 1969; *Print* 55, July 8, 1969; Report on Left Action Conference, *Lot's Wife*, April 3, 1969, p. 9; Peter D'Abbs, The Totalitarian Left, *Farrago*, April 18, 1969, p. 10; Ockenden, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-77.

²¹⁶ See Gould, *op. cit.*, p. 8. FOCO resumed November 28, 1969 (on Friday nights) at 291 St Paul's Terrace in Brisbane. For the looming question of 'self-management', see Letter from Convening Committee (representing Monash, Latrobe and Melbourne (University) Labour Clubs) on Revolutionary Socialist Students Alliance (name since May) Conference, Monash, May, 1969....note debate proposed on "Self-management or the Dictatorship of the Proletariat", "student-worker unity"; Letter from Mitch Thompson to Albert Langer, October 10, 1969. See A. Langer, *Criticism and Self-Criticism*, December 1, 1969 for reference to the "Trotskyite/SDS mess" in Sydney. For the attraction of a cohort of new leftists to the CPA, see Milner, The Road to St Kilda Pier, *op. cit.*, p. 35; Winton Higgins, Reconstructing Australian Communism, *Socialist Register* 1974, pp. 164-5; Mendes, *op. cit.*, p. 34 (and Footnote 151); Douglas Kirsner, The Communist Party and Revolution, *Australian Left Review*, No. 23, February-March, 1970; Eric Aarons, The Congress and After, *Australian Left Review*, 25, 1970; Dan O'Neill, The Congress and After, *Australian Left Review*, 25, 1970. For fragmentation of the new left, see Report on Left Action Conference, *Ergo*, April 14, 1969, p. 5; Editorial... on fragmentation on the Left, *Analysis*, Vol. 2, No. 1, April 1969; Bob Gould, Honeymoon Over - the Decline and Fall of the Left Coalition, *Old Mole* 3, June 29, 1970. Compare Freney, A Map of Days, *op. cit.*, p. 238....Left Action Conference..."marked a new degree of unity".

Student Power

Diary

1969 April 25 Moved to The Bakery from Palmerston Street today.

May 25 Everyone is poring over the new Penguin Special about 'Student Power'. It is seen here as a weapon for the 'New Left'. Des Fitzgerald and Jill Jolliffe have set themselves up in the kitchen writing a review of the book for *Lot's Wife*. Every time I bump into Des in the bathroom he asks me whether I agree with the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'.²¹⁷

The humanistic invigoration of Marxist thought - the strongest legacy of the post-1956 reaction against Stalinism - challenged the notion of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' (and the corollary of 'ownership of the means of production') as the self-sufficient goal of socialist revolution. Exploration of the thought of the young Marx, and of the 'heretical' Frankfurt and Lukacs schools, highlighted 'alienation' and 'powerlessness' as key problems for socialists and brought to the forefront demands - 'participatory democracy'/self-management' - challenging the manipulators and controllers of society. As new left activists, rejecting mechanical ('stages') strategies, sought to link the 'personal' and the 'political' in the here and now, the artificial separation of Marxism and utopian anarchism began to erode. In 1968, radicals on Australian campuses embraced the concept of 'student power' (defined as 'student control or influence over decision-making affecting them') and the goal of a 'self-managed' university became the leitmotif of the 'New Left'.²¹⁸

²¹⁷ Alexander Cockburn and Robin Blackburn (eds.), *Student Power – Problems / Diagnosis / Action*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1969.

²¹⁸ See Warren Osmond, Monash: Battling the Machine, *Tribune*, July 10, 1968, pp. 6–7; *Tribune*, July 10, 1968; *Australian Left Review*, 4/1968, July – 'Student Activism': interviews with D.Kirsner, G.Hannan, R.Cahill, B.Aarons, M. Thompson, P. Duncan, P. O'Brien. See also SDA (QLD) leaflet, "West German Youth Rebel", early 1968; *Tribune*, March 12, 1969 – 'Protest and Student Power' – B. Laver, R.Cahill, D.Kirsner, E.Bacon, M. Hamel-Green. See also *Tribune*, March 5, 1969, p. 3 – 'The Student Challenge'. See also Student Power Conference, December 28–29, 1968 at 'Resistance' – in *Resistance Newsletter*, December 1968. See also Warren Osmond, Student Revolutionary Left, *Arena* 19, 1969; Peter O'Brien, From the New Left, *Ergo*, Vol. 1, No. 4, June 20, 1969. Campaigns for "staff-student control" (of ruling university councils and of courses, and of 'discipline') were mounted at universities in Sydney, Brisbane (led by the RSSA) and Adelaide (led by SDA), particularly in 1969–70 when activism re-focused on the university – seen by some as the most important, and most vulnerable, institution: a potential 'red base'. Forms of direct action were undertaken, as pressure mounted on the university administrations. On March 24, 1970, Sydney University exploded. Demanding an end to secret university government, one hundred militants occupied the administration building for twenty-four hours over the refusal to admit female student Victoria Lee. For explanation of Victoria Lee affair, see *Liberator* – broadsheet distributed by the occupiers, Sydney University, March 1970. See graphic report in *Melbourne Herald*, March 25, 1970 – "Students Fight Uni Guards"; *Newsday*, March 25, 1970 – "Battle for University"; *Tribune*, April 1, 1970 – "Why They Moved in at Sydney University". The occupiers published 6000 copies of *Liberator*, a four-page broadsheet which included "11-points for a self-managed university" by Alan Roberts et al, January 1970. See *Tribune*, April 15, 1970 – "Honi Soit" condemns the radicals,

In 1968 and 1969 Monash students became world famous for audacious militancy. Though the campus had become a battlefield, with the Labor Club leading its serried ranks in siege upon siege, the nature of the struggle became increasingly defensive, because the militants rather than pressing forward proactively to encroach upon power, allowed their struggle (increasingly ritualistic confrontations) to be defined by successive acts of repression. Through intransigence, backed up by press hysteria, the administration finally managed to isolate the Labor Club and decapitate its leadership.²¹⁹ On May 8, 1969, a four-page dissection of the Labor Club - written by the eloquent Warren Osmond - appeared in *Lot's Wife*. Osmond criticised the club's theory of revolution, its emphasis on coercion rather than (cultural) consent as the basis for capitalist hegemony, and its contempt for 'intermediary objectives' challenging 'powerlessness' in everyday life.²²⁰ The 'New Left' explained that attempts at 'direct involvement in decision-making processes' need not wait upon a revolutionary situation: as a short-term goal the power structure of the university could be altered. Over the following twelve months 'New Left' members continued to refine the concept of a 'self-managed university'. The chance had been lost at Monash; at Sydney and Brisbane the struggle was conducted under that libertarian banner.²²¹

Albert Langer suggested that 'their own experience', not 'abstract preaching about self-management' would win students to socialism. From a position in 1968 that supported 'staff-student control' (the demand even being inscribed in its constitution), the Labor Club moved to total hostility. The demand was a 'small '1' liberal' one:

sixteen students to face charges, radicals launch fighting fund. See also D. Freney, Occupation and the Challenge to the Elite University, *Tribune*, April 15, 1970.

²¹⁹ On May 6, 1969, 5000 students voted to take action to force the Administration to drop the "double jeopardy" clause (Clause 17.3: the 'right' to exclude "criminal elements") of its proposed "Discipline Statute", believed to be aimed at political dissenters. The Administration building was stormed on a number of occasions; the charges against eight students for their actions on July 14 ("Bastille Day") were the first of many and laid the ground for the most inflammatory act of all - the university's exclusion of its bete noire: Albert Langer.

²²⁰ Warren Osmond, An Anatomy of the Monash Labor Club, *Lot's Wife*, Volume 10, No. 5, May 8, 1969, p. 13. See also Dave Nadel, Reply to Osmond (letter), *Lot's Wife*, Vol. 10, No. 6, 1969, p. 3; Michael Hyde, The Dissection of the Anatomy of the Labor Club, *Lot's Wife*, Vol. 10, No. 6, 1969, p. 11.

²²¹ Alan Roberts et al, "11 Points for a Self-Managed University", 1970 in *Up The Right Channels*, Queensland University, 1970, pp. 115-116; Alan Roberts et al, Statement for the Seventies (on self-management for the universities), *Australian Left Review*, No. 25, 1970; Dan O'Neill, Abstract and Real Worlds: Intellectuals and Radical Social Change, *Lot's Wife*, 10/2, March 23, 1970. For the New Left view, see Andra Jackson and Diane Wieneke, Student Power - An Alternative View, *Arena* 19, 1969; Diane Wieneke, Alan Roberts, Jim Falk, John Playford - Manifesto, in *Lot's Wife*, Vol. 9, No. 9, July 24, 1969, p. 9; Ockenden, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-70; Alan Roberts, Student Revolt and Democracy, *Australian Rationalist*, Vol 1, No. 3, 1969 (based on talk given to Rationalist Society Conference, Warburton, October 1968). For a differing perspective, see Humphrey McQueen, Three Tactics for Student Power, *Arena* 18, 1969; Humphrey McQueen, Student Power Yet Again, *Arena* 20, 1969.

...the fundamental question ... is not who runs the university but who it is run for...only under socialism can the university serve all of society because it will be under the control of the workers.²²²

Mike Hyde pointed out: "... it is perfectly conceivable that Capitalism could continue to run quite efficiently with students running their own university". Most students were not from the industrial proletariat and could not be expected to serve the working class.²²³

In their harangue against the Penguin Special on 'Student Power' that fortuitously appeared in Australian bookshops at the very moment that Monash leftists were grinding one another to dust on this very question, Des Fitzgerald - a Bakery resident and co-ordinator of the Student Worker Co-ordinating Committee - and Jill Jolliffe summed up the basic position of the Labor Club:

As socialists, we believe that all revolutionary activity must be directed towards the seizure of State power from the capitalist class by the working class.²²⁴

The Worker-Student Alliance - Hard-Baked

At Prahran about 1000 people marched to the Prahran Market and occupied it for twenty minutes chanting: 'the fruit belongs to the people'.²²⁵

Some saw the RSA as the Melbourne Branch of the national RSA, others saw it as the beginning of a disciplined Marxist party and others as the post-graduate adjunct to the Monash Labor Club.²²⁶

²²² *Print* 64, July 24, 1969. For Langer's view, see Albert Langer, Criticism and Self-criticism, December 1, 1969 (roneod); 'Peter Collins', Work at Monash, *The Red Line* 2, February 7, 1969.

²²³ Michael Hyde, The Dissection of the Anatomy of the Labor Club, *Lot's Wife*, June 10, 1969, p. 11. It is clear that the issue turned on the definition of "working class". For Osmond's view of students as "new working class", see his *An Anatomy of the Monash Labor Club* (op cit) and also Osmond, Towards Self-Awareness, in Richard Gordon (ed.), *The Australian New Left*, op. cit, pp. 166-216.

²²⁴ Des Fitzgerald and Jill Jolliffe, Review of 'Student Power' by Cockburn and Blackburn, *Lot's Wife*, Vol. 10, No. 6, June 10, 1969, p. 25.

²²⁵ Willie, The Pack Rape, *Lot's Wife*, 10/7, May 13, 1970 - Report on Moratorium march to Prahran market.

²²⁶ Statement, January 6, 1970 by representatives of Camp Eureka Conference....proposal that "Rev Socs' disbands itself etc. One contribution suggested that there had been a "failure of its (RSA) membership to make a total identification with an identifiable organisation and the ends for which it stands." See 'Some Proposals' by Ken Gooding, *Worker-Student Alliance Discussion Bulletin* 2, January 10, 1970.

With the sharp rise in working class militancy in Australia following the May 1969 victory over the penal powers, sections of the ‘new left’ turned from simply pursuing a ‘worker-student alliance’ towards the attempt to establish proletarian parties. Self-proclaimed ‘vanguards’ flourishing ‘finished’ programs (usually imported from overseas) sprouted like mushrooms in the capital cities, or wherever the mass student and anti-war movements subsided.²²⁷ The project of party-building was vitiated by a deepening of the most fundamental rupture within the ‘new left’ - between ‘theorists’ developing (Marxist) theory and ‘activists’ seeking practical involvement in the class war. The trend towards ‘rigorous theory’ (Althusser) was matched by the strong tendency to idealise, romanticise and emulate ‘the industrial worker’.²²⁸

On January 11, 1970, a meeting of activists at The Bakery, responding to the recommendations of a four-day Summer Conference held at Camp Eureka (Yarra Junction) from January 1-4, disbanded RSA (Rev Socs) and established a new organization - ‘The Worker-Student Alliance (WSA)’. A frenzied exorcism was carried out to rid The Bakery of the ‘...ingroup mentality which has allowed groups like the revolutionary socialists to resemble a group therapy organisation for sexual neurotics...’ and the “past practice of inviting Marxist ‘intellectuals’” to lecture.²²⁹

²²⁷ See David Horowitz article “Hand-Me-Down Marxism and the New Left” on the demise of SDS (USA), *Lot's Wife*, October 9, 1969, p. 9 – reprint from *Ramparts*; Melbourne Revolutionary Marxists, *A Call for the Revolutionary Regroupment of the Australian Left*, Melbourne, September 1975; Ken Mansell, *The Fragmentation of the Australian New Left*, unpublished private dissertation, May 1975; Andrew Milner, *The Road to St. Kilda Pier*, *op. cit.*, pp. 32, 40–45, 80, 85–86. See also Rob Durbridge, No University is an Island entire of Itself, *Tribune*, March 4, 1970, p. 7; Ian Turner, Way Out on the Left – Who’s There, *Labor ‘71*, November 27, 1971; Denis Freney, Trotskyist Trends, *Australian Left Review* 35, May 1972. Total working days ‘lost’ due to industrial action increased from 705,300 (1967); 1,079,500 (1968); 1,958,000 (1969); 2,393,700 (1970); 3,068,600 (1971) (Source – Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia, 1972, p. 274, cited Milner, *The Road to St Kilda Pier*, p.85, Footnote 4).

²²⁸ For the theorists/ activists divide, see K. Mansell, *The Fragmentation of the Australian New Left*, *op.cit.* 1975; Milner, *op. cit.*, p. 72 – the rift between ‘theorists’ and ‘activists’ in Melbourne...due to new left’s failure to establish encounter between critical theory (Frankfurt school) and orthodox Marxism"intellectual nullity of Maoism""class politics" versus “sterile theoreticisms”. See also Milner, *ibid*, pp.49–51 (“Intervention” magazine and Althusserianism....new petty-bourgeois intelligentsia...scholasticism is attractive to the New Left intelligentsia); Eric Aarons, What’s Left?, *op. cit.*, p. 191 – student movements decline at beginning of seventies – gravitate from humanism to rigorous theory (Althusser).

²²⁹ See *Four pages of material on Camp Eureka Conference January 1–4, 1970* – “The atmosphere of drunkenness, sexual gossip, and neurosis which has pervaded the organisation, and which should in fact be irrelevant to any POLITICAL organisation has repelled potential cadres and sapped the organisation of any political strength it ever had...the past practice of inviting Marxist “intellectuals” to “lecture” to the group without playing any other political role to speak of. Theory can only emerge from struggle and collective experience, and for this reason it is preferable to have mutual study groups based on a lower level of understanding than to be “lectured” by gurus.” Other contributions also felt that Rev Socs had served to reinforce “student cultural mores” and to encourage “theoretical study with no particular problems in mind”. See also *WSA Bulletin* No. 13 – including article “The Formation of WSA and the Reasons Why” (including RSA); *Worker-Student Alliance Bulletin* 14, 1973 – see paper from Prahran Branch Conference, March 18, 1973 – “Ever since WSA was formed ... Bakery ... two lines – working class and petty-bourgeois.”

At Camp Eureka, it had been resolved to “participate in working class struggles and organise revolutionary workers in their factories and on their job sites”. WSA cadres that were not already working in industry were encouraged to do so, preferably in Prahran.²³⁰ Initially, the ‘Workers Group’ and the ‘Socialist Teachers’ were the most prominent of WSA’s sub-groups. The other basis of organisation was regional – by the end of 1970 WSA had decentralised beyond Prahran and established suburban branches (which were to expand to number eleven by November 1971).²³¹

The most visible and controversial activity organised from The Bakery in 1970 was anti-war work. It was WSA which first proposed the now famous occupation of city streets on Moratorium Day (May 1970), but for the most part ‘the Maoists’, stressing a militant ‘anti-imperialist’ position of support for the National Liberation Front and often resorting to violent attacks against the property of American companies in Melbourne, were at loggerheads with the established peace movement. Two rival ‘July 4’ demonstrations were held in 1970 and clashes over Moratorium tactics became increasingly vitriolic.²³² So pronounced and violent was the rhetoric of *Vanguard* (newspaper of the Communist Party of Australia [Marxist-Leninist])

²³⁰ See *Half-Baked*, October 3, 1969; *WSA Must Take the Path of Integration with the Masses of Working People* (n.d Prahran WSA); *Lot’s Wife*, October 9, 1969, p. 7; Jolliffe, *Student/Worker Attitudes*, *op. cit*; Anon (early WSA?) – *Students and the Working Class*; *Print* 4/9, March 18, 1970; *Print*, April 24, 1970; SID Guerilla Map to meeting at Shirley Grove, October 18, 1968; U.U (*Uni High Underground*), n.d, circa November 1970. For “workerism” in general, see Peter Cochrane and Barry Plews, *Popular Culture: a Workerist Approach*, *Arena* 66, 1984; Denis Skiotis, *The Working Class Today*, *Australian Left Review*, 24, p. 71. See also *Farrago*, July 4, 1969, p. 9 – “A Personal Account” – interview with Phil Sandford. See also Leaflet “vacation activities” sent out from Bakery late November 1969 (not Rev Socs) – notice about January 1–4 Camp Eureka Conference – “worker –student group” – a number of workers associated with the Bakery are forming group to discuss and practice socialist agitation in factories, including students with vacation jobs (Les Barnes).

²³¹ Other sub-groups early in 1970 were in Womens Liberation and Anti-War. See also *Socialist Teachers Manifesto* (WSA); *Organise* Vol. 1. No. 3, December 10, 1969...organ of Socialist Teachers Association...report from A. Dowsley, Traralgon. For regional organisation, see Prahran–St.Kilda WSA *Branch Newsletter* 1, December 30, 1970....WSA organised on a regional basis/see list of branches; *Struggle*, Vol. 2, No. 1, February 2, 1971 – back page list of WSA Branches; *Struggle*, new series, No. 1, November 1, 1971, p.3: list of WSA Branches (11); *The Rise and Fall of Prahran WSA*, n.d, probably 1971....has history of WSA in Prahran, including Rev Socs.

²³² For the original Labor Club/WSA proposal about occupation, see Val Noone in Langley, *op. cit*, p. 134 – “the idea of sitting down and occupying the streets was first mooted by the Monash Labor Club and it took three months before it was generally accepted. Seemed like a way-out idea typical of the students.” On the anti-war disputes, see Letter from Jill Jolliffe on July 4 split, *Revolution*, August 1–September 1, 1970, p. 2; Two views on the July 3–July 4 split demonstrations – York versus Jolliffe, *Rabelais*, July 15, 1970, p. 4; Bernie Taft, July 3–4 Melbourne, *Tribune*, July 8, 1970, p. 8...on confrontationism and provoking police.... talks about the “Bakery group” in Prahran; *Struggle* 2, August 26, 1970, pp. 4, 6 – WSA line on Cairns and Moratorium; Two leaflets of “Committee to form an Alliance Against Imperialism”, May 1970; Letter/notice from Alliance Against Imperialism (Cassidy), May 28, 1970; Darce Cassidy (on behalf of WSA, The Bakery, Greville St), The Worker Student Alliance and the anti-war movement, in *The Communist Party is Behind this Moratorium – Way Behind*, Brisbane, May 1970; *Print*, May 11, 1970 – report on Moratorium; *The Worker-Student Alliance and the Anti-War Movement* (four pages) – Cassidy/ WSA statement on Moratorium...note details on exclusion from early meetings.

that opponents of The Bakery began to speculate about a ‘Weatherman’ (terrorist) tendency being spawned there.²³³ By mid-1970, The Bakery was being lampooned as ‘Bakery House’ and its occupants as bronzed Greek warriors following King Langerides and Nadelopolous into battle.²³⁴

... wots this yr daughter singing mao-tse-tung to the tune of walt disneys mickey mouse even if its only in the bathtub she is no longer a baby and will not go with the bathwater.²³⁵

March 1969: Wearing nothing more than a gorilla mask and a coating of coconut oil one male student arose in front of 2000 freshers in Sydney University’s Great Hall - “I would suggest that all revolutionaries discard their guns, along with their clothes, and march naked up and down the aisles and out into the streets, to mystify and amaze policemen, and by their wonderful, outrageous, wordless eloquence, serve notice that the cultural revolution has commenced”.²³⁶

The growth since 1967 of ‘hard-line’ new left politics occurred at the same time as the emergence of a youth-based ‘counter-culture’ addressing many of the issues of ‘personal life’. At Monash, the ‘revolutionary socialist perspective’ and ‘the oppositional sub-culture’ were separate from the outset - an institutionalised split that even carried over into Greville Street and the peculiar dichotomy of The Bakery, with its beer-stained posters (but never a film) of grenade-throwing Vietnamese, and Alice’s Bookshop with its array of every conceivable ‘underground’ item in Australia.²³⁷ Each pole - the ‘hard-left’ and the ‘counter-culture’ - dialectically rejected but retained something of the other. Just as the ‘counter culture’ remained ‘anti-bourgeois’, the ‘hard-left’ invented its own self-made ‘underground’ institutions: irreverent journals such as *Ergo*, *Brisbane Line*,

²³³ See D.L.Bronstein, Don’t Need a Weatherman to Tell Which Way the Wind Blows, *Rabelais*, July 15, 1970; *Struggle* 1, August 5, 1970 – drawing of a gun...“a magazine is where you keep the bullets”; Jill Jolliffe, The Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist?) Part 1 – the Youth Movement, *Socialist Review*, Vol. 2 No. 1, February 1972; Murphy, *op. cit.*, p. 266 – “an ‘ultra-left’ minority which espoused cathartic confrontations with the state.” See also *Vanguard*, March 26, 1970 – “several groups of people have warned the police that they will meet their violence with violence”; *Vanguard* March 4, 1970 – “Without a Peoples’ Army, the People have Nothing” (heading)...“more people than ever before now have guns in their hands and they are fighting the gun with the gun”; *Vanguard*, October 3, 1968, Editorial: “the people must have their own guns”.

²³⁴ Henrie Ellis, ‘Monash Tragedy Play’, *Lot’s Wife*, June 22, 1970, p. 16.

²³⁵ ‘July 5th’ (excerpt), poem by Bill Beard, published in *Aquarius* (War Resisters International), circa March 1970.

²³⁶ “Gorilla” calls for ‘cultural revolution’ at Sydney University, see statement, *Ergo*, March 24, 1969, p. 2.

²³⁷ Ockenden, *op. cit.*, p. 7: by beginning of first term 1967, the nucleus of the Labor Club had emerged with a “revolutionary socialist perspective” (but no cultural critique or ‘oppositional sub-culture’).

The Old Mole, Struggle; the ‘guerilla’ journalism of *Print* and *Wednesday Commentary*; radical films; bookshops like Alice’s Restaurant; Saturday luncheons and folk coffee shops. But they were ‘guerilla’, rather than sustained, cultural interventions. No revolutionary culture (combining politics and culture) emerged.²³⁸ The ‘personal’ and the ‘political’ did not come together. In 1970 the youth ‘counter-culture’ grew steadily more influential WITHIN the new left, with some of its members seeing the ‘alternative culture’ as offering the way forward. To many on the ‘hard-line’ left, the ‘counter culture’ was co-opted, increasingly harmless. This rift grew and eventually cracked the ‘new left’ asunder.²³⁹

The Bakery became increasingly inhospitable to ‘counter-cultural’ trends. The organiser of the Friday night folk coffee lounge remembers:

Peter Bland ‘got religion’ as a Maoist and I can remember him and Albert Langer both coming through and expressing some contempt for the decadent music that was being performed at the coffee lounge. Somebody was singing a Leadbelly song. Leadbelly was one of the greatest folk singers of all time, close to being the greatest black American folk singer ever, able to articulate the feelings of Negro black chain-gang workers, an incomparable influence on protest singing. Albert probably did not even know what it was. He just got this impression of a bluesy sad number and what Peter Bland said to me was “What has this got to do with revolutionary politics? All this stuff is expressing acceptance of one’s lot”.²⁴⁰

The denizens of The Bakery established a Music Group to sing and write songs of ‘class war’:

Oh, time is a power that is precious and golden
That is needed so much by a working-class bloke
It’s ours in the cradle then sold, seized and stolen
If you’re caught off your guard it is snuffed at a stroke²⁴¹

238 See Peter O’Brien, *Culture and Revolution*, *Arena* 23, 1970. See also D. Freney, *op. cit* (*A Map of Days*), p. 259 – early 1970...the slogan ‘the personal is political’ still not heard, even in womens’ movement. See Dan O’Neill, *Time for a New Festival of Folk* (critique of *May Day*), *Tribune*, April 30, 1969. See also Milner, *The Road to St Kilda Pier*, pp. 67–68. See also Dennis Altman, *The Politics of Cultural Change*, paper at Socialist Scholars Conference, May 1970.

239 Freney, *op. cit* (*A Map of Days*), p. 233 – something missing...the personal/sexual and the political ‘far from harmonised’. See Jill Jolliffe comments on ‘Revolution’, *Rabelais*, July 15, 1970, p. 4; Jill Jolliffe, *Revolution?*, *Direct Action*, December 1970; Keith Windschuttle, review of ‘Playpower’, *The Old Mole* 5, August 31, 1970, pp. 12–13; J.C., *The Head Scene*, *The Old Mole* 7, October 26, 1970, p. 9; Chris Arup, *Hip Capitalism*, *Farrago*, February 28, 1972, pp. 20–21.

240 Ken Mansell interviewed by David McKenzie, Coburg, August, 1992.

241 Opening stanza of ‘The Westgate Bridge Disaster’ by Ken Mansell, composed October 1970 following the death of thirty-five workers when the Westgate Bridge collapsed. For WSA and the counter-culture, see Hyde’s comments in Hanford, Alice’s Restaurant of Prahran, *Broadside*,

The issue of ‘women’s liberation’ was incipient at The Bakery in 1969. Informal discussions among female comrades associated with The Bakery were held on this topic towards the end of 1969. They reflected a societal groundswell. Even before the year was over, a group called ‘Women for Socialism’ had been formed at The Bakery: the group was pro-women’s liberation but concerned to smother the possibility of an autonomous women’s tendency.²⁴²

Finale

Towards the end of 1969, Jill Jolliffe began a relationship with Rod Quinn, Trotskyist carpenter-cum-proof-reader, which marked her growing disillusionment with both the Bookshop and ‘Bakery’ politics. Jolliffe organised a private political discussion for close friends which had the opposite effect to that intended: word leaked out, and a room full of suspicious Bakery Maoists went full bore to produce the Young Communist League (YCL) Phase Two.²⁴³

The thirty, hard-baked cadres of this tight organisation were eventually split however by the introduction of works by Stalin to the reading program.²⁴⁴ Jolliffe and Quinn ‘defected’ and eventually helped establish a branch of the Socialist Youth Alliance in Melbourne.²⁴⁵ At Monash, the Labor Club itself split in 1970, between the YCL and Dave Nadel’s Independent Communist Caucus (ICC).²⁴⁶ In fact, 1970

September 4, 1969, p. 8 – “they’ll just absorb it”. For WSA attitude to marijuana, see *Print*, July 9, 1970. See also Paul Francis Perry, *op. cit.*, p. 5 – “No matter that the Monash Labor Club is known far and wide for its almost monastic asceticism. No drugs, deviants, or drunks for the Bakery! Beside the Labor club cadres, Malcolm Muggerridge looks like Hugh Heffner.” See also Gerry Vignola letter on New Left and Rolling Stones, *Lot’s Wife*, 10/11, July 9, 1970; Rolling Stones Play Ruling Class Tune, *Struggle* (WSA), No. 1, August 5, 1970, pp. 12–13 – attack on New Left, Mick Jagger.

²⁴² See four-page document *An Introduction to ‘Women for Socialism’*. See also *Print* 4/4, March 9, 1970.

²⁴³ Author’s personal recollection.

²⁴⁴ See *Internal Bulletin*, Young Communist League, No. 1, January 9, 1970; Draft Constitution of the Young Communist League, December 31, 1969; Draft Constitution of the YCL, February 1970; *Internal Bulletin*, Young Communist League, No. 6, April 17, 1970; *Internal Bulletin*, Young Communist League, No. 7; *Internal Bulletin*, Young Communist League, May 1970; *Internal Bulletin*, Young Communist League, No. 9.

²⁴⁵ See *Internal Bulletin*, Young Communist League, n.d, circa May 1970; Jill Jolliffe, The Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist?), Part One – The Youth Movement, *Socialist Review*, Vol. 2, No. 1, February 1972, pp. 19–25; Jill Jolliffe, review of CPA (M-L) pamphlet ‘Fight Fascism in Australia now’ (August 1970), *Direct Action* 2, October 1970, p. 11; Jill Jolliffe article on CPA (ML)’s “national chauvinism”, *Direct Action* 14, February 7, 1972, p. 13.

²⁴⁶ ‘The General Line of the ICC’ – on self management: “the line of demarcation in the student left”; *Spectre* (ICC), Vol. 1, Nos 1–4, September 1970; *Independent Communist* (Monash ICC), Nos 1 and 2; ICC Document Monash – “Tactical Perspectives”; Leaflet on ICC Conference, November 27–29, 1970. See also *Serve the People*, Monash Young Communist League, No. 1, April 29, 1970; “Communism and Centrism”, Monash YCL reply to ICC, November 17, 1970. Nadel has pointed out to the author that the third “c” in ICC had an ambiguous meaning and was not defined as standing for ‘club’ or ‘caucus’.

was a year of splits and decline within the whole Australian ‘new left’, already reeling from savage suspensions and expulsions.²⁴⁷

By 1971, Latrobe University, not Monash, was the storm centre of student revolt in Melbourne. Latrobe University became the vibrant focus for WSA. The July raid on The Bakery, and the decentralised structure of WSA, made The Bakery less attractive and necessary. The purchase of an off-set press to print the new WSA newspaper *Struggle* after August 1970 prolonged the organisation’s presence in the building, but the lease was not renewed at the end of the year. In 1971, The Bakery reverted to being an actual producer of bread (‘The Feedwell Foundry’) and the tradition of activism in Prahran was maintained, in a slightly more mellow form, at a Peace Shop in Chapel Street.²⁴⁸ The printing moved back to a shed in Cassidy’s Shirley Grove residence, as did the gaze of ‘Newsweekly’.²⁴⁹

Some people just went on doing what they were disposed to do. Before the next year was out, Albert Langer, who was nabbed for ‘riot’ on May Day, had appeared again in the dock. Ron Lawson, left holding onto a completely bankrupt shop, was still urging caution:

I was there to try to tone things down on many occasions. I remember they were having a demonstration and they were going to carry Stalin

²⁴⁷ In Brisbane, RSSA split. See Tom Cochrane, Brisbane Re-thinks, *The Old Mole*, No. 7, October 26, 1970; *The Old Mole* 2, June 15, 1970, p. 12; The Brian Laver Incident, *The Old Mole*, 3, June 29, 1970; *Newsweekly*, August 11, 1971, p. 4. A schism, similar to that between the two left clubs at Monash, developed in the Adelaide ‘new left’, in this case WITHIN the one organisation (SDA). New ‘Marxist-Leninist’ student organisations were formed. See *Grassroots*, n.d, late August 1968; *Grassroots*, October 9, 1968; *Grassroots*, Vol 2. No.7, April 9, 1969; *Grassroots*, n.d, circa mid – October, 1970. Sydney ‘Resistance’, the YSL, the CPA, the RSA, and SDS also split in this period. Sydney suffered a sense of malaise and demoralisation – which set in when students failed to answer the call for a boycott following the expulsions of Hall Greenland and Haydn Thompson. See ‘Don’t Let the Bastards Grind You Down’, *The Old Mole* No. 1, June 1, 1970; Peter O’Brien, The Occupation, *Outlook*, June 1970; *The Old Mole*, No. 3, June 29, 1970, p. 3; Hall Greenland, Boycott Flops, *The Old Mole* No. 4, July 20, 1970, p. 2; *Tribune*, July 15, 1970, p. 12; Denis Freney, Malaise in Student Left on Sydney University campus, *Tribune*, August 5, 1970, p. 8; Hall Greenland, ‘The University of Sydney – 1970: Year of Struggle’, *The Old Mole* No. 8, March 8, 1971, pp. 8, 9, 16. The Sydney situation paralleled the situation at Monash where the student body failed to condemn the administration for excluding Langer and the Labor Club went into sad decline. See Ockenden, *op. cit.*, pp. 94–97 – Langer’s exclusion from Monash; *Lot’s Wife*, March 5, 1970, p.1; Warren Osmond, Face to Face Again at Monash, *Tribune*, March 25, 1970, p. 3.

²⁴⁸ *YCL Bulletin* No. 8, July 26, 1970 – WSA decision to not renew Bakery lease at end of year; also report about police raid on Bakery. The ‘Demilitarised Zone’ (DMZ) Peace Shop, 574a Chapel Street Prahran near Toorak Road – posters, badges, peace pendants, draft counselling. See also *Earth Garden*, 9, June 1974, p. 14 – “In 1971 Brian Peacock and Dave Edwards moved into an old disused bakery in Greville St, Prahran and opened the Feedwell Foundry to bake wholemeal breads and cake using organic stoneground flours and an old-style wood-fired oven.”

²⁴⁹ *WSA Bulletin* 1, January 19, 1971. See *Newsweekly*, August 11, 1971, p. 3 – Cassidy/ WSA; *Newsweekly*, August 25, 1971 – article on Latrobe WSA/ article on Cassidy, with photograph of Number 1 Shirley Grove; *Newsweekly*, November 17, 1971, p. 5 – article on Latrobe Maoists, WSA, Cassidy, Langer; *Newsweekly*, January 5, 1972, p. 7 – full page ‘expose’ of Darce Cassidy and Shirley Grove.

through the streets. I said ‘Oh Jesus! Don’t carry Stalin for Christ’s sake.
Any one but Stalin’.²⁵⁰

²⁵⁰ Interview with Ron Lawson, Taradale, December 13, 1992.

CONCLUSION

Why The New Left failed

In the introduction to this thesis, I contrasted the positive view held by many participant observers of the sixties with the now fashionable intellectual sport of 'trashing' the decade. I defined the movement known as the new left and established its importance to Australian political and cultural developments in that period. The extensive empirical material in the case study of this thesis is a corrective to the tendency to underestimate the importance of the new left. However, *The Yeast is Red* has been concerned above all with an interpretation of the failure and fragmentation of the new left.

An historian who concludes a priori that a movement is intrinsically unimportant is not likely to discover concrete factors explaining its fortunes. Donald Horne in *Time of Hope* merely glanced at the new left in a book otherwise preoccupied with the effects of 'permissiveness'. Those important sections of the new left who saw 'permissiveness' as a new form of social control (Marcuse's 'repressive tolerance') and a diversion from attempting revolutionary change were dismissed by Horne as essentially 'romantic'. John Murphy has also argued that the 1968 belief in the beginning of the end of capitalism was simply millennial and likewise 'romantic'. The belief that the French experience could be mechanically transposed to Australia was certainly 'romantic', but those with the advantage of hindsight may have forgotten that the Australian events of 1968-69 (student upsurge, O'Shea strike) did bear a superficial resemblance to France. John Murphy has pointed to the morbid social symptoms evident in 1966-1969 and to the fact that this period was characterised by the death of the 'old', even if not quite the birth of the 'new'. Horne himself refers to the breakdown of 'hegemony'. But I contend that whether or not the new left was 'realist' or 'romantic' in its attitude to 'revolution' is the wrong question. Only some of the more starry-eyed radicals of the sixties expected an imminent revolutionary explosion in Australia; most prepared for the 'long march through the institutions.' The fundamental question is - why could they not endure that long march? Why did they become bogged down in trenches hurling grenades at one another?

In Horne, the breakdown of 'hegemony' is interpreted as a mere crisis of values, the arrival of 'permissiveness' and the ethic of self-indulgence. It was in fact more profoundly structural than that: a crisis of social relations and structures of domination. The Establishment often responded with violent repression. Struggles over discipline and 'riot' trials were diversions from the struggle for the control of the institutions and degenerated into fights over democratic rights. The struggle at Monash was ultimately defined by successive acts of repression and became increasingly reactive.²⁵¹ The Monash activist left, weakened physically by retreat and clandestinity, also suffered theoretically: an over-emphasis on the question of violence downplayed the crucial role of superstructural factors that the new left itself

²⁵¹ Ockenden, *op. cit.*, pp.106-110.

had discovered. These developments, generally evident throughout the new left, were writ large at The Bakery. Student Maoism, exposed as an increasingly militant rhetoric of 'class struggle' accompanying a decreasingly radical practice, became dominant at this supposedly off-campus headquarters. It managed to do so even within an originally libertarian secondary schools' movement. The fact that the fortunes of Maoism seemed to grow and prosper, the more the wider movement retreated from its original utopian goal of 'participatory democracy', suggests that student Maoism became an expression of the retreat and defeat of the new left.

Ann Curthoys has posed the question of whether the 1965-71 movement against the Vietnam War should be interpreted as the 'last sign of the old Australia' or 'the first sign of the new'.²⁵² My answer is that it, and the new left, were both. At the end of 1968, with the revitalisation of the left movement as a whole, preparations were made for the organisational unification of the new left along 'revolutionary socialist' lines. The new left was not then fragmented as Murphy suggests²⁵³, but became so, and the important task of an historian of the new left is to discover why this happened.

The possibility of an indigenous radicalism (or Marxism) would have required the unification of the new critical theories (such as those of Marcuse) with the practice of class struggle. They were not united; they went separate ways. Action moved 'forward', becoming more militant; theory, even if dressed up in stunning Althusserian costume, retreated to the refuge, certainties, and orthodoxies of the past. The new left, unable to advance under the conditions imposed by the rupture of theory and practice, forced upon its adherents the choice of either 'practice' or 'theory' and began to split along this first of a number of fissure lines. At 'The Bakery', again, this process was incipient in the division between practitioners (Cassidy) and theorists (McQueen) and resulted in the abandonment of a serious ongoing educational program for the instant political satisfactions provided by immersion in class struggle. The Bakery experience also exemplified the second fissure - the split between (counter) culture and politics as class war - which resulted in the failure of the new left to develop a truly counter-hegemonic, revolutionary alternative culture through the incorporation, in practice and theory, of issues of personal life. This split was particularly noticeable at Monash University and was symbolised by the juxtaposition in the one Prahran street of a battle headquarters and underground bookshop. The bookshop and The Bakery remained external to one another (resulting finally in the flight of Jill Jolliffe) and both became bankrupt. At 'The Bakery', the prevailing cultural forms catered for 'politics' defined in the narrow sense of class struggle pure and simple. They failed to respond to the ramifications of personal lives, troubled and confused in a time of a major crisis of role identifications. Consequently, the issues of personal life were taken up outside the new left by new autonomous social movements, such as the women's movement. The new left failed to live up to its potential as a social movement in its own right.

²⁵² Ann Curthoys, *Mobilising Dissent – The Later Stages of Protest*, in G.Pemberton (ed.), *Vietnam Remembered*, Sydney, Weldon, 1990, p. 162.

²⁵³ Murphy, *Harvest of Fear*, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

Some of the larger fragments formed single-issue movements attempting to transform personal life. The new left was a momentary flash of light at the point of rapid transition (qualitative leap?) from the 'old' Australia to the 'new'. Though giving birth to the new social movements of the seventies, it could not itself become such a movement. It withered into a caricature of the past. It was the last gasp of an older socialist tradition that began in the nineteenth century; it was the first elemental cry of the new freedoms sought in personal life.

The Bakery, already undermined as a potentially gregarious off-campus centre for ex-students by the bad blood between the left clubs at Monash, opted for the orthodox, and embraced the industrial working class when that class and its traditions were beginning to pass away. The French events had pointed to the need to reunify the long-estranged traditions of scientific (Marxist) and utopian (libertarian) socialist thought. They had demonstrated the political potential of the 'new working class'. Any chance that radical activity in Melbourne might be guided by the profound lessons of the 'French May' was lost with the demise of the 'Rev Socs'. The increasingly homogenous Monash Labor Club controlled The Bakery. The Bakery did not become a vibrant centre of competing schools of thought. That mysterious new category of ex-students, the 'new working class', was squeezed out in a fervour of 'workerism' - a cultist romanticisation of the industrial working class, deeply imbued with nineteenth century symbolism. The fact that the 'Rev Socs' eventually ended without so much as a whimper, may be interpreted not simply as a phase in student politics but as a stillborn movement for socialism in the ranks of the 'new working class'. This social category of so-called 'middle-class' people, still politically immature, unorganised and fragmented, therefore moved away from socialism and off into 'single issues.'

In the United States, the new left and the old left were mutually hostile. In contrast, the generations of leftists in Australia interacted and learned from one another, discouraging notions of 'youth as a class'.²⁵⁴ When the Monash Labor Club radicalised it did so under the banner of orthodox Marxism. On the other hand, the New Left Group was more influenced by *Arena*. The links to the old left (and the old new left) were reassuring but smothered the growth of the new left of the late-sixties as an autonomous self-reliant movement capable of developing a living and unified theory and practice. In fact, splits within the new left were accentuated when different parts of the one generation attached themselves to factions of the old left still settling old scores.

Jill Jolliffe, with whom this story commenced and with whom it finishes, disproved Feuer's sexist thesis of male rebellion, in her own person and life. *The Yeast is Red* exposes the derivative Gerster and Bassett 'vanity' thesis as pure literary mythologizing. Most new left activity took place away from the camera lens. Time was spent cranking the Gestetner in dark cellars, speaking at union meetings, sweeping the flour dust or feeling sheer despair (there is the psyche for you!) at the

²⁵⁴ Murphy, a little too strongly, has called the relationship 'an antagonistic dialogue'. See Murphy, *op. cit*, p. 219.

Vietnam carnage. What TV camera could pick that up to turn into a commodity? Unlike the peace movements of the eighties which often conducted merely 'symbolic' demonstrations for the cameras, the struggles of the sixties were for 'physical' supremacy and 'space', for the control of conditions of life, not mere space in the dailies and on the TV News. Activists went out into the night to paint graffiti for John Zarb, not into the TV studios for media interviews. Albert Langer (the Monash 'pest' according to Gerster and Bassett) did not ask to be pestered, or mercilessly caricatured by the media.²⁵⁵ Nor can Gerster and Bassett's pejorative notion of an essentially juvenile, 'seized' sixties movement be sustained. This historical case study shows that the new left in Australia was composed of responsible, serious-minded young people who resisted the enticements of Horne's self-indulgent age and struggled for a better world.

²⁵⁵ Such as on the occasion when Langer, and Kerry Miller, were followed to their retreat in Frankston by the media and hounded – "Albert is tired of being in all the newspapers all the time". See Douglas Aiton, Albert Wants to be Alone, *Newsday*, November 15, 1969.

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