REvolutionaries and Racists: Australian Socialism and the Problem of Racism, 1887-1917

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This thesis is my own original work.

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In memory of my friend Peter Tobin
of the Aboriginal Legal Service,
who was killed in a plane-crash in Cuba
in June 1977.
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"Workers of the World, Unite!" was the advice from Marx that his followers in Australia in the period 1887 to 1917 found most difficult to apply. Operating in a wider labour movement that enthusiastically endorsed the ruling racial ideas of the age, the experience of Australian socialism provides a vivid illustration of the complexities of the interaction between socialist groups and the working class they are seeking to influence. The relationship between 'the party' and 'the class' involves not simply the question of how socialist groups deal with the problem of ideas in the working class that run counter to the tenets of socialist ideology, but also the extent to which these 'incorrect ideas' affect the socialist groups themselves.

The socialist groups examined include the Australian Socialist League, the Socialist Labor Party, the International Socialists, the Victorian Socialist Party, the Barrier Socialist Propaganda Group, the Socialist Federation of Australasia, the Australian Socialist Party, the Queensland Social Democratic Vanguard, the Broken Hill Social Democratic Club, the Kalgoorlie Social Democratic Association, the Western Australian Socialist Party, and the Social Democratic League of New South Wales. The influence of the Industrial Workers of the World, both the 'Detroit' and the 'Chicago' factions, is crucial to an understanding of the approach to racism of these socialist groups.

The emphasis, therefore, is on the attitudes of socialists outside the Labor Party. However, as essential background, attention is given to the development of working class racism and its political expression in the Labor Party's objective of "The cultivation of an Australian Sentiment based on the maintenance of racial purity" and its fighting platform of "Maintenance of White Australia". This involves discussion of the bases of Australian racism and of theories of racism in general, as an understanding of the role of racism is necessary before it is possible to appreciate the dimensions of the problem that working class racism poses for socialists. A study of Australian socialism between 1887 and 1917 reveals a variety of responses to the problem, ranging from uncritical conformity with racist ideas to critical dissent from any ideas, particularly racism, that would prevent the union of the world's workers. The thesis seeks to explain the reasons for the different reactions of the various socialist groups to the problem of working class racism.
ABBREVIATIONS

ACTU  Australian Council of Trade Unions
AFL   American Federation of Labor
ALF   Australian Labour Federation
ALP   Australian Labor Party
AMA   Amalgamated Miners' Association
ANA   Australian Natives' Association
ANL   National Library of Australia
ANU   Australian National University
ASE   Amalgamated Society of Engineers
ASL   Australian Socialist League
ASN   Australian Steam Navigation Company
ASP   Australian Socialist Party (occasionally Australasian)
AWU   Australian Workers' Union
BSPG  Barrier Socialist Propaganda Group
CGT   General Confederation of Labour, France
CSR   Colonial Sugar Refining Company
KSDA  Kalgoorlie Social Democratic Association (or Federation)
L     Editorial
IS    International Socialists, Sydney
ISB   International Socialist Bureau
ISC   International Socialist Club, Sydney
IWW   Industrial Workers of the World
MHR   Member of the House of Representatives
ML    Mitchell Library
MLA   Member of the Legislative Assembly
n.d.  no date
OBU   One Big Union
PLL   Political Labour League
PSA   Practical Socialism in Australia
QSDV  Queensland Social Democratic Vanguard
SDF   Social Democratic Federation, Britain
SDL   Social Democratic League of New South Wales
SFA   Socialist Federation of Australasia (occasionally Australia)
SLP   Socialist Labor Party of Australia
SPD   Social Democratic Party of Germany
THC   Trades Hall Council
ABBREVIATIONS continued.

TLC Trades and Labour Council
VSP Victorian Socialist Party
WASP Western Australian Socialist Party
WIIU Workers' International Industrial Union

A NOTE ON SPELLING
Apart from use in quotation or occasionally paraphrase, the spelling 'Labor' has been used for the political party, even when referring to the period before such spelling was adopted. 'Labour' or 'labour' is meant in one of its wider senses, according to context. It could mean, for example, the class of wage-earners, or the commodity of labour-power employed by 'capital', or 'the movement', that is, the many organisations established by wage earners to further their interests, which could include 'Labor', depending on the time period and place.

A NOTE ON FOOTNOTING
The current Labour History convention of preferring short titles to op. cit. has been followed. Also, except in cases of possible confusion, initials or first names of authors have not been cited, nor the publication details of books. Full names, longer titles, if appropriate, and complete publication details are given in the bibliography. The same applies to theses, which are distinguished by the use of single inverted commas, for example, Curthoys, 'Race and Ethnicity'...
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A Socialist Welcome to the American Fleet
*Socialist*, 28 Aug 1908

Tom Mann: As the Capitalists wish to see him
*Socialist*, 23 April 1909

Flowers for Labour's May Day
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"In My Name – After 1900 Years"
*International Socialist*, 11 May 1912

The War is the Class War
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"Won't They Be Edified"
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The Toads of War
*Socialist*, 28 Jan 1916

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In Europe, socialists were to stand or fall over the response to the outbreak of the Great War; in Australia, the crucial testing ground for socialists throughout the period from 1887 to 1917 was the issue of racism. This thesis is an examination of the reaction of Australian socialist groups in this period to the problem of working class racism. In the Australian context, the burning racial question was reaction to coloured immigrants, particularly Chinese, but socialist attitudes on imperialism, nationalism, and militarism are also discussed, as a means of illuminating the central response to racism. Nationalism is regarded as more significant in this respect than imperialism, as a distinction must be made between thorough-going anti-imperialism and that less vigorous variety based on Australian nationalism.

The period 1887 to 1917 is an intriguing and exciting era in the history of Australian socialism. It was a time of intensified class conflict and deepening class consciousness; it was a time of socialist euphoria, of debates about whether socialism would be achieved by Christmas, of conviction that socialism had only to be tried in order to prove its universal worth. The socialist groups studied all existed as distinct organisational entities to the left of the official labour movement, that is, the trade unions and the Labor Parties. To varying degrees, these groups all found mainstream trade unionism and/or Laborism inadequate; they desired faster or more fundamental change in the existing society. For this reason, they are extended the courtesy of being assessed within the theoretical framework appropriate for analysing the nature and purpose of a revolutionary party. Rather than categorise a particular group from the outset as revolutionary or reformist, all groups are judged, in the first instance at least, on the criteria which would be used for a revolutionary party. Several groups are, of course, found wanting in this respect.

Examining these groups by the yardstick of the function of a revolutionary party is therefore only a preliminary approach. Much finer distinctions than the crude brandings of 'revolutionary' or 'reformist' were found to be necessary in order to explain the differences in the handling of working class racism on the part of these 57 varieties of revolutionary party.

In investigating the response to racism of these socialist groups, attention is focussed on their public statements on the issue, mainly in their official organs and occasional pamphlets. Internal party documents have been of limited use: these tend to discuss questions such as which
comrade will polish the piano and which female comrades will make the sandwiches for the May Day tea. Debates at a higher level, such as over racism, were generally not carried on behind closed party doors, but paraded in the party press. Internal correspondence has often proved interesting, but mainly for substantiating what is evident from a cautious reading between the lines of the party press. The emphasis on the public position does not, of course, examine the true racial sentiments of the individuals involved in the socialist movements. This is a purposeful omission: the task of the thesis is to examine what the party said to the class.

I. The Problem

In theory at least, working class racism presents a problem for a revolutionary party. Even if the party chooses to ignore or obviate, rather than confront, the problem, it none the less poses a theoretical dilemma. The dilemma is a function of the role of any revolutionary party. A revolutionary party exists precisely because it assumes that the working class does not of its own accord develop revolutionary working class consciousness. The purpose of a revolutionary party, therefore, is to combat the uneven levels of development in the working class by organising the class conscious elements into a political force, which will, by propaganda and agitation, bring the more 'backward' sections of the class to a revolutionary realisation of their class interests. This process should, presumably, involve the challenging of an idea such as racism, which encourages race loyalty at the expense of class loyalty. Yet, in confronting anti-class conscious ideas, a revolutionary party frequently encounters rejection by a working class in which such ideas are particularly strong. Also, even revolutionaries are often influenced by the values of the 'backward' elements they are supposedly educating.

In Australia in the period 1887 to 1917, it is apparent that both fear of rejection and the inability to attain immunity from social democratic ideology encouraged socialist capitulation to working class racism. This socialist weakness was not only an effect, but also a cause, of the overwhelming strength of racist and nationalist ideas amongst Australian workers. However, it was in this period, also, that Australian socialists

1. The intimate connection between Australian social democracy and racism is discussed in many places throughout the thesis.
first issued a challenge to working class racism.

Leo Kuper has alleged that the failure in class solidarity between workers of different race or ethnic group was contrary to the expectations which Communist Parties had derived from classical Marxist theory. This is not altogether fair on the classical Marx. Marx noted, for instance, that the organisation of the proletarians as a class, and consequently into a political party, was continually being upset by the competition between the workers themselves. In particular, Marx was aware of the problem of bourgeois mobilisation of the working class, ideologically and militarily, in defence of 'national' interests.

If the emancipation of the working class requires their fraternal concurrence, how are they to fulfil that great mission with a foreign policy in pursuit of criminal designs, playing upon national prejudices, and squandering in piratical wars the people's blood and treasure.

The General Rules of the International Working Men's Association, adopted in September 1871, noted that:

the emancipation of the working class must be conquered by the working class themselves... all efforts aiming at that great end have hitherto failed from the want of solidarity between the manifold divisions of labour in each country, and from the absence of a fraternal bond of union between the working classes of different countries.

Marx's solution to this problem was that it must be the role of the communists, "the most advanced and resolute section of the working-class parties of every country", to express the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality, and to counteract the capitalist-encouraged divisions between workers. This 'party' would bridge the gap between the proletariat as a 'class-in-itself' and as a 'class-for-itself'. Marx argued that the proletariat was a class by virtue of its common situation and common interests against capital, but that this mass does not constitute a class for itself until it becomes united in struggle and realises that the interests it defends have become class interests.

Perhaps the weakness of classical Marxist theory was not that Marx failed to recognise the problem of proletarian fragmentation, but that, due to the limitations of his time period, he was unable fully to predict the

problem of reformism within the workers' movement. Lenin addressed himself directly to this problem. He proposed a party that would represent, not the entire class, as Marx envisaged, but only its 'vanguard':

Precisely because there are differences in degree of consciousness and degree of activity, a distinction must be made in degree of proximity to the party... it would be... 'tailism' to think that the entire class, or almost the entire class, can ever rise, under capitalism, to the level of consciousness and activity of its vanguard...

With the capitulation to nationalism of European social democracy on the outbreak of the Great War, Lenin identified the 'social-chauvinism' and opportunism exhibited as the product of the long-germinating tendencies of class-collaboration, and argued that it must be the task of the future International to rid itself of this bourgeois trend in socialism. He provided a theoretical basis for his polemical denunciations in *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*.

Where Lenin saw opposition to the "labour lieutenants of capitalism" as an all-important function of the vanguard party, Luxemburg appears to have shared with Marx a more optimistic view of the potential consciousness of the mass of workers. Her strategy assumed that workers, through struggle, would throw off the deadweight of the influence of the reformist 'leaders'. She stressed that the primary role of the party was to influence the proletariat ideologically, rather than, for fear of leadership falling to reformists within the movement, to regiment its struggle. It was over this 'finicky' organising role of the party that she disagreed with Lenin; both were agreed that the party must aim to unify the class, albeit at a high level of revolutionary consciousness.

It was Gramsci, above all, who concentrated on the problem of confronting bourgeois ideology, on the method for creating amongst workers a collective will in opposition to the ruling class. Such a task, he believed, could not be entrusted to the laws of history. A "modern prince" was required, but it could not be a mere individual.

It can only be an organism, a complex element of society in which a collective will which has already been recognised and has to some extent asserted itself in action, begins to take concrete form. History has already

7. See The Position and Tasks of the Socialist International; The Tasks of Revolutionary Social-Democracy in the European War; The European War and International Socialism; Socialism and War; The War and the Second International; War and the Workers.
8. See Organisational Questions of Russian Social Democracy; The Russian Revolution; The Mass Strike, the Political Party and the Trade Unions; The Junius Pamphlet. Also Fröhlich, *Rosa Luxemburg*, p.143.
provided this organism, and it is the political party—the first cell in which there come together germs of a collective will tending to become universal and total. The party, according to Gramsci, must not only engage in a "war of manoeuvre" against the blatantly repressive institutions of the state, but also in a "war of position" against the more subtle forms of bourgeois control. The war of position required the party to establish its own hegemony over the class and to undermine the hegemony of the ruling class.

Divisions between workers both expressed this ruling class hegemony and reinforced it. The party, in its war of position, had to "react energetically" upon the working class in order to solidify it.

All these major contributors to the theory of the revolutionary party agree that the party must counteract divisions between workers, as such divisions, in a myriad of ways, aid the continued domination of the ruling class. Sexism, and the antagonism of skilled workers towards unskilled, are examples of proletarian fragmentation. Such divisions constitute a problem for any revolutionary party, which, according to its own 'rules', must aim to solidify, not atomise, the working class. The particular problem examined in this thesis is that of working class racism.

* * *

Working class racism exists, not because it expresses the real interests of the working class, but because of the all-pervasive influence of ruling class ideology. As Marx explains: the ruling ideas of any age are the ideas of its ruling class; the owners of the means of economic production in any society have at their disposal also the means of intellectual production; the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force.

Oliver Cox describes racism as "a social attitude propagated among the public by an exploiting class for the purpose of stigmatising some group as inferior so that the exploitation of either the group itself or its resources may both be justified". And non-Marxists, often by empirical research, stumble across the 'coincidence' of particularly virulent racism.

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with the era of European expansion. But even when working within a Marxist paradigm, it need not be assumed that capitalism has a monopoly on racism. Feudal societies, for instance, could generate a racist ideology to justify the plunder of other territories in the interests of its ruling class. John Rex refers to the process of stereotypical denigration of the "external proletariat" from Roman times to the era of European imperialism. And Louis Hartz argues that the liberal, equalitarian ideologies following the Protestant Reformation urged the solution of denying humanity to the colonial subjects. In feudal, Catholic settled Latin America, however, the objects of exploitation could be found a place at the bottom of the human hierarchy, thereby faring better.

The efficient cause of racism appears to be the existence of an exploiting class, whether capitalist, feudal, slave-owning, or whatever, which, finding itself in the vicinity of a physically distinctive group, uses the superficial differences of this group to allege inferiority and thereby to legitimate the exploitation of the group or its resources or both, in the interests of the accumulation needs of this exploiting class. This situation was obviously common during European imperial expansion in the nineteenth century. Michael Banton comments that in the last half of the nineteenth century, the idea that Saxon peoples might be biologically superior to Celts and Slavs, and white races to black, was "seized upon, magnified, and publicized, because it was convenient to those who held power in the Europe of that day". Non-Marxist theorists, however, usually insist that racism preceded exploitation. Van den Berghe scorns the "simplistic view" that racial theories were devised with the Machiavellian purpose of justifying the colonial system, and claims that physically distinguishing characteristics are generally seized upon to perpetuate group differences and power relations. Leo Kuper maintains racial sentiments develop autonomously and that racial and ethnic divisions are of greater significance than class divisions; he believes it is a source of confusion to interpret the political conflict between racial or ethnic sections in terms of class struggle and the relationship to the means of production.

14. For example, Schermerhorn, Comparative Ethnic Relations, p.73.
insists that racial exploitation was a result of racist beliefs, not a cause. Many such theorists inevitably fall back on assumptions about the innate or socially-induced tendency of individuals or groups to hatred and violence.

However, choosing to work within a Marxist framework need not be construed as a dogmatic and insolent rebuke to all those outside that framework. One cannot put it better than Frederick Johnstone. The basic issue is not whether conventional inquiry, in its idealism and empiricism, has yielded anything of value. Quite obviously it has. And let us at all costs avoid vulgar, mechanistic materialism, and always recognise the crucial importance of values and ideology in social life. And let us have 'a healthy respect for the facts'. The basic issue here is the relative scientific value of any approach, in relation to the particular object of inquiry. If the Marxist approach seems superior to idealist and empiricist approaches, especially for the kind of things this study is concerned with, it is not in any arrogantly absolute sense but in relative ways, by virtue of the fact that it avoids the real pitfalls of empiricism, but does not, if handled with care, replace them with other deficiencies of equal weight.

A 'healthy respect for the facts' of nineteenth century Australian history bears out the Marxist contention that in capitalist society, racist ideology arises from the interests of capital, not of labour, as dominant ideologies express the interests of the dominant class. A study of racism in colonial Australia also reveals that racism is a particularly virulent ruling class idea, because it continues to work in the interests of the capitalist class long after its use as a justification for imperial designs, by dividing the working class and lessening its resistance to exploitation. Yet, attempts to wrestle with the phenomenon of Australian racism have tended to assume some sort of balance or even harmony of class forces, and that racism expressed the interests equally of the whole community. Even McQueen plays down the importance of ruling class propaganda in the formation of racist attitudes amongst workers: "The workers would not respond to the brazen rhetoric of racism if it did not strike a chord in their own experience; if it did not at least distort some aspect of their reality." This argument is absolutely correct, but McQueen has demolished

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21. See, for example, Allport, The Nature of Prejudice; Frame, "The Psychology of Race Prejudice" in Stevens, Racism, Vol 1, pp.24-9; Mason, Patterns of Dominance, pp.326-8, 337; Simpson and Yinger, Racial and Cultural Minorities, pp.65-127; Myrdal, An American Dilemma.
23. McQueen, "A Race Apart", Arena, No 19, 1969, p.62. Australian historiography on the issue of racism is indeed remarkable for its lack of class analysis, even when it is otherwise perceptive and ingenious. For
a straw person of his own making. The brazen rhetoric of racism strikes a chord in working class experience, because racism has already moulded that experience. For example, racist treatment of immigrants from the time of their arrival is likely to encourage their 'ghettoisation' and a tendency to

example, Cole, "The Crimson Thread of Kinship: Ethnic Ideas in Australia, 1870-1914", Historical Studies, Vol 14 No 56, April 1971, pp.511-5, 522-4; Cronin in Evans, Saunders, Cronin, Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination, pp.241-2, 245-6, 248; Encel, "The Nature of Race Prejudice in Australia" in Stevens, Racism, Vol 1, pp.33-4; Engel, "The Protestant Church and Race Prejudice" in Stevens, Racism, Vol 1, p.177; Goodwin, "Evolutionary Theory in Australian Social Thought", Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol XXV No 3, July-Sept 1964, p.393; Oddie, 'The Chinese in Victoria 1870-1890', pp.132-3; Palfreeman, The Administration of the White Australia Policy, p.1; Reynolds, "Racial Thought in Early Colonial Australia", Australian Journal of Politics and History, Vol XX No 1, April 1974, pp.45-53. Russel Ward is interesting for his academic mea culpa on the subject of Australian racism. He admits there was one error of substance in his The Australian Legend: "It was wrong (and self-contradictory) to state that the gold rush introduced racist passions amongst Australians for the first time". ("The Australian Legend Re-Visited", Historical Studies, Vol 18 No 71, Oct 1978, p.190). Yet Ward fails to extrapolate from the implication of his admission that racism was not an aberrant post-aurous intrusion. Some commentators fall into rank idealism. Stanner and Dow appear to think ideas come from no where, and Colin Clark believes they come from Oxford. (Dow, Australia Advances, p.37; Stanner, "Introduction: Australia and Racialism" in Stevens, Racism, Vol 1, pp.12-3; Colin Clark, Australian Hopes and Fears, pp.44-5). McQueen also tends to talk in terms of community hopes and fears, without distinguishing between the proponents of the ideology and its enthusiastic fellow-travellers. (A New Britannia, pp.17, 21-3, 37, 42-3, 61, 67). However, he does succinctly point out that to suppose that occasional attempts to lower wages by introducing Asians 'caused' racism in Australia would be to misunderstand totally its historic experience. ("Racism and Australian Literature" in Stevens, Racism, Vol 1, p.118). Yarwood's work is valuable because it stresses the extent to which conservative interests lined up behind exclusion, and the manner in which the media and politicians of all persuasions contributed to racist hysteria. And he rightly regards those employers still hankering after coloured labour as an exception to a rule. He notes also the effect of the imperial legacy in the formation of Australian racial attitudes and avoids attributing racism to specifically proletarian interests. (Asian Migration to Australia, pp.5-9, 23-4, 32-4, 104, 153-4). Curthoys most noticeably admits of differential class interests in the development of Australian racism, and recognises the comparative powerlessness of the working class. Of the origins of the problem, she writes that racism as a belief and a system of thinking was derived from the experience of European, and especially British, colonial expansion generally, and from the resultant situations of dispossession, exploitation, and competition. The acceptability of racism was facilitated by the "hegemonic liberal ethos" that emphasised community, homogeneity, identity of values, and conformity in moral and political assumptions. She claims that the labour movement shared this middle class ideology, because it had not developed its own political philosophy. ("Race and Ethnicity", pp.373, 447-8, 510-1, 654-5, 661-2; "Conflict and Consensus: The Seamen's Strike of 1878" in Curthoys and Markus, Who Are Our Enemies?, p.54).
work for lower wages. This reality, created by racist practice, then appears as 'proof' of racist ideology. Racism creates the preconditions necessary for its continuing acceptance. The argument that workers are corrupted by racist propaganda is an adequate explanation, as long as it is realised that racism in a class society is both an ideology and a practice. Indeed, it is this dual nature of racism that provides its internal dynamic, and therefore its tenacity. Racism can be 'justified' by pointing to its consequences. For example, a white South African once insisted there was no point supplying running water to black townships, because blacks never washed. Racism is a self-fulfilling prophecy; racist practice and racist ideology are mutually reinforcing. However, the process does have a beginning. Racism, as an ideology and as a practice, is initiated and encouraged by the exploiting class in any society.

A revolutionary party, from its knowledge of the workings of the capitalist system, is in a position to comprehend the internal momentum of racial prejudice; it is able to understand that racist practice appears to prove the validity of racist ideology. It should, from this standpoint, be able to encourage workers not to confuse this appearance with an unchangeable reality, and to realise that class solidarity is the best means to defeat both racism and the system that produces it.

II. Class and Race in Nineteenth Century Australia

The anti-Chinese laws of 1888 throughout the separate colonies and the Immigration Restriction Act or 'White Australia Policy' of 1901 in the new Commonwealth were enacted at the behest of capital, not of labour. To understand the transformation over time of the predominant form which Australian racism took, its development from either genocide or paternalism towards exclusionism, it is essential to examine the interests of employers and the changing power relations within the employing class that reflected the structural alterations in the economic organisation of Australian society. In the middle decades of the century, there was a conflict of interests within the shared racism of Australians. On the one hand, the squattocracy wished to apply its racism to the super-exploitation of coloured immigrants. On the other hand, the propertyless, and eventually most urban capitalists, applied their racism in terms of retaliation to coloured immigrants. By the 1880s, however, changes had occurred that
allowed these conflicting expressions of racism to coalesce into a united and virulent form of exclusionist racism, epitomised by the anti-Chinese legislation and the White Australia Policy.

Australia's first ruling class, that donated by Britain, was possessed of a peculiar degree of ethnocentric racism, which manifested itself both in the sporadic paternalist gestures towards the Aborigines and in the more frequent punitive expeditions to rid the young colony of the 'nuisance' of black neighbours. The superiority of British civilisation was never doubted. The Australian colonies were founded on racist assumptions, and with the beginnings of pastoral expansion in the 1830s, this racism developed a dynamic of its own. As far as the squatter was concerned, the pursuit of profit was dependent on the annihilation, or at least decimation, of the Aboriginal tribes, whose land was desired as being at this time the principal means of production. With convicts to perform the menial tasks for the squatters, Aborigines could not offer white society the commodity of labour, which might have protected their communities from near elimination. Only in a few very remote areas, where convict labour was more scarce, did squatters attempt to teach subsistence tribespeople the 'advantages' of wage-slavery.

Most sections of the press reassured the squatters of their right to kill and expropriate what was accordingly deemed an inferior race, destined to be superseded by a superior race who would put the land to better 'Lockean' use. It is this continual process of reassurance of superiority that is the essence of racism, and it is the actions of the economically powerful that initiate such a justificatory process. To expel the Aborigines from humanity made light of a practice that would otherwise be seen as reprehensible. The ideology of racism, which reflected the form of capital accumulation, also facilitated this method of economic development. The ideological spin-off from British imperial experience in other areas of the world was an important source of nourishment for this specific racism against Aborigines and of racial ideas in general.24

With the ending of transportation and the discovery of gold, squatters were faced with a serious labour shortage. Attempts at indenturing 'coolies' in the 1840s and early 1850s met with little success. In the middle decades of the century, therefore, land-owning employers favoured a policy of unrestricted immigration. Their racial attitudes in this period were classically paternalist: coloured immigrants, being inferior, would perform a useful permanent lower-caste function in the economy. These racial attitudes were partly accepted and partly rejected by the working class and other non-landowning colonists. It was happily agreed, thanks to the imperial legacy, that coloured people were inferior, but the paternalist racist corollary that these inferior people should be gladly admitted as second-class citizens was anathema to the majority of colonists. They felt that the development of a caste society would only increase the power of the land-owners, who were widely disliked for their political power and due to the frustrations, experienced or imagined, because of the monopolisation of land. Many colonists had also experienced a competitive racial situation on the goldfields, which encouraged their doubts that the paternalist race relations could be maintained. Land-owners, however, still had the political whip-hand, so anti-Chinese legislation remained insufficient to stem Chinese immigration markedly, but sufficient to increase colonial revenue through poll taxation of each Chinese immigrant.

Creek Massacre and its Significance in the Controversy over the Aborigines during Australia's Early Squatting Period'; Hartwig, "Aborigines and Racism: An Historical Perspective" in Stevens, Racism, Vol 2, pp.9-24; Hartwig, "Capitalism and Aborigines" in Wheelwright and Buckley, Essays in the Political Economy of Australian Capitalism, Vol 3, p.133; Markus, 'The Burden of Hate', pp.9-11, 14-6; Pittock, "Aboriginal Land Rights" in Stevens, Racism, Vol 2, pp.192-7; Fridgen, Australia, Its History and Present Condition, p.75; Reynolds and Loos, "Aboriginal Resistance in Queensland", Australian Journal of Politics and History, Vol XXII No 2, Aug 1976, p.216; Roberts, The Squatting Age in Australia, p.335; Rosecrance, "The Radical Culture of Australia" in Hartz, The Founding of New Societies, pp.300-3. And in a recent land rights case, Mr Justice Blackburn referred to the colonial ideology "that the whole earth was open to the industry and enterprise of the more advanced people were therefore justified in dispossessing, if necessary, the less advanced". (Quoted in Tobin, "Aborigines and the Political System" in Stevens, Racism, Vol 2, pp.65-6).


26. Irving notes that before the Chinese started to return to China in the early 1860s, the anti-Chinese cause was popular in all classes. He stresses the role of the liberals in this early anti-Chinese campaign, who argued Australian society could not achieve its potential for harmony and freedom.
Moreover, the legislation was repealed after the gold rush: declining gold yields caused a natural decrease in Chinese immigration and the balance of forces within the ruling class still favoured unrestricted immigration. From the late 1870s, however, factors were at work that paved the way for serious exclusion legislation: the urban bourgeoisie, who had never endorsed the 'open door' policy, were becoming more powerful vis-à-vis the squattocracy, and the increasingly complex nature of the economy was discouraging employer faith in archaic class relation. But the crux of the matter for all sorts and conditions of employers was that coloured immigrants were not conforming to paternalist racist expectations. Employers as a whole began to doubt the wisdom of the policy of unrestricted immigration.

Employer disillusionment with coloured labour from the 1870s was understandable. The vision of many Australian capitalists, of a cheap coloured proletariat, had proved illusory. Only a minute proportion of coloured immigrants ever worked for Australian capitalists. The Chinese, in particular, preferred to work for themselves or for their fellow countrymen. More employers were realising that coloured immigration did not provide a labour force, cheap or otherwise, for any employers other than coloured ones. As such, it threatened local farming and business concerns. This 'coloured entrepreneurial threat', even more than the collapse of hopes for a cheap labour force, encouraged a review in employer thinking about immigration. And given the increasing complexity of the economy, which demanded a less inflexible hierarchy of labour, assisted British immigration became generally regarded as a better long term investment, because it provided not only the most useful immediate labour force, but also a future one.\(^{27}\)

\(^{27}\)For evidence of this turn-about in employer thinking, see Bach, "The Pearlshelling Industry and the 'White Australia' Policy", Historical Studies, Vol 10 No 38, May 1962, pp.203-7; Blackton, "Australian Nationality and Nationalism", Historical Studies, Vol 9 No 36, May 1961, pp.359-60; Manning Clark, A Short History of Australia, p.179; Curthoys, "Conflict and Consensus: The Seamen's Strike of 1878" in Curthoys and Markus, Who Are Our Enemies?, p.53; Curthoys, 'Race and Ethnicity', pp.6-7, 55, 554, 590; Dallas, "The Origins of 'White Australia'", Australian Quarterly, Vol XXVII No 1, March 1955, p.50; Cronin in Evans, Saunders and Cronin, Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination, p.251; Ebbels, The Australian Labor
In these circumstances, Australian employers felt no restraints on the issue of race. Newspapers of every description inspired and encouraged the racist frenzy of this period. Instead of occasionally preaching the advantages of coloured labour, the media indulged in vicious and blanket racism, aimed at securing exclusion legislation. The victory of the White Movements, 1850-1907, p.95; Fletcher, 'The Role of the immigration question in gaining for the labour movement recognition by society in the period 1877-1890 in New South Wales', pp.13-5; Hornadge, The Yellow Peril, p.14; Kellaway, "White Australia" - How Political Reality became National Myth", Australian Quarterly, Vol XXV No 2, June 1953, p.10; Markus, 'The Burden of Hate', pp.207, 224, 238-42, 279; McQueen, "A Race Apart", Arena, No 19, 1969, p.66; McQueen, A New Britannia, p.46; Nairn, "A Survey of the History of the White Australia Policy in the Nineteenth Century", Australian Quarterly, Vol XXVIII No 3, Sept 1956, pp.24-31; Oddie, 'The Chinese in Victoria 1870-1890', pp.157, 161; Yarwood, Attitudes to Non-European Immigration, pp.85-7. It is interesting to note that in 1887, just before the anti-Chinese laws were enacted, European furniture-making employers in Victoria became particularly worried about Chinese competition. Act 961 of 1887 obligingly redefined a factory as any place where more than one Chinese was working on articles for trade or sale, thereby placing tiny Chinese concerns under the same regulations as large factories employing more than six Europeans. Act 1445 of 1887 provided for the stamping of all furniture, describing the labour as 'European', 'Chinese', or 'European and other'. The Act also restricted the hours that Chinese could work, as European employers believed that Chinese profits were the result of their employees working excessively long hours. (Huttenback, Racism and Empire, pp.255-6). Oddie, however, alleges that the success of Chinese furniture-makers was due to their specialisation. (The Chinese in Victoria 1870-1890', pp.96-8). Victorian premier Deakin claimed the Chinese were destroying the cabinetmaking industry in Victoria, because they were more successful than European manufacturers. The Victorian legislation aimed to protect European furniture-making employers, not their employees. (Huttenback, Racism and Empire, pp.255-6). The Victorian furniture trade is just one example of Chinese encroachment in Australian business circles. Moreover, the Chinese in Australia were just a small part of an extensive pattern of Chinese fortune-hunting throughout Southeast Asia. These Chinese immigrants aimed "to return home with honour and wealth". (Yong, The New Gold Mountain, p.2). And in Australia, as elsewhere, Chinese labour was tightly controlled by Chinese capital. (See Oddie, "The Lower Class Chinese and the Merchant Elite in Victoria", Historical Studies, Vol 10 No 37, Nov 1961, pp.65-70).

Australia idea was ensured by the employers eventually joining forces with 'the masses' in their resentment of coloured immigration. To this extent, McQueen is wrong to argue that it was an imperial vision of a British arcady on Austral's shores that inhibited employers from attempting to increase their share of surplus value by indenturing Asians. The point that has been stressed is that coloured labour had been found wanting as a source of increased surplus value. The 'imperial vision' merely reinforced indigenous Australian racism in that it preached the inferiority of those people whom capital in Australia, whether Australian or British, wished at different stages either to expropriate, exploit, or exclude.

Not even in Queensland were the workers responsible for the decision in favour of 'racial purity'. Successive Liberal governments also opposed the private trafficking in Melanesian labour, being hostile to the development of large scale rural capitalism as the basic economic and social system of the immature colony, and the creation of a rigid racially-determined two-caste society.

But even more important in determining the phasing-out of the system was the fact that the sugar planters themselves became increasingly divided on the issue. This division tended to be geographical: planters in the far north were the most hostile to the ending of the labour trade. Elsewhere, the internal dynamics of the industry pointed to a decline in the use of plantation-style labour. To emphasise the north/south divergence, it is interesting to note that in 1902 the proportion of sugar grown and harvested by European labour was 83.2% in the southernmost region, and only 4.3% in the northernmost region. Structural alteration in the sugar industry, particularly in the south, which was the oldest established and most influential section of the industry, reduced the heavy reliance on Melanesian labour. Fitzpatrick draws attention to "earlier, similar changes elsewhere than in the Queensland sugar areas".

The increasing centralisation of the sugar-refining process was transforming cultivation methods. Co-operative central mills had been

29. McQueen, "Racism and Australian Literature" in Stevens, Racism, Vol 1, p.118.
30. Parnaby, Britain and the Labor Trade in the Southwest Pacific, pp.84-5; Saunders in Evans, Saunders, Cronin, Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination, p.152.
advocated as early as the 1870s by smaller growers, who were inconvenienced by the massive variations in prices given for their cane by the mills attached to the larger plantations. Also, these small and inefficient mills were not extracting the maximum amount of juice and were turning out an absurdly low tonnage of sugar. This aggravated the effects of the competition from European beet sugar in the early 1880s. In this battle for survival, the manufacturing of cane sugar had to be made more efficient: "agricultural chemists, engineers, and mechanical inventors were slowly but surely revolutionising the said industry". This centralising process, therefore, was not a response to the ending of the labour trade, but a precondition for it.

The petition presented to parliament in November 1885, which subsequently led to the inauguration of the central mill system, outlined the difficulties of cane farmers in being confined to the mills of plantation owners,"and made a powerful plea for assistance by stating that cane growing could be made a white man's industry". White Australia was the excuse for the reorganisation of the sugar industry, rather than the motive. This reorganisation resulted in "a very decided alteration in the personnel of the people engaged in it. Instead of about fifty planters in a district, 800 small farmers took their place... The whole tendency was to eliminate the large landlord and create a type of reliant self-made men". Rationalisation, in the form of larger-scale processing units, encouraged smaller-scale production units.

Initially, of course, there was resistance to this reorganisation from the larger planters, but the Colonial Sugar Refining Company led the way and started to cut up its estates for sale or lease. "It was soon recognised that this system had many advantages, and many of the larger planters began to cut up their holdings and sell farms to canegrowers". By 1891, the Department of Agriculture reported that many large plantations had been subdivided and mill owners were taking cane at a fixed price, and that there was every indication that this system would be widespread before long "to

37. ibid., p 14.
38. ibid., p.10.
the mutual advantage of both parties". A review of the industry in the Mackay Sugar Journal of 1896 commented that the number of islanders employed in the whole colony had fallen from 9,362 on 1st January 1891 to 7,853 on 1st January 1895. "White men working for themselves and using the best labour-saving implements are displacing the coloured workers rapidly. The large estates are rapidly becoming peopled with small farmers".

This 'petty bourgeoisieification' of the sugar industry in the south made plantation-type labour redundant. Besides, the advantages of Melanesian over white labour were diminishing. Being 'property', a Melanesian who died was a financial loss, and Melanesian mortality in 1893, for example, was nearly four times higher than for Europeans. More sophisticated cultivation techniques required a better educated, better paid, but smaller workforce. Easterby claimed the efficiency of white labour on the Queensland canefields was "far superior" to any other class of labour employed. A CSR Company publication admitted that "considerations of conscience and humanity" played a secondary part in the extinction of the "Kanaka system", as the main reason for the decline in coloured labour was economic. "Hoe culture was giving way to plough culture and the white man was proving a more productive worker even in the tropics". Unless Melanesian labour was freed from its slave status, it could no longer 'compete' with indigenous white labour.

Also, the extra costs involved in slave-labour, such as passage money, rations, and maintenance, were becoming prohibitive. Recruitment, in particular, was becoming increasingly expensive, as islanders began to resist the traders, often with firearms belonging to returned plantation workers. A Queensland Government Commission in 1889 found that the cost of Melanesian labour had increased by more than 50% since 1883. And Melanesians were organising and holding strikes to back demands for increased wages. Besides, the presumed indispensability of coloured labour for tropical work was being undermined by the fact that many white workers, frequently ex-gold miners, were willing to work in the canefields in the

41. Calculated from Edward Shann, An Economic History of Australia, p.245.
42. Easterby, The Queensland Sugar Industry, p.27.
43. CSR Company, South Pacific Enterprise, p.32.
depressed years of the 1890s and, contrary to medical mythology, were found to be perfectly capable.\textsuperscript{46}

So, although there was opposition to the ending of the labour trade from large planters in the north,\textsuperscript{47} the 'progressive' elements in the sugar industry were primarily interested in being given time to adjust and, above all, assistance to effect, the transfer to production based on a smaller, white labour force. Bolton describes the 1901 report of the Director of the Sugar Experiment Stations as "a cogent statement of the economic trend towards the amortisation of the Kanaka", which "clearly pointed to the future".\textsuperscript{48}

Parnaby points out that sugar growers were particularly interested in the protected market for the whole of Australia that federation probably would secure for them.\textsuperscript{49} Bolton notes that only a small minority of planters stood out against federation, unable to credit that the rest of Australia would tax its sugar in the interests of the sugar producers. He considers the opposition to the commonwealth legislation to assist the sugar industry was possibly a smoke-screen aiming at better terms, and concludes that the political bargaining strength of the Queensland sugar planters, and their long-standing obstinacy, did finally weigh the scales in their favour, by bounty.\textsuperscript{50} So planter protest aimed not at renewing recruitment but at slowing down the changeover process and indirectly at securing higher subsidies by feigning hardship. Markus confuses this smoke-screen tactic with genuine widespread displeasure at the ending of the labour trade.\textsuperscript{51} Easterby dismisses the opposition as being that of a few old die-hards. At federation, he writes, "there were still a few of the old type of sugar planter owning small mills who could see nothing but ruin ahead in the entire replacement of the Kanaka by white labour... few of them lived long enough to witness the great expansion of the industry in the years since federation, and the upsetting of all their forebodings of calamity..."\textsuperscript{52}

The 1901 Pacific Island Labourers Act provided for the cessation of the

\textsuperscript{46}Markus, 'The Burden of Hate', p.464; Yarwood, \textit{Asian Migration to Australia}, pp.153-4; Yarwood, \textit{Attitudes to Non-European Immigration}, p.57.  
\textsuperscript{47}The number of Melanesian workers was increasing in northern areas, possibly due to a northward migration of time-expired Melanesians no longer able to find employment in the south.  
\textsuperscript{48}Bolton, \textit{A Thousand Miles Away}, p.200.  
\textsuperscript{49}Parnaby, \textit{Britain and the Labor Trade}, pp.195-6.  
\textsuperscript{50}Bolton, \textit{A Thousand Miles Away}, pp.199-200.  
\textsuperscript{51}Markus, 'The Burden of Hate', pp.523-4.  
\textsuperscript{52}Easterby, \textit{The Queensland Sugar Industry}, p.23.
trade in March 1904 and the deportation of any islanders remaining at the end of 1906. Commonwealth legislation imposed protective duties which gave sugar produced by white labour an advantage of £2 per ton over home-produced sugar grown by black labour and £5 per ton over imported sugar. Norris makes the interesting point that planters urged greater concessions in the early years of the commonwealth, not because they were faring adversely from the ending of the labour trade, but because they were anxious to subdivide their large estates for white settlement and the subsidies obviously increased the value of the land. Fitzpatrick comments: "Sugar manufacturing was, in fact, perhaps the first Australian industry to benefit from the political Federation of the colonies... under the Commonwealth the consumer was sustaining the sugar producer". An additional bonus to 'white enterprise' was that under the Sugar Bounty Act any non-white occupiers or lessees of a cane farm or plantation were not entitled to the bounty. Growers had been disturbed by the incidence of 'Asiatic' canegrowing. So, the rationalisation of the industry and the increased cost of Melanesian labour made the Kula labour system much less attractive to many growers. It was because of this division among sugar producers about the merits of Melanesian labour that governments could appear responsive to the demands of the humanitarian and working class campaigns against this labour. The battle for a white Queensland was not won by labour; it was merely conceded by capital. Except for a few 'backward' growers and other capitalists involved in recruitment, the demand no longer constituted a serious threat to profits. The result of the ending of the labour trade was that Queensland planters were paid to change over to a system that was either immediately or ultimately in their own interests. The strength of racism ensured that the rest of Australia was prepared to meet the bill. Australia's immigration laws, therefore, were not conceded unwillingly by capital. Employers were still being inaccurately branded as supporters of 'cheap coloured labour' by a working class which felt disinclined to bring more substantive charges to bear. Imperial resistance to the White

57. The anti-Chinese movement of the 1880s and the White Australia movement of the 1890s are discussed in more detail in the introductory sections to
Australia Policy was also overestimated. The Colonial Office by this stage was not even prepared to continue paying lip-service to the philosophy of racial equality. It merely felt concern for diplomatic niceties to aid imperial designs. As Huttenback points out, given the essential homogeneity of the Anglo-Saxon world view, most of the officials in the corridors of power agreed with the racial attitudes of the colonists. It is inaccurate, therefore, to depict the White Australia movement as being successful in opposition either to British imperial interests or Australian bourgeois interests. It is only by appreciating the change of heart about coloured immigration on the part of Australian employers that the simplistic equation - working class obviously bothered by coloured immigration therefore White Australia Policy equals working class victory - can be avoided. The association of the Policy with the labour movement has helped obscure the extraordinary degree of consensus on the issue. That the other parties were later converts to the cause does not verify the argument that the White Australia Policy was the victory of the labour movement. In fact, it proves the opposite, as the exclusion movement was successful only when it coincided with the interests of the capitalist class. That the working class supported the Policy and have even been miscast as the protagonists belies the truth of the nature of the victory. Workingmen were involved in the anti-transportation movement, but this campaign was successful only when its leadership fell to business and professional men, and the movement began to articulate bourgeois reasons for desiring the abolition of convictism. Arbitration was favoured by the labour movement, but arbitration was adopted, not for this reason, but because it was in the interests of employers that labour power be the only commodity whose price was not determined by the market. The White Australia Policy was a victory neither of, nor for, the labour movement. Peter Corris has pointed to this historiographical vacuum: If racialism was... an ingredient in the political thinking and behaviour of all Australians, regardless of class, right through the political spectrum, the present emphasis in discussion on working-class and radical racialism

the relevant chapters. It is, of course, impossible to pin-point the date at which the balance of forces within the ruling class began to favour restriction of coloured immigration, but the 1880s would appear to be the crucial decade. Certainly, as Curthoys has shown, employers still tended to favour 'cheap coloured labour' as late as 1878.(["Conflict and Consensus: The Seamen's Strike of 1878" in Curthoys and Markus, Who Are Our Enemies?, p.61]. 58.Huttenback, Racism and Empire, pp.317-8. See also Yarwood, Asian Migration to Australia, p.12. 59.Irving, "1850-1870" in Crowley, A New History of Australia, pp.134-6. 60.See Fieldes, 'Pains and Penalties'.
will be misleading to any attempt to understand racialism as a whole. What about the bosses?61

Connell addresses himself succinctly to McQueen's implication that the racism of the labour movement was internally generated:

If one takes the idea of hegemony seriously, it is the hegemonic groups that must provide the focus of an account of the situation. In the roll-call of groups whose part in the ideological origins of the Labor Party provides the structure of McQueen's book - emigrants, convicts, diggers, selectors, etc. - there is one echoing absence: capitalists.62

If the argument that the White Australia Policy was the victory of the labour movement is unconvincing, then the corollary, that the Policy aimed primarily at defending working class wages and conditions, is equally untenable. It similarly ignores both differences in class interests and the relative strengths of these interests. Such explanations of the immigration laws fail to appreciate the underlying material basis of racism: that racism expresses the economic interests of the ruling class, not the economic interests or 'fears' of the working class. To argue otherwise, is to attribute to the working class a degree of ideological power and political influence that is quite unrealistic. It is not logical that non-wage-earners, let alone the capitalist class, would espouse the White Australia idea out of any concern for working class wage levels. Such an explanation cannot possibly explain the strength of racism at this time. The general will was racist, and the fact that it was general defies the possibility that it was based on fear of cheap labour competition.

Many empiricist historians, however, have argued precisely this: that the objections of the labour movement to coloured immigrants were not racist, but merely a legitimate expression of concern for working class living standards. They have conflated appearance with reality.63 Other historians

fall between the two schools of idealism and empiricism by arguing that racism and fear of cheap labour competition were the twin motivations, thus posing a false dichotomy between the two. And of those historians who correctly insist that the exclusion movement was racially inspired, many fall into the idealist trap of regarding these racial ideas as an immaculate conception.

The whole debate revolves around an erroneous distinction between racism and fear of cheap labour. The true economic 'cause' of racism is not fear of cheap labour competition; this fear on the part of the working class is not a cause, but an effect, of racism, for racism has a more substantial cause. This is not to deny that fear of cheap labour competition, whether real or imaginary, exacerbates racism, but racism is the independent variable, regardless of labour competition. Proletarian fears about the nature of coloured labour are best understood as symptoms of racism. Confusion need only exist if economistic excuses given by racist workers are construed as causes of racism, rather than effects.

In the nineteenth century, various immigrant groups were made to feel unwelcome. However, the differential responses of the local working class were in no way a function of the 'economic threat' the various immigrant groups posed to the working class. The extent of hostility was determined by preconceptions about the people concerned, which were reinforced by campaigns against them; certain groups were, from the outset, unacceptable for 'biological' reasons.


66. By the 1880s, belief in the immutability of hereditary predispositions was common. Eugenic principles were used not simply to justify aversion to other races, but also to explain the 'deficiencies' of certain members of the master-race who had forfeited this membership by falling too far below its required standards. (Stephen Garton, seminar paper on 'Insanity in NSW').
On any criteria other than racist ones, assisted British immigration was more harmful to Australian labour standards than was Chinese, because, being assisted, it was very much subject to employer manipulation. Employers were not shy about requesting an influx of immigrants, if they felt wage levels were too high or workers too confident. Occasionally, employers used assisted immigration in an even more insidious way. For example, in 1889, the Gawler branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers discovered that James Martin and Co Ltd had paid the fare of an employee named Crompton, but was deducting it from his wages with the promise of a refund of £17/17/-, if he worked for two years at the rate agreed with the agent in London and on the condition that his work and conduct were satisfactory. In fact, throughout the 1880s, the ASE was disturbed by emigrant ships' engineers entering into contracts in Britain to work in Australia at wages below the prevailing rates. And Coghlan notes that, even when assisted British immigrants were not contracted, they frequently threw old hands out of work by accepting lower wages. The campaign against these 'abuses' of the system of assisted British immigration can be seen as an expression of the real economic interests of Australian workers under a capitalist system; the anti-Chinese movement did not by comparison express a real economic interest of Australian workers, only an imagined interest. The labour movement regarded opposition to coloured immigration as a matter of principle; it considered opposition to assisted British immigration as an appropriate tactic only if the economic circumstances warranted such action. There is

67. For examples, see Sir George Gipps to Lord John Russell, 13 Sept 1841, Historical Records of Australia, I, XXI, p.506; Sir Charles Fitzroy to Earl Grey, 30 Jan 1847, Historical Records of Australia, I, XXV, pp.332-3; Sir Charles Fitzroy to Earl Grey 1 Dec 1848, Historical Records of Australia, I, XXVI, p.719; Sutcliffe, A History of Trade Unionism in Australia, p.33, fn.6; Coghlan, Labour and Industry in Australia, pp.425, 1549-50, 1515; Gollan, The Coalminers of New South Wales, pp.27-8; Buckley, The Amalgamated Engineers in Australia, pp.45-6.

68. Buckley, The Amalgamated Engineers in Australia, p.29.


71. Coghlan's statistical evidence reveals that, taking employment as a whole, it was not in any sense true that the presence of Chinese in Australia tended to depress wages and cause unemployment amongst European workmen. (Labour and Industry in Australia, p.1334). McNaughtan likewise insists the Chinese were not a threat to the wages and jobs of the overwhelming majority of workmen and that, on the whole, they were a valuable element and filled a place in colonial life left empty by the whites. ("Colonial Liberalism, 1851-92" in Greenwood, Australia, p.124).

no evidence of any significant opposition to unassisted British immigration, and because of the feeling of common racial identity, the campaign against assisted British immigration lacked completely that edge of intolerance and loathing that characterised the anti-Chinese movement. Opposition to assisted immigration did not form itself into 'Anti-British Leagues'; opposition centred on the state financing of the system, the manner of selection, and the bad timing of arrivals. The wrath of the anti-assisted immigration campaign was directed at the authorities in London, not at the immigrants themselves. The debate on assisted immigration was set within nationalist parameters: there was objection to the conduct of assisted British immigration, but exclusion was never contemplated, as British immigration was to supply the raw material for building the new nation. The opposition frequently overlooked many of the immediate problems posed by the system for the sake of the benefits that were felt would accrue from it in the long run; Chinese and other coloured people, however, were considered unsuitable material for the building of a nation, regardless of their role in the economy. Working class hostility to assisted immigration as a system rarely extended to abuse of the assisted immigrants as people. As soon as these immigrants arrived, they were welcomed into whatever appropriate working class organisations existed; as far as the ASE, for example, was concerned, "the newcomers were brother-members". British workers were regarded both as victims of, and potential co-operators against, assisted immigration. This response of the labour movement to assisted British immigrants, despite the dangers to working class standards that the system posed, helps highlight the racial inspiration of the working class movement against the Chinese and other coloured races. The difference between the two campaigns was one of kind, not simply of degree.

Of course, an underlying motif in the campaign against assisted British immigration was the suspicion that the immigration authorities in London

were easing the burden of Poor Law administration by shipping out paupers in the way they had once off-loaded convicts on to the colonies. A fine distinction was drawn between the poorest of immigrants, and paupers, who were considered, like the Chinese, to be genetically inferior. And when pauper immigration was blatant, rather than subsumed in the wider scheme of assistance, proletarian anger was aroused. For example, in the early 1890s, General Booth proposed the establishment in Australia of "self-helping and self-regulating communities" where poverty-stricken Englishmen could start a new life. Booth made it clear that these paupers would be indentured, forbidden to join unions, and denied mobility. Oppositions to such restrictions on labour was obviously appropriate, but Markus points out that this working class wrath was directed, not just at the scheme itself, but at the proposed immigrants as well. The Australian Worker characterised these helpless individuals as the "rakings and scrapings of the social garbage heaps of Great Britain" and the Barrier Miner exceeded Eysenck-style genetics: "The British beggar is a beggar by hereditary instinct, and a debilitated wreck of manhood through the transmitted blood of weakness and disease". Paupers were despised as a lumpen-proletariat for social reasons, but by the 1880s, it was primarily on genetic grounds that they were regarded as irremediably cheap labour. They were deemed innately different, akin to other races, and therefore incapable of improvement. Workers believed that paupers were nearly as unlikely to observe Australian labour standards as were the Chinese. That the labour movement objected to the supposed 'dregs' of their own race in the same way as they objected to any and every member of another race is surely a testimony to the racism of that labour movement, no matter what rationalisation was given for the objection to both groups. In preparation for the 1889 election, the Parliamentary Committee of the Melbourne Trades and Labour Council drew up a 14 plank platform, which included the demand for a bill "to prevent the introduction of criminal, pauper or Asiatic labour".

Convicts and paupers were the only white 'immigrants' who were despised as people. However, there was a distinct preference expressed for convicts over coloured immigrants of any description. For example, the Sydney Morning Herald of 21st November 1857 declared: "The outpourings of all the hulks, and penitentiaries of England, are better materials for the foundation of an

76.Australian Worker, 30 Oct 1891; Barrier Miner, quoted in Truth, 11 Jan 1891, quoted in Markus, 'The Burden of Hate', pp.59-60.
77.Sutcliffe, A History of Trade Unionism in Australia, pp.135-6.
empire than the best of the native inhabitants of Asia". In the Legislative Council in 1857, a speaker was greeted with a chorus of assent, after admitting he would rather have 2000 convicts landed in Australia than 500 Chinamen. And the Age of 24th July 1857 announced that "all the arguments urged in support of the Anti-Transportation Movement, tell with a thousand times more force for the exclusion of the Chinese". Of course, the anti-transportation movement was more than justified in as much as it concentrated on the fact that the legal status of convicts made them objects of super-exploitation. Admittedly, this aspect of the campaign was frequently submerged, but it was by no means as insignificant in the working class section of the anti-transportation movement as was the objection to the indentured status of coolies in the working class opposition to the importation of coolie labour in the 1840s. Unashamed and uninhibited racism is evident, for instance, in the petition "very numerously signed by persons principally of the Working Classes in Sydney, against the importation of Coolies", which stated that:

Your Petitioners, being aware from experience and from history of the vices peculiar to the natives of India, would deprecate in the strongest manner, any attempt to introduce them into this Colony, feeling assured that such a step could not fail to be a hindrance to the growth of virtue and morality amongst us.

As it is unlikely that any of the petitioners would ever have met an Indian, any 'awareness' of vices peculiar to Indians must have been the legacy of the 'experience' of British imperialism. In neither the anti-coolie campaign of the 1840s nor the White Australia movement of the last decades of the century, did the working class involvement reveal any ideological independence from the ruling ideas of the age.

The mixed response to non-British Europeans reveals that prejudice, not feelings of 'proletarian protectiveness', was the crucial determinant. Markus reveals that by the 1890s, organised labour was very concerned at the prospect of Jewish migration to Australia. In 1891, when there were only 809 Jews in the whole of Queensland, the Queensland Worker announced that: "A crusade against the Jews would be a socialistic crusade. The creed and the race of the Jew make him an enemy of the entire human family... Racially and religiously the Jew is an outcast, and racial tradition and religious teaching have fashioned out of the outcast a parasite". The Sydney Worker

79. Sir George Gipps to Lord Stanley, 27 March 1843, and enclosed petition, Historical Records of Australia, I, XXII, p.564
in 1893 commented that: "The Russian Jews, like their Australian brothers, are principally bankers, loan mongers, peddlars and pawn brokers. They are hated and hunted for their deeds, not for their religion". Labour papers continually preached anti-Semitism, occasionally poorly disguised as anti-capitalism; labour press cartoons often depicted a capitalist with a hooked nose. In 1891, the NSW Trades and Labour Council made attempts to ensure that Jews were kept out of the Pacific region, and early in 1892, the Adelaide Trades and Labour Council, after expressing alarm over the immigration of Russian Jews, sent a deputation to the premier to protest. One member had reported 12 Jews already "in our midst". Hostility was obviously racially inspired, but in this case the economistic excuse of fear of cheap labour could not be employed against a group type-cast as 'bankers, loan mongers, peddlars and pawn brokers'.

Racist ideas, although concentrating on Asians, Melanesians, and Aborigines, tended to backfire on the darker-skinned Europeans. In the 1890s, there was increasing working class hostility to the presence of Italians, even to those who had arrived without assistance, and despite proof of Italian union consciousness. Italians were generally grouped with non-Europeans, and because of this subjective idea, hostility to Italians can fairly be described as racist. It certainly did not lack the emotive content of racism. The Australian Worker of 1st October 1890 referred to Italians as "Braggart cowards, who make their wives prostitute themselves, and sell the virtue of their own children... that they may sit at home and drink and gamble. Blood thirsty demons, as foul in habits as in person, exhaling a moral stench as fetid as their physical one which is well authenticated, and capable of being nosed for yards". In a similar vein, the readiness of Italians to use knives was emphasised in the press, both labour and non-labour.

By contrast, Scandinavians and Germans were perfectly acceptable, to all classes in Australian society. Lyng's fatuous little book on Scandinavian immigration claims that Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes have made good citizens and have been happy. Given their good Anglo-Saxon credentials,

81 Quoted in McQueen, A New Britannia, p.197.
82 Markus, 'The Burden of Hate', pp.60-1. From 1881 to 1891, the number of Jews in Australia rose from 8,815 to 13,779. A large proportion of these were in NSW and Victoria. (Lyng, Non-Britishers in Australia, p.235).
84 Quoted in Markus, 'The Burden of Hate', pp.63-4.
there was obviously no reason why the native workforce should wish to make them unhappy. Similarly, Germans were admired because of their success in developing new industries such as grape growing and sugar cane cultivation, which contrasted with the resentment felt about Chinese market gardening. Nor did German cultural separateness, encouraged by their Lutheranism, arouse the hostility that Chinese 'clannishness' did. And on the occasions when German immigrant labour posed a threat to local labour standards, the response was very different from that towards Chinese in equivalent situations. For instance, when 200 German scabs were imported to break a Melbourne masons' strike in 1859, the locals met the Germans off the ships, asked for their assistance, and offered them hospitality. The Germans returned the good will and refused to work. It was not until an uppity German Empire began to disturb British national complacency that Germans were resented in Australia, when British imperial mythology necessarily designated Germans as undesirable and politically dangerous. Just as the objects of imperialism were branded as inferior, so its rivals were cast as evil and unpleasant.

All in all, it was not the activities of immigrants after their arrival in Australia that determined working class response to them. Whatever a coloured immigrant did was wrong; an equivalent action on the part of an Anglo-Saxon, bearing neither the biological drawback of pauperism nor the stigma of convictism, was either praised or excused.

The Chinese were the immigrants most resented by Australian workers in the nineteenth century, because they were the group who could be seen to be competing most conspicuously and 'unfairly' with Australian workers. But hostility to Chinese was not caused by their gold-digging or their employment. The identification of an out-group must precede the in-group's fear of out-group competition. On the goldfields, the Chinese were automatically perceived as outsiders, with whom the Europeans would have to compete for gold and water, not like other Europeans such as Germans, with whom these commodities were to be shared. The Chinese were also accused of being filthy and diseased, gamblers, heathens, and fornicators. All the usual slanders of a racist mentality were thrown at them, of which economic 'crimes' were merely one of a kind. Obviously numbers as well as economic conditions, such as declining gold yields and unemployment, are crucial in

transforming racial attitudes into racism, but the racial attitudes are the starting point. Circumstances certainly determine the form racism takes at a particular time in a particular place, but the differing forms nevertheless depend on the pre-existing ideology of racism. Fear of competition from non-white immigrants was the result of racist ideas present in Australian society since 1788. This was as true for the ruling class as for the working class.

In comparing the experience of non-British Europeans, who were welcomed and accepted, with the treatment of Aborigines and Chinese, Curthoys shows how assimilation was both the necessary condition for acceptance but possible only under conditions of acceptance. British colonists, by and large, firstly used racist criteria to judge which peoples could assimilate and which could not, secondly made assimilation possible, or at least easy only for those judged able to assimilate, and thirdly saw assimilation or lack of it as proof of the validity of those racist criteria.88

In the 1860s and 1870s, the desire of the labour movement to restrict Chinese immigration arose from the racist conviction that the Chinese were irremediably cheap labour and were totally incapable of even desiring a higher standard of living, let alone fighting to obtain it. In 1871, the NSW Trades and Labour Council was founded, and its policy on immigration typified labour attitudes at this time. It made no objection whatever to free British immigration, opposed government assistance to British immigrants, and insisted on complete prohibition of Asian immigration, because "they were convinced that Asians would never come to accept Australian industrial standards". The First Inter-Colonial Trades Union Congress in October 1879 resolved that "the indiscriminate immigration of Chinese, is, in the opinion of this Congress, injurious - morally, socially, and politically - to the best interests of the colony, and demands immediate legislation".90

87. For evidence of the 'non-economic' basis of goldfields prejudice, see Connolly, "Miners' Rights: Explaining the 'Lambing Flat' Riots of 1860-61" in Curthoys and Markus, Who Are Our Enemies?, pp.38-41, 45; Curthoys, 'Race and Ethnicity', pp.251-3, 277, 595, 668; Willard, The History of the White Australia Policy, p.31; Yarwood, "Attitudes Toward Non-European Migrants" in Stevens, Racism, Vol 1, p.148. Markus, however, argues the Chinese were first welcomed then rejected as economic competitors, thus blaming an activity of the objects of prejudice for the creation of that prejudice. ('The Burden of Hate', pp.89-90, 108, 127, 533).
90.Quoted in Markus, 'The Burden of Hate', p.256.
And, as long as only the working class was active in the exclusion campaign, no effective legislation to that end was enacted. Moreover, even in this period of limited, and primarily proletarian, opposition, it is not possible to argue that the motivation was not racist. At any and every stage, the exclusion campaign was racist; its success depended merely on the strength of the forces involved. As a racist demand, exclusion was not a justifiable one for socialists to echo.

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The socialist reply to the exclusion campaign should have been to encourage coloured labour to become as expensive as possible by arguing that coloured immigrants should be allowed into unions and that it was better to organise with, rather than against, coloured workers. To do otherwise was to allow employers to use immigrant labour to the detriment of the entire working class.

Markus's research on the Melbourne furniture trade reveals that the racist assumptions about the backwardness of Chinese workers were wrong. He describes the attempts of the Chinese to fight for better wages and conditions and to form unions, in the face of the white furniture workers' hostility and continued refusal to allow Chinese into their unions. European workers feared redundancy in the trade through being under-sold, or so they argued. It was in their economic interest, then, to support Chinese workers in their wage struggles, but nothing was further from their minds. In September 1885, about 300 Chinese furniture trade workers went on strike for higher pay against their Chinese employers. And a picket was mounted in "approved Caucasian fashion". By 1888, the Chinese Workers' Union was enforcing minimum rates of pay, a 50 hour week for those not working piece-work rates, a closed shop, and half-yearly trade holidays. The discrepancy between European and Chinese rates of pay was invariably exaggerated. In 1880, for instance, one member of parliament asserted the Chinese were receiving 7/6 per week, when the average pay was £1/11/-.. However, in 1890, European cabinetmakers insisted that the Committee of Finance refund the donation from the Chinese to aid striking shearers. And in 1892-3, when the Chinese workers were desperately attempting to resist a reduction in wages, the Europeans contemptuously ignored these efforts on the part of the Chinese. While the strike was at its height in January 1893, a former president of the Trades Hall Council commented: "We can afford to laugh. It
does not affect us". The secretary of the Council explained that, as the Council was altogether opposed to Chinese labour, the strikers would receive no support, because that would be countenancing it. In 1896, in response to the suggestion that Chinese should be allowed into the union, members of the furniture trade interrupted the speaker with an uproar of dissent, half angry, half amused, and cried "Never, never!" and "It would be like oil and water". Yet Yong reveals that from 1897 to 1912, reports of the Chief Inspector of Factories showed that Chinese employees received an average minimum wage higher than that received by their Australian counterparts. In 1897, Chinese employers dismissed many old and slow workers, because the minimum wage system was introduced, but were forced to retain them as the result of a strike.

If Chinese wages were higher than European rates, European employees could only gain from joint action. On the other hand, if Chinese rates were lower, European employees could best protect their own rates by aiding Chinese struggles, and generally, by co-operation. Markus is correct to argue that the road to success for European workers in the trade lay not through waging anti-Chinese propaganda in the general community, but in unison with the Chinese against the employers and middle men who exploited both European and Chinese workers by forcing them to undercut each other. After all, the Chinese had proved themselves to be good unionists, with the same aspirations as the Europeans. As Markus points out, the European cabinetmakers made the mistake of attacking a fictional enemy, instead of the real foe. The troubles of the furniture-makers stemmed not from the Chinese, but from the economic condition of the industry. The anti-Chinese tactic aggravated, not alleviated, the effects of this recession for all the workers involved. The effort could have been more usefully spent in combined resistance against the employers. The sterility of the anti-Chinese tactic and the disutility of working class racism generally, seems obvious; the adoption of such irrational policies was merely given the semblance of rationality by the 'unfair labour competition' argument.

However, Carr scores a telling point against Markus. "The historian", he writes, "must diagnose the cause of the disease, not merely point out its more colourful and sensational symptoms, however entertaining they might prove to be". Markus cannot ride two horses at once. On the one hand, he demonstrates what good unionists the Chinese were and argues that it would have been in the economic interests of the European furniture workers to fight alongside the Chinese, rather than against them. On the other hand, he attributes the hostility expressed by European workers in the trade to Chinese to the fear that Chinese, being inferior and content with a lower standard of living, would undermine wages and conditions in the whole trade. So, if racism was not an expression of the real economic interest of the workers, but merely an expression of an imagined interest, then Markus has failed to explain the genesis of racism and its tenacity. Why did European unionists assume right from the start that the Chinese could not aspire to European standards of living? This is the real question that Markus never answers. He describes the self-fulfilling justification of the perceived threat, but not why this perceived threat existed in the first place. He does not relate working class racism to the prejudices of the wider society, and attempt to explain these prejudices, without always returning to 'perceived' threats and 'imagined' economic interests. It is precisely the perceptions and imaginings that must be explained.

Australian working class racism was fed by the perceived tendency of coloured immigrants to work for lower wages, but where this was the case, and the tendency was more exaggerated than real, it was the fault of the racist attitudes of the labour movement. As Kisch wrote: "Instead of fighting for a general settlement of wages and conditions, some Australian trade-union leaders attacked at the point of least resistance. The point of least resistance was the Chinese". Only racism can explain the adoption of this policy, which then created the alleged reason for its adoption.

Employers benefitted directly from white worker antagonism to coloured workers, as a cheap labour supply could remain cheap only if organisationally distinct from the rest of the labour force. Ironically, the employers who benefitted most were invariably coloured. And employers in general benefitted from the racial division in the ranks of the working class. All in all, much valuable working class energy was wasted attacking coloured workers, rather than in aiming at a general improvement in living

standards for all workers.

Moreover, racial preoccupations distracted workers from embracing any fundamental criticism of capitalist society. Consequently, the work of socialists in Australia was very much an up-hill task. Cronin notes that in Queensland in the 1890s, labour publicists and enthusiasts subsumed a wider question of capitalist oppression within an obsessive preoccupation with the Chinese issue:

...'influentials' in the community also had a vested interest in keeping the anti-Chinese struggle alive, for this race question could be utilised to over-ride other tensions in the society and maintain the status quo. Thus, in assessing reasons for the failure of socialism in Queensland, racist preoccupations ought not to be overlooked.96

The strength of racism and the weakness of socialism were mutually reinforcing.

III. The Unmaking of the Australian Working Class, 1788-188797

Mansfield has argued that it was because of their attitude to the Chinese as a race that the radicals in the developing labour movement were not much taken with notions of internationalism and of working class solidarity.98 This is putting the cart before the horse. It would be more logical to argue that it was the relative lack of internationalism and feelings of working class solidarity in the labour movement that prevented the emergence of any sustained indigenous critique of racism as a 'bosses' ideology'. Working class acceptance of racist ideology depends, after all, on class collaborationist assumptions, on workers believing their interests

96. Cronin in Evans, Saunders, Cronin, Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination, p.301.
97. This title is meant ironically rather than seriously. The restrictions on this thesis prevent full-blooded participation in the post-Thompson debate on class and class consciousness in Australian history, other than vehemently to oppose McQueen's idealist notion of class as revealed in A New Britannia. (For a potted guide to the debate so far, see Stuart Macintyre, "The Making of the Australian Working Class: An Historiographical Survey", Historical Studies, Vol 18 No 71, Oct 1978, pp.233-53). The subject of class and class consciousness is properly a thesis in its own right, and unfortunately Connell and Irving, Class Structure in Australian History, was published too late for incorporation into the main body of this thesis. Remarks on the subject of class and class consciousness are therefore sketchy and tentative, and concentrate on the question of nationalism.
coincide with their employers' interests and together form a 'national interest'. This denial of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms is common ground between racism and nationalism. Racism denies the significance of class divisions and promotes racial solidarity across these class boundaries; nationalism unifies a capitalist and class-divided society, by providing the ideological cement to counteract the atomising and fragmenting ideological forces of possessive individualism and liberalism. So, although any more specific connection between racism and nationalism can only be understood historically, nationalism in the working class, like working class racism, is an inverse function of working class consciousness. The strength of nationalism, or the strength of opposition to nationalism, in the labour movement, can be construed as a vital indicator of the degree of class consciousness.

But it is important to distinguish between trade union or job consciousness, on the one hand, and class consciousness, on the other. Obviously, trade union consciousness and nationalism could co-exist, and in the Australian context, frequently did. Yet trade union consciousness was clearly closer to class consciousness than the more conservative forms of consciousness apparent in the developing labour movement. Whether the difference between trade union consciousness and class consciousness is qualitative or quantitative, is difficult to judge, but trade union consciousness would certainly appear to be a prerequisite, or at least a good training ground, for class consciousness.

Evidence of class conflict does not necessarily entail the existence of working class consciousness, but it must surely hint at the presence of at least a rudimentary form of trade union consciousness. Because of the obvious existence of considerable class conflict in nineteenth century Australia, it is difficult to accept those wild McQueen-inspired generalisations, that have been raised to the level of historiographical commonplace, that the relative integration of the working class into the system was higher in nineteenth century Australia than in Britain or continental Europe. Apart from the lack of comparative work on which to base such assertion, these generalisations tend to regard the Australian

99. Météin observed that the idea of international working class solidarity did not appear to be as strong as in western Europe, but he relates this primarily to the tyranny of distance: "L'idée de la solidarité ouvrière international ne semblait pas non plus aussi forte que dans l'Europe occidentale; les australasiens sont trop loin des autres nations" (Le socialisme sans doctrines, p.271).
working class at any stage in its history as an homogeneous whole with an homogeneous and unchanging consciousness. Rather, it is evident that the Australian working class exhibited a heterogeneity of 'consciousnesses' and that no form of consciousness was static. Within the working class there was a continuum of consciousness ranging from complete servility to class struggle militancy, and at every point this consciousness was subject to change, according to objective conditions and ideologies. True, liberal ideology largely hegemonised the working class, but with differing degrees of success. Some workers might even have fallen under the spell of the value-system of the squattocracy. On the other hand, some workers all of the time, and many workers part of the time, refused to kow-tow to either section of the ruling class, at least on the job.

McQueen, however, asserts that in the period 1840-1890, most of the "lower class" were convinced that acquisitive competitiveness produced improved circumstances, and that acceptance of this outlook was a triumph for bourgeois hegemony. Of course, as Gollan points out, McQueen is wrong to reclassify the workers as petty bourgeois on the strength of their ideas. Their relationship to the means of production made them proletarian, so the task is to analyse the reasons for their supposed petty bourgeois aspirations, not to indulge in relabelling which is little more than polemical abuse. Ironically, the sorts of arguments McQueen uses to explain the low level of class consciousness could, at the same time, explain the strength of trade unionism and the occurrence of proletarian militancy.

For instance, labour shortage and rapid economic development could aid unionisation and militancy, while retarding working class consciousness. High wages could provide a worker with limited capital, which, in the colonial economic environment McQueen describes, could be put to very remunerative use. So militancy, in the form of pursuing wage demands, could

100. McQueen, A New Britannia, pp.122-5.
101. Gollan, "An Inquiry into the Australian Radical Tradition - McQueen's 'New Britannia'", Arena, No 24, 1971, p.34. Admittedly, class divisions in colonial Australia were often faint. For example, wage-earners frequently slipped into sub-contracting or self-employed categories, then back into wage-earning. However, McQueen was not referring to this particular problem, and Gollan's criticism stands.
102. Militancy has both a specific and a general meaning. Specifically, it means a propensity to strike or employ any other tactic aimed at forcing the employer to grant a wage rise. Generally, it refers to preparedness of workers to resist or attack their employers in the workplace, either to improve wages and conditions or 'for the hell of it'. This latter sense is the one intended by the use of the word, unless indicated otherwise.
prove attractive, as a collective means to an individual goal of economic independence. The existence of gold could add a further edge to militancy. Workers were possibly more prepared to risk the sack if they believed, not only that they could move on to another job easily, but that, if necessary, they could survive by prospecting (and shooting rabbits). But McQueen merely emphasises the role of gold in creating a property-conscious proletariat with private fantasies of gold-induced economic independence, and maintains the fantasies were as important in subordinating the labour movement as were the very real riches and wide-spread prosperity that gold engendered. Instead, gold could add to proletarian confidence, and therefore to militancy. Land could not perform a similar 'back-up' role, as considerable capital was required to commence farming. But land, and the self-sufficiency encapsulated in its appeal, could be a powerful incentive behind wage demands and the will to fight for them. McQueen's 'co-option thesis', however, simply argues that the possibility, whether real or imagined, of landed self-sufficiency, retarded working class consciousness in country, town, and city. Similarly, the effect of immigration could be seen as

103 McQueen, A New Britannia, p.146.
104 ibid., pp.147-76. Hopes for landed independence were, in fact, largely futile. (See Blainey, The Tyranny of Distance, pp.165-9). Land was abnormally expensive in Australia, with the aim of ensuring that such hopes rarely materialised, and also to use the land revenue to supply, by assisted immigration, wage-labour for the large landed properties. The physical condition of Australia favoured Wakefield's ideas, as settlers soon found there was insufficient profit in small holdings, until improved technology made smaller holdings more viable. Wakefieldism dovetailed neatly with the needs of both the Australian and the British ruling classes. Britain found herself with a surplus population, surplus produce for export, and the need for certain raw materials Australia could provide. British economists such as Mervive and Torrens were demolishing Ricardian orthodoxy, by arguing that to send capital out of the country could prevent a fall in profit. The mercantilist belief that emigration weakened the economy, wealth being dependent on population, was being counteracted by industrialisation and the corresponding ideas of Malthus. And, as capital export required an adequate labour force in the country of its destination, it seemed that all of Britain's problems could be solved at once. Wakefield's ideas appealed because it was believed his system could relieve the unemployment menacing British industry and straining rate-payers, provide Britain with agricultural produce, and provide a market for her exports. J.S. Mill's writings express this new-found enthusiasm in Britain for getting rid of surplus population. (Principles of Political Economy, p.103). And the need for a constantly expanding market for its products had indeed chased the English bourgeoisie to the furthest corner of the globe, but for Marx, Wakefield's only virtue was that his doctrine of the 'sufficient price' revealed the true nature of capitalist production. "Its principle is to make the land in the colonies artificially more expensive while making labour artificially cheaper, in order to reach the 'necessary combination of
double-edged. McQueen seems to regard British immigrants as super-hegemonised products of the imperfect nature of the English bourgeois revolution. Yet there is considerable evidence that British immigrants were a vital force in the creation of at least trade union consciousness, as immigration brought many experienced British trade unionists to Australian shores. The 'pommy shop-steward' is not a recent Australian invention.

So, although McQueen downgrades the evidence of class conflict in nineteenth century Australia, his arguments can, nevertheless, be employed to explain, not the level of co-option, as he intends, but also the level of conflict, which certainly did exist. Of course, his arguments are by no means an adequate explanation of conflict, as such an explanation must start with the labour-process and the extraction of surplus value, and such a starting point is not even a premise in McQueen's work, as McQueen's workers are all petty bourgeois. He has distorted the 'aristocracy of labour' concept beyond recognition. To distort McQueen instead, it is apparent that the reasons he cites for the low level of class consciousness are useful to the extent to which they explain, not the homogenous backwardness of working class consciousness, but rather its heterogeneity. Factors aiming to account only for the emergence of a backward element in the working class are inadequate for an understanding of the trajectory of the Australian labour movement. On the other hand, if these factors can account also for the existence of a more militant section of the working class, then they are worth considering.

However, for the purposes of this thesis, it is necessary, not only to establish the existence of different degrees of consciousness within the labour movement, but to explain how even the 'vanguard' of the working class was prone to nationalism. It is impossible to deny that the most trade union conscious sections of the working class, the vanguard in the nineteenth century, were frequently the most nationalist into the bargain. Why, then,

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productive forces" (Marx in Neue Oder Zeitung, 26 July 1855, quoted in Mayer, Marx, Engels and Australia, p.144). Wakefield's ideas appealed to the Australian squattocracy, as it was geared towards securing a large landless labour force, by selling land at a 'sufficient price', which was in effect a price high enough to prevent land being sold to any but the richest immigrants.

105. McQueen, A New Britannia, pp.177-8.
106. This point hardly needs footnoting. See Barnard, History, p.416.
107. As Macintyre notes, not even the most third-world orientated of Marxist theorists would ever claim that the metropolitan workers are so debased by the effects of imperialism that they no longer constitute a proletariat. ("The Making of the Australian Working Class: An Historiographical Survey", Historical Studies, Vol 18 No 71, Oct 1978, p.236).
were those who fought their employers on the job nevertheless susceptible to the ideology of their employers?

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The appeal of nationalism to the working class derived partly from the dual role of the Australian colonies. Although they were more or less dependent colonies of Britain, this community of transplanted Britons, as Hancock notes, developed its own aggressive imperialism. Moreover, indigenous Australian commercial interests developed their own aggressive capitalism on the mainland. Yet this 'nationalism of initiative', internally and externally, was able, by virtue of Australia's colonial status, to take ideological form as a 'nationalism of resistance' to British subjection. By this means, it was able to broaden the base of its support; it could appeal to the working class, especially to the militant working class, which resented the apparent exploitation and oppression involved in subjection to Britain. Australian nationalism was able to pose as a radical ideology, while in reality it articulated the interests of that section of the Australian ruling class that had become dominant by the 1880s.

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109. Joseph Cook, Free Trade leader, confided to his diary in the early years of the Commonwealth: "... the real problem of the world is race... Problems may be acutely upon us before long. Japanese have proved beyond all doubt the immense potentialities of the Asiatic renaissance for war, industry, colonization... Hitherto the field of commerce, now the venue [is] changed to the field of diplomacy. May be next to the battlefield..." And Alfred Deakin, leader of the Protection Party, stressed the importance of a Pacific policy in addition to an imperial policy, because foreign interests surrounded Australia, and the islands to the north and east, he pointed out, "affect our business more and more... there are Pacific problems in which the Australian interest is inexpressible". (Quoted in Meaney, "Australia's Foreign Policy: History and Myth", *Australian Outlook*, Vol 23 No 2, Aug 1969, p.175).
110. Connell and Irving argue that in eastern Australia, the unity of the ruling class dissolved in the 1840s, and a struggle for control of the state developed. Urban bourgeois mobilisation rested on the strategy of politically co-opting the urban workers. The struggle in the political arena against the conservatism of pastoral capital was the strongest dynamic in the emergence of the commercial bourgeoisie as the leading section of capital. "Just as the squatters had justified their programme in terms of the good of the colony, so now the urban merchants and manufacturers associated a 'free' labour market with a free society, and profits with prosperity for all. A liberal individualism was easily inserted into these arguments. There was even a tinge of nationalism; a single, strong domestic market, whose entrepreneurs would be strategically placed to exploit the
By the last few decades of the nineteenth century, the imperial-minded squattocracy had been challenged, economically, politically, and ideologically, by a more Australian-minded section of the ruling class — merchants and businessmen. Nationalism was very much the plaything of this new ruling class group. The ability of the new commercial and business leaders to mobilise the labour movement behind their demands increased their political power vis-à-vis the squattocracy. Protectionist associations and land-reform leagues are possibly the best examples of this new-bourgeois/proletarian co-operation.\textsuperscript{111} Nationalism was crucial in this mobilisation, and the anti-British emphasis was self-evidently the easiest way to sell the product to the working class, particularly to the militant working class.\textsuperscript{112} Yet anti-Britishness was in no way the substance of the nationalism of the newly dominant fraction of the ruling class. It was no more anti-British than it was pro-labour. The anti-Britishness, and the associated rejection of the English aristocratic pretensions of the squattocracy, was largely a rhetorical device aimed at strengthening the political power of the urban bourgeoisie, and thereby strengthening Australian-based capital. Yet such capital was not hostile to London finance; indeed, it was frequently intertwined with it. Australian capital, however, was establishing substantial interests independently of Britain, in Australia and in the Pacific. Asian capital, not British capital, was regarded as the principal threat to these interests.

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\textsuperscript{111} See Irving, "1850-1870" in Crowley, \textit{A New History of Australia}, pp.124-164.

Even the rhetoric was not entirely anti-British. It rejected merely those aspects of British society that were inappropriate in a society made in the image of the new urban bourgeoisie. Australian nationalism was anti-feudal. Beyond that, Anglophilia and Australian nationalism could happily co-exist. Indeed, Australian nationalism stressed the importance of preserving the British nature of Australia. Australia's destiny was to be white, to be more British than the British, though this nationalist utopia was to be purged of British inequalities and constructed out of a "multitude of perfect human units". Racial homogeneity formed the backbone of Australian nationalism, and this racial homogeneity was dependent on Britishness. But imperial diplomacy, which involved dealing with 'inferior' races, was regarded as a threat to racial homogeneity; despite imperial acquiescence in the substance, if not the details, of the White Australia legislation, Australian racism gained strength from the supposed threat of a British sell-out. Yet Australian nationalism was very much a product of British imperialism. As Roe points out: "The assertion or arrogance with which Australia faced the world was possible not only because British power guarded Australia (albeit not so meticulously as some Australians would have liked), but because Australians identified themselves as Britons, the master-people of the nineteenth century". Cole describes the common ethnocentric basis of nationalism, imperialism, and racism: Australian ethnocentrism became identified with nationalism, Anglo-Saxon ethnocentrism with imperialism, and Caucasian ethnocentrism with racialism... as expressions of a common ethnic consciousness, all three blurred and blended rather easily with each other. The varying functional value of the three determined which would be emphasized at any particular time and by whom. By the turn of the century the indigenous ethnocentricity had fulfilled many of its functions.

The most obvious function that 'indigenous ethnocentricity' had fulfilled was the ideological justification for the Australian Zollverein.

113. Queensland Worker, 5 Jan 1901.
114. Roe notes how the Australian ethos fitted the demands of nationalist ideology, and was to some extent determined by those demands. He suggests the ethic-creators imposed nationalist doctrine upon their portrayal of Australia rather than that empiric study of Australia inspired their nationalism; the ethic-creators not only denied large parts of Australian reality, but often set about their task on very brief acquaintance with Australian reality. All in all, Roe sees the Australian ethic as a contrived one, which concorded with nationalist needs and inclinations. ("An Historical Survey of Australian Nationalism", Victorian Historical Magazine, Vol 42 No 4, Nov 1971, pp.664, 666, 675, 670).
Blackton identifies three main streams of colonial opinion in the two decades preceding federation: the radicals, the middle-class nativist moderates, and the Anglo-Australian loyalists. Although he wrongly assumes the radical, republican, egalitarian, and anti-British nationalism of the 1880s was a force created independently of the nativist moderates, he describes how, in practice, the nationalist banner and continental leadership fell to the moderates by the time of federation. Not only had the disunited radicals apparently lost their historic role as champions of Australian nationalism, but the conservatives, adrift after the collapse of Imperial Federation, had no choice but to give their support to the middle class nationalism of the moderates. It was these nativist, moderate, and middle class elements that designed and launched the Australian state in 1901 as a democracy and as an associate of the British Empire and of capitalism: "It was a nationalist Australia, racially exclusive, with ambitions in the Pacific. It was democratic but not entirely egalitarian... The chance for a workmen's Utopia had been lost, and it was a middle-class democracy, linked to the British monarchy, which appeared in 1901".  

There was no chance for a 'workmen's Utopia' as long as working class militancy was diverted into nationalist channels, no matter how anti-British and 'egalitarian'. For even radical nationalism was essentially about the creation of a capitalist society, freed of the incubus of feudalism, and based, not on actual equality, but on equality of opportunity. By championing an apparent nationalism of resistance to British subjection, the urban bourgeoisie was able to mobilise the labour movement behind its demands. Australia's aggressive imperialism and capitalism were sustained, ideologically by nationalism and racist xenophobia, and in practice by militarism. We are treated to the absurd spectacle of a community that had intervened in the Sudan, in South Africa, and in China, avidly rearing itself on 'yellow peril' bogies and literature about the imminent invasion of Australia. The blood spilt, however, was frequently in the British imperial cause. There was little conflict; in reality, between British capitalist designs and Australian, but the urban bourgeoisie found the fiction of such a conflict worth preserving, as an antidote to working class consciousness. 

The strength of labour nationalism was assisted also by working class 

responses to the state. Unlike the United States and the other 'dominions', Australia was settled by a capitalist state formation disguised as a British military regime. Admittedly, the disguise was a poor one; the commercial activities of the corps were far from concealed. But the state was privileged, nevertheless, to witness the birth of a capitalist society. Such was not the case in Britain, for instance, where the modern bourgeois state developed in response to the needs of mature private enterprise. The state as it emerged in Britain was more obviously the 'executive committee of the bourgeoisie'. It could not appear as the arbiter of national development in the interests of all.

Not only did the state pre-date capitalism in Australia, but, given the particularly harsh physical environment of Australia, this state apparatus became linked with all aspects of economic development. The overwhelming task of settling the continent accorded to the machinery of state an abnormal degree of economic control. And private capitalists had no desire to challenge this role of the state. Grattan makes clear that under colonial middle class rule, the state intervened because it had been decided, pragmatically and realistically, that this was a proper way to give aid to private enterprise and strengthen the prevailing dogma of equality of opportunity. Fitzpatrick dismisses, as an illusion, the idea that in Australia, Government was in business to restrict private enterprises, maintaining that the collaboration of Government and Capital was in fact the

117. See McMichael, "The Genesis of Settler Capitalism in Australia", Intervention, No 13, Oct 1979, pp.45-6. Connell and Irving note that the first private capital in the colony came from officers' salaries and official funds, but that a process of accumulation in the officers' hands began immediately private trade and agricultural production was organised, that is, in the early 1790s. (Class Structure in Australian History, p.38).
118. As Fitzpatrick explains: the circumstances of Australia were such that it was as obligatory on the democratic governments to undertake these 'developmental responsibilities', as it had been obligatory on Phillip and Macquarie to clear the road for private enterprise in the first generation. (The British Empire in Australia, p.396). N.G. Butlin refers to the crucially important role the government played in respect to the formation of capital, always difficult to create in a colonial economy. (Cited in Encel, "The Concept of the State in Australian Politics", Australian Journal of Politics and History, Vol VI No 1, May 1960, p.69). Blainey points out that governments could play an unusually energetic role in economic and social affairs due to land revenue, which, in many years, exceeded their income from all other forms of taxation. And British loans could be raised on this basis. (The Tyranny of Distance, pp.166-7). Reeves refers to the state in Australia as 'the great colonial landlord'. (State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand, p.62).
distinguishing characteristic. The persistent public undertakings, particularly railways and irrigation, were for the service of private enterprise. The State administered essential services that would not be profitable for private enterprise; it nurtured enterprise by tariff, bounties, advances to settlers, selection legislation, and other concessions. "Before 1834, the role of the State was to provide British capitalists with free land and labour in Australia; afterwards, having facilitated the importation of capital for investment, its role was to provide services which would facilitate the earning of dividends on the capital invested".  

An elaborate capitalist infrastructure was created, and the state paid the bill. Even more urgently than in advanced industrial capitalist societies, private capitalists in Australia desired that the state finance developmental schemes, either because of the non-specific return on the investment, as in the case of irrigation for example, or for fear that a private monopoly might make profits at the expense of all other sections of private industry, as in the case of railways, or from lack of private funds for investment. Yet, incidentally, the state appeared as an independent 'third force', transcending the interests of either capital or labour, because of the connection between such developmental schemes and general prosperity. The outcome of this impartial posture of the state was that the labour movement developed no thorough-going critique of the state as necessarily working in the interests of the employers. Instead, the labour movement believed the state could protect working class interests; it was enthusiastic about the extension of state control on the basis that the state, unlike the employers, was impartial. Even German social democracy,

120. Fitzpatrick, *The British Empire in Australia*, pp.398-9, 451, 503-4. Writing about the state in early colonial Australia, Connell and Irving note: "The state organisations provided both a base and a field of operations for private entrepreneurs. State power and private control of production were articulated in many ways, from the magistracy to the organisation of immigration. The form of the state certainly changed, moving closer to the English pattern, but it was never substantially opposed to private production. Above all, the state became involved in constructing and guaranteeing the relations of private ownership on which the labour market and capitalist production would rest". (Class Structure in Australian History, p.35).

121. State activity could easily be incorporated into the doctrine of progress as capitalist expansion, leading to social prosperity, which Connell and Irving describe as a lasting legacy, becoming a central part of the parliamentary ethos as the new political order crystallised. "Henceforth governments took credit for prosperity, blame for contraction, and attempted to prop themselves electorally by guaranteeing the profitability of the leading industries". (Class Structure in Australian History, pp.63-4).
while nursing illusions about the potential of the state, harboured few
illusions about the nature of the contemporary capitalist state. *Neue Zeit*
described arbitration as the most short-sighted of all demands, and
despaired that the Queensland labour movement praised state purchases of
pineapples and strawberries as a big victory for the cause of socialism. 122
Labour enthusiasm for the role of the state made it an easy victim of the
politics of consensus. As De Garis notes, what was good for one section of
the community was believed to be good for all, and the idea of class or
sectional parties and legislation was anathema. "These assumptions gave a
paradoxical but effective monopoly of political power to the burgeoning
middle class". 123 The belief that the state was responsive to the demands of
working class Australians, that the Workingman's Paradise had merely to be
legislated into existence, encouraged working class loyalty to the state,
and through the state, to the nation. 124 And it was the 'left' in the early
labour movement who were most enthusiastic about state action; militants
were typically those workers who fought the boss most ferociously then
called for the state to intervene to settle the dispute 'fairly'.

* * *

The 'incorporation' of workers lacking trade union consciousness is
understandable. But the political and ideological mobilisation of the
'vanguard' of the class, behind the demands of their employers, is more
unusual. In Australia, this mobilisation was achieved by a bourgeois-

122. Cited in Tampke, "'Pace Setter or Quiet Backwater?' – German Literature
on Australia's Labour Movement and Social Policies 1890-1914", *Labour
History*, No 36, May 1979, p.14. Murphy believes the early Labor Parties
placed too much faith in the power of the state and understood too little
the power of capitalism. "In the value they placed on state intervention...
they were undoubtedly assisted by the Australian national acceptance of the
state as having a greater positive role than would have been accepted in
Britain or in the United States". (*Labour in Politics*, pp.5-6). Dalton argues
that because Australian geography and history bred reliance on the state,
the vast public utility, this produced Labour's belief in state planning for
social engineering. ("An Interpretative Survey: the Queensland Labour
Movement" in Murphy, Joyce, Hughes, *Prelude to Power*, pp.24-5).


124. The ideology of 'left labourism' and its associated enthusiasm for the
role of the state is enunciated most clearly in the work of William Lane,
who edited various labour publications in Queensland in the 1880s and 1890s
before departing, in 1893, to form a utopian socialist colony in Paraguay,
along with several hundred of Australia's most militant workers. Lane's
philosophy is discussed in the introductory sections of the chapters on the
1880s and 1890s.
nationalist ideology, which appealed to the most radical in the labour movement by its polemical denunciation of the hierarchy of British society and its imitators amongst the 'bunyip aristocracy' of Australia. And the state, as an important agent of capitalist expansion, was regarded by militant workers as a progressive and neutral force, and therefore deserving of proletarian allegiance.

But, in the final analysis, incorporation of trade union conscious workers is not surprising. Even a militant 'class-in-itself' cannot be immune to the siren entreaties of bourgeois ideology. Trade union consciousness and nationalism could exist simultaneously within the most advanced section of the working class; class consciousness and nationalism, however, could not. Yet it was, nevertheless, the heightening of trade union consciousness that served as an ideological springboard for the development of class consciousness. The class-in-itself became a class-for-itself via industrial militancy, thus preserving the connection between objective situation and consciousness. However, the nationalism and racism accompanying trade union consciousness had to be confronted before the transformation from trade union consciousness to class consciousness could take place. Only then could Australian socialist groups perform the role of a revolutionary party, of bringing 'correct' class conscious ideas to the working class, for these socialist groups themselves had first to be transformed.

IV. The Making of Australian Socialism, 1887-1917

As the Labor Party developed throughout the Australian colonies, and later, the states, it truly articulated the combination of trade union consciousness and nationalism within the earlier labour movement. While pursuing trade union aims by political means, the Labor Party zealously protected the 'national interest'. NSW Labor leader Holman observed: "The genuine Laborite, it appears, must not only accept the Labor programme, as I do, but must accept this undescribable something called nationalism, as well, on pain of exclusion from our magic circle". AWU leader Spence would have been the first to urge exclusion. He boasted that the Labor Party

stood for "racial purity and racial efficiency - industrially, mentally, morally, and intellectually. It asks the people to set up a high ideal of national character, and hence it stands strongly against any admixture with the white race. True patriotism should be racial". But perhaps the strength of nationalism (and liberalism) in the Labor blend is best illustrated by Federal Labor leader Watson's reply in 1901 to a plea for avoiding insults to the Orient:

We never say that 'all men are equal'. No sensible set of men would ever say so. But we say... that equal opportunities should be afforded so far as the law can allow to every citizen. And we reserve the right to say who shall be citizens. We ask that they shall be on a moral and physical level with ourselves...128

Under the pressure of the electoral system, the young Labor Party not only thought of itself, but also forcefully presented itself, as a 'national', rather than as a 'class' party.129

It is apparent, then, that unadulterated class consciousness did not repose in the Labor Party. As Hancock observed of the Labor Party: within it, it was impossible to disentangle the passions of class and of nationalism, so inextricably were they intertwined.130 The story of the making of Australian socialism is the story of the process of disentanglement.

However, the impetus for this disentanglement did not come from within the Australian labour movement; it came from without, in the form of 'imported' revolutionary and internationalist ideology. The Australian working class appears to have been incapable of independently throwing up a vanguard bereft of the burden of nationalism. Working class consciousness was insufficiently developed, partly as a result of the strength of labour nationalism.

Yet Rickard claims that around the period 1890-1910, something of a working class consciousness was forced on wage-earners by sheer economic facts, as the social mobility of earlier colonial society no longer existed.131 Rickard has interpreted the heightening of class conflict and trade union consciousness at this time as indicating a move towards class consciousness. But if working class consciousness was to be found anywhere, it was to be found, presumably, amongst those workers disillusioned with the

129.See below, Chapter 3, footnote 19. The nationalism of the Labor Party is, in fact, outlined 'chronologically' in the introductory sections to each chapter.
130.Hancock, Australia, p.53.
131.Rickard, Class and Politics, p.293.
Labor Party. However, criticism of the Labor Party centred on failure within its own economistic strategy; there was virtually no dissent from the nationalist perspective of the party. Similarly, Fox infers from the support given to May Day demonstrations in the early 1890s that internationalism and ideas of working class solidarity were widespread. Yet one must be wary of attaching too much significance to May Days at this time, as there was a certain amount of Eurocentric socialist chauvinism in such displays. To a large extent, they were a demonstration of white industrial and political superiority, rather than an expression of unconditional solidarity with all the world's workers. The crucial test of class consciousness for Australian workers was the reaction to the 'yellow hordes'.

However, Rickard is right that there was something of a class consciousness as early as the 1890s, as a substantial increase in trade union consciousness must be regarded as a move towards class consciousness. Trade union consciousness can be increased, rather than decreased, by the ending of factors that initially encouraged this trade union consciousness. And by the 1890s, the avenues of co-option were certainly closing. The depression had sealed off the escape routes from wage-labour; labour shortage had turned into unemployment. Mining companies had introduced class relations onto the goldfields. And, as Alexander, following Frederick Jackson Turner, states, the posthumous influence of the frontier was limited; in the 1890s, 'land-hunger' replaced hopes of landed self-sufficiency. Symptomatic of the situation was that in 1892, for the first time, Australia began to lose population by emigration. Most importantly, urban capital was beginning to create its potential grave-diggers - an urban proletariat living in crowded slums. And in the country, the normally scattered workforce was choosing to cluster in crowded strike camps to resist wage-cutting and to defend the right to form unions. A level of class struggle hitherto unknown in the history of Australia had been reached.

132. Fox, "Early Australian May Days", Labour History, No 2, May 1962, p.47. The first May Day demonstration in Australia was evidently in Barcaldine during the shearsers' strike in 1891. 1,340 men took part, of whom 618 were mounted. (ibid., p.36).
133. This limited 'internationalism' expressed in May Day demonstrations is described in various places throughout the thesis.
134. Alexander, Moving Frontiers, p.33.
This move towards class consciousness in the form of intensified trade union consciousness after 1890, and indeed, the militant traditions of Australian labour from further back, were essential prerequisites for the emergence of working class consciousness in Australia. The catalyst, however, was external to the Australian labour movement. Not even the socialist organisations in the period up to 1906 could properly be described as representing a class conscious section of the workers, unless class consciousness is to be defined so narrowly as to embrace the working class of only one race. Trade union consciousness had to be stripped of its nationalism before it could become class consciousness. This happened in the case of those militants who came under the influence of Tom Mann or, more importantly, the Industrial Workers of the World.

So, while it is certainly true that Australian society created the conditions for the acceptance by some workers of class conscious ideology, this ideology was not generated directly from within the Australian labour movement. This in itself is not unusual. Colonial ideologies, hegemonic or otherwise, are generally derivative. What is interesting is which ideas take root after transplantation, and which do not. In the case of Australia, it was Australian circumstances, moulded largely by the mode of production, geography, climate, natural resources, population, and so on, that determined which ideas would be accepted. The brake of nationalism had prevented a natural development from trade union consciousness to class consciousness; the nationalism and racism of Australian labour had deterred indigenous flowering of revolutionary ideas that rejected the race and the nation. Yet the trade union consciousness of many Australian workers enabled such workers to respond enthusiastically to the class conscious ideology of the IWW, because the IWW emphasised the industrial struggle and other methods that 'rang true' to the militant traditions of Australian labour.

Labour Socialism, as Macintyre notes, came from outside the working class; revolutionary internationalist socialism, albeit after implantation from abroad, came from within the working class, from the IWW, which allowed only wage-earners to join and whose members were addressed as 'fellow-workers', not 'comrades'. The IWW struck a chord in the vanguard of the working class; it appealed to the 'gut economisin' of Australian labour. The One Big Union propounded by the IWW offered Australian militants a 'macro trade unionism', which, in the wake of the 1890s industrial defeats,
had obvious appeal. They were even prepared to discard their former allegiance to the nation and the race, which true Wobblyism made essential.

Until the IWW established its own press in 1914, the Australian agencies for the ideas of the IWW were socialist organisations. Not unexpectedly, the groups themselves were fundamentally transformed in the process, from nationalist, trade union conscious organisations to internationalist, class conscious ones. For such socialists, the IWW became a substitute for old ways, as it proposed a method for revolution that avoided the parliamentary pit-falls becoming ever more apparent. Only those socialists who still regarded parliament as the best means for attaining socialism were impervious to the ideas of the IWW and the switch to anti-racism that acceptance of Wobbly ideas entailed; where socialism continued to be construed as the end-product of a legislative process pursued by proxy, confrontation of working class racism was either not considered necessary or not worth the consequent electoral penalties. On the other hand, the most trade union conscious socialists, those most critical of the Labor Party, happily underwent conversion. This conversion entailed a fundamental change in strategy, away from parliament and towards industrial organisation, but *class conscious* industrial organisation. Where socialist groups endorsed the IWW's strategy of revolutionary industrial unionism, the confrontation of racist ideology was seen as an essential component of the overall aim of promoting proletarian solidarity at the point of production. Ironically, it was the IWW, which despised revolutionary political parties, that taught Australian socialist groups to behave like revolutionary parties; it convinced them of the necessity, in Gramsci's words, to 'react energetically' upon the working class, in order to solidify it.

So, it was the revolutionary *method* of the IWW that was the key to its anti-racism. Indeed, examination of socialist groups throughout the period 1887 to 1917 reveals that their reactions to working class racism depended on the method the group proposed for altering society, or even for securing a better deal for workers under capitalism. Reformist groups, therefore, were not necessarily racist; nor were revolutionary groups inevitably anti-racist. As a general rule, however, anti-racism tended to be the preserve of revolutionary socialist organisations, as only revolutionaries in Australia adhered fully to the proposition that the emancipation of the working class must be the task of the working class itself, and that towards this end, the workers of the world should unite.
CHAPTER ONE.

GENESIS: THE 1880s

Wage-Labour and Capital

"No Chinese! No Kanakas!"

The Racial Philosophy of William Lane

Winspear's press and the Australian Socialist League
Lloyd Ross writes of the period before the gold rush, that social and economic conditions were fluid, and there were many avenues of escape from wage work. "There was no true place for permanent working-class organisation". By 1880, however, changes in the structure of the economy demanded not simply permanent, but increasingly well developed, working class organisation. Fitzpatrick notes that the great expansion and diversification of commerce and industry in the last third of the century involved radical changes in the occupational distribution of the people, in the distribution of the national income, and in the relations in general between those who capitalised the expansion, or their representatives, and those who provided the necessary labour; the upshot was a struggle between employers and employed.

Trade union development from the fifties, but especially from the seventies and in reply, the anti-union combination of employers throughout Australia and New Zealand, especially from the 'eighties, were preliminary to a general trial of strength between Labour and Capital in the key industries, in 1890-94.

The dominant material facts of the 1880s, according to Fry, were of growth and prosperity. The first prerequisite of this was the increasing British demand for wool, and its most obvious support, the inflow of British capital, which was partly an effect, as well as a cause, of Australia's prosperity. The government in each colony was one of the principal agents for this capital. This responsibility to the overseas bondholder encouraged governmental interference in industrial relations to a much greater extent than elsewhere. Public capital accounted for about half the total new investment in Victoria and New South Wales during the 1880s. Most of this went into railway building. Private capital was channelled mainly into the pastoral industry and urban building, resulting in booms for Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, and Brisbane.

2. Fitzpatrick, The British Empire in Australia, pp.275-6. In NSW in 1861, 50% of the population had been employed in primary industry, 20% in secondary, and 30% in tertiary. By 1891, the proportions were 30%, 30%, and 40%. (E.C.Fry, 'The Condition of the Urban Wage Earning Class in Australia in the 1880s', p.25). In 1882, Victoria had only 15 factories employing more than 200 workers. By 1888, this number had doubled. (C.L.Buxton, "1870-1890" in Crowley, A New History of Australia, p.194).
Glynn argues that Australian cities developed in advance of the hinterland, and that urbanisation gave rise to manufacturing. Whatever the exact order of development, by 1891, almost two thirds of the population of three million lived in cities and towns. The developing transport and communication systems, and improved technology, accelerated this centralising trend. Moreover, apart from the fact that immigrants contributed disproportionately to urban expansion, population growth was greatest where near sexual parity existed, that is, in the cities rather than in the country. The major manufacturing industries were textiles, clothing, metals, machinery, building materials, food, drink, and tobacco. Manufacturing, in general, was nurtured by protective tariffs and government contracts.

Predominantly, the decade was marked by the preservation of full employment, fairly constant domestic prices, and rising money and real wages. The occurrences of short-lived and local unemployment, and even the depressions of '79-'80 and '86, did not seriously interrupt the rising standard of living or the expectation of its continuance. Fry comments that Australian wage earners could not fail to congratulate themselves on having attained a standard of living that the world might well envy. Despite some blackspots such as women, children, and outworkers, there was agreement amongst observers, confirmed later by Coghlan's statistical evidence, that the standard of living for the working class in Australia was very high by world standards. Buxton notes that the most optimistic wrote of a workingman's paradise, of workers concerned not with bread but with cake and the number of plums in it. Fry gives the impression of the existence of proletarian self-importance.

Scarcely inferior in their own estimate to the petty shopkeeper or official, with whom they often lived side by side, were the skilled craftsmen, such as building or metal workers, proud of the eight hour day and high wages which gave them an opportunity to play an active role as citizens. Confident in the strength of their unions, they knew their position, considered it an honourable one, and did not fear it could be jeopardised. More numerous but less prominent were the unskilled and semi-skilled workers in manufacturing, construction and transport. They lacked the privileges of the groups above them, but earned good wages, ate their three full meals, clothed and housed themselves adequately, and were confident that they could obtain their share

in the general prosperity and progress. There were few workmen who did not possess a black coat and bowler hat for Sunday wear.10

Such conditions were obviously favourable to the growth of trade unionism and its success in day to day struggles.11 But Fry refers also to the "intellectual ferment" of the 1880s working class. "Though the official of the craft union might be a lay preacher on Sundays, it was the challenging ideas of Henry George, Gronlund, Bellamy and such which fought their way into the minds of bush and city workers..."12 For instance, Bellamy's Looking Backward was serialised in the Illawarra Mercury, and in 1886, the Sydney Morning Herald commented that the men who were pioneering trade unionism in the Illawarra district were preaching a gospel composed of "crudely developed ideas with a strong socialistic tendency".13 The Fifth Inter-Colonial Trades Union Congress in 1888 betrayed the influence of Henry George in its resolution that a simple yet sovereign remedy which will raise wages, increase and give remunerative employment, abolish poverty, extirpate pauperism, lessen crime, elevate moral tastes and intelligence, purify government and carry civilisation to yet nobler heights, is to abolish all taxation except that on land values.14

And Gollan, in noting the extraordinary response to the London dockers' strike, the collection of £30,000 from Australia, remarks that "leading trade unionists were thinking in terms of national trade union co-operation, leading to a co-operative commonwealth and perhaps even a co-operative world".15

Nor was the intellectual ferment restricted to the working class. Reeves writes that a wave of socialistic feeling was sweeping over the colonies. In 1889 every one was reading collectivist tracts and listening to altruistic sermons. Trade unionists were not by any means the only colonists who sent money home to help the London dockers. And when the dockers won their strike, middle-class men and women in Australia and New Zealand rejoiced as over a victory for the cause of humanity.16

Markus argues that the coincidence of the founding of organisations to the left of the labour movement with the period of most intense anti-Chinese agitation is not entirely fortuitous for the historian interested in

15. Ibid., p.161.
16. Reeves, State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand, pp.74-5.
socialism and racism. He claims that both events stemmed from a common seedbed: adverse economic conditions were provoking thought.\textsuperscript{17} Certainly, in the wake of relative affluence, adverse economic conditions would probably be more 'thought-provoking' than continuing boom, continuing depression, or boom after depression. Whatever the cause, these radical thoughts that were being provoked found expression in "a growing family of little left-wing papers".\textsuperscript{18} Not only papers, but groups and grouplets also flourished. For example, the Melbourne Anarchist Club was formed on 1st May 1886 as an offshoot of the Australasian Secular Association.\textsuperscript{19} It was against this background of generalised radicalism that the Australasian Socialist League first developed its more seriously socialist ideas.

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The upsurge of racist nationalism evident in the 1880s took place against a background of increased Chinese immigration, particularly into Sydney and Melbourne.\textsuperscript{20} It hardly seems coincidental, however, that the marked revival in the anti-Chinese movement in 1886 took place after the \textit{Bulletin} launched its alarmist reporting of the Chinese situation in May 1886. The press, generally, was whipping up anti-Chinese hysteria, relying heavily on news from California to give substance to their scaremongering reports.\textsuperscript{21} Anti-Chinese Leagues were formed in Sydney in August 1886 and in

\begin{itemize}
\item[17.] Andrew Markus, "White Australia? Socialists and Anarchists", \textit{Arena}, Nos 32-33, 1973, p.84.
\item[19.] F.B.Smith records that the Anarchist Club began a newspaper \textit{Honesty} but then fell out amongst themselves. Upham, Andrews and Petrie supported the 'Chicago policy' of violence, whereas Andrade and Fleming were for moral suasion and peaceful change. (F.B.Smith, "Joseph Symes and the Australasian Secular Association", \textit{Labour History}, No 5, Nov 1963, p.43). It appears that \textit{Honesty} is not available, but some impression of the Club's activities and politics can be gleaned from its relations with the ASL and its exchanges with the \textit{Radical} and \textit{Australian Radical}. Merrifield has also provided useful background on the Melbourne anarchists in the \textit{Recorder}, Bulletin of the Melbourne branch of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History, and in S.Merrifield, "The Melbourne Anarchist Club 1886-1891", \textit{Labour History}, No 3, Nov 1962, pp.32-43.
\item[21.] Markus, 'The Burden of Hate', pp.316-20. Markus reveals that the disturbances in the western USA first received extensive coverage in the Australian press in December 1885, and that knowledge of the Californian situation made a deep and lasting impact, with Australian papers quoting extensively from American ones. In fact, he shifts the basis of his
\end{itemize}
Townsville, Brisbane and Melbourne in September. The resolution passed unanimously at the Fourth Inter-Colonial Trades Union Congress in 1886 read:

That in the opinion of this Congress the time has arrived when immediate steps should be taken about the total abolition of Chinese and Coolie immigration because - first, the competition of Asiatic against European labour is entirely unfair; second, it is well known that the presence of Chinese in large numbers in any community has had a very bad moral tendency.

The momentum achieved in 1886 was maintained in 1887 by the visit of the Chinese Investigation Commission. Although this Commission came merely to report on the conditions of Chinese resident in Australia, and on trade possibilities, the idea gained currency that this Commission was the advance guard of the Mongolian hordes, sent to spy out the land. NSW premier Parkes, for one, blatantly pandered to this viewpoint. Other agitators used it for all it was worth; the miners of Newcastle, for example, were 'warned' that five or ten thousand Chinese could easily be imported to work in the mines.

The only outcome of the visit, however, was that the Chinese Minister in London protested to the British government about the poll tax system because it was used exclusively against Chinese. This protest was forwarded to the various colonial governors in January 1888. The reply of the Tasmanian government is extremely pertinent.

In none of the Australasian colonies would the artisans and labourers have sufficient power or influence to obtain restrictive legislation on this question if they were not aided by the conviction of a majority of the other members of the community that such legislation is necessary for its present and future welfare.

The development of the anti-Chinese agitation in the various colonies in the 1880s reveals in many ways the declining relative importance of the union movement, the increasing involvement of businessmen and other middle-class people, and the importance of the press in encouraging anti-Chinese agitation.

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27. Persia Crawford Campbell, *Chinese Coolie Emigration to Countries within the British Empire*, p.68.
activity. The Northern Territory, with a Chinese population of about 4,000 and less than 1,000 Europeans, was the actualised nightmare of Australian capitalists throughout the continent. Markus finds that in the Territory in the 1880s, "European storekeepers and teamsters saw Chinese competitors set up against them in competition. Even European contractors, making a living by profit for government contracts, saw profit margins being reduced and contracts passing into other hands as Chinese entrepeneurs entered the market". In the meantime, the press spread rumours that attempts were being made to flood the Territory with Chinese labourers who would soon move south to compete with Australian workers.

Anti-Chinese orthodoxy was still as strong in the labour movement as in the wider community, but the anti-Chinese movement, by the late 1880s, had no discernible class base. The Sydney Anti-Chinese League, feeling the lack of organised working class involvement, made desperate attempts to secure a trade union base. The defeat of the seamen who waged an unsuccessful struggle against Chinese crews in 1888 was partly the result of lack of support from other unions. Given the degree of community consensus and middle class political demagogy, specifically working class interest in the campaign waned. With prominent public figures like Parkes whipping up anti-Chinese feeling and initiating restrictive measures, the trade unions took up the position of second violin in the anti-Chinese orchestra; gone were the days of the small chamber music group dominated by unionists.

It was Parkes who instigated moves late in 1887 for common inter-colonial action on Chinese immigration, by circularising the other premiers. The reactions to his proposal were favourable, and this common feeling on exclusion now felt by the different colonial governments resulted in an inter-colonial conference in June 1888, which brought all the colonies to a common exclusion policy. When moving the Influx of Chinese Restriction Bill in the NSW legislature, Parkes disclaimed any involvement in the anti-Chinese campaign, and posed merely as the tribune of the racist people.


We the members of the Government, who are responsible for bringing in this bill, have been in no way instrumental at any time in promoting this agitation; but the question is there, black and startling, in the midst of our social economics, irritating, agitating all classes of persons, and operating in a most intense way on those who are least informed, and for that reason the most dangerous. Can this thing be allowed to go on, this gangrene in the body politic, this seed of disturbance in the midst of society?... It is against this danger that we are called upon at the present time, to legislate... Neither for Her Majesty's ships of war, nor for Her Majesty's representatives, for for the Secretary of State do we intend to turn aside from our purpose, which is to terminate the landing of the Chinese on these shores for ever.32

Trade unionists applauded from the back row. The NSW branch of the Federated Seamen's Union of Australasia passed a unanimous resolution praising Parkes and his government for their "resolute protection of our race and country from an invasion of innumerable hordes of Chinese".33

By the end of 1888, Chinese were effectively excluded, so the governments of the various colonies could concentrate on preventing 'unfair' competition of capital and, incidentally, of labour. The Sixth Trades Union Congress in 1889 expressed its 'satisfaction' with the colonial Acts of Parliament aimed at restricting Chinese immigration.34

In Queensland, however, the continuation of the Melanesian labour trade for the sugar plantations still frustrated the aspirations to 'racial purity' of the overwhelming number of Australians, of all classes. Corris notes that when feeling against Melanesian labour ran high, criticism was focussed, not on the slave Melanesians, but on those who had served out their contracts. In 1889, there were 2,879 time-expired men in the colony, and north of Townsville they could demand and receive £1 per week. One employer in the Herbert River district reckoned there was "a sort of union amongst them". Organisation of this sort on the part of the islanders was much resented, as it was when islanders competed directly with Europeans by setting up as contractors for fencing and scrub clearing.35

In 1885, the Griffith Liberal government had passed legislation making importation of Melanesians illegal after the end of 1890. Griffith's government had already introduced measures to promote the small cane farm as opposed to the large plantation, such as the 1884 land selection act and

32. NSW Parliamentary Debates, 16 May 1888, pp.4781-7, quoted in Yarwood, Attitudes to Non-European Immigration, pp.94-5.
33. Quoted in Huttenback, Racism and Empire, pp.110-1.
35. Corris, Passage, Port and Plantation, A History of Solomon Islands Labour Migration 1870-1914, p.86.
the 1885 provision of money for the first central sugar mill. The Liberal government had struck the first blow in the battle for a white Queensland.

* * *

Although based in Queensland, the writings of William Lane were influential throughout the Australian labour movement, and more than any other agitator of the time, it was Lane who sold racism to the working class. Lane edited the *Boomerang* from its first issue in November 1887 until he joined the Queensland *Worker* at the beginning of 1890. Amidst articles on the necessity for better irrigation and control of rabbits, attacks on capital punishment and cruelty to animals, support for Prohibition and anti-gambling legislation, Lane outlined his racist and nationalist philosophy vividly and frequently. No issue spared the 'inferior' races detailed and scathing attention. Lane's journalism deserves consideration not merely because of its role in promulgating working class racism but because an examination of his philosophy also contributes to an understanding of the racist psychology of the Australian working class in the 1880s, and in particular, of the working class response to the Chinese and Melanesians.

The problem with the Chinese was simple. Because of his colour he was unchangeable, not just physically, but culturally, as well. A Mongol is a Mongol whether he owes allegiance to the Son of the Sun or to the Queen of England or to the Grand Llama of Thibet. He is none the less filthy or dangerous or objectionable though he has been dipped seven times in Jordan; he is the representative of a rival civilisation, the standard-bearer of an arch-antagonistic race...

Like the *Bulletin*, Lane made much of the possibility of actual physical contamination, and in classic racist fashion, all imaginable sins were thrown at the Chinese: "They skin our goldfields, they debauch our children, they undersell our merchants, shopkeepers, and producers, availing themselves of trade-tricks and subterfuges such as no honest community could descend to, in order to achieve the white man's ruin more happily..." These

37. Mansfield pays Lane this dubious tribute: "Of his influence on the developing Labour movement there can be no doubt at all... By the early '90s Lane was the major figure in both the journalism and the organization of Labour in Queensland. The racialism of *The Boomerang* was bitter and complete. Lane believed that races could not mix, and was terrified at the thought of a "piebald" population in Australia". ("The Origins of 'White Australia'," p.63).
AUSTRALIA WAKES! (See Page 3.)

Every Australian Colony but West Australia has joined in the Declaration that the Chinese immigration through Port Darwin must be ceased.

Boomerang, 25 Feb 1888.
unimprisoned villains, Lane continued, "are the pest and bane of commerce and industry, the blood-leeches of many a struggling shopkeeper and merchant and householder..." 39

This concern for the plight of the white shopkeeper and his fellow petty bourgeois is a dominant theme in Lane's writing on the race question. The opposition of race against race, rather than class against class, is the real core of Lane's philosophy.

We stand together, we whites, shopkeepers and merchants, artisans, labourers and farmers; if one falls the others follow; that is what makes this colour question a race question and what makes the Anti-Chinese movement so irresistibly strong... Nothing can weaken that which draws its inspiration from the first instinct of self-preservation... 40

So Lane called on the Australian working class to defend the interests of their white employers on the basis that the viability of capital was the proper concern of labour. He considered joint white economic resistance essential, because the Chinese "crowds out both the white worker and the white shopkeeper and the white manufacturer..." 41

The logic of Lane's racist-nationalism led him to a federationist position, as race traitors tended to concentrate themselves in some colonies more than others, creating soft underbellies that endangered the whole of Australia. 42 "It is as a nation that we must beat the yellow men... One strong prohibitive should bar from this continent all alien peoples whose presence tends to adulterate and weaken our civilisation". 43 Lane's racism was so uncompromising that he abhorred petty expressions of prejudice such as stone-throwing that substituted for a full-blooded movement of expulsion. 44

It is a race struggle, this white-yellow controversy, the clashing of distinct civilisations and of antagonistic peoples. The strong hand must win in this as in every other struggle for existence. The Chinaman has got to go if there is virtue in our vigorous Australian blood or energy in our mingled descent from the migrating stocks.

The Chinese were clever, but Lane was confident of the result of the race war. "They are nomads, sly as serpents, treacherous as cats, greedy as hogs, and lascivious with the hideous immorality of Eastern peoples. We don't fear the result of such a civil war, but we do dread the price we should pay for

40. ibid., 26 May 1888 L.
41. ibid., 24 Nov 1888.
42. ibid., 11 Feb 1888, 23 June 1888.
43. ibid., 3 Dec 1887.
44. ibid., 2 June 1888.
victory".  

As it was based in Queensland, a central preoccupation of the *Boomerang* was the 'kanaka menace'. "Upon the Black Labour question", Lane wrote, "all progressive men agree". Queensland, for Lane, was a divided society, with the south representing the will to be white and free, the north representing backward elements. The Separation debate was between the man who would rather be a despot ruling over an inferior caste against him who would sooner stand, a citizen-king, among his sovereign equals. Lane insisted that black labour debauched the white employer as much as it degraded the white labourer, and that its presence was fatal to the growth of a free state and subversive of the political equality which must be maintained if Australia was to be great and happy. "We will not have a piebald people here in Australia. We are white and progressive and we will stay white and progressive although we have to eat beet-root sugar and to dispense with the company of the genial and hospitable planter".

However, Lane was prepared to advocate extreme measures to suit the convenience of the genial and hospitable planter. "Anything that will assist the planters, except black labour, we are ready and willing and want to further". Lane suggested a bounty scheme, a loan scheme, land banks, a reciprocity scheme, co-operative mills, protection, and rewards for mechanical inventions. He particularly favoured protection for the industry as the solution. Such an example of "Nationality" could take the sugar industry in its arms and lift it high above the competition of slave labour and degraded isles by throwing a wall around the continent over which competition could not pass. It could say to the planter: "Grow sugar with white labour and Australia will back your bills".

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45. *Boomerang*, 4 Feb 1888. This concern with impending race-struggle is obvious in the *Boomerang*'s serialisation of Lane's gruesome race-yarn, 'White or Yellow? A Story of Race War in A.D. 1908', which appeared between February and May 1888. Here, the 'revolutionary' race war is fought out between a Chinese dictatorship in Queensland backed by some traitorous Europeans, and the white freedom-loving elements of the community on behalf of Australian democracy and racial purity. Other lengthy articles written by Lane as 'Sketcher' completed the picture of Chinese debauchery by fantastic descriptions of the sordid every-day life of the Chinese. Written vividly and with an air of documentary authority, it is reasonable to assume Lane's message got across.

46. *Boomerang*, 5 Oct 1889 L.
47. *ibid.*, 29 Sept 1888 L, 10 Nov 1888.
48. *ibid.*, 7 Jan 1888.
49. *ibid.*, 10 Nov 1888.
50. *ibid.*, 20 April 1889 L.
In sharp contrast to the hostile attitudes expressed towards Chinese immigration, the *Boomerang* called a very different tune when considering the many thousands of white immigrants who were pouring into Australia in far greater numbers than the Chinese.

We don't mind our white kinsmen of the score of European and American nations flocking to our shores and swelling our populace; we welcome with open hand every honest white man whatever his birthplace and whatever his past allegiance... But alien races - yellows, blacks and browns - we won't have...51

In discussing the system of assisted passages, blame for its shortcomings was always laid squarely on the shoulders of the authorities, not the British immigrants, who were cast as innocent victims, as much an object of concern as Australian workers.52 "We don't blame the new chum. He also is deceived and wronged. He is usually an honest, industrious fellow, who only asks the right to live and labour and to eat a 'fair' share of the fruit his toil produced".53 Assisted immigration was only unfair, in Lane's opinion, because it treated the immigrants unfairly, as well as Australian workers; Chinese immigration was unfair because it threatened Australian racial purity. Population increase *per se*, then, was perfectly acceptable; coloured immigration, however, was not at all acceptable. The *Boomerang* even expressed anxiety that assisted immigration might cease altogether, if abused. Because it was desirable that Queensland's population be augmented by British immigration, it was the duty of politicians to provide employment for all, by devising schemes such as land-settlement and protection, so that immigration need not cease.54

It is this concern with nation-building that explains both Lane's antagonism to other races and his qualified enthusiasm for assisted British immigration. The Chinese could not participate in the great project of building the Australian nation; the British, by dint of their ability to *become* Australian, could. And the children of British immigrants would be indistinguishable from the rest.

Homogeneity was the key-note of Lane's concept of the ideal Australian

51. *Boomerang*, 16 June 1888. On the question of Aborigines, Lane's racism mellowed to paternalism. In the face of what was regarded as the inevitable extinction of the Aboriginal race, Lane was concerned to ease the passing of this 'inferior' race. (See *Boomerang*, 24 Nov 1888, 16 Feb 1889). This was a typical response for racists at this time, and it is improbable that Lane would have been as 'tolerant' if Aborigines were increasing in numbers, and if dispossession were not largely completed.


53. *ibid.*, 18 Feb 1888.

54. *ibid.*, 21 April 1888, 7 Sept 1889, 19 Oct 1889 L.
nation, not simply racial homogeneity, but also social.

Australia is not a sect or a section, it is not a caste or a class, or a
creed, is not to be a Southern England nor yet another United States.
Australia is the whole white people of this great continent, "without
distinction of sex, age, or previous condition"...55

Lane's nationalism, then, had egalitarian overtones. Equality amongst the
citizenry was desirable but could be achieved only if this citizenry was
composed of identical units with identical aims. However, the struggle for a
more equitable share for Australian workers was seen, not in class struggle
terms, but as a means of contributing to the glory of the entire Australian
nation, bosses and workers alike. Good working conditions were desirable for
the sake of the nation, not the class. Employers and employees were partners
in this great national enterprise, if white. The alpha and omega of Lane's
politics was the Australian nation, not the Australian proletariat, and
certainly not the international proletariat. "Our principles are easily
declared. They are Australian. Whatever will benefit Australia, that we are
for; whatever will harm Australia, that we are against".56

This egalitarian nationalism entailed for Lane a rejection of the
imperialist link with Britain. Britain's association with coloured races,
even in the role of exploiter, made her an object of suspicion; far better
was it to have no contact at all with other races. And Britain's method of
government fell far short of Lane's egalitarian ideals. The hopeless
ignorance and depravity of the ruling oligarchy in Tory-ridden England was
proved also by their lack of understanding of the importance to Australians
of racial purity. Salisbury, for instance, revealed his backwardness by
suggesting that the Australian colonies settle the Chinese question by
dealing with foreign immigration generally, by putting Americans, Germans,
Swedes, and Danes on the same footing as the yellow-hordes. Lane regarded
the idea as preposterous, and explained why.

With whites of any race we have so far no quarrel. Any man whom we can
absorb is welcome to come here and to make his home here to help us in
building up a great and free white State... We won't have the Chinaman
because white and yellow can't live together, and because even if they could
we wouldn't leave the destinies of our country in the hands of piebald
brats.57

Lane differentiated between jingoism, which was aggressive, and patriotism
or nationalism, which was defensive, and the righteous expression of love

55. Boomerang, 19 Nov 1887 L.
56. ibid., loc.cit.
57. ibid., 14 April 1888, 28 April 1888 L, 16 June 1888, 28 July 1888.
for a country that deserved this affection. To be worthy of this love, Australia had therefore to solve the 'social problems' of the old world.  

Lane's model nation was to be purged of class conflict, not by the abolition of classes, but by careful attention to the needs of both capital and labour. To avoid "bitter social war", Lane urged both the encouragement of the enterprise of Capital as well as the consideration of the "just claims of Labour". The 'Radical Programme' had to embrace proposals for the surmounting of these difficulties so that the government would be brought into line with the perfect State of Lane's imagination, and the supremacy of this State be justifiable. Lane suggested some prerequisites: Protection and Federation, "the twin steps towards complete nationality"; adult suffrage, "without which there cannot possibly be political freedom"; the Land Tax, which admitted "that the suzerainty of the soil never leaves the people"; and Labour Legislation, "which will replace to some extent the 'liberty of contract' which our competitive civilisation has broken into pieces".  

Lane's Social Darwinism was therefore the collectivist interpretation, not the individualist; a welfare state was quite compatible with the doctrine of the survival of the fittest.

To care for others has become a necessity in our Humanity. It is the very basis of our supremacy, the rock upon which we have built and are building in our ceaseless effort upwards, the connection of which with the survival of the fittest can be seen at once if we remember that Evolution works by the individual but for the race.

Australia as 'Working Man's Paradise' was simply part of a great nationalist dream, a means of proving superiority to older, less progressive nations. The Paradise was to be created for the sake of the Australian nation-state, as a testament to its glory; the State, for Lane, was not to be purely and simply a means of protecting the Paradise. The aim of reforms was not so much the betterment of the condition of the working class, but the creation of a perfect State. This ideal State was really the starting point of Lane's racial politics. "The very same arguments which make for Protection make for a white Queensland - the foundation of the whole is that the State is supreme and that the good of the community at large is the only thing that makes social 'right'."  

Throughout, Lane portrays the State as representative of the interests

58. *Boomerang*, 7 April 1888, 1 Sept 1888.
59. *ibid.*, 1 Sept 1888 L.
60. *ibid.*, 14 Sept 1889 L.
61. *ibid.*, 15 Sept 1888 L.
of all; he explicitly rejects the notion that the State is an instrument of class rule. Lane distinguished between state and government, thus managing to accommodate the conservative and the radical aspects of his political philosophy, to justify dissent and change, yet at the same time to ensure stability. Lane predicted that even if all government were destroyed, still the State would live on, unshaken and intact. True government served the State, not mastered it. There was nothing sacred about government. The State, on the other hand, belonged to a higher realm, similar in some respects to Plato's world of the Forms. Lane posited the notion of an ideal State, a perfect State, a State which human government should strive to approximate. But unlike Plato, knowledge of this perfect State was on a more populist basis, accessible to all who cared for the State, not just to the true philosophers. So the State, to Lane, was the Spirit of the Age, the common body of ideas about how society should operate. Lane argued that it was not the government in the form of police that people really relied upon to defend life, property, the honour of women, and to show people methods of exchange, but our "heritage of civilisation, bred in our bone, stamped into our brains, crystallised into that wonderful orgasm [sic] which we call the State".

It was because the State was essentially a system of ideas, that racial homogeneity was crucial. An influx of people with inherently different modes of thought and action endangered, not the government, but the otherwise inviolable institution of the State. Herein lay the danger of coloured immigration, as the existence of the State could only be threatened at the level of ideas. The State, as a Common Value System, had necessarily to be composed of more or less identical particulars, or else it failed to exist. Anti-alien restrictive legislation protected the State from without. Compulsory public education guarded the fortress from within.

However, the crucial flaw in Lane's political philosophy is not his notion of the State as the Ruling Ideas of the Age, but his insistence that these ideas express a real and objective common interest, a 'national' interest. Lane has no conception of the State as a class institution, of 'public opinion' as a reflection of the ideas of the ruling class. His idealist philosophy prevents any understanding of the material basis from which the ruling ideas of any age spring. He cannot see the strength of

62. *Boomerang*, 5 Oct 1889 L.
63. *ibid.*, 6 July 1889 L.
64. *ibid.*, 28 July 1889 L.
65. *ibid.*, 19 Nov 1887, 28 July 1888 L.
racism amongst the working class as an expression, not of their material interests, but of the material interests of the dominant class. Lane does not even acknowledge the division of society into mutually antagonistic classes. Lane is avowedly for progress, yet the real motor-force of history, the class struggle, is excluded from his philosophy, and evidence of its existence is treated as an abnormality.\(^{66}\) So, the limitations of Lane's radicalism, and the explanation for his racism, lie in the essentially class-collaborationist basis of his philosophical system, the supposition that the state is neutral and the representative of a common interest.

Class-collaboration was not only the lynch-pin of Lane's philosophy, but also the aim of his practical politics. He openly espoused the necessity of an alliance between Labour and Capital, in a series of editorials throughout 1889, and referred to class conscious militants in both camps as relics of a byegone era. Even the solidarity of labour, which Lane was known to champion, was simply a means of facilitating class-collaboration; it was the "\textit{sine qua non} of a peaceful understanding between Labour and Capital" as, through solidarity, the workers could go into the market as a unit and collectively make the best arrangement possible for the disposal of their collective energy.\(^{67}\) Lane also recommended that employers join their trade association so that each side could talk authoritatively to the other. Such a set-up in the Victorian iron-trade had pretty well obliterated the petty, irritating strike, Lane noted with satisfaction.\(^{68}\) So Lane has not only advocated employer organisation, and reduced labour solidarity to a market mechanism, but has also denounced strike action. He believed both Labour and Capital must organise, "not as enemies in rival camps but as co-operating allies in business fashion".\(^{69}\)

Predictably, Lane's musings merged into advocating arbitration as the obvious solution to industrial trouble and the difficulty of the 'fair' employer withstanding the unrestrained competition of the 'unfair' employer.\(^{70}\) It was this distinction between fair and unfair employers that explains Lane's militancy: unfair employers deserved to be inconvenienced by their workers as they jeopardised the normally smooth working of the capitalist system. Lane reduces the malfunctions of capitalism to the

\(^{66}\textit{Boomerang},\ 24\ Dec\ 1887.\)
\(^{67}\textit{ibid.},\ 23\ Feb\ 1889,\ 23\ Nov\ 1889\ L.\)
\(^{68}\textit{ibid.},\ 23\ Feb\ 1889.\)
\(^{69}\textit{ibid.},\ 13\ April\ 1889\ L.\)
\(^{70}\textit{ibid.},\ \text{loc.cit.}\)
personality defects of the occasional employer, the anti-union 'unfair' employer, who breaks an otherwise "happy family arrangement and involves in endless disputes those who... might continue for a generation without trouble". Lane insisted labour should not demand too much, and that its demands should be national, not sectional. "We should treat vested interests with consideration because we all have vested interests, but every joint interest which we have got is on the side of local progress and a white race".

It is not surprising that the Boomerang tended to 'tail-end' the Queensland Liberal Party under premier Griffith. And Lane was not even immune from supporting the less progressive party in domestic politics. We must be white... Shopkeepers, traders, manufacturers, farmers and wage earners can agree upon this, however much they differ on other matters. In Queensland the Liberal party has shown its sympathy already and the National party has blotted out the Conservative past by nailing the white flag to its masthead.

It was not the bourgeoisie as a whole that Lane opposed, but merely what could be labelled in contemporary terminology, the 'comprador bourgeoisie', the large capitalists with financial links abroad. The domestic bourgeoisie was as much Lane's concern as were the workers. He even explicitly rejected the argument that the race issue was purely a question of wage standards.

It is wages to the wage-earners, truly. But it is profits to the trader also, and business to the manufacturer, and existence to us all... Will coolies and Chinamen buy BOOMERANGS? Will the yellows patronise yellow shopkeepers or white ones, yellow manufacturers or white ones, yellow middlemen or white ones?

'Reformism in one white country' would be an appropriate summary of Lane's politics. It was the opposition of race against race, not class against class, that Lane championed. It was against this racist reformism that the Australian Socialist League directed its tentative appeals for a more class-conscious workers' movement.

71.Boomerang, 23 Feb 1889.
72.ibid., 15 Sept 1888 L.
73.ibid., 10 March 1888 L, 22 Dec 1888 L.
74.ibid., 4 Aug 1888 L.
75.Lane expressed similar ideas as 'Sketcher' in his weekly column in the Brisbane Evening Observer before his Boomerang days. On 20 March 1886, he wrote: "Every man has a right to employ his own earning as capital; no man has a right to employ another's earnings as capital... Every man has a right to compete; no man to monopolise". His column was headed by epigrams such as 'If either labor or capital thinks it can go it alone, let it try once'. (Lloyd Ross, William Lane, pp.40-3).
76.Boomerang, 4 Aug 1888 L.
Winspear's press and the Australian Socialist League

Few historians of the period even mention the Australian Socialist League and its associated press, the Radical and the Australian Radical, edited by W.R. Winspear. The Radical appeared first in March 1887, Winspear at this stage being a free-lance radical, who published the paper almost single-handedly from his Newcastle suburb of Hamilton. In justifying his extraordinary journalistic venture, Winspear explained that as the wrong in existing conditions was so glaring and the evils so deeply rooted, efforts of a "vigorou nature" would have to be made if labour was ever to obtain what was its admitted right, the reward of human toil distributed among the toilers. 77 Like the Boomerang, the Radical offered comments on the burning issues of the day - Home Rule for Ireland, the Queen's "Jew-bilee", the fiscal debate, the Chicago anarchists, and rabbit-proof fencing. But unlike the Boomerang, the Radical made conscious efforts to expose the hardships of ordinary working class existence, and where the Boomerang called for more rabbit-proof fencing to protect the national pastures, the Radical pointed out that some capitalists were making a lot of money out of this fencing and that there were rabbits on both sides of it.

The Australian Socialist League was inaugurated on 4th May 1887 in a back-room in George Street, Sydney. It was launched publicly on 26th August, and shortly afterwards it decided to support the Radical and accept it as a medium of agitation. The alignment was a case of a meeting of minds; Winspear's liberal editorial policy suited the League, which was in two minds about most things in its early years. Mansfield, in a passing reference, describes the radicalism of Winspear's press as eclectic: it discusses land nationalization, and various schools of socialism found a place in its columns. It was, in 1887 and 1888, a forum for radical opinion in which the discussion was often bitter. It gave a great deal of attention to republicanism and the Imperial connection, and hostility to monarchy and aristocracy was one of its constant themes. 79

It is true that Winspear allowed coverage to differing radical viewpoints, but it is a little exaggerated to describe the tone of the discussion as 'bitter' as early as 1887. Vitriol was remarkably absent from the Radical in its first year. Blackton evokes better the mood of 1887.

77 Radical, 12 March 1887.
78 ibid., 5 Nov 1887; Australian Radical, 2 March 1889, 10 March 1888. The men at the May meeting were W.H.McNamara, J.E.Anderton, H.Clayton, G.Chandler, H.Hickman, W.G.Higgs, T.Pilter, A.H.Potter. (Radical, 22 Sept 1887).
There was in the Radical... a friendly feeling for its colleague enterprises, and publicity was given to meetings of the Australian Socialist League, the Melbourne Anarchist Club, and other such recent flowerings of the new social criticism. The conflicts between republican and socialist bodies were recorded with regret.80

1888 marked the cooling of relations, not just with other radical groups, but also the development of internal faction fighting, which no longer had the aura of discussion for discussion's sake. The Sunday evening debates, which Markus aptly describes as "esoteric gatherings",81 deteriorated during 1888, and more obviously in 1889, into a forum for the type of political abuse that was beginning to characterise the Australian Radical, which succeeded the Radical in March 1888. League members were clearly divided on the issue of race, but this did not contribute to internal tension; the politics of the ASL rendered race so unimportant as to permit disagreement.

It would be impossible to describe adequately all the criss-crossing currents of character assassination, both political and personal, which developed between members. O'Farrell mentions that the columns of the Radical "resounded with the hammer blows of socialist on anarchist and anarchist on socialist", and correctly emphasises that it was in Melbourne rather than in Sydney that the anarchist influence in the League became strong.82 An early member of the League, Thomas Batho, has described it as being "quarter philosophical anarchist, quarter physical-force anarchist, quarter state socialist, and quarter laborite". However, after the 1890

82. O'Farrell points out the even more divided nature of the short-lived Melbourne branch of 1889, which, lacking a single dominant figure such as McNamara in Sydney, became strung out between three strong personalities right from its foundation. "Andrews had sought to form a Communist-Anarchist group, Fleming wanted a Melbourne branch of the Anarchist Club, and Rosa was contemplating a Social Democratic Federation. By July the Melbourne League had sundered into its various factions and disappeared, but not before the Sydney League had exhibited similar tendencies". (P.J. O'Farrell, "The Australian Socialist League and the Labour Movement, 1887-1891", Historical Studies, Vol 8 No 30, May 1958, p.156). Gollan claims that the Melbourne ASL was formed merely as an umbrella organisation for the Anarchist Club and the German Socialist Club formed in 1887. (Gollan, 'The Political Theory of the Australian Labour Movement', p.73). Presumably this German Socialist Club was the 'Sozialestene Vorwärts' [sic] that Merrifield refers to. (S. Merrifield, "George Leonard Vogt", Labour History, No 7, Nov 1964, p.18). Merrifield also mentions elsewhere that in July 1889, the Melbourne ASL became the Social Democratic League of Victoria. (Recorder, July 1964).
83. 'The Vag' [Thomas Batho], Random Ramblings, p.7.
maritime strike, the League moved towards advocating state control of everything, and away from the earlier emphasis on building a system of federated Co-operative Communes, thereby refuting Mansfield's thesis that the ASL was some sort of political colony of William Morris's Socialist League. But Mansfield is right that in both groups "Marx and Kropotkin were held in precarious tension".  

Racism and anti-racism were also held in precarious tension, unbeknown to Mansfield. He believes it was partly the rejection of protection and reformism, and partly the declaration that the Chinese were no problem, that separated the Radical and the Australian Radical from the main line of political development of Australian labour.  

Blackton, also, suggests they were isolated on the race issue, that the Radical's internationalist attitude towards the coloured races lost this paper the support of many members of radical groups.

Mansfield and Blackton give the League a little too much credit. Opinion was divided, as on all issues, on how to react to racism as a belief. Where the ASL stood up and was counted, was in its hostility to anti-Chinese League type activities. It was, nevertheless, opposed to Chinese immigration, and its hostility to the Anti-Chinese League was partly based on its own unique and twisted racist logic. Moreover, it allowed coverage in its associated press to racist as well as anti-racist ideas. Boomerang-style ultra-racism was generally absent, but the visit of the Commissioners, for example, was greeted as evidence of "a growing inclination on the part of China to find some outlet for the immense and growing surplus population". The deputation from the Anti-Chinese League was a waste of time "for when the Chinese have once made sure of their ground, remonstrances are futile... it would be well if Australians looked a little to their own interests". The Chinese immigrant did not even contribute to the national revenue as he "takes his dust to the


Davison implies the radicals had their own material reasons for disliking the Chinese. He writes that the overlapping circles of secularists, republicans, land-reformers, feminists and socialists, which together comprised Sydney's infant 'counter-culture', focussed their activities on a small triangle of the 'transitional zone' between the Town Hall, Hyde Park and Redfern Station. But in the 1880s, the pressures created by redevelopment around Circular Quay forced the Chinese to abandon their old haunts in lower George Street and move south to the area which the radicals regarded as their own. The Chinese became the scapegoats for the city's housing problem. (Graeme Davison, "Sydney and the Bush: An Urban Context for the Australian Legend", Historical Studies, Vol 18 No 71, Oct 1978, pp.198-200).
flowery land". And when the mayor of Tamworth told the Commissioners that the local Chinese were industrious and orderly, the Radical commented that the mayor meant orderly "after a Fan-tan fashion".

More seriously, the Radical pandered to the alarmist reports from the north. The people of Port Darwin were allegedly experiencing trouble with the Chinese and smallpox:

the European is doing his best to stamp the disease out, while his Mongolian friend is doing his best to render his efforts futile. The Chinese refuse to keep their places clean, and when some of their number have been stricken with the disease, their friends hide them in the bush. Several houses have had to be burnt down owing to their condition.

When reporting a fight in Sandhurst where two Chinese hacked each other about with choppers, the Radical could not resist commenting that Chinese did not like the European style of settling differences, on account of the lawyers' fees. At a similar level of sarcasm, the Radical reported that occasionally it hoped the Chinese might become civilised, but was invariably upset by hearing that another Chinaman had been converted by the Salvation Army. But the most categorical expression of racism ever published was a contribution to the Australian Radical from L.D. Petrie of the Melbourne Anarchist Club.

Gentlemen, I believe I am an Anarchist, still I feel I am almost a latter day Christian when I think of Ah Ling's dirty clean habits. When I rub up against him my fraternity is silent. Prejudice, you will say, and John has as good a right to come and settle in Australia as the Scotchman, Irishman or Englishman - has a perfect right to live on rice, work sixteen hours a day, to make the exploiter stronger - he produces much, consumes little... his frugality and industry are indisputable and the end and aim of John's life is cash, opium and one of my sisters... I object to John because he has many vermin-like attributes, he is prolific and I aver that few whites can live with the Chinese without being contaminated... Depravity is a natural result of association with Chinamen.

Petrie added that the Chinese took their amassed wealth back to China, thereby robbing the white workers of the land, and in a racial stream of consciousness, remarked that the city of Melbourne was mortgaged to one Jew.

However, Petrie's racism was qualified by some understanding of the class interests involved. He admitted that the Chinese were a very
convenient evil by which many greater evils sheltered themselves; the
Yellow Agony distracted attention away from the White Agony. "The Landlord,
citizens of Melbourne, is a monster who does worse than under-sell your
labor because he appropriates your labor... Rent is the greatest curse of
the age, and yet the people run after the drink curse, the religious curse,
and the Chinese curse". For Petrie, the land curse, the government curse, and
the money curse, were the real problems. So, while admitting that John
Chinaman was a red herring, Petrie nevertheless insisted that he was better
in the sea than in Australia.

Now my Anarchist friends must not fancy that I am not anti-Chinaman, although
I fully recognise the fact that we would have little or nothing to fear from
John in a state where use and possession were the only title to land, and
where tokens of exchange bore no interest except the natural interest of
wear and tear.

The Chinese were therefore conflated with every other evil of the capitalist
system, a problem to be extinguished along with capitalism, a slogan to be
added to the list of radical demands. "Advocate the destruction of every
evil; the Chinese evil; the bastard freetrade evil; as well as our lesser
evil of protection. Abolish rent, usury, etc..."93

Yet Winspear's press was often internationalist, in rhetoric at least.
The Radical declared it knew "no national jealousies" but recognised instead
"a common brotherhood".94 The ASL Manifesto published in November 1887
announced that one of the objects of the League was to uphold the principle
of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, and that Fraternity meant the principle
which denied national and class distinction, asserted the Brotherhood of Man,
and said "The world is my country". It also aimed to foster Mutual Confidence
and Fraternity amongst the working people of all ranks; to remove the
elements of war, distrust, and discord, caused by competition for profits, and
class exploitation of the workers; to abolish standing armies, and all
vestiges of "militaryism" and coercive laws.95 When the London dockers
received support from workers of other nations, the Australian Radical noted
with satisfaction that capitalism was fighting a losing battle. "The labor
movement appears to be breaking down all national barriers and distinctions,
and anything which tends to maintain them is toryism"; the fundamental truth
of the Brotherhood of Man was obscured by the nationalism of English,
Russians, Germans, French and so on.96 And one of the arguments posed against

93.Australian Radical, 2 Sept 1888.
94.Radical, 16 July 1887.
95.ibid, 19 Nov 1887.
96.Australian Radical, 31 Aug 1889, 7 Sept 1889, 10 March 1888.
protection was that it was directly opposed to the principles of socialism, as it set up barriers between the workers of different nations, and fostered national hatred. Chauvinism was an object of ridicule. Madame Touser, the Radical commented, thought women of other nations absurd, as Japanese women gild their teeth, Greenland women colour their faces blue and yellow, and Chinese women distort their feet. "Madame ridicules all this yet she engages her maid to assist in screwing her waist up to a third of its normal size".

And the ASL press, unlike the Boomerang, abhorred militarism. The Sudan contingent, for instance, was a case of declaring war "for nothing at all but glory, or in other words, murder". On the home front, the Radical pointed out the true danger of armed forces, while the Boomerang howled for compulsory military training. "Working men should be the last to countenance the creation of standing armies", the Radical declared, and recalled the use of troops against miners during a strike a few years before in the Newcastle district. The ASL reaction to Lord Carnarvon's visit was that he had come to poison the minds of Australians with the jingoism that animated the rulers of the old world, and to advise the maintenance of armed bands of men to be held in readiness to smite either fellow-countrymen or foreigner. It maintained Australians were opposed to the warlike imperialism and the wasteful expenditure that English and Colonial Tories were attempting to foist upon them.

When a hurricane struck German, English, and American ships off the coast of Samoa, the Australian Radical commented that the conduct of the natives of Samoa, in risking their lives to rescue the drowning man-o'-wars' men, was in remarkable contrast to the spirit of aggression amongst the civilised, which the war-ships denoted. And on dry land, the Australian Radical noted that the British, the Americans, and the Germans, claimed between them more land in total than existed in Samoa. "The white people thus own all the land and 24,000 acres over, while the natives are not in it, yet the whites have the coolness to call the natives heathens and barbarians. The fact is that the white man is still an uncivilised robber".

But despite opposing imperialism and militarism, and maintaining a

97. Australian Radical, 9 Feb 1889.
98. Radical, 23 July 1887.
99. ibid., 12 March 1887.
100. ibid., 19 March 1887.
101. ibid., 24 Dec 1887.
102. Australian Radical, 6 April 1889, 14 Sept 1889.
critical distance, in theory, from nationalism, the ASL nevertheless conformed, to some extent, to Australian labour nationalism. The Australian Radical declared that it had struggled to show that Australia should belong to every honest worker who cared to dwell in it and add to its greatness by assisting to develop its resources; it opposed those who intended to hand Australia over to the highest foreign bidder, thereby giving in mortgage the birthright of Australians. "These men are not Australians; they are jingo, traitors and selfish parasitical knaves, who are prepared to see Australians in the same condition as the Irish peasantry, the Scottish crofters, and the English farm labourers..." The ASL even stooped to the anti-Semitism typical of anti-imperialist nationalism though rejecting anti-Semitism at the theoretical level. The Radical referred to the Jews in the Land of Goschen, pleased with the passage of the Naval Force Bill, saying to the colonial legislators: "You protect our interests in your waters, and we will lend you money on good security". And it made scurrilous references to the Queen's "jew-billee". The Australian Radical warned its readers:

Our birthright is gradually being sold for a mess of pottage and under Esau's hairy coat the wolfish Jacob may yet be discovered. If we condemn the usurious pawnbrokers receivers of stolen property, what must be said of the colonial traitors who play into their hands - the men who are determined to make money at any price... The least that can be said of them is that they are traitors to their country, and as such it would have been better for the country had it never known them.

The ASL, then, in positing the concept of 'traitors', accepted the idea of an Australian national interest that could be betrayed. It also consciously placed the interests of Australia's workers before those of anywhere else. At a meeting in Melbourne to establish a fund for the famine in China, the socialists moved an amendment to the effect that although the Chinese deserved sympathy, the destitute of Australia had a prior claim to an amelioration of their unhappy lot. In reporting the event, the Australian Radical expressed its contempt that, in spite of common sense and the supposed love of country and countrymen, the amendment was lost.

There was obviously more contention within the League over the extent to which members should conform to labour racism. This disagreement often surfaced at the Sunday night debates, and generally speaking, the

103. Australian Radical, 21 April 1888.
104. ibid., 10 March 1888.
106. Australian Radical, 1 May 1888.
107. ibid., 20 April 1889.
'leadership' was more anti-racist than were the less involved members. When the secretary of the Anti-Chinese League failed to turn up to open a debate at the invitation of the ASL, his place was obligingly taken by a comrade Hennessy, who "denounced the Chinese in unmeasured terms". Even in opposing this angle and arguing that the anti-Chinese cry was got up by professional politicians to lead the workers into side issues, W.C. Andrade nevertheless advocated white worker co-operation against the Chinese. Comrade Filter took a similar position: if the Chinese were tools in the hands of the capitalists, the workers should organise their ranks and co-operate, then they need not fear Chinese competition. But, Filter added, we were all slaves, more or less, in the hands of capitalists, landlords, and politicians; there was something in the Chinese question, but not so much as place-hunting politicians and dodgers tried to make out. He pointed out that there were no Chinese in England, but there was still terrible destitution and suffering there. W.H. McNamara, the leading and founding figure of the League, was the most uncompromising on the issue. And the following week, at the Hall of Science in Newcastle, McNamara ridiculed the way whites boasted of their "civilisation" and sneered at the Hindu, the Chinese, and the Mohammedan, while the civilised community, of which they were so proud, was "a conglomeration of millionaires and mendicants" and "a community in which idleness is gorged and elevated, while industry is starved and reviled". W.H. McNamara, the leading and founding figure of the League, was the most uncompromising on the issue. And the following week, at the Hall of Science in Newcastle, McNamara ridiculed the way whites boasted of their "civilisation" and sneered at the Hindu, the Chinese, and the Mohammedan, while the civilised community, of which they were so proud, was "a conglomeration of millionaires and mendicants" and "a community in which idleness is gorged and elevated, while industry is starved and reviled".

Dispute within the League over racism possibly paralleled the anarchist versus socialist cleavage. For example, at a League debate on 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity', the anarchist elements, represented by McDougall and Powell, upheld only Liberty as being the best defence of the 'talented few' and argued that Equality and Fraternity were absurd, as how would you like to call the Chinese your brothers, or the Aboriginal women your sisters? The Australian Radical report, however, commented that this opposition group got "the necessary thrashing it deserved".

But all currents within the League appear to have been relatively united as to the dangers of anti-Chinese agitation. "Labor agitators are declaiming against the 'yellow agony'; and worst of all, the members of our trades unions are allowing themselves to be borne upon the crest of this wave of jealous fear". The Radical announced that it was not prepared to endorse what

108. Radical, 19 Nov 1887.
109. Ibid., 26 Nov 1887. At a mock parliamentary election at one of the ASL's Sunday evening debates, of the four candidates offering, only one declared himself in favour of 'Chinese prohibition'. (Australian Radical, 25 Aug 1888).
110. Australian Radical, 10 March 1888.
A wave of jealousy is at present sweeping across the Australian continent. "Able editors" are awaking to the evil of this wave of jealous fear. We think they commence to grub in the ground to obtain a miserably small amount of produce. They say, they produce cheaply, it is clearly to the advantage of the consumer. If they sell at low prices, they are the losers. They can perform fifteen times as much labor, yet he fears to compete with them. The cause of our bad times and misery is clearly not production, in our manner of living; we must go deeper and endeavour to see why it is, and how it is, that the more we produce, and the less we consume, the poorer we become.

Through enquiries which we have recently prosecuted we have learned that the Chinese are the victims of the system of landlord and tenant which obtains in this and other countries, and that he is being used by our landlords and capitalists to raise rents and to lower wages. This being so, it seems clear that it is not the Chinese with whom we must reckon, but our own countrymen. One case of which we are acquainted, is where a landlord has leased two acres from a European for which they have to pay £7 per month in rent; and in addition, they have to provide his household with 7 lbs of each of the fruits of the soil. The owner is quite willing to lease his land to his own countrymen provided that they pay the above price. His own countrymen however will not consent to be degraded to the level of brutes, and therefore hold aloof from the land. In such a case it is the Chinese who are blamed, and it will be found upon examination that in all branches of industry the Chinese and Europeans are simply the tools of the landlord and capitalist.

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The cause of our bad times and misery is clearly not production, in our manner of living; we must go deeper and endeavour to see why it is, and how it is, that the more we produce, and the less we consume, the poorer we become.
such agitators were doing to drive the Chinese out of the Australian colonies. The Chinese, Winspear argued in an editorial, were being used, by landlords and capitalists, to raise rents and lower wages. "This being so, it seems clear that it is not the Chinese with whom we must reckon, but with our countrymen... in all branches of industry the Chinese and Europeans are simply the tools of the landlord and capitalist". However, a certain amount of cultural chauvinism is evident in this editorial, as Winspear explained that as the Chinese inherited the religious superstitions of their fathers against labour-saving machinery, which made them unfit for large undertakings and handicapped them in the struggle for existence, Europeans could easily out-compete them. But, Winspear added, if the Chinese lived in a degraded condition, it was not their fault, just as it was not the fault of Europeans who lived in similar conditions in Sydney, London, Manchester, and other large cities.111

In an article entitled 'The Chinese Craze', the Radical regretted that the workers of the colonies are falling out as to who is to do the work, instead of considering who should share the profits. Narrow-minded writers and speakers are everywhere declaiming against the Chinese because they are industrious and thrifty, but the same guardians of the interests of the workers are silent about those who do no work and who are clad in purple and fine linen. If the Chinese is robbed and degraded by the greed of those who have a monopoly of the land, it is clearly the monopolist who should be blamed.112

The Radical pointed out that it was absurd for workers to fawn over ruling class parasites while attacking Chinese workers,113 and accused the Anti-Chinese League of playing with a great social problem by ranting against the Chinese. "The Chinese slaves are not to blame, any more than European slaves are. It is the enslaver who is to blame, and our anti-Chinese friends should strike at him, instead of at the industrious hard-working Chinese". It noted that working class spokesmen were prepared to blame the capitalist for the degradation of their own race, but blamed the Chinese themselves for their degradation. The Radical advised workers to see the trick that was being played on them by the "anti-Chinese gentlemen", as the condition of workers was becoming worse everywhere, not just in the trades in which the Chinese competed. "They must see that they have nothing to fear from those who work for their living, but all to fear from those who do no work".114

111.Radical, 17 Sept 1887.
112.ibid., 1 Oct 1887.
113.ibid., 22 Oct 1887.
114.ibid., 29 Oct 1887.
In January 1888, Winspear declared that the Anti-Chinese League leaders were endeavouring to stop the workings of nature. Nature declares that man shall break down all artificial barriers that at present prevent his brotherhood from being fully proclaimed the world over. Nature declares for cosmopolitanism and man to obey. He is everywhere defeating distance and overcoming the obstacles which prevent him knowing his fellowman across rivers, tides, and continents. Winspear considered it was pointless to become violent at the influx of foreigners and claimed that the Anti-Chinese League had less sense than a mule. The Radical hoped that if the Inter-Colonial Trades Union Congress in Brisbane in February 1888 dealt adequately with the important questions such as the organisation of labour, Land Nationalisation, and Co-operation, there would be little time left for talking about the chances of obtaining the help of politicians, to persecute the Chinese. It commented that because trade unionists did not realise who their real enemies were, they often prevented labour organisation and caused dissension. "Instead of wasting their time in fighting foreigners - who as often as not are honest workers like themselves - let them combine and bring all their energies to bear on those who will not work, but yet eat so much".

The ASL also pointed out a flaw in the internal logic of the Anti-Chinese League's position. It claimed that anti-Chinese agitators who argued for exclusion on the grounds that Chinese would out-compete Europeans, were as illogical as those who argued the Chinese were inferior; if Parkes, for instance, really believed the Chinese were superior, he should hail them as desirable colonists, as a race of men who could materially aid progress. The truth of the matter, according to the Australian Radical, was that Parkes was simply pandering to the Anti-Chinese League, "to the short-sighted prejudice of the ignorant and narrow-minded who are blind to the true evils which afflict us". It insisted Parkes should know that the barbarous Chinese was in every way the inferior of the Britisher; give the Britisher fair play and he could beat the Chinese as easily as he could beat the Aboriginal in all branches of industry. The Australian Radical asserted: "we don't knock under to any Mongolian, nor do we believe that he can hold his own with the Europeans of any nation, whether English, German, French or Russian, if the Europeans have only fair-play."

115. Radical, 7 Jan 1888.  
116. ibid., 11 Feb 1888.  
117. Australian Radical, 14 April 1888.  
118. ibid., 2 June 1888.
The ASL also spotted the double standard of the anti-Chinese crusaders. The Australian Radical noted that whereas 25 Chinamen were arrested at Cooktown for gambling, many members of the Legislative Council were still at large. And newspapers had one code of morals for rich Europeans and another for poor Chinese: "Fan-tan is immoral but horse racing is an honest occupation..." Nor did the ASL join in the clamour about the disgusting residential standards of the Chinese. Instead, it pointed the finger at the owner, not the tenants. The Australian Radical mocked the letter to a Sydney paper asking why the government allowed such filth amongst the Chinese in lower George Street, commenting that the writer was oblivious of the fact that the owners of the filthy premises were the Powers that Be. Anti-Chinese activists were wrong to call such premises "Chinese dens", as the Chinese were seldom owners of the buildings they inhabited.

The higher the rent is raised, the deeper are the depths of degradation into which the poor tenants are plunged; in proof of which we have only to look at London, Manchester, New York, or Sydney, to see white people as low as the Chinese. The fault is clearly not with the tenants, but with landlordism... All the talk about the filth and misery of the English, Irish, American or Chinese tenants is so much wasted energy unless it is directed against the cause, instead of against the victims.

The ASL argued the Chinese were the tools of the landlords, and that was why they were in Australia, as they were useful to increase rents in large cities. This identification of the landlords as the principal beneficiaries of Chinese immigration helps explain the ASL's apparently contradictory position on the Chinese question, viz, the hostility both to Chinese immigration and to the Anti-Chinese League. This was the era of Henry George, and although the political philosophy of the ASL was socialist, it none the less insisted that land reform was the necessary first step in the direction of socialism. The monopolisation of land in Australia was regarded as part of a general world problem of monopoly, and it was this tendency of capitalism to monopoly that the ASL considered as the principal indictment of the system. "One great reform is necessary, and that is to unlock to labor the land". Until the forces of nature were made accessible to labour, the ASL considered it sheer folly to allow in any more population, whether white or coloured. The Radical mooted a conspiracy theory of

119. Australian Radical, 2 June 1888.
120. Ibid., 26 May 1888.
121. Ibid., 12 May 1888.
122. Ibid., 5 May 1888.
123. Ibid., 2 June 1888.
immigration: "where there are large land syndicates legislation tends to the
influx of population, as population grows so does the value of land"; the
government was flooding the country with labour to increase the selling
price of the lands of members of parliament, and working men should
everywhere combine to force open the gates of the vast areas in the hands of
banks, speculators, and land companies. 124 It was a "well-known fact" that
immigration made land values advance. 125 On an even more sinister note, the
Radical alleged: "Immigrants have been brought here by capitalistic rings,
at the expense of the people, in order that the value of land may be raised,
by lines of railway being run through the big estates". 126 What was wanted,
the Australian Radical argued, was to unlock the land and allow labour to
get to work, then immigration would no longer be necessary, as labourers for
the monopolists to exploit would not be needed; the worker's hope lay in free
land and the abolition of monopoly. 127 The Australian Radical declared:
It is useless to point to the men of other nations as the cause of poverty,
for we find upon comparing notes with them that they are workers like
ourselves who are fleeing from the grinding heel of usurious monopoly in
their own lands. The battle of the workers is the same the world over, and
it will be well for them when they join their hands together to fight the
common foe - legalised monopoly... 128

Land was the one inheritance which one generation left to the next, and
if the present generation sold it, it sold the birthright of the next
generation, which would be a cause of trouble in the future. "Land grows in
value as population grows, and hence cannot be fairly bought and paid for,
future populations will have a right to the increased value, which can only
be obtained if the land belongs to the people". The ASL concluded that if the
land question was settled, the Chinese question would be resolved.
At present the landlord uses the Chinese to cause competition in the rents of
inferior properties, grinding the last fraction out of him, and causing him
to dwell in a debased condition, which condition must be shared by Europeans
who are forced to compete with him. The benefits of such competition should
not be shared amongst a few landlords, but amongst the whole people. 129

That the concern about land, not an abstract concern for racial purity,
was the guiding motive of the ASL's opposition to Chinese immigration, is
demonstrated by the similarity of its response to British immigration. The
Radical tended to conflate arguments against both Chinese and British

124. Radical, 12 March 1887.
125. Ibid., 29 Oct 1887.
126. Ibid., 7 May 1887.
127. Australian Radical, 31 Aug 1889.
128. Ibid., 23 June 1888.
129. 'Radical Principles'. (Running column in Radical, 18 June 1887 to 3 Dec
1887).
immigration into a general argument against population increase under the prevailing system. If the ASL had viewed immigration as serving the interests of capitalists as a whole, by depressing wage levels, its response might well have been to aim to discourage racial divisions amongst workers, in an attempt to defeat the capitalists' aims. But, in identifying landowners as the principal beneficiaries of immigration, through the effect of increased population on land values, the encouragement or discouragement of racial attitudes becomes irrelevant, as rent increases will occur whether the working class is divided or not. For the same reason, the country of origin of the immigrant was irrelevant: it was numbers that forced up land values, not particular racial types. This explains, then, the ASL's blanket objection to immigration of all kinds and its near indifference to the issue of racism. It wished to limit the population until land reform was effected; all races would then be welcome, as most League members did not agree with Lane that certain races were congenitally incapable of belonging in the Workingman's Paradise. However, the ASL cannot be correctly described as anti-racist, because it did not positively exclude racist viewpoints being expressed in the organisation's press. It was neither racist nor anti-racist.

The obsession with land reform not only provoked the ASL's lack of concern about working class racism, but also encouraged assaults merely upon landlordism, not upon capitalism. And the ASL's idea of revolution sounded like international free selection under workers' control. Let the toiler of N.S.W. correspond with the toiler of Victoria, and when we have, as we shall have, a Federated Australia, let the toiler be in touch with the toilers of Europe, Asia, Africa and America, let this be done, and then settle the lands everywhere upon the principles of Land Nationalization, less hours, less labor, and more comfort must be the result. The world's remedy for the world's need is social co-operation.130

The ASL's vision of socialism was of a society composed of co-operative schemes for industry and autarchic individualised small-scale farming.131

This utopian vision also encouraged the ASL's indifference to the existence of racist ideas amongst workers. It did not regard racism as a major obstacle to the construction of socialism, because socialism was to be achieved, not by mass working class struggle, but by small groups of workers getting together. Racial divisions within the class were no threat to a strategy for socialism based on the fragmentation of the class; only racist activity was opposed, as being a waste of time and energy, and a distraction.

130. Radical, 21 May 1887.
131. ibid., 12 March 1887, 23 April 1887, 4 June 1887.
Because this enthusiasm for voluntary schemes was a common ground of
agreement between the anarchist and the state socialist elements, this
coopreative road to socialism became the dominant pre-occupation of the
League's politics. The anarchists regarded group enterprise as socialism
itself, the state socialists considered it to be a useful step on the way.
Modern socialists do not wait until State Socialism has dragged its weary
length along, the Radical explained, but affirm that "it is better to at
once cross swords with the privileges of the classes... the workers might
co-operate to produce for their own requirements, without the intervention
of capitalists". The length and gradient of the purely parliamentary road
to socialism seemed too great even to the state socialists in these pre-
1890 days. Educating people to elect the right representatives was described
as "an uphill task", as the monopolist could match the Australian Radical
with a thousand papers. Non-political methods were regarded as more
rewarding: any small body of working men who saw the evils of society could
set about their own emancipation by co-operating on socialistic principles.
"Fifty years of Co-operation would be worth five hundred blindly stumbling
along after the politicians, to the workers and progress..." Parliament
would play a role in the spreading of socialism, but only after the masses
had been won over to socialism by the example of those already in utopia.
Implicit in this devotion to co-operatives, was a growing wariness about
the value of strike activity and of trade unionism in general. 'Pickax', the
Australian Radical's chief industrial correspondent, insisted that trade
unionism must be supplanted by co-operation, and as quickly as possible.
And the reasoning behind the open letter to the Northumberland miners was
that, as the masters always came off better during strikes, the money and
energy spent on striking should have been directed into a co-operative
scheme.

The ASL maintained that pauper-paid labour of any racial type need not
bother workers who organised themselves co-operatively. This solution to
exploitation encouraged the League's detachment about the products of pauper
labour outside Australia, as well as about the presence of paupers in
Australia. As comrade Elphinston asked rhetorically at one of the Sunday
evening debates, "were not the Socialists organising to protect themselves

132.Radical, 12 Nov 1887.
133.Australian Radical, 16 June 1888, 24 Nov 1888.
134.ibid., 26 May 1888.
135.ibid., 10 Nov 1888.
136.ibid., 6 Oct 1888.
against the raids of capitalists: then why should not the people organise to protect themselves from the pauper paid labor of other countries?.." So, instead of wasting time imploring politicians either to exclude the Chinese or to introduce tariffs, the Australian Radical urged workers to concentrate on setting up co-operative schemes, which could deal with the problem of cheap labour by the boycott method.

The ASL did not, generally, display the type of racist mentality that confused cause and effect. It was careful to reveal that the 'faults' of the Chinese were a product of circumstances, not the cause of such circumstances. But for all this understanding, the ASL still concluded that, given the uses to which the system would put the Chinese, in order to disadvantage the workers, retaliatory action was legitimate. Unlike the Anti-Chinese Leagues, which aimed at restrictive legislation, the Australian Radical recommended what was, from a working class viewpoint, possibly a more dangerous method, the boycott. Anti-Chinese League methods were castigated as "idle twaddle as compared with the common-sense plan of 'having no dealings with them if you do not like them'." The Sydney coal lumpers were congratulated for adopting a rule that any member or his wife who dealt with Chinese would be fined 5/-, as such a method of dealing with the question beat all the parliamentary methods. Such union boycotts were "more potent than all the governmental folly we have had" and the only weapon the workers should use against the Chinese. The Australian Radical boasted of its opposition to legal persecution and of its support for the just method of the boycott.

We ourselves were amongst the very few who held that the Chinese are an inferior race, and that under fair conditions the white man can more than hold his own against the mongol, and that such being the case, there was really no cause for panic, but only a need for right thinking and the recognition of natural methods based on equal rights to accomplish all that was required...

137. Australian Radical, 19 May 1888. Admittedly, some League members did divide on the fiscal issue. A few comrades supported protection as a progressive step in the building up of Australia's manufacturing industries. Others instinctively opted for free trade as involving less restriction, and for fear that protection would encourage monopoly. For discussion on the issue, see Australian Radical, 19 May 1888, 26 May 1888, 8 Sept 1888, 10 Nov 1888, 22 Dec 1888, 2 Feb 1889, 9 Feb 1889. But most League members regarded both protection and free trade as red herrings drawn across the path of true reform. Either way, the workers were deprived of the fruits of their labour while the drones revelled in luxury on the annexed results of their toil. (Australian Radical, 2 Feb 1889).

138. Australian Radical, 12 May 1888.

139. ibid., 19 May 1888, 4 Aug 1888.
However, some elements in the ASL did recommend more class conscious methods of dealing with Chinese immigration. At a debate on the fiscal issue, comrade Norman announced that he did not object to foreign labour coming to Australia, as "we would teach them to keep up wages". And, of the Lithgow Anti-Chinese League, the Australian Radical commented that the miners had far better hold meetings to fight the bosses who had recently locked them out. Australian politicians misled the unsuspecting mass by "specious clap-trap" about the inferiority of the Chinese and the superiority of the freedom-loving Australian while the spider-like cords of the usurer were being tightly drawn around the latter. The solution? "Let the workers of every country then join hands and make common cause against the plunderers". Whilst Australians were expending their energies in anti-Chinese agitations, British workmen were also making the mistake of blaming foreigners for their grievances. "The Britisher is as bad as the Australian: neither of them seem to see that their real grievance is not Chinese workmen but aristocratic loafers".

Part of the League's objection to the Anti-Chinese League, then, was that such agitation directed valuable working class anger away from the real evils. This type of argument, however, was not as typical of the League's approach as its declaration that the working class should not feel threatened by the Chinese, precisely because of their inferiority, and that, in any case, the best solution was the protection afforded by co-operatives.

The record of the ASL on the issue of Chinese immigration reveals the dilemma faced so frequently by 'advanced sections' of the labour movement. On the one hand, the League recognised that anti-Chinese agitation distracted working class attention away from more fundamental problems. On the other hand, as part of the labour movement, the League was obviously influenced by prevailing proletarian norms. So, while maintaining, in theory, an internationalist stance, it was nevertheless reluctant to court rejection by the rest of the labour movement through stressing its more principled appreciation of the Chinese question. Instead, by arguing that the Chinese were so inferior they were no problem, the League presumably hoped to take some wind out of the sails of the Anti-Chinese League, which it consistently regarded as a reactionary force, but still retain its own

140. Australian Radical, 10 Nov 1888.
141. Ibid., 2 June 1888.
142. Ibid., 16 June 1888.
peculiar anti-Chinese credentials. It wished to stop the working class agitating on an issue it recognised to be a waste of time and energy, but it did not wish to confront the racist ideas of this working class.

The reason for the League's tardiness to oppose racist ideas was that it did not regard racist ideas and racial exclusiveness to be deleterious to the workers' movement, but only racist agitation, such as the Anti-Chinese Leagues advocated. It did not realise that racist ideas, per se, were a pernicious influence in the working class, for the simple reason that the League's method for achieving socialism, and even for obtaining a better deal for the workers in the meantime, did not rely on wide-spread working class solidarity. They believed in the co-operative road to socialism: small groups of workers would get together to run their own businesses. Generalised solidarity was therefore unnecessary; small-scale self-help was the answer.

Significantly, what was discarded en route was class struggle. Action by workers as workers was absent from the ASL's formula for socialism; action by workers on a small scale, to become capitalists, was substituted. This micro-socialism did not require proletarian solidarity. It did not demand that the advanced sections of the working class attempt to instill an equal amount of class consciousness into the rest of the working class. Un-class conscious ideas did not have to be confronted, as the backward elements of the class were, at this stage, not a deadweight, but simply irrelevant to the campaign for socialism. They were to see the light later on. The ASL's concept of socialism, then, encouraged it to ignore the practical consequences of working class racism. The ASL even tried to sell its co-operative schemes to workers by pointing out their usefulness in dealing with the Chinese problem. This small-scale capitalism cum socialism could make Australian workers immune to the effects of any sort of immigration, as all immigration, whether white or coloured, was detrimental to the interests of the non-landowning classes. The ASL's solution, therefore, was ultimately an individual one, not a class one; its version of internationalism, in practice, was simply spreading the word world-wide about this individual or small group solution. On the question of racism, the ASL was diverted from a confrontationist stance, which might have flowed from its reasonably thorough-going class analysis of Australian society, because of its obsession with land reform and its micro-socialist strategy. The emancipation of the working class was the immediate formation of

143. *Australian Radical*, 9 Feb 1889.
co-operatives.
CHAPTER TWO.

EXODUS: THE 1890s (Lane leaves Australia and the ASL leaves Labor)

Industrial Labour and Politics  88
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The Australian Socialist League  105
The price of wool was falling in eighteen ninety one,
The men who owned the acres saw something must be done
"We will break the shearers' union, and show we're the masters still,
And they'll take the terms we give them or we'll find the men who will!"¹

The price of wool fell 49% between 1875 and 1894. A period of low world
prices set in, and loan money became scarce, and it was loan money that, to a
large extent, had sustained the boom in the 1880s. Export income dropped 13%
between 1891 and 1894; gross domestic product fell 20% between 1891 and 1895;
and many banks were forced into liquidation in 1893.² And the road to
recovery was made longer by the "Big Drought" of the 1890s, which killed off
a huge proportion of the stock, and devastated the farmlands of primary-
producing Australia.³ In 1892, for the first time, Australia began to lose
population by emigration, and there was much shifting from one colony to
another: the losers were Victoria, South Australia, and New South Wales; the
gainers were Western Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania. The deep troughs of
the 1890s depression were 1893-4 and 1897-8. With the exception of Western
Australia, which experienced a localised gold-inspired boom, conditions in
the other colonies were probably as serious as in the early 1930s, and
aggravated by the absence of official social security measures.⁴ To counter
the depression, the colonial governments generally opted for the goal of
diversification of rural industry, as the concentration on investment in the
wool industry was seen to have been excessive.⁵ But, as Fitzpatrick notes,
the first step in encouraging this diversification in the economy and the
consolidation of a middle class of small producers, was "to put down the
pretensions of wage workers to a share in the control of industry".⁶

¹. From "The Ballad of 1891", Builders' Labourers' Song Book, Widescope, 1975,
p.69. (It was written by Helen Palmer for the play Reedy River).
². Portus, Australia: An Economic Interpretation, p.55; E.W.Campbell, History
of the Australian Labour Movement, p.23; Jackson, Australian Economic
Development in the Nineteenth Century, p.23. The spectacular bank failures in
1893 have confounded bourgeois economic historians, who argue about the
relative importance of internal structural factors such as over-investment in
some sectors, and the coincidence of unfavourable external influences such as
decreasing export prices. See, respectively, N.G.Butlin, Investment in
Australian Economic Development,1861-1900; E.A.Boehm, Prosperity and
Depression in Australia, 1887-1897.
⁵. Sinclair, "Capital Formation" in C.Forster (ed), Australian Economic
The maritime strike of 1890, the shearers' strikes of 1891 and 1894, and the Broken Hill miners' strike of 1892 were the outstanding battles in what Fitzpatrick describes as the "overt class war of 1890-94". But why 1890? Fitzpatrick replies that this was the time at which, a long period of prosperity having unmistakably closed, capitalists decided that it would be more profitable to show the unions, "once and for all", who owned Australia, than to leave that question in the background, as had seemed prudent in the 1880s while profits were mounting.7

There is considerable controversy about the effect of the Great Strikes of the 1890s, about the extent to which this industrial set-back for labour encouraged its emergence on the political field.8 Contemporary observers

7. Fitzpatrick, A Short History of the Australian Labor Movement, pp.113-4. Brady considers the 1890 confrontation was deliberately precipitated by organised capital, with the aim of putting Australian unionism out of action for ever.(Brady, The Red Objective, ch.2). E.O.G.Shann describes pastoralists as drawing together to face a gathering storm, of which the predicted outcome was the control of all industries by the organised proletariat, and refers to "high tension in the relations of employers and workers".("Economic and Political Development 1885-1900" in The Cambridge History of the British Empire, p.373). Barnard maintains both labour and capital hoped to survive at the expense of the other. "Both had learnt to organize, both had built up an embattled philosophy. Interneicine strife was added to the troubles Australia had to face".(A History of Australia, p.146). But Gollan stresses that, although the shearers had a profound belief in their rights as trade unionists and there was a widespread socialist ideology, it was not a revolutionary socialism.("Nationalism, The Labour Movement and the Commonwealth, 1880-1900" in Greenwood, Australia, p.168). Nairn insists 1890 was not a struggle planned and precipitated by united employers, "nor does it illustrate a class war, a struggle waged by united Labor on the one hand and united Capital on the other..."(N.B.Nairn, "The 1890 Maritime Strike in NSW", Historical Studies, Vol 10 No 37, Nov 1961, pp.2, 15). De Garis likewise rejects the depiction of the maritime strike as a deliberate trial of strength between united labour and united capital over the principle of unionism. He points out that the strike was limited, and neither side was as well co-ordinated as claimed.("1890-1900" in Crowley, A New History of Australia, p.231).

8. Fitzpatrick maintains the strike defeats encouraged the labour movement to add political action to its arsenal of tactics, because it realised that direct action alone was inadequate, as governments had sided with the capitalists to beat the unionists. "Labor did not love industrial action less, because now it smiled also on political action".(A Short History of the Australian Labor Movement, pp.145-6). Collan believes the defeats were not the single cause of the formation of the Labor Parties, but were the "final incentive" needed to launch them, and points out the distance the trade unions had gone towards forming political parties in the five years before 1890.("The Trade Unions and Labour Parties, 1890-4", Historical Studies, Vol 7 No 25, Nov 1955, p.17; Radical and Working Class Politics, p.128). Both Collan and Churchward stress the importance of the development of the 'new unionism' in the 1890s, which they claim provided a more class conscious basis for national party politics, than did the more-skilled, craft-minded
seem to regard the strikes as crucial. Roydhouse and Taperell, the first historians of the Labor Party, wrote that when the battle was over, and the last guerilla affair of Labour and Capital outposts was past, Labour set about repairing its wounds and making good resolutions for the future. "It was then that Labour resolved to cast aside semi-barbaric methods for the more peaceful, and more effective, means of Constitutional Reform". Métin saw 1890 as the crucial divide in the history of the Australian labour movement, as he alleges the maritime strike threw the unions into politics after an era of purely industrial activity. Reeves considers that Labor unionists of the cities. (L.G. Churchward's Introduction to Ebbels, The Australian Labor Movement, 1850-1907, pp. 17, 35). Nairn, however, upgrades the role of moderate labour, particularly the Trades and Labour Council, and downgrades the importance of militant labour, in the formation of the Labor Party in NSW. (Bede Nairn, Civilising Capitalism). Manning Clark maintains the strike experience converted the workers' leaders to a belief in political action, in the expectation that the state could, and should, be the protector of the material well-being of all its citizens. (A Short History of Australia, pp. 167, 169, 175). McQueen sees the appearance of Laborism as a distinctive political form in the 1890s as the fulfilment of the past, not the result of an "exogenous shock" such as the maritime strike. He cites the labour agitation in the 1880s for payment of members as proof of parliamentary aspirations. (A New Britannia, p. 225). Philipp insists the labour movement in the 1870s and 1880s had been intensely interested in political activity, but trade union organisation had not reached a sufficiently high level of development, rural workers had problems voting, there were too few urban workers, and members were not paid in NSW until 1889. But, after outlining these independent reasons for the non-emergence of Labor until the 1890s, she acknowledges that the maritime strike defeat created an acute sense of the urgent need for political action. ("1890 - The Turning Point in Labour History?", Historical Studies, Vol 4 No 14, May 1950, pp. 145-154). O'Connor agrees that the significance of 1891 was that, instead of desiring parliamentary representation, the labour movement succeeded in establishing a mass political party, independent of the old parties. ("1890 - A Turning Point in Labour History: A Reply to Mrs Philipp", Historical Studies, Vol 4 No 16, May 1951, pp. 355-365). Dickey notes that, although the TLC proposed putting up candidates in January 1890, the effect of the maritime strike was to encourage vigorous local support for the establishment of Labour Electoral Leagues. (Politics in New South Wales 1856-1900, p. 173). Murphy claims that the introduction of salaries for politicians in all but Western Australia by 1890, was a mundane but crucial factor leading to Labor in politics. He considers that a study of the separate colonies reveals that the simple causal relationship between the strike and the formation of the Labor Parties is open to doubt. ("The Labor Parties in Australia" in Murphy, Labor in Politics, pp. 3-4). De Garis concludes: "Disenchantment with the strike weapon gave rise to a new interest in alternative methods of settling industrial disputes, and plans to secure labour representation in parliament received a boost". ("1890-1900" in Crowley, A New History of Australia, p. 233).

emerged because the political co-operation of working class and middle class was broken for good by the strikes of 1890-94.\textsuperscript{11} V.S.Clark observed that the failure of the maritime strike made the working men of Australasia distrust trade union methods.\textsuperscript{12} Certainly, Labor politicians of the time used the strike defeats as retrospective justification for the incursion into the parliamentary arena. Black claimed the NSW Labor Party of 1891 was the creation of the maritime strike, as the workers had discovered the strike was "an expensive and largely futile method of obtaining reforms".\textsuperscript{13}

Debate has also centred on a more important issue: whether the political conservatism of the 1890s Labor Parties was a rupture with a militant past or a continuation in the industrial tradition of 'Defence Not Defiance'. Those who posit the notion of a rupture assume a pre-lapsarian period for the labour movement, a golden age of militancy, eventually superseded by a period of betrayal.\textsuperscript{14} But, whatever the nature of the past, the conservatism of the political labour movement in the 1890s is not disputed. As the \textit{Daily Telegraph} commented of the NSW Labor bunch in 1891: "If the conduct of the Labour Party in Parliament is as rational as most of their legislative aims or as temperate as most of their hustling utterances, capital will not be more troubled at what they will do than it now is at what they have

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{11} Reeves, \textit{State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand}, pp.61, 65.
\item \textsuperscript{12} V.S.Clark, \textit{The Labour Movement in Australasia}, p.71.
\item \textsuperscript{13} George Black, \textit{History of the N.S.W. Labour Party}, p.1.
\item \textsuperscript{14} Fitzpatrick relates Labor's acceptance of arbitration, which it had rejected in the 1880s, to its weakened position in the 1890s, state regulation of employer-employee relations appearing to be the only practicable course for the battered and broken unions of the 1890s to pursue. (\textit{The British Empire in Australia}, pp.315-7). Campbell notes the reaction to the empirical observation that governments broke strikes, but comments that the labour leaders found no fault with the capitalist state as such, their criticism being levelled only against 'unjust' laws and 'biased' politicians, as they could not see that this 'partiality' of the government towards the employers arose from the real nature of the state in capitalist society. (\textit{History of the Australian Labour Movement}, p.28). Philipp accuses both Campbell and Fitzpatrick of encouraging the vague notion that the labour movement before 1891 was militant and radical, and suddenly became conservative and political after 1891. ("1890 - The Turning Point in Labour History", pp.145-54). O'Connor agrees that Campbell and Fitzpatrick placed too little stress on the conservative outlook of the union leadership before 1890. ("1890 - A Turning Point in Labour History: A Reply to Mrs Philipp", pp.355-65). McQueen rubbishes the myth of the super-militant pre-1890 labour movement on the basis of its performance in the great trial of strength, as the strikes were broken by a superabundance of non-union labour. (\textit{A New Britannia}, pp.210-1). Dalton supports the notion of a rupture, but blames the depression, not the formation of the Labor Party. ("An Interpretative Survey: the Queensland Labour Movement" in Murphy, Joyce, Hughes, \textit{Prelude to Power}, pp.24-5).
\end{itemize}
done". Initially, Labor did not take up a clear-cut oppositional position, but offered support to other parties in return for concessions. And, as McQueen notes, the working class accepted middle class radicals as leaders, Sir George Grey being the outstanding example. Sir Charles Lilley, a Liberal premier of Queensland, was another. Henry Lawson wrote in 1892:

O who will bear the battle's brunt
And lead the ranks of Labour?
Our leaders blunder in the front
While victory's a neighbour!
We need a man to guide us through -
The march is rough and hilly -
The army wants to know if you
Are coming, Charlie Lilley?

In 1896, W.M.Hughes claimed the Labor Party represented merchants, clerks, and farmers, as well as workers, and that Labor policy was framed in the interests of rich and poor, excluding only financiers, money-lenders, rentiers, and land-monopolists. Turner notes that the formation of Labor governments put the finishing touch to the tendency of Labor not only to present itself, but to think of itself, as a community, rather than a class, party, concerned to prosecute a conception of the national interest that was increasingly acceptable to its traditional opponents.

15. Daily Telegraph, 26 June 1891, quoted in Manning Clark, A Short History of Australia, p.172.
17. Quoted in McQueen, A New Britannia, p.183.
18. Cited in Reeves, State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand, pp.89-90.
19. Turner, Industrial Labour and Politics, p.68. Rawson agrees that the Labor Party was never in fact and professedly an interest party, noting that when it was founded, a deliberate attempt was made to bring together industrial workers, the smaller farmers and business men, and clerical and salaried workers. He adds that, without any apparent sense of incongruity, Labor leaders have asserted both that the party was a distinctively working class party, and that it was a party which overstepped class boundaries and served the entire community. ("Labour, Socialism and the Working Class", Australian Journal of Politics and History, Vol VII No 1, May 1961, pp.76-7). Dalton claims the early support for small farmers that Labor advocated did not spring from opportunism, but from a conscious belief in Labor as the party of all Australians, a party which cut across class boundaries in its appeal. ("An Interpretative Survey: the Queensland Labour Movement" in Murphy, Joyce, Hughes, Prelude to Power, pp.24-5). Childe concludes: "To avoid giving offence to middle-class supporters Labour Governments have followed a vacillating policy and have tried to govern in the interests of all classes instead of standing up boldly in defence of the one class which put them in power". (How Labour Governs, pp.72-3, 80). Of course, countless historians have elaborated upon the reformist nature of the Labor Parties since their inception. Only outright reactionaries, such as St Ledger, have thought otherwise. (Australian Socialism, pp.4-5, 162).
The decade ended with the outbreak of the Boer War. The labour press, though regretting the conflict, were 'loyal'. Gollan maintains that republicanism was never more than a minority cause in the labour movement, yet it was, none the less, a cause. There was no such prevarication in the labour movement over the issue of racism. A lone delegate at the Inter-Colonial Trades and Labour Congress in 1891, Campbell of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, attacked the proposal that 'alien races' should be excluded from Australia, commenting that, after protesting their social brotherhood, the delegates showed petty jealousies, and talked about excluding aliens. Campbell thought there was not much brotherhood in that. The mood of labour is summarised in the extract from the Australian Worker, approvingly quoted in the Queensland Worker in July 1892:

In from the West the Chinese are swarming unchecked, from the East the kanaka current flows. To the North the pearl-shelling industry is already in the hands of Asiatics, to say nothing of the Javanese and Japanese. And before the vast besetting wave of servile labour, with all its manifold evils, the white labourer is being driven southward.

The anti-Chinese hysteria of the 1880s gave way, in the 1890s, to a generalised phobia about alien races, encouraged by the immigration of other groups such as Japanese, Afghans, Indians, Italians, Jews, and Syrians. Governments accordingly moved towards blanket restriction on the entry of all coloured immigrants, generally by extending their anti-Chinese clauses to embrace all 'inferior' races; each colony's Labor Party wrote alien exclusion into its platform.

Specifically anti-Chinese agitation was considerably less frenetic than in the 1880s. The exclusion legislation of 1888 throughout the colonies had laid down the society's guidelines. The work yet to be done consisted in restricting the entry of aliens other than Chinese. Norris correctly stresses that, although racism was strong in the 1890s, it was not an issue as such, that the desire for uniform immigration control was not of any importance in the federation movement, and that the White Australia Policy

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24. Vic 1891, Qld 1892, SA 1893, NSW 1895, WA 1896.
of 1901 was less the manifestation of a causal factor, than an effect, of federation. Grass-roots anti-Chinese agitation was confined to Western Australia and country areas in the eastern states that were experiencing Chinese immigration for the first time. In some areas there was strong resentment about the success of Chinese farmers. There was opposition along the NSW/Queensland border as Chinese took up land for tobacco growing, and around Tumut, local farmers complained that the Chinese already held the best tobacco and maize growing land. European market gardeners also resented Chinese competition, and attempted to mobilise anti-Chinese feeling in country towns. In 1899, European employers in the Sydney furniture trade arranged for a meeting with the union to discuss various "questions of mutual concern" including the evils of Chinese competition.

Shearers and other bush unionists were among the most hostile to Chinese labour in the 1890s. Banjo Paterson captures their sentiments in Travelling Down The Castlereagh:

I asked a cove for shearing once along the Marthaguy
"We shear non-union here" says he. "I call it scab", says I,
I looked along the shearing-board before I turned to go,
There was eight or ten dashed Chinamen a-shearing in a row,
So its shift, boys shift! There wasn't the slightest doubt
It's time to make a shift with the leprosy about.

The Queensland Shearers' Union stipulated that no member of the union should work with an 'Asiatic'. The Amalgamated Shearers' Union, which covered South Australia, Victoria, and NSW, originally permitted entry of non-Europeans, but the 1888 Conference decided to exclude Chinese, and by 1890, neither Melanesians nor Chinese were acceptable as shearers or shearers' cooks. These anti-Chinese rules were opposed by only two unionists, Stevenson and Power from Victoria. And it was Power who opposed the discriminatory rules of the General Labourers' Union formed in 1891, by arguing that the basic principle of unionism stood against racial discrimination. He had no support. When the southern bush unions amalgamated in 1894 to form the Australian Workers' Union, the discriminatory rules were retained. In the same year, Chinese shearers employed on Wirrah station in NSW refused to work with non-unionised Europeans.

27. A.P.Elkin, "Re-Thinking the White Australia Policy", Australian Quarterly, Vol XVII No 3, Sept 1945, p.12; Markus, 'The Burden of Hate', pp.425-6, 418-9. The desire to exclude aliens, particularly Chinese, was entangled with the other issues raised by the 1891 shearers' strike. Spence's retrospective verdict was that the stand made by the shearers and
Labour movement opposition to the recruitment of Melanesians for the Queensland plantations flared up again in March 1892. Coghlan writes that it was with surprise and resentment that the white working class learnt of Griffith's announcement that he was advising the re-introduction of Melanesians for a limited period. It was this Liberal 'betrayal' that helped cast the emerging Queensland Labor Party as the true defenders of the white working class. McQueen argues that the struggle to end Melanesian labour was crucial to the emergence of the Labor Party in Queensland. Harris likewise cites Labor opposition to Melanesian labour as an important factor contributing to the election of 14 members of parliament in 1893.

But Markus is also correct that European workers in the sugar industry did not need to agitate on the issue, as Melanesians were a constant source of worry to the whole community. The rural labour press simply channelled this widespread opposition to the continued employment of Melanesians into support for the Labor Party and eventual electoral victory. The labour shed employees in 1891 was not only against a reduction of wages and an attempt to introduce 'freedom of contract', but was principally against the introduction of Chinese labour. This is an exaggeration. The use of Chinese labour was merely one example of 'freedom of contract' which, along with wage-cutting, formed the basic grievance of the shearers, who wanted all-union sheds. But what is certainly true is that the anti-Chinese aspect of the strike was played up both to rouse the strikers and to gain public sympathy. Coghlan writes that the references to Chinese labour were introduced "in order to embitter the feelings of the men on strike, and to suggest a grievance which would appeal powerfully to a large public". That the Chinese issue was used for this two-fold purpose is indicative of how widespread anti-Chinese sentiment was, regardless of class. In public, union leaders arguing the case of the shearers continually harped on the Chinese question. The secretary of the Sydney Wharf Labourers' Union defined 'freedom of contract' as freedom to employ Chinese, Melanesians, and any other sort of labour, to crush out unionism. The 'Chinese issue' was used also as a post-facto justification. Writing 20 years after the men in NSW agreed to recognise the right of employers to hire men of their choosing including non-unionists, while the Pastoralists' Federal Council merely agreed to "use its influence to prevent the employment of Chinese or Kanakas as shearers and shearers' cooks", Spence attempted to cloak this defeat, by arguing that victory had been secured in the form of preventing a flood of non-European labour. He recalled how the shearers had cheered when he announced at Bourke that the Pastoralists' Association had expelled a member who refused to discharge his Chinese employees. (Spence, *Australia's Awakening*, p.178; Coghlan, *Labour and Industry in Australia*, p.1530; Markus, 'The Burden of Hate', pp.422-4).

29. McQueen, *A New Britannia*, p.52.
press echoed the prejudices of the wider society, for its own benefit. The Worker described Melanesian labour as "cheap and nasty", made reference to "Kanaka Hooligans", and gave much publicity to Melanesian crimes. The struggle against the use of Melanesian labour was actually a struggle against the presence of Melanesian people. "This approach", writes Harris, "rather than a conscious attempt to win the coloured workers to a struggle for equal pay and conditions coupled with opposition to mass migration, meant in practice that the coloured workers would continue as a cheap labour force". 32

From Harris's evidence, it would not have been difficult to encourage such struggles. He cites a strike in June 1890 at the Woodlands sugar plantation at Marburg and one in October 1891 at Robb and Co's sugar mill at Cudgen. The Worker, in March 1898, suggested Melanesians were setting up their own union organisation and enforcing a minimum wage, but still criticised the "Tommy Tannas" for being violent with their non-unionists. 33 The Bulletin of April 1899 referred to the "curse of the kanaka", particularly the time-expired, "who work for the highest wages they can get..." 34 All in all, attempts by indentured labourers on the sugar field to form unions or strike were either ridiculed by the labour movement or used as proof of the unruliness of the 'kanakas', and therefore as further justification for their exclusion from Queensland. Hunt notes that "brotherhood, solidarity, and the right to work were the exclusive preserve of an homogenous group of white, predominantly British workers. Most trade unions had rigidly applied rules forbidding membership to Asians and Melanesians". 35

Unlike the industry in Queensland, sugar in northern NSW had always been grown by white labour on small family farms. However, in the 1890s, Indians began moving into the NSW sugar industry. Although there was strong working class opposition to Indians in the district, the organisation of the Anti-Alien Society was carried out by cane farmers, helped by the editor of a local paper. That Indians were beginning to rent farms was obviously disturbing to local cane growers. Besides, the NSW sugar industry, at this stage, had to be free from allegations that it was employing coloured

34. Quoted in Hall, "Racism and the Press" in Stevens, Racism, Vol 1, p.133.
labour. In May 1895, NSW premier Reid had proposed removing the customs duty on imported sugar, and the cane growers hoped to defeat Reid by appealing to racism for maintaining the duty on imported 'coloured' sugar. Furthermore, the Colonial Sugar Refining Company was keen to exclude Indian labour as this enabled the smaller enterprises to survive. In fact, anti-alien activity served CSR interests admirably. When Reid reduced the duty, thereby putting the squeeze on smaller growers, CSR reduced its wages. Instead of fighting this wage cut, a meeting in Ballina called on employers to dismiss their non-European workers. This action was co-ordinated by Municipal Councils, district progress associations, and a new body with a working class base, the East Coast and North Coast Anti-Alien League. The working class opposition was working hand in glove with the middle class. Indian enterprise was disconcerting for local cane growers, and Indian labour threatened CSR's monopoly pretensions.

Many of the 'truckies' of the 1890s were Afghan camel-drivers, who were bitterly resented by European carriers. Anti-camel agitation began late in 1890 in Bourke. One Afghan, Gunny Khan, tried to join the Carriers' Union, but was rejected, even though he offered to advise other Afghans to stay away from the area and to bind himself not to import any more camels. Appropriately, Khan succeeded in breaking the Carriers' Union, which disbanded in 1895. Organised opposition to Afghans peaked in 1893 with the formation of the Anti-Alien Labour League at Bourke. The main stimulus came from the Bourke Municipal Council, and the mayor and the editor of the local paper toured through the western towns to organise support and collect signatures for a petition. This organised aspect of the opposition was accompanied by frequent acts of violence against Afghans, often resulting from brawls over right of way. In 1899, Afghan employees of the Bourke Carrying Company went on strike, and were imprisoned under the Masters and Servants Act. But despite this proof of Afghan militancy, an Anti-Camel League was formed again, late in the century. In Western Australia, also, Afghan carriers were deeply resented, but no organised opposition equivalent to that based in Bourke resulted, though there were frequent brawls between Afghan and European carriers, as in the NSW outback.

37. ibid., pp.445-8, 454-5; Coghlan, Labour and Industry in Australia, p.2011. Alcohol, in particular, was entrusted to Afghan carriers, as their Mohammedanism forbade consumption of it en route. (Blainey, The Tyranny of Distance, p.290.)
Around this time, many of the itinerant hawkers who roamed country areas were Indians, Afghans, or Syrians. This 'lumpen petty bourgeoisie' was resented, not by white workers, but by white merchants. In 1896, the Victorian government responded to the requests of the Country Traders' Association of Victoria, by passing legislation refusing hawking licences to Asians. Likewise, in Queensland, the Sale and Use of Poisons Act of 1897 denied Asians the right to sell poisons. The specific reason for this law is unclear, but all colonies had examples of similar petty legislation. The general principle seemed to be that coloured enterprise must be curtailed.

However, the racial group which most excited attention, apart from the Chinese and, in Queensland, the Melanesians, was the Japanese, but only very late in the century. Yet working class opposition to Japanese never reached national proportions, as the numbers of Japanese were small and concentrated in particular activities such as pearl-shelling at Thursday Island, thereby provoking hostility only in a limited area. Also, at this stage, anti-Japanese hostility did not have that added dimension of fear of a military invasion that it acquired after the Japanese victory over Russia in 1905. But even before this, hostility to Japanese, as to all coloured immigrants in the last two decades of the century, was the prerogative of Australian society as a whole and not just of its working class.

According to Markus, leaders of working class campaigns against non-Europeans were reluctant to extend their racial attitudes to embrace Aborigines. However, this does not mean that Aborigines were regarded as equals, but simply that Aborigines were despised and neglected rather than resented and feared. That they were not feared is evident in the fact that they were catalogued along with American Negroes and Maoris, who predictably had virtually no impact whatever on the Australian labour movement. When the

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39. ibid., p.159. Queensland had far more Japanese immigrants than any other colony, 3,248 by the end of 1898, because, unlike the others, it adhered to the Anglo-Japanese Commercial Treaty of 1894.
41. Markus, 'Burden of Hate', p.35. Markus argues that in the labour movement there was often a desire to treat Aborigines as equals, but then mentions that Aborigines were allowed into the Shearers' Union without membership fees, while Melanesians and Asians were rigidly excluded. This is not equal treatment, but acceptance of the appallingly low wages paid to Aborigines; it is paternalistic racism, not exclusionist.
AWU was formed in 1894, it was open to "all bona fide wage-earners, male or female, except Chinese, Japanese, Kanakas, Afghans, and other colored aliens (This shall not apply to Aborigines, Maoris, American negroes, or to children of mixed marriages born in Australia)."

The March 1896 colonial premiers' conference agreed on the principle of exclusion of coloured immigrants, with the exception of Queensland, which adhered to the Anglo-Japanese Commercial Treaty. But as Yarwood makes clear: No ground swell of excited popular feeling prompted the resolutions of March 1896. Neither miners' riot nor quayside protest gave urgency to the parliaments that attempted to put them into effect... The initiative for the extension of the 'White Australia' legislation of the nineties came not from popular demand but from politicians, who, though primarily concerned with the Japanese question, took the opportunity of completing the statutory wall behind which an essentially Anglo-Saxon society could be nourished... The 1896 Coloured Immigration Restriction Bills passed in NSW, Tasmania, and South Australia (including the Territory) were refused royal assent. The Colonial Office felt that the colonies should be required to avoid offending Britain's friends, although it sympathised with the desire to avoid "the permanent presence of a considerable element of an inferior race". At the London Premiers' Conference in 1897, Jo Chamberlain, Secretary of State, suggested some "form of words which will avoid hurting the feelings of any of Her Majesty's subjects, while at the same time it would amply protect the Australasian colonies against any invasion of the class to which they would justly object". At the end of 1897, the Western Australian Immigration Restriction Act was the first legislation in Australia to adopt the 'Natal formula', the language test to exclude immigrants, in this case, English. The act also prohibited the entry of criminals, idiots, and people with certain diseases. In 1898, NSW and Tasmania followed Western Australia in enacting this Natal method of exclusion. Reid bowed to the exigencies of imperial diplomacy after blustering that it would be trifling with the gravity of the situation to open the country to all coloured persons who could get up sufficient English.

The labour press gave wholehearted approval to the racist initiative of the politicians. Practically every issue of the Worker contained racist

43. Yarwood, Asian Migration to Australia, pp.5-6.
44. Ibid., pp.12-3; Coghlan, Labour and Industry in Australia, p.2012; Gollan, "Nationalism, the Labour Movement and the Commonwealth, 1880-1900" in Greenwood, Australia, p.179.
cartoons, racist verse, or news items that 'proved' the unsuitability of coloured men as raw material with which to build the millenium in the antipodes. Following the cue of the Boomerang, the labour press of the 1890s made blatant appeals to race above class. The Queensland Worker of 15 May 1897 declared:

Are the white men of Australia willing to permit their women and children to be inoculated with loathsome diseases and polluted by the presence of the swarming hordes of Asia? Will the white people who are engaged in business pursuits without a protest suffer themselves to be ousted by Javanese, Syrians, Chinese, or Japanese? Should not all white people unite to save their race and civilisation from going down before the black, brown, and yellow invaders?

* * *

The reluctance of the organised socialists in the 1890s to confront this working class racism was, in a perverse way, the outcome of that obsession with parliamentary activity that, in the wake of debilitating industrial defeats, characterised the entire labour movement in this period.

Exceptions to this rule were few and ineffective. The Social Democratic Federation of 1892-3, according to Gollan, provided one opportunity for the expression of international sentiments. It sent a delegate, Francis Sceusa, to the Zürich International Socialist Congress in 1893. He called on workers to "join the international movement, and break down the barriers of racial and religious prejudice which renders the worker an easy prey to the scheming politician and the commercial marauder". But this SDF died in 1896 after splitting, apparently into 'German' and 'Anarchist' camps.

More tenacious was the International Socialist Club. According to O'Farrell, this social club was formed in 1898, mainly by German cigar-makers, although Cole claims it was started by a group of Italian immigrants and soon supplemented by Scandinavian and German contingents. Brady reckons these continental elements were old members of the ASL and he describes the Club as a friendly meeting place where good draught lager was

45. Yarwood, Asian Migration to Australia, pp.34-5.
46. Quoted in Markus, 'The Burden of Hate', pp.484-5.
49. O'Farrell, Harry Holland, militant socialist, p.22.
Farrell sheds some interesting light on the Club's origins. Evidently, in 1896, Edward Aveling, representing Australia at the London International Socialist Congress, moved a motion calling upon workers' organisations not to ask for restrictive legislation against the immigration of aliens. Farrell claims it was the Europeans in favour of this resolution who left the ASL to form the Club, and in arguing with the League over its support for restriction, cited the authority of the International.

However, even the membership of the International Socialist Club was divided on the issue. In July 1899, the Club discussed 'What position should the Socialist take towards the alien question?' Comrade Kendall considered that on the ground of expediency as opposed to strict ideal Socialism, and keeping in view the dangers that the presence of large numbers of Asiatics might cause, the exclusion of those races with a lower standard of life and ideas was desirable. Comrade Eyre said that exclusion was not only anti-socialist but not even justified by expediency, as, if a maximum price and minimum wage law existed, no danger would accrue from the competition of so-called aliens. Dierks supported Eyre, arguing that Marx's battle-cry of "Proletarians of all countries, unite" ought to remind them that socialism should not forswear its own principles, as it would injure the cause to include exclusion as one of its weapons. Barlow supported exclusion, holding that "theory might be too strictly followed". The Chairman was opposed to exclusion, but Ercole, from practical experience, agreed that anti-alien legislation had justification in fact.

So, whatever the exact history and development of the Club may be, and its relationship with the ASL, it was in no way a bastion of principled opponents to ASL equivocation on the exclusion issue. Yet, it would appear that the Club, with its high migrant composition, was closer to the cosmopolitanism of the Second International than were the indigenous Australian socialists of the League.

One individual socialist who opposed racism was Chris Casimir, a French-Mauritian revolutionary Marxist, who was an enthusiastic seller of the Melbourne independent labour paper Tocsin, which appeared first in October.

53. People and Collectivist, 29 July 1899.
1897. Casimir wrote in a letter to the *Age*:

By what right is Australia called a white country? In my opinion, Australia, by right, does not belong to the white population, the whites on Australian soil are regarded and must be regarded as foreigners and aliens by the blacks... what inherent right has the Australian to this continent independent of the right of conquest, for mark you conquest implies nothing else but brute force.55

Casimir would not have been allowed in William Lane's "xenophobic utopia".56 The Preamble to the Constitution of New Australia announced that membership would be denied to "any person of colour, including any married to persons of colour".57 Yet New Australia was to be run on co-operative principles; persons of colour could not be regarded as a threat due to their supposed lower living standards in a competitive labour market. So Lane's explanation in the Queensland *Worker* in 1891 that the anti-Chinese agitation was not a racial but a political economic movement,58 cannot be taken seriously. If anything, Lane's racism became even more violent, more hysterical, and more dogmatic than in his *Boomerang* days. There was the implication present that the degradation of labour, exemplified by industrial defeat, was the outcome of racial degeneration. Markus writes that Lane intuitively grasped the sub-conscious symbolism encapsulated within the leprosy phobia: the effects of the disease expressed analogously the degeneration of the Aryan race following the introduction of aliens.59 This theme pervades Lane's novel, *The Workingman's Paradise*, written to raise funds for the settlement in Paraguay. Docker describes the race-paranoia of Lane's Teutonic heroine Nellie: "Civilisation in Australia is going down, and the only victors can be the Chinese, who seem to sense the disease within white society and are waiting patiently and stolidly, for its demise".60

It has even been claimed that Lane fled from Australia because he believed the white population would soon be drowned in a sea of swarming Asians. This specific concern may or may not have motivated Lane, but it is apparent that his particularly emotional style of racism was a reflection of his utopian and idealist socialism, and it was this concept that led Lane to "start another fire in the Hell of Capitalism". In 1911, the International Socialist related Lane's utopianism to the Labor Party's blind worship of its "State ownership fetish". As Lloyd Ross comments, in every mining camp and shearing shed in Queensland in the 1890s, the Worker circulated, telling the mates and comrades and friends that the state was the only equitable employer, as it had no interest in taking anything beyond the cost of production. But perhaps the best proof of the conservatism of Lane's politics was that he was complimented by the reactionary politician, St Ledger, for having "a strong human sympathy with both labour and capitalism, inasmuch as he regarded labour as the innocent victim, and capitalists as the unconscious high priests of the human sacrifices they were inflicting on Society". Lane was as far, if not further, from preaching class solidarity in the 1890s, as he had been in the 1880s. The very name 'New Australia' summarised Lane's nationalist dreaming of a society that would be purely 'Australian', an homogenous white community, shunning the mistakes of Old Australia. But Lane failed to "write the history of humanity on the rocks of the Andes". Palmer refers to "the pathetic failure of a handful of idealists to create an image of the good life in the Paraguayan jungle: it covered the substance of the Australian dream itself, the idea of a closed continent, of building up a free community apart from the world". Even more bluntly, Lane's contemporary,

61.Hannan, "William Lane - Mateship and Utopia" in Murphy, Joyce, Hughes, Prelude to Power, pp.181-6.
62.The Vag [Thomas Batho], Random Ramblings, p.6. Gollan traces Lane's faith in the workers as drawing some strength from a version of the agrarian myth - the idealised bushman. ("American Populism and Australian Utopianism", Labour History, No 9, Nov 1965, p.20). Glen Lewis refers to the widespread agrarian idealism of the 1890s in Queensland, and argues that after bush life itself, agricultural settlement was believed to be the best for realising the mateship ideal, the dominant nationalist value of the time. ("The Alice River Settlement and the Legend of the Nineties", Australian Journal of Politics and History, Vol XIX No 3, Dec 1973, pp.361-2).
63.International Socialist, 22 July 1911.
64.Lloyd Ross, William Lane, p.107.
66.Lloyd Ross, William Lane, p.172.
Brady, comments that communism, to Lane, was "just being mates", so they "went mates" to Paraguay with a brass band and forgot to take spades. Brady considered the Preamble and Articles of Association of New Australia were "the output of an unpractical mind... obsessed with the idea that economic change can be effected by voluntary association under primitive conditions". 68

The Australian Socialist League

In the 1890s, the press of the ASL retreated from the qualified rejection of racism that characterised the Radical and the Australian Radical. When Winspear and the ASL parted company late in 1889, the affairs of both were at a low ebb. The Australian Radical struggled to appear monthly as an independent anarchist paper, but gave up the print in April 1890. The ASL survived the rupture and, according to O'Farrell, "swift and significant" revival began with the outbreak of the maritime strike in August 1890. It did not, however, re-establish its press until the middle of the decade, when disillusionment with the infant Labor Party began to set in. The first venture was the Socialist, which appeared first in October 1894, and resulted in Harry Holland serving a three month's sentence for libel. In 1896, Holland and Batho decided to shift the publishing headquarters to Newcastle, "the miners generally being regarded as better material than the city slave", and to call the new weekly paper the Northern

69 O'Farrell argues that the effect of the 1890 defeat was to attract a considerable number of young radicals to the League, and that among workers in general the strike defeat created a climate favourable to the reception of socialist propaganda. ("The Australian Socialist League and the Labour Movement, 1887-1891", Historical Studies, Vol VIII No 30, May 1958, pp.156, 153). Davison refers to the Sydney waterfront in 1890 as a frontier of class conflict, and that ASL members, for a brief moment of radical solidarity, spanned the range of anarchists, social democrats, Georgists, and labourites, and extended from the intellectuals of the inner city to the working class respectables of the western suburbs. ("Sydney and the Bush: An Urban Context for the Australian Legend", Historical Studies, Vol 18 No 71, Oct 1978, p.204). Fitzhardinge records that the ASL, moribund in 1889, claimed to have received 200 new members as a direct result of the maritime strike. (William Morris Hughes, Vol 1, p.29). E.J.Brady, ASL secretary in 1891, recalls that ASL participation in the 1891 election "stiffened the campaign", and scared the moderate section at the Trades Hall, who endeavoured to have the League officially repudiated, although many ASL members were TLC delegates, and nearly all belonged to industrial unions. (The Red Objective, Chs.6, 8). O'Farrell claims that the ASL membership, acting in trade unions, Labor Electoral Leagues, the TLC, and in their own organisation, contributed much to the success of the Labor candidates in the 1891 election. ("The Australian Socialist League and the Labour Movement, 1887-1891", Historical Studies, Vol VIII No 30, May 1958, p.165). E.H.Lane describes the ASL in 1891 as "the centre of the revolutionary movement in Australia". (Dawn to Dusk, p.29). Even Hughes recalls that ASL headquarters, Leigh House, was the temple where "the advance guard of the Labour movement, the stalwarts of socialism and the single tax", gathered on Sunday nights, and that the hall was always packed to the doors with men and women of all shades of advanced opinion. (Crusts and Crusades, Tales of Bygone Days, p.68). 70 The story of this paper, which is missing from the Mitchell Library, is related by Batho in his Random Ramblings, pp.8-9; People and Collectivist, 1 Oct 1898 L, 4 Jan 1899; O'Farrell, Harry Holland, militant socialist, pp.11-2.
Developments in Sydney again led to the appearance of an ASL monthly sheet, the Collectivist, which eventually amalgamated with the Northern People to become the People and Collectivist.

The Collectivist appeared for five months, from November 1897 to March 1898. It noted in its first issue that the chief cause of the closure of mills in Lancashire was the pressure of foreign, especially "Asiatic", competition. It sought legislative rather than industrial solutions to the problem of competition from foreign labour, either at home or abroad. This emphasis on parliamentary action was in accord with the Eurocentric limitations of its internationalism. It expressed solidarity with workers in countries such as England, France, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Switzerland, and Italy, who were politically organised. It believed the success of the "universal fight" would depend on the combination of these political organisations.

No generalised comment can be made about the response to racism of the Northern People of January 1897 to March 1898. Not a single lead article 'put the line', so editorial opinion on the matter can be gleaned only in the regular 'bits and pieces columns', which, being made up of short anonymous comments, wise-cracks, and 'news', can reasonably be taken to have been selected at the discretion of the editor. Yet, although most asides on the question were racist, some were anti-racist. There was not even consistency in the attitude expressed towards any particular racial grouping, apart from the Aborigines, who only scored one comment: the information that the speaker at a meeting of the Aborigines Society in London had stated that the manner in which the blacks of Westralia were indentured to settlers was a form of slavery that ought not to be allowed.

On the Chinese, the Northern People's response varied from the report of the Chinese arrested in Melbourne who was in an advanced stage of leprosy, parts of his arms and legs being eaten away, to the observation that, although the Chinese had been compressing the feet of their women for thousands of years, Chinese babies were still born with feet like other people. It also published, without comment, Ben Tillett's speech during his visit late in 1897 that revealed that Tillett was either unable or

71. The Vag [Thomas Batho], Random Ramblings, p.9.
72. Collectivist, 1 Nov 1897.
73. ibid., 1 Dec 1897.
74. Northern People, 24 April 1897.
75. ibid., 23 Jan 1897, 3 April 1897.
unwilling to distance himself from the widespread anti-Chinese sentiment, as he asked: "What sort of a nation will you Australians be in fifty years? If things go on as they are it seems to me that some of you will be wearing pig-tails".76

Regarding Melanesian workers, the *Northern People* expressed both sympathy with the oppressed as well as the desire to get rid of them. It commented that 'kanaka' women were forced to work on the plantations, no matter what their condition of health, and that the way they were treated by the overseers, whose morals were on a par with their language, called to mind the slavery days of the Southern States.77 Far more vehement, however, was the 'Random Notes' item that recorded that the colony of Queensland was over-run by "Kanakas and other undesirable races", who seemed to have things pretty much their own way in some places, fighting in the streets and openly molesting white people of both sexes. The *Northern People* advised the workers to get up a petition against this unjust foreign competition, "setting forth that by the assistance of the Government cheap and nasty laborers are being introduced into Queensland to the great detriment of the Queensland worker, reducing the price of his labor-power below the cost of production..."78

On the other hand, a more class-conscious approach to the question of racism is also evident, but only where European 'races' are involved. Apart from asserting that the emancipation of the working class was that of all human kind, without distinction of sex or race, the *Northern People* expressed concern over the disputes between Australian and Italian fruit vendors: "And what makes the matter appear all the more grotesque is the fact that each side throws all the blame on the nationality of its opponents. It never seems to strike any of them that it is in competition where the evil lies..."79 Yet the *Northern People* implied elsewhere that mixing nationalities was inherently disastrous for wage levels. It reported that representatives of every nation under the sun were employed in the American mines, and that there was very little organisation amongst them, and wages were down to three shillings a day.80

Admittedly, the *Northern People* was consistent in its denunciation of

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76.*Northern People*, 9 Oct 1897.
77.*ibid.*, 27 Nov 1897.
78.*ibid.*, 20 March 1897.
79.*ibid.*, 15 Jan 1898, 23 Jan 1897.
80.*ibid.*, 6 March 1897.
British imperialism, but with a distinctly Australian nationalist orientation. Of a British punitive force that completely routed the Angoni Zulus, the *Northern People* commented sarcastically that of course this was not murder, it was England's glory and England's pelf. Yet it was more genuinely bitter that Australia's vast natural resources were being rapidly exploited for the purpose of providing fortunes for London trusts and syndicates. "When this country is about worked out and the syndicators have flown away with their booty, perhaps the starving people will find voice enough to ask 'Where are the great resources of this grand country?'" More offensively, the *Northern People* referred also to Australian settlement as the "triumph of the Caucasian type based upon the exclusion of the Asiatic and the annihilation of the aboriginal..."

At Easter 1898, when the *Northern People* and the *Collectivist* merged to become the *People and Collectivist*, the ASL annual conference formally adopted the demand for "The exclusion of races whose presence under present competitive conditions might lower the standard of living of Australian workers".

This demand was adopted despite the ASL's awareness, in theory, that racial discrimination was distinctly anti-socialist. The *People and Collectivist* explicitly acknowledged that socialism knew no colour line, and that all humanity, irrespective of race, colour, or creed, were one brotherhood. The paper did not pull its punches about racism – at the theoretical level:

For the working class there are no state or national barriers, their common interests form a stronger bond than that belonging to any one state or nation. The advancement of the political, economic, and intellectual interests of the working class requires the common action of the workers of all states and nations in their common struggle against the capitalists of all tongues. The class-conscious workers know nothing of national hatreds, they wish every nation to possess full liberty to develop. And they fight together, that is, internationally, against the common enemy of them all – International Capitalism.

The *People and Collectivist* concluded by commending the words of the great

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81.*Northern People*, 9 Jan 1897.
82.*ibid.*, 16 Jan 1897 L.
83.*ibid.*, 23 Jan 1897. See also 4 Sept 1897.
84.*The People and Collectivist* was published weekly from Newcastle under managing editor Harry Holland, assisted by a Sydney press committee of Thompson, Moroney, and Barlow. The ASL hailed the new amalgamated outfit as "the organ of straightout Australian Social-Democracy, a permanent institution". (*People and Collectivist*, 1 Oct 1898).
85.*People and Collectivist*, 12 Nov 1898, 23 Dec 1899.
Internationalist and exponent of Scientific Socialism: "Workers of the World, UNITE!" 86

Seven months after adoption of the exclusion demand, a German comrade gave a lecture at ASL headquarters on 'International prejudices'. The People and Collectivist reported that this comrade gave an interesting sketch of the many false cries with regard to the religious and race hatreds raised by the capitalist class on the continent of Europe and in the United States as a means of preventing that solidarity of the world's workers that socialists recognised as absolutely essential to the growth of an intelligent socialist movement. The report added that a lively discussion followed, the general trend being in accord with the spirit of the lecturer's remarks. 87

Likewise, the People and Collectivist was quite happy to uphold the rights of oppressed minorities - overseas. European capitalists were still "partitioning" China among themselves, the People and Collectivist noted, as "Civilisation" takes no notice of the Chinaman's rights. 88 Reference was made to the "buccaneering, blustering, thieving, murdering 'empire builders' of South Africa fame". 89 In a similarly contemptuous vein, it published a parody of Kipling, 'The Black Man's Burden', which included, for example:

Take up your sword and rifle,
Rob every savage race,
Annex their land and harbors,
For this is Christian grace.
E'en though ye slaughter thousands,
Ye still shall count it gain;
If ye extend your commerce
Who dreads the curse of Cain? 90

Far from home also, was the Dreyfus Affair. The People and Collectivist announced that the bourgeois capitalist republic of France was rotten with corruption and social disease. "To divert the attention of the workers from the remedy of their economic troubles held out by the international working class movement, to cover up the sins and peculations of fraudulent legislators and administrators, the infamous Dreyfus affair was born..." 91 Anti-Semites, the People and Collectivist declared, use Jews as scapegoats for the exploitation of the working class, whereas socialists say that it is not the race that should be crushed, but the mechanism it uses, as well as

86. People and Collectivist, 7 May 1898.
87. ibid., 3 Dec 1898.
88. ibid., 27 May 1899.
89. ibid., 3 Sept 1898.
90. ibid., 6 May 1899.
91. ibid., 22 Oct 1898.
the exploiters among the Christians.  

Far from home, in another sense, were the neglected and forgotten Aborigines. The *People and Collectivist* indicted white society for the crimes inflicted on the Aborigines, and cried a curse on the capitalist system for degrading and murdering "the helpless untutored black".  

Closer to home, the ASL's internationalism was not so strong. This dissonance was no doubt a result of the racist pressures operating on this small and beleaguered socialist group. Although it justifiably emphasised that the problem of 'cheap labour' could not be solved this side of socialism, specific comments made about racial minorities in Australia aimed to please the working class, not to persuade workers that racism divided their ranks. An editorial in May 1899 referred to Australia's north-eastern province, "where the ascendancy of the white race is seriously threatened by the influx of slave labor from the Pacific Islands and Asia..." Earlier, the *People and Collectivist* expressed fears that the 'kanaka' might be replaced "with a small army of the cheap and reliable Jap". Also, it reported that Hindus were working in some parts of Queensland for their tucker only, and not tucker wages for white men. "When the flour bag is empty they convert the bag into trousers and shirt, and they have nearly all taken up selection, so they have come, like the ticks, to stop". And, although the *People and Collectivist* rubbish the *Worker*, it nevertheless reprinted its article on the "mongrelisation of kanakaland", on the basis that the matter demanded the serious attention of every Australian wage earner.  

So, despite their theoretical reservations, in practice, the ASL encouraged, rather than discouraged, racist fears. Of the Chinese, it reported authoritatively that they had almost entirely monopolised the cabinet-making of Brisbane, and that in Sydney, the same process was going on. Even more alarmist was the report of the Jubilee procession in London. *Justice* had argued that the coloured soldiers who rode through the streets as vassals might one day march through as conquerors, because they could be brought in to suppress any popular movement. Taking its cue from *Justice*,

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92.*People and Collectivist*, 20 Aug 1898.  
93. *ibid.*, 23 July 1898.  
94. *ibid.*, 6 May 1899 L.  
95. *ibid.*, 14 May 1898.  
96. *ibid.*, 24 June 1899.  
97. *ibid.*, 21 Jan 1899.  
the *People and Collectivist* pointed out that the soldiers of India were nearer to Australia than to England, and India's climate was similar to Australia's.

The upper classes here may yet find it necessary to employ force, especially with the restriction of political liberty that will happen if Federation under the present proposed form is agreed to. Say, the disciplined, trained, used-to-butcher soldiery of India against the Queensland bush workers. Would you like the prospect?99

But the most virulent racism was that expressed by the ASL comrades in the northern rivers area of NSW, where, in the late 1890s, the response of white residents to Indian sugar cane growers and workers was causing considerable racial tension. One report from the Casino branch referred to "hordes of smellful Hindoos", "the Colored Labor Curse", and the need to "protect and preserve the purity of our white race from further contamination".100 Another northern rivers correspondent warned readers that the "interesting alien" was making his way into the dairying industry, and was docile, inexpensive, and "Uriah Heapish" in his muleness.101 The correspondence was published without editorial comment. And one writer, with the authority of the man on the spot, wrote to quell the rumour that a gang of 'kanakas' was equal to a gang of pale-faces in the canefield, as he had watched both closely, and asserted that a pale-face gang would work the best 'kanaka' gang procurable in Queensland to death in a few days.102 'Sakeum', another authority on such matters, remarked that the northern rivers would soon be a "New Hindoostan", as coloured aliens were doing most of the farm work on the Richmond River, while the remaining work, which was too hard for them to tackle, was done by whites at "Hindoostan prices". The writer was appalled at the suggestion made at the local sports day that there be a tug-of-war match between Hindus and whites, remarking that there was enough tug-of-war in earnest between blacks and whites, and that the blacks were getting the big end of the rope. His horror at miscegenation was also evident.

I'm told they have already started to blend the colors there, as one little individual can boast Hindoo-stralian parentage. Jerusalem! what next? Australia for the Australian - and his black brother-in-law. And this undesirable state of affairs is coming at an alarming pace.

Pull yourselves together, men, and assert your rights, before every jot of humanity is crushed out of you by the ruling capitalist class, who will

100. *ibid.*, 3 Sept 1898.
102. *ibid.*, 19 Nov 1898.
stop at nothing — not even at the flooding of these colonies with black slave labor — to obtain their own selfish ends in the shape of bigger profits...103

Of course, if the ASL believed, as it did, that such labour really was cheap by comparison with white labour, then it was justified in exposing the motives of the employers, and in objecting to its cheapness. However, such concerns were rarely the substance of ASL commentary on the race issue, and were certainly never unalloyed with racist rhetoric. The ASL appeared to be struggling to come to grips with the question of racism, to resolve internal contradictions on the matter, but without really succeeding. In the final analysis, it advocated, not working class solidarity, but national solidarity.

In practice, then, the ASL pandered to the racism which it, in theory, rejected. The *People and Collectivist* announced that "Australian Socialism is only a branch of International Socialism, as Australian capitalism is only a branch of international capitalism".104 Yet the League also seemed to regard Australian socialism as inferior to international socialism, by virtue of the backwater in which it operated. It was continually praising the progress of European socialists, and lamenting the backwardness of the Australian working class, as though this was somehow justification for its comparative lack of success.105 Eulogies on the SPD were particularly common, the ASL refusing to believe that Bernstein would gain any supporters.106 But the ASL's 'socialist cringe' was most marked in relation to the visit of Ben Tillett during 1897-8. The *People and Collectivist* reported that he had not been treated as well in the colony as he should have been, because Australian democracy was lacking in that honesty of political thought and

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103.*People and Collectivist*, 1 April 1899.
104.*ibid.*, 19 Nov 1898.
105.In commenting on the massive success of the Danish strikes of 1899, the *People and Collectivist* explained that the reason for the relative failures of Australian socialists was that the Australian worker had not yet grasped the idea that he belonged to a class, and so he failed to organise as a class, industrially and politically, and therefore went down every time before the capitalist class, which understood the need for class organisation. (*People and Collectivist*, 2 Sept 1899).
106.For example: "There is too much intelligence among German Social-Democrats to allow of any possibility of a backdown. German Social-Democrats are, and will remain, in the very front rank of the class-conscious army". (*People and Collectivist*, 7 Jan 1899). Rumours of support for Bernstein were regarded as purposeful misrepresentation on the part of the capitalist press of Britain and Australia. (*People and Collectivist*, 21 Jan 1899).
action that characterised the workers' movement in Europe. But, if the ASL capitulated to Australian working class racism, then Tillett positively wallowed in it. He was offended that the people of Australia allowed foreigners with a low standard of living to "sneak in", yet objected to his encouraging British workers to become assisted migrants. "The hardy sons and daughters of our race want a better reception than the one promised, or Australians in the next generation or two will be mongrels of a very mixed breed... every Britisher coming into Australia keeps a Jap, Chinaman, Coolie, and servile European out..."[107]

The ASL could have taken a lesson from its reader who wrote a letter of complaint, alleging that Tillett had caught the surplus flattery of Australia and valued it. The letter ended pertinently: "0, if Karl Marx could he would force his hand through the grace, and cry out louder and louder again: 'Working men of the world, unite. Don't be discouraged by such narrow-minded brains. They are only the victims of their environment'.[108]

No doubt the ASL was also to some extent the victim of the racist environment of the Australian labour movement. In fact, if any more proof of the extent and depth of working class racism is required, then ASL prevarication on the issue can be taken down and used in evidence against the working class. It would be easy, from an 1980s standpoint, to condemn the ASL, but this would be to ignore the temper of the 1890s. On the other hand, ASL capitulation to working class racism cannot be excused on simple 'environmental' grounds, as subsequent socialist organisations, operating in a working class environment that was just as racist, did not succumb to these racist pressures. Moreover, the ASL was well aware that racism was un-socialist. What needs explaining is the divorce between the theory and the practice of the ASL on the issue, or, more accurately, the contradiction between its generalised comments on racism and its specific observations on the racial preoccupations of Australian workers. The ASL was 'internationalist', in a Eurocentric way, because it regarded itself as the antipodean representative of European socialism, which rejected racism. But, it conformed to the racial prejudices of Australian workers, because it did not regard racism as a hindrance to its particular strategy for achieving socialism.

[107] People and Collectivist, 2 Sept 1899.
[108] ibid., 23 Sept 1899. The letter was from Friedrich Hahnsbein, 26 Palmer Street, Balmain.
The collapse of the 'Great Strikes' not only contributed to the revival of the League, but also affected its politics by strengthening the state socialist elements, who "saw in a Labor Party the means of realising their utopia". As Campbell points out, the ASL, at this stage, believed that the Labor Party would gravitate spontaneously towards socialism, win a majority in parliament, and usher in the new socialist era, peacefully and without revolution. This confidence was dashed only after the 1894 elections, when it became obvious that the Labor Party was not intending to implement a socialist programme, or even to carry out its own nationalisation proposals. The League's response was the re-establishment of its own press, but this press was critical of the Labor Party only for failing in its declared strategy. The ASL did not propose a different method for attaining socialism. The process of disillusionment with the Labor Party is most marked in the Northern People of 1897. In the space of seven months, it moved from hagiography of Labor candidates to bitter denunciation of Labor politicians. During 1897, many ASL members resigned in disgust from the Labor Party; the final organisational breach between the ASL and the Labor Party occurred in the wake of the 1898 Political Labour League Conference at which the nationalisation plank was lost.

This rupture with the Labor Party was traumatic for the ASL. It had not been active in the PLL in order to wean its membership away and into the ASL, but in order to push the mainstream labour movement in a more rigorously socialist direction, because it believed that parliament was the appropriate vehicle for achieving socialism. The ASL saw the 'rats' problem as the result of the Labor Party neglecting to guard the purity of its cadre, not as an

109. O'Farrell, "The Australian Socialist League and the Labour Movement, 1887-1891", Historical Studies, Vol VIII No 30, May 1958, pp.152-3. An editorial in the People and Collectivist, 31 Dec 1898, mentioned that after the collapse of the great maritime strike, the League decided to sink its political individuality, and so its members took part in political organisation, promoted mainly by the trade unions, and succeeded in dominating the NSW Labor Party for some time. The official history of the ASL claimed that up to 1897 the ASL was "practically the advance wing of the Political Labor Movement, its members being the most active and aggressive within the Political Labour League, giving support to the Labour Party on the political field". (The Unity Question, p.3).
111. O'Farrell, Harry Holland, militant socialist, pp.11-2.
112. Compare Northern People of 30 Jan 1897 and 13 Feb 1897 with 14 Aug 1897.
effect of the structural problems of pursuing the parliamentary road to socialism. If the ASL had not been so enamoured of this route to emancipation, the break with the Labor Party would not have been so painful. But, having announced that the Labor Party was beyond redemption, the ASL had no other option than to aim at replacing the Labor Party, to retain the vehicle of parliament, but to insist on a change of drivers. A change of vehicle was not contemplated, as the ASL believed too firmly that the state would bring about socialism. "All will agree", the Northern People confidently predicted, "that the nationalisation of the land and the tools of production is the only solution, - the only means - by which the wage slave can win freedom". Frequent references were made to the advantages of state action, and the ASL's own nationalisation plank was pushed ad nauseum. It insisted the working class had to "conquer the government", so that, with its aid, workers could convert the nation into the Co-operative Commonwealth, where production for profit would give way to production for use. The ASL no longer advocated the establishment of voluntary co-operatives, as it had in the 1880s, and it denounced anarchism and communist anarchism for not admitting the important role of the state.

The means by which the working class was to 'conquer the government' was by the ballot. The government of a country is only a 'political machine', a thing created by the community; it is sustained by the votes of the country; it is simply the agent of the people; it can be taken possession by a majority of the people and used for their benefit. The workers are the majority, they should take possession of the political machine. The polis is the place and the ballot is the means by which to gain possession.

This emphasis on the ballot became even more pronounced after the divorce from the Labor Party. Socialism could simply be "voted into existence by an intelligent working-class". The People and Collectivist enjoined the workers to recover at the Ballot Box their stolen mines, their stolen land, their stolen machinery of production, and to place the whole of it in the hands of the Co-operative Commonwealth.

114 Northern People, 14 Aug 1897, 25 Dec 1897; People and Collectivist, 30 July 1898, 27 Aug 1898, 18 Nov 1899.
115 Northern People, 19 Feb 1898.
116 People and Collectivist, 23 April 1898, 18 June 1898, 15 April 1899 L, 8 July 1899 L, 19 Aug 1899 L.
117 ibid., 5 Nov 1898, 18 Feb 1899.
118 Northern People, 12 Feb 1898.
119 People and Collectivist, 27 Aug 1898.
120 ibid., 7 May 1898.
The small, correct ASL would replace the large, incorrect Labor Party, and legislate socialism into existence. League members were confident of their formula. They were few but they were pure. "Better to remain small and compact, with a thorough agreement on our aims and aspirations, than to have a large mass of heterogeneousness". The ASL announced it was guided by its knowledge of history, of evolution, and of the human mind.\textsuperscript{121} This self-certainty, which approached Messianism, can be dated from its break with the Labor Party, and it was nourished by the League's fatalistic belief in the inevitability of socialism.\textsuperscript{122} However, although socialism was inevitable, it required the midwifery of the ASL, which, by using the ballot box, would ensure this inevitable goal was reached without bloodshed.\textsuperscript{123}

But, this all-out reliance on the efficacy of the ballot tended to relegate to a poor second place the importance of industrial solidarity, even though the ASL constitution included industrial organisation as one of its tactics. And this neglect of industrial action went further than the ASL's observation that trades unionism could not prevent exploitation, and the union-bureaucrat bashing of late 1899 that occurred in response to the rightward drift at Trades Hall.\textsuperscript{124} It went as far as the old co-operativist elements of the 1880s ASL had gone in intimating that struggle on the job was a waste of time. The 1880s ASL had suggested co-operative schemes as an appropriate substitute for strike action; the 1890s ASL pushed the "class-conscious" use of the ballot. After reporting on an unsuccessful strike, the \textit{People and Collectivist} commented that, once more, the worker had been taught the folly of attacking capitalism at its stringest point with the "weakest weapon" in the armoury of labour. It claimed that each industrial fight of any magnitude was won before it began by the class which owned the tools of industry, and that the industrial organisation which refused to say to its members that they must obtain control of those tools via the ballot-box was buttressing the power of the workers' oppressors.\textsuperscript{125} The most effective class

\textsuperscript{121}\textit{People and Collectivist}, 6 Aug 1898 L, 1 Oct 1898. To reassure its members the ASL recommended inward digestion of the following lines from Lowell, in the \textit{People and Collectivist}, 12 Aug 1899: Then to side with Truth is noble, when we share her wretched crust, Ere the cause bring fame and profit, and 'tis prosperous to be just: Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside, Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified. And the multitude make virtue of the faith they have denied.

\textsuperscript{122}\textit{Northern People}, 23 Jan 1897; \textit{People and Collectivist}, 27 Aug 1898 L.

\textsuperscript{123}\textit{People and Collectivist}, 8 July 1899 L.

\textsuperscript{124}\textit{ibid.}, \textit{loc.cit.} And for many issues following.

\textsuperscript{125}\textit{ibid.}, 10 Sept 1898.
organisation, according to the ASL, was a political one; organisation at workplace level was not considered essential, even though this level was recognised as the location of exploitation.

Men and women are economic slaves. Industrially they cannot strike a blow at organised capital without wounding themselves, but politically, in this country, men are free and women soon will be. They could vote a new economic system into existence any time they make up their minds that such is necessary... When men and women who toil advance to this consciousness, Collectivism is in reach. The ballot then will call it into existence.126

So, like the Labor Party, the ASL concentrated its efforts on the parliamentary arena. ASL analysis of the Labor Party's inability to bring about the socialist nirvana went no further than implications that the Party was ridden with sinful individuals consciously eager to sell out the workers at every conceivable opportunity.127 The People and Collectivist declared that "disgust, contempt, and loathing" must be the response to the Labor Party of all decent-minded intelligent men, and that was why the ASL aimed at building up the Australian Socialist Labor Party.128 In fact, although relishing the smallness and correctness of its initial forces, the ASL was supremely confident of its growth prospects. It referred to itself as the Advance Guard of the Socialist Army that was already marshalling its forces for the overthrow of Capitalism.129 Yet its strategy for building up a correct but large socialist party depended on gaining the approval of a majority of electors. So, no matter how much the ASL might protest its purity, it was none the less into the game of vote-catching. This made the League vulnerable to conformism on any demand about which the working class

126. People and Collectivist, 7 May 1898.
127. And none of these sinful individuals were more despicable than former ASL members such as Hughes, Holman, McGowen, Griffith, and Black: people who joined the Labor 'rats' whom they had previously denounced. See, for example, People and Collectivist, 30 July 1898, 6 Aug 1898.
128. People and Collectivist, 18 Nov 1899.
129. Ibid., 27 Aug 1898. L. Growth from mid-1898 onwards was, admittedly, fairly impressive. At Easter 1898, the ASL had only 50 members in three branches - Central, Leichhardt, and Newcastle. A year later, Central branch had trebled its membership, Leichhardt had "done well", and new vigorous branches had been established in Newtown, Waterloo, and Casino on the Richmond River. (People and Collectivist, 13 May 1899). The People and Collectivist reached a wider audience, correspondence coming in from country and suburban areas all over eastern Australia, from places as different and as far apart as Mudgee, Erskineville, Redfern, Richmond River, Tweed River, Darlinghurst, Botany, Pyrmont, Wickham, Lambton, Darlington, Wallsend, Tintenbar, Minmi, Goulburn, Paterson, Broken Hill, North Melbourne, Burwood, Maitland, North Sydney, Adamstown, Petersham, Byron Bay, Balmain, Coonamble, Waratah, Wilcannia, Newtown, Bourke, Carlton, Crenfell, Granville, Cobar, Tasmania, Temora, Lismore, White Cliffs, and Thirroul.
felt strongly, if the League did not regard this demand as positively obstructing socialism. The reason that the ASL did not consider its exclusion demand as detrimental to the movement was because it assigned such a low priority to industrial organisation. It is industrial solidarity that is affected adversely by working class racism, not 'political solidarity', as pushed by the ASL, that is, the 'class-conscious' use of the vote. So, the ASL pandered to the fears of the backward elements of the working class on an issue which it did not consider to be of sufficient importance to demand confrontation and the loss of support that would ensue. The 1898 Conference, which marked the ASL's entry into competition with the Labor Party for proletarian votes, incorporated the exclusion demand into its platform. Before the rupture with the Labor Party, the ASL had simply tail-ended Labor racism; after the break, it competed with Labor racism. The careless approach to racism in the Northern People gave way to dedicated espousal of the exclusion demand in the People and Collectivist. ASL reluctance to regard anti-racist ideology as an important component of its propaganda was a function of its parliamentary method for attaining its particular vision of socialism, that of national co-operation under the aegis of the state.

ASL secretary, E.J. Brady, mentions that the League contained Americans, Germans, Belgians, Dutch, Finnish, French, Italians, Spanish, Poles, Russians, Swiss, Scandinavians, and others, but relates a revealing story about the uncertainties in the League about extending internationalism any further. He recalls having the "chilling thought" that international antipathies and diversities might prove a slight hindrance to universal amity and the socialist idea of "The World One Family", so he selected an apparently intelligent comrade, and asked whether the scheme of socialism included the coloured races. The comrade was silent for a moment then said:

There is a divergence of opinion, comrade, among Socialists in regard to that question. The Latin Socialists, the Spaniards, and Italians, and Portuguese, are in favour of socialising the people of the East, but the English and German Socialists do not encourage the idea. Personally I am dead against Chinamen!

Brady said: "if there is no such thing as equality between races or nations, there can be no such thing as equality between individuals". The comrade replied: "but we are not aiming for equality... We simply want to abolish competition in production, and to substitute co-operation for it".

CHAPTER THREE.
THE MINUTE MONOLITH: 1900-1906

The Cultivation of an Australian Sentiment
Entrism and Racism

The Australian Socialist League/ Socialist Labor Party
The characteristic Australian developments about the beginning of the new century, according to Fitzpatrick, were an accentuation of the economic importance of the old wool and gold industries, together with a great expansion of the export trade in wheat, silver and base metals, butter, and frozen meat. He cites 1903 as marking the beginning of a period of recovery from the depression of the 1890s.  

With unemployment falling, wages rising, and unions re-forming, Turner notes that "a spirit of aggressive confidence was in the air". However, if there was any aggression in the confident spirit, it must have been the preserve of rank and file militant workers in both city and country, and not of their 'leaders'. Even with the most militant 'new union' behind him, Spence of the AWU nevertheless described arbitration as a "self-evident and sensible plan" that could provide a peaceful means of avoiding strife, leaving unions free to secure reform by means of political action. Fitzpatrick points out that arbitration did not even ensure better wages and conditions than might otherwise have prevailed, but that by and large, the trade unions at no time denounced arbitration as a system. The existence of a permanent forum for industrial relations did, after all, increase the organisational status of the unions. The goal of industrial peace, then, appears to have been a primary consideration of trade union officials in this period, and on the whole, they were successful. The only major disruption to industrial peace in the first six years of the century was the railway strike in Victoria in 1903. The impatience of the more militant sections of the union movement was yet to be activated by the continued poor performance of Labor in government, the lack of 'aggression' on the part of trade union officials, and the message of the Industrial Workers of the World. Indeed, the passivity of the labour movement at this time was apparent in its grateful acceptance of the triangular social contract offered by the federated Australian state. Arbitration was the apex angle, protection and immigration restriction were the base angles. "The policy of the New Protection was to exclude from Australia the products of the labour of those whose persons had been excluded by immigration restriction".

One of the first acts of the Commonwealth parliament was the Immigration Restriction Act, "a selective form of preventive apartheid". All three parties in the first federal election - Protection, Free Trade, and Labor - adhered to a White Australia Policy, and except for two doctrinaire Free Traders in the Senate, all the members elected to the first parliament agreed on this issue. The Prime Minister and leader of the Protection Party, Barton, announced that legislation against an Asian influx was regarded simply as a matter of course. Disagreement revolved merely around the method of exclusion, which was finally resolved in favour of a test in a European language. The Labor Party gained credibility by being the only party united on method, because of its relative lack of imperial hang-ups, and Gollan suggests they moved the amendment for an overtly racist bill, which they knew would be defeated, as a means of impressing the electorate and posing as the true party of Australian nationalism. Such motives would

9. The idea of an English language test was unpopular; it was felt that the nation-building stock of continental Europe should not be frightened away. (Yarwood, *Asian Migration*, p.27). A prohibited immigrant was defined as *inter alia*, "any person who when asked to do so by an officer fails to write out and sign in the presence of the officer, a passage of fifty words in length in an European language dictated by the officer". (Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, 7 Aug 1901, p.3498). The Attorney-General assured the House that qualified European immigrants would not be required to run any linguistic gauntlet, whereas for non-Europeans a test of the greatest severity would be used. Deakin pointed out that the anti-Chinese acts of the states would be allowed to continue, to "make assurance doubly sure". Barton added he would not dream of instructing the officer to subject a Swedish immigrant to a test in Italian, as "this Act will not be worked unfairly or oppressively in regard to those whom it is not our common desire to exclude, but that every care will be taken to prevent its being defeated by those whom we desire to keep out". (Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, 12 Sept 1901, pp. 4814, 4816; 26 Sept 1901, p.5234; 1 Oct 1901, p.5351).
10. Gollan, *Radical and Working Class Politics*, p.196. Voting on the amendment was:

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(Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, 26 Sept 1901, p.5288). Willard maintains the adoption of the 'Natal formula' was "a distinct concession to Empire". (The History of the White Australia Policy, p.121). However, imperial pressure against the White Australia Policy has usually been exaggerated, and what pressure was exerted was not in the interests of racial equality, but diplomatic necessity. In May 1901, a secret despatch from Chamberlain to Barton via the Queensland governor described Japanese objections as having "peculiar force at the present time owing to the position of affairs in the
be a tribute to the strength of racism in the community. Yarwood points out that the object of the legislation was to be achieved by administrative techniques based on a policy of racial discrimination enunciated, not in the act itself, as the Labor Party desired, but in the debates on the bill. And every party contributed to the enunciation of this racist policy. Indeed, the only member on any side who attempted to avoid racial arguments was H.B. Higgins. Isaacs urged the avoidance of "the contamination and the degrading influence of inferior races". Barton declared that "I do not think that the doctrine of the equality of man was really ever intended to include racial equality". Deakin maintained that the question of a White Australia touched "the instinct of self-preservation - for it is nothing less than the national manhood, the national character, and the national future that are at stake". And as a testimony to the consensus on the issue, he added: "No motive power operated more universally...and, more powerfully, in dissolving the technical and arbitrary political divisions which previously separated us than did the desire that we should be one people, and remain one people without the admixture of other races". When speaking to the direct bill amendment, Watson, the leader of the Labor Party, explained that the objection I have to the mixing of these coloured people with the white people of Australia... lies in the main in the possibility and probability of racial contamination. I think we should gauge this matter, not alone by the abstract possibilities of the case, but by those considerations which appeal to our ordinary human weaknesses and prejudices. The question is whether we would like our sisters or our brothers to be married into any of these races to which we object... The racial aspect of the question, in my opinion, is the larger and more important one; but the industrial aspect has also to be considered.

With a pertinent observation, Watson continued:

We know that a few years ago business men - speaking by and large - looked upon the Chinese or other coloured undesirables as men who could be very well tolerated, because they took the place of labourers, of men who might be unreliable, or not quite so cheap, but when it was found that these Orientals...
possessed all the cunning and acumen necessary to fit them for conducting business affairs, and that their cheapness of living was carried into business matters as well as into ordinary labouring work, a marked alteration of opinion took place among business men, so far as the competition of the "heathen Chinee" was concerned.\(^{14}\)

The racial basis of Australian immigration policy was thus firmly laid down by the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901, despite the efforts made to avoid direct racial references in the actual legislation. The act symbolised the racial aspirations of the overwhelming majority of Australians of all classes; later legislation merely tidied up some of the loose ends.\(^{15}\) The daily newspapers gave enthusiastic support to the principle of racial homogeneity.\(^{16}\) And having opted for racial homogeneity, it is not surprising that certain interests felt threatened by the evidence of a significant decline in the white birth-rate since the late 1880s. The 'populate or perish' syndrome came into its own; the media campaign to make women realise their reproductive duty both played on existing racial anxieties and reinforced these fears of armed or unarmed invasion by the 'yellow hordes'.\(^{17}\) The motive behind the 'hysteria from above' was possibly the recognition that expanding population was a prerequisite for economic prosperity; that a larger workforce and larger consumer market meant greater profits.\(^{18}\) In a similar manner, racism was both used and encouraged, to justify increased defence expenditure in the early years of the Commonwealth.\(^{19}\) Both Labor and Fusion wished to achieve some degree of strategic independence from Britain, as Australian involvement in the Pacific region meant that imperial and Australian interests were no longer synonymous. Moreover, the power of the fledgeling central government could best be asserted vis-à-vis the state

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17. For contemporary expressions of concern at the birth-rate, see O.C. Beale, Racial Decay; T.A. Coghlan, Childbirth in New South Wales; T.A. Coghlan, The Decline in the Birth-Rate of New South Wales and Other Phenomena of Child-Birth; John Foster Fraser, Australia: The Making of a Nation, pp.22-4, 30, 52-4, 58, 63; Charles H. Pearson, National Life and Character, pp.129-30.
governments through the building up of national defence forces. In 1905, Deakin complained to the British government about the Australian government subsidy to the Royal Navy: "No Commonwealth patriotism is aroused while we merely supply funds that disappear in the general expenditure of the Admiralty". 20

Racism, then, helped protect Australian commercial interests in three ways, but with differential success: as an argument to increase the white population it was apparently ineffective; as a justification for defensiveness it was plausible; as a means to limit competition it was unsurpassed. White Australia legislation effectively prevented large-scale alien entrepreneurial competition to Australian capitalists; it aimed, in the words of a Western Australian politician, to "restrict the Asiatics to such channels of labour as leave them hewers of wood and drawers of water". 21 Yong notes that the White Australia Policy restricted and discouraged Chinese immigrants, and therefore made the idea of setting up sizeable businesses impracticable. Chinese merchants were also hesitant to speculate for fear of being boycotted. Thus the law and the hostile environment discouraged Chinese business; their 'competition' was confined mainly to the laundry, furniture-making, grocery, and banana trades. 22 This residual small-scale competition was vigorously opposed, particularly by country store-keepers, and their boycotting campaigns were supported by the press. 23 However, large-scale Chinese enterprise could not establish a foothold without a regular supply of Chinese to employ. Probably, the only substantial section of the Australian bourgeoisie to suffer from immigration restriction was the shipowners, due to the decrease in traffic.

Except in the west, there was very little White Australia activity by the labour movement around the turn of the century. The Westralian Worker noted that the shop assistants of Perth had been making a bold stand against the employment of Chinese and 'Japs' as cooks while competent white men were available, and remarked that their efforts should be backed up by "every decent worker" as there were many workers ready to rave about a white Australia, but when it came to action to assist in keeping it white, a good

20. Gavin Souter, Lion and Kangaroo, pp.136, 144.
23. Yarwood, Asian Migration to Australia, p.118; Willard, The History of the White Australia Policy, p.132; Campbell, Chinese Coolie Emigration, pp.77-8. Competition from aliens other than Chinese was also resented. For examples, see Yarwood, Asian Migration to Australia, p.146; Markus, 'The Burden of Hate', pp.457-8.
deal of the enthusiasm vanished. Attempts by Japanese to join the union were rebuffed by these 'decent workers'.

In the east, workers were content, by and large, merely to 'rave about a white Australia'. The Queensland Worker, for instance, announced its Laneite philosophy of racial purity and class collaboration:

Australia is to be saved from the coloured curse, to be relieved from strikes, to be famous for having no paupers or poor houses, to be a government of, by, and for the people. Or else to be a mongrel nation torn with racial dissension, blighted by industrial war, permeated with pauperism and governed by cliques of lawyers and bankers and commercial and financial adventurers.

The 1905 Federal Labor Party conference expressed Lane's ideal of race before class by adopting as its objectives, presumably in order of importance:

(a) The cultivation of an Australian sentiment based on the maintenance of racial purity and the development in Australia of an enlightened and self-reliant community;

(b) The securing of the full results of their industry to all producers by collective ownership of monopolies and the extension of the industrial and economic functions of the State and the Municipality.

This order of preference was shared by socialists closely allied with the labour movement. The Queensland Social Democratic Vanguard, formed around the turn of the century, referred to the Labor Party's "splendid" Objective of 1905, and approved of the fact that its nationalisation clause did not aim at all the means of production, as advocated by the "fast disappearing revolutionary school" whose methods tended to delay or defeat the aim in view. "The most intelligent Socialists decline to arbitrarily advocate the collective ownership of all wealth".

The Vanguard's position on racism was indistinguishable from the Labor Party's, with the exception, in its early years, of occasional lip-service to internationalism. It opposed militarism and imperialism during the Boer War period, but its opposition to British imperialism was couched in

24. Westralian Worker, 7 Sept 1900; Markus, 'The Burden of Hate', pp.508-9.
25. Queensland Worker, 30 March 1901.
27. Queensland Worker, 25 Nov 1905, 13 Jan 1906.
28. ibid., 5 May 1900, 26 May 1900, 7 Sept 1901, 14 Sept 1901, 12 Oct 1901, 30 Aug 1902, 27 Feb 1904.
29. ibid., 2 June 1900, 1 Sept 1900, 27 Oct 1900, 13 April 1901, 18 May 1901.
decidedly Australian nationalist terminology, similar to the Labor Party rhetoric of the time. The kangaroo stands erect and the emu walks with dignity, the Vanguard noted, yet despite their adornment of the National Coat of Arms, a wave of prostration was sweeping over Australia because some gaudy uniforms and a tame duke were sent here to advertise John Bull. "What is England to us that we should sacrifice our infant nationality by becoming a nation of grovellers falling over each other to salute Her Majesty's paid murderers..." And in 1905, when the Anglo-Japanese treaty was renewed, the Vanguard referred to this alliance with an Asian nation as "the most immoral one in the history of Empire".

The Vanguard heartily endorsed the ending of the Melanesian labour trade, not simply on humanitarian grounds, but because the introduction of the "cheap and reliable heathen" had given posterity the problem of eradicating the "tainted roots of a racial cancer", a lesson that showed that social democracy must break down obsolete methods of expediency, and substitute unswerving fidelity to fixed principles. The Vanguard's 'Round Table' in the Queensland Worker on the eve of federation, featured a letter from 'A Bush Woman on the Alien Evil'. The woman alluded to the "villainous wrong inflicted upon womankind by the continuance of black labour in our midst", and complained that in the meantime the number of Melanesian women introduced was totally inadequate to minister to the savage appetites of their male aliens ... naturally our sisters and daughters become the object of their contaminating lust... Where then is the patriotism of our male rulers! They compel us to suffer this bitter and cruel wrong in order that dividends may be maintained. The virtue of women against the greed for gold.

The Vanguard did not object to the Labor Party's racism, because it did not object greatly to the Labor Party's politics. It conceived its role as being to pressure the Labor Party into carrying out its declared programme, a position similar to that of the ASL in the 1890s before the break with the Labor Party. Indeed, the Vanguard's Labor orientation was forecast at its conception, as it was encouraged by the editor of the Worker and the secretary of the Australian Labour Federation. Apart from distributing its

30. Queensland Worker, 5 Jan 1901, 12 Jan 1901.
31. ibid., 11 Nov 1905.
32. ibid., 19 Oct 1901, 7 Dec 1901.
33. ibid., 6 June 1904.
34. ibid., 15 Dec 1900.
35. E.H.Lane, Dawn to Dusk, p.62. Ernest Lane, William Lane's brother, was probably the person most responsible for the foundation of the Vanguard. He later became very disillusioned with the direction it was taking.
own and imported Fabianish literature, it contributed regularly to the labour press throughout Queensland. The Vanguard particularly stressed the advantages of municipalisation as a preliminary to nationalisation, maintained the Labor Party's platform was "strongly Socialistic", and insisted Fabianism was better than Marxism. This Labor outlook reached its most grotesque conclusion in 1903, when the Vanguard rejected a motion of censure on the Labor Party for forming a coalition government with the Liberal Party. As the "honest members", in Ernest Lane's phraseology, resigned as a result, the Vanguard's politics moved so close to the Labor Party's that it removed its own raison d'être, and subsequently collapsed.

A similar formation was the Barrier Social Democratic Club, established in 1903; its members had to declare their intention of voting for Solidarity Labor candidates, and it aimed to "educate people in the principles of Social-Democracy". It also aimed to sell liquor, and in October 1904 its membership was 1,350 - all men. Presumably, its members were all white, too, as the Westralian Worker reported in February 1905 that the Club had debated a member's support of the 'Jap' laundry, and resolved that "this general meeting urges on the members the desirability of supporting white labor only..."

R.S.Ross, who had served his socialist apprenticeship in the Queensland Social Democratic Vanguard, was closely associated with this Club. Soon after becoming editor of the Barrier Truth, the Broken Hill paper sponsored by the Amalgamated Miners' Association, Ross embarked on a journalistic vendetta against the Afghan and Syrian camel drivers camped on the fringes of the town, insisting that prostitution and syphilitic diseases "in repulsive form" were common in these camps. "Truth is not opposed to color because it is COLOR", he explained, "but because to object to intermarriage with aliens is a FUNDAMENTAL INSTINCT to protect the species; because it is socially, economically, racially ruinous to tolerate an alien people in a white community".

The only exception to this racist socialist orthodoxy was a tiny group in

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36. Social Democratic Vanguard, Manifesto; Queensland Worker, 2 Nov 1901, 28 June 1902.
38. L.S. Curtis (ed), The History of Broken Hill, p.140.
39. Westralian Worker, 3 Feb 1905.
40. Quoted in Brian Kennedy, Silver, Sin and Sixpenny Ale, p.93.
Broken Hill in 1901. It opposed racial discrimination because of its belief in reincarnation. John Paterson, the leading and possibly only light of this 'Industrial Brotherhood Co-operative Colony' or 'Practical Socialism in Australia' (P.S.A.) warned Jabez Wright, the Labor mayor of Broken Hill, that it was unwise to persecute the descendants of his own flesh and blood, as he may have been incarnate 3,500 years ago as a Pacific Islander, 2,500 years ago as a Chinaman, and 1,500 years ago as a Malay. But in an odd way, the 'Articles of Association' of P.S.A., which are written in the first person, highlight the extent of racism in the mainstream labour movement.

There is one... great question in which unionism, the A.S.L. and others differ from P.S.A., and if I were seeking popularity I should certainly keep silent, namely, the boasted white Australia... Socialism admits of no birth or social distinctions... I say this at the risk of getting the cold shoulder, and being black-balled, persecuted, hounded, and hooted (and they can hoot) by trades unionists of the Barrier... but Socialism is at stake... a white Australia is the great mistake of Australia at the present day.41

So anti-racism was confined to the lunatic fringe of the labour movement; the ASL's record on the issue was contemptuously dismissed by this fringe, along with the rest of the labour movement.

The Australian Socialist League/ Socialist Labor Party

The Australian Socialist League contested the first Senate election of the new Commonwealth in March 1901 as the Australian Socialist Labor Party. The choice of name was no doubt influenced by the American Socialist Labor Party, which, with its leader Daniel De Leon, was becoming an increasingly important model for the ASL. Contesting these elections involved open competition with the Labor Party for the working class vote. Turner points out that the ASL platform contained little that was not common ground with the Labor Party. One glaring difference, however, was over priorities. Unlike the Labor Party, the ASL raised as its first demand "The exclusion of races whose presence under present competitive conditions might lower the standard of living of Australian workers".

In explaining the SLP's enthusiastic support for a White Australia, the People, which succeeded the People and Collectivist in January 1900, and was published from Sydney, implied that the priority given to this plank proved that the SLP was a 'better' proletarian party than the Labor Party. The Socialist Labor Party is the only party which can intelligently, and honestly, and earnestly voice the demands of the working-class. It being the desire of every worker to maintain and to raise his standard of living, it follows that every worker is opposed to anything that menaces the existing standard...

Australia had been peopled by Anglo-Saxon stock: the Britisher recognised that continental Europeans were as desirable citizens as himself, because, although differences in living standards might exist in Europe, "in Australia, Teutonic, Latin, and their descendants are coming together as one homeogeneous whole, actuated by the same feelings, and having the same ideals and beliefs, demanding the ONE standard of living". The People considered Europeans were inherently capable of conforming to Australian labour standards, and coloured races were not.

But there are other peoples invading and threatening to invade the Australian labor market who have not the adaptability of the Caucasian, whose traditions and philosophy are widely divergent from those of the Australian people. The Australian workers are right when they assert that centuries will not transform the mind of the Asiatic and the Polynesian so that they can be classed as fellow workers desiring the same standard of living, and fighting for it, with the Australian working-classes of to-day.

The ASL insisted the Labor Party could not be trusted to administer the White Australia Policy sufficiently stringently. The People referred to

42.Turner, Industrial Labour and Politics, p.29.
43.People, 12 Jan 1901.
44.ibid., 23 Feb 1901.
Watson as "chief boss of the Piebald Labour League", and consistently portrayed the ASL as the only true champion of working class interests, by virtue of its 'hard line' on immigration. The 'Federal Platform' declared that the candidates of the SLP stood for the material interests of the working class and nothing else, as in their demand for a White Australia there was no vagueness or insincerity: they did not talk of the gradual extinction of the 'kanaka', but demanded that all undesirable races be immediately and absolutely excluded from the Australian labour market.

To vote, then, for a White Australia, is to vote for the Socialist Labor Party. This party alone stands for a White Australia, owned and controlled by white workers. This party alone declares not only for the abolition of the Asiatic wage-slave, but also for the abolition of the class who exploit both Asiatic and Australian wage-slaves. In this demand, which will make the worker the arbiter of his own life absolutely - the Socialist Labor Party is as one with the organised intelligent workers all over the world.

In 1905, the ASL published a Criticism of the Labor Party's Socialism from a Working-Class Point of View, which announced that the capitalist system should be allowed to continue in its evolutionary process until the Socialists had won a sufficient majority to transform it into a Co-operative Commonwealth. The 'unimportance' of working class racism to the ASL can be explained by this fatalistic belief in the inevitability of socialism, that is, in their own eventual electoral victory. Andrew Thompson, the author of the Criticism declared that he did not object to racial purity and a white Australia under existing conditions, and, while embracing the principle of the brotherhood of man, was of the opinion that the Chinaman would be liked much better if he stayed in China. The objection to the Chinaman was not a racial objection but purely an economic one, because, under existing conditions, the undeveloped man would undersell the Australian worker in the labor market, and thus the more highly developed section of the human race would be brought into keen competition with the undeveloped section...

The International Socialist Club was apparently still in hot dispute with the League on this issue, pending amalgamation, and was arguing that the exclusion plank should be expunged, and the demand for an Eight Hours Day and minimum wage be substituted instead. Moroney's official reply to the secretary of the ISC said that the latter provision was already in their 'Social Demands', and that there was no move within the ASL to have the exclusion plank removed. "It has been explained several times to your members", Moroney continued, "that its inclusion as a question of policy by

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45. People, 23 Feb 1901, 30 March 1901, 25 Jan 1902.
46. ibid., 23 Feb 1901.
47. Andrew Thompson, A Criticism of the Labor Party's Socialism from a Working-Class Point of View, pp. 6, 3.
this League was dictated solely to meet Australian Conditions applying mainly to the Asiatics". Moroney pointed out that the League did not debar anyone on account of nationality, and could not resist reminding the ISC that the ASL was "the oldest Socialist organisation in Australia and through every visisitude [sic], has borne the brunt of the battle, in keeping the Socialist movement alive and active", and that their actions and methods were "the result of the experience gained through years of struggle...". The dispute continued for several years. In 1903, the People referred to the problem of Chinese and Japanese, "in bond to a lower standard of life", entering British Columbia, and added: "Some sentimental Socialists object to Alien Planks in Socialist Demands: how would they deal with this type of non-unionist coming into this Commonwealth under the above bonds?" And a few weeks later, the People described a Mr H.Dierks as "an International Scientific Socialist, who objected to the plank in the Socialist Labor Party's platform to exclude races whose standard of living was calculated to endanger the standard of living of Australian workers...".

The ASL's response to coloured workers already resident in Australia was hostile. For example, it objected to Chinese cabinet-makers furnishing the governor's new residence, and congratulated a Mrs Geddes for forming a white workers' union in the rag trade, commenting that determination and perseverance could accomplish much. Yet the People gave due credit to the militancy of Indians working for CSR - in Fiji. It noted that the Parsees went in a body and asked gently, yet firmly, for more wages and less working hours, and commented that they were ungrateful wretches, as an Australian Union Labor Agitator would not have turned dog on the Company like that. Likewise, at the level of abstraction, the People took up a principled position.

The capitalist employs the black man and the yellow man under brutally degrading conditions, and remunerates them at the rate of a few shillings a month, because by so doing he makes a greater profit than he could do if he employed whites. Compel the capitalist to pay the black man the same wages as the white man demands, and shorten by law the hours of his working day, and the incentive to the capitalist to employ colored slave labor will be gone.

Hughes was rebuked for banning coloured labour on boats carrying

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48.Letter dated 11 Sept 1901 on ASL letter-head from Moroney to secretary of ISC in reply to amalgamation proposals, IWW Correspondence.
49.People, 10 Jan 1903.
50.ibid., 7 Feb 1903.
51.ibid., 26 April 1902, 31 May 1902.
52.ibid., 1 March 1902.
Commonwealth mails, instead of demanding an Eight Hour Day and minimum wage for all steamship employees. Yet the ASL had refused to substitute such a demand for its 'alien plank' at the request of the ISC. It continued to raise this demand for exclusion, although it was well aware of the capitalists' interest in promoting racism. Capitalism, the People argued, was based on cut-throat competition, setting man against man, race against race, and sex against sex. The object of capitalist production was to make profits, and towards that end, every feeling of national prejudice was utilised. Patriotism was inculcated in the "fool crowd", who were robbed all the time. The role of the Jingo-Capitalist press was to work up patriotism for all it was worth. "Next to the ignorance of the working class, their feeling of Patriotism is probably the most powerful means in the hands of the capitalists, which they use for the purpose of keeping the workers in subjugation..." Bommes set workers of different nationalities against each other as pacemakers, for example, and played heavily on racial feeling. The ASL knew that racial divisions were caused by capitalists, along with all other evils. It announced that the raison d'etre of class and race struggles, wars, poverty, luxury, misery, millionaires, corruption, prostitution, crime, plague, adulterated food, shoddy clothing, slums, consumption, decreasing birthrate, "and nearly every evil we suffer from to day is Ownership by a Few. The only effective remedy for these evils is ownership by ALL".

The logic of the ASL's position, then, appears to be that because racism could only disappear with capitalism, there was no particular reason why racism under capitalism should be opposed. The solution to racism was to vote the SLP into power. So, as before, the emphasis on voting rather than industrial organisation, allowed the ASL to admit that racism was a capitalist device used to divide workers, but to do nothing to counter those divisions. The ASL felt no inconsistency in raising the demand for exclusion, but also announcing: "There is only one political party that does not trade on Patriotism: it is the only genuine Peace Party in existence; its name is the Socialist Party..."

53. People, 14 Sept 1901.
54. ibid., 4 Oct 1902, 22 Oct 1904, 25 March 1905 L.
55. ibid., 26 April 1902.
56. ibid., 7 June 1902.
57. ibid., 19 Nov 1904.
58. ibid., 26 April 1902.
So, although encouraging racism by retaining the alien plank rather than demanding maximum hours and minimum wages for all, the ASL remained confident in its internationalist credentials, because of its theoretical grasp of the issues involved. "The Socialist Labor Party is from its inception and from its very character an international party". The *People* referred to the "cosmopolitan labor movement" called International Socialism, and advised wage slaves to rally around the SLP, whose motto was "The World for the World's Workers". Creed, race, and nationality had no place as the economic position of the working class was the same in every clime - slaves to capitalism. Comrade Isaacs, speaking at Waterloo branch, explained to his audience that socialists did not recognise any particular country, class, or creed, as the world was their nation and humanity their brotherhood. Comrade Thompson, on May Day at Marx Hall, the ASL headquarters, expressed impatience with working class racism. The bulk of the working class, he complained, were passive like sheep, and too narrow and patriotic to greet a man in another country. "We have no quarrel with the slave of another country, he is our brother, no matter what race he belongs to or what tongue he speaks. The capitalist is our enemy the world over". Two years later, the May Day editorial announced that the class conscious workers of the world, trampling on all the accidental distinctions of colour, race, and creed, were meeting together in every land to exchange greetings and to tell their enemies that they were neither Europeans nor Americans, neither Japanese nor Australians, but men and women socialists, who, "with interlaced hands and united hearts, proclaim the only true brotherhood - that of useful labor..." There were two nations in every land, the *People* explained, the capitalist owners, and the workers, who produce and own not. The ASL abused socialists who capitulated explicitly to nationalism. It declared it had no time for Robert Blatchford and his anti-German sentiments, other than to tell him that he was held in contempt by all true socialists.

60. ibid., 9 May 1903.
61. ibid., 2 May 1903.
62. ibid., 4 Oct 1902.
63. ibid., 9 May 1903.
64. ibid., 29 April 1905 L.
65. ibid., 17 March 1906.
66. ibid., 24 Sept 1904. Interestingly, a note of wariness about the SPD was sounded when reporting Bebel's comment that the Social Democrats would defend the Fatherland. The capitalist class of every country own the wealth the workers produce and the workers are outcasts and aliens in their own country, the *People* pointed out. Has Bebel become more revisionist than the
The ASL's solution to the problem of working class racism was building the party. "Socialism, like capitalism, is international and knows neither race nor color, creed nor boundaries. Meanwhile our duty is clear: to organise and marshal the forces of the revolution; to cherish its principles and keep them pure; to be as narrow as science and as intolerant as truth". Because working class interests cut across creeds and nationalities, the People reasoned that all workers should vote for socialism. It noted that white wage slaves in the Queensland pearl shell industry were driven out by cheaper coloured wage slaves, as capitalism buys labour, a merchandise, in the cheapest market. The solution the People advocated was, not encouraging coloured labour to become more expensive, but voting for the SLP. "Workers of Australia, lift your labour - which is yourselves - out of the category of merchandise, by abolishing private ownership of the land and the tools of production with your ballot".

The ASL argued persistently that there was no 'race question' as such. From the workers' standpoint - the only true one - there is no color question, no race question, no national question, no sex question, no declining birth-rate question: there is only an "economic" question, and that question is How long are the workers of the world - white, black, yellow, tawny or brown going to continue to permit a handful of privileged persons to prevent them consuming and enjoying the whole product of their labor?

Under the heading 'Simply An Economic Question', the People pointed out that competition for employment amongst workers of all races, all ages, and all sexes, was a necessary result of the private ownership of the means of production and of the competition between these owners. Therefore, instead of weeping and whining about these hard conditions, and voting them back in all the time, the workers should simply abolish the entire system and its evils at the ballot box. Socialism would abolish race antagonism, which was, at root, economic. The People justified its complacency: "Socialists look on revisionist, it queried. So Germany was not to be the socialist storm centre after all. "The Social-Democratic Party in that country is one of confusion and mixed elements, and must remain so until the remnants of feudalism and kaiserism are removed..."(People, 19 March 1904). However, the following week, the People reported Bebel's speech in the Reichstag, upholding the right of German South West African natives to defend themselves against "German bloodsuckers", and commented that the German Plute was horrified at such lack of patriotism.(People, 26 March 1904).

67.People, 23 May 1903.
68.ibid., 22 Nov 1902.
69.ibid., 3 May 1902.
70.ibid., 23 Dec 1905
71.ibid., 23 July 1904.
72.ibid., 31 Jan 1903.
race and color problems with equanimity, recognising that these are really in their essence economic problems, which will be fully and triumphantly solved when the land, and tools that man has created, come into the hands of humanity per medium of working-class emancipation".73

The ASL did not regard its stance as contradictory. Socialists were often charged with inconsistency, it admitted frankly, for advocating a White Australia, while proclaiming everywhere that they recognised neither race, nor creed, nor colour barriers. The People's explanation was that, under capitalism, there was no alternative to exclusion, as otherwise racial problems were inevitable. In other words, the ASL identified the coloured immigrant as the cause of the 'problem', not the response of the Australian working class, which it regarded as a legitimate tactic 'under the present competitive conditions'. Under socialism, the problem would no longer be a problem. "When the workers become economically free, questions of creed, race and color will be deprived of all their evil effects, the most of which springs from the present evil system".74 Who says the socialist is out to perpetuate class and race hate, the People asked indignantly, and retorted that socialists were the only people who wanted to abolish such hate, by abolishing its cause, unlike the capitalist, who wanted to keep it alive.75

The ASL, then, did not acknowledge the necessity to confront working class racism under capitalism, in order that a united working class could achieve socialism. Instead, it shelved the issue, pending the revolution, which was synonymous with its own electoral victory.

ASL comrades were even better nationalists than were the members of other parties: "Australian Federation was desirable and necessary in order to build up a strong and vigorous, industrialised modern State, and none recognised this more than the Socialists". Although the constitution was an instrument which would entrench the power of capitalism and reaction, this could be cured by voting for the SLP. The People predicted that soon "the advanced guard of the Socialist army will be represented in the Federal Senate by the only working class party in Australia, the Socialist Labor Party".76 Of course, ASL nationalism was directed mainly against imperial interference, particularly in the administration of the White Australia Policy.77 The capitulation over the education test was regarded as proof that

73.People, 28 Feb 1903.
74.ibid., 27 June 1903.
75.ibid., 11 June 1904.
76.ibid., 18 Oct 1902.
77.For examples, see People, 12 Jan 1901, 19 April 1902 L, 27 May 1905.
the Barton government was influenced by Chamberlain's gang of Robber Rulers. "Australia is not a nation, but merely a dependency of a capitalist-controlled Empire..." And when the Western Australian government received a "peremptory dispatch" ordering that an anti-Asiatic clause in their factory law had to be repealed, the People commented that Australia could not do anything against the material interests of the "Hempire capitalist gang... In the name of the profits".

It was not for anti-racist reasons, but because of its link with British imperialism, that the ASL rejected the 'Yellow Peril Bogey'. The People noted that all sorts of alarmist statements were made about Australia's liability to attack, to play upon the sentiment of insular prejudice, in order to get the Naval Tribute Bill through. "It is time the Australian workers refused any longer to be the vassals of British Capitalism and its ginger-bread Imperialism... a stand should be made against it in the interest of our political independence". However, it was not because the ASL rejected the Yellow Peril and the associated dependence on British naval power, that it opposed the endorsement by Australia of the Anglo-Japanese treaty, but because such an alliance threatened the White Australia Policy.

Another area of contention with British diplomacy was the Boer War and, indeed, the whole situation in South Africa. In practice, the ASL position could be described as pro-Boer, although the People disclaimed this label. As things settled down in South Africa, the People expressed resentment about the labour situation there, especially for Australians. "After all the deeds of the Australian swashbuckler, he's not wanted now. Only Chinamen need apply... having done the dirty murdering work White Men are not Wanted..." John Chinaman, without bayonet and rifle, had marched triumphantly to the front, and Mr Australian had to leave or starve; that was how capitalism rewarded, the People concluded. It advised the workers of the Transvaal to agitate for the ballot, "And when won, strike... as solidly against the thuggish system responsible for the deluge of human blood which saturated the South African veldt in the interest of a few capitalists and cheap Asiatic labor". And then, after indulging in sour grapes on behalf of the proto-Anzacs, and mourning the slaughter of the Anglo-Saxon Boers, "the subjugation of a brave

78. People, 21 Sept 1901.
79. Ibid., 11 Nov 1905.
80. Ibid., 18 July 1903.
81. Ibid., 22 Feb 1902 L.
82. Ibid., 13 Sept 1902, 25 Jan 1902; letter from Julia Fitzhenry on "The People-Collectivist" corresponding club letterhead, 26 Feb 1900, IWW Correspondence.
and virile race", the ASL warned that a new and ominous danger might arise from the importation of Chinese to the Transvaal, because wherever Chinese labour had gone, leprosy had appeared.\footnote{People, 30 Jan 1904, 26 March 1904 L, 3 Sept 1904, 17 Dec 1904.}

The ASL saw clearly through the Kiplingesque justifications for Empire. The \textit{People} referred contemptuously to the Delhi Durbar and coronation of Edward VII as Emperor of India as a garish display built on the misery, degradation, and exploitation of the natives of India.\footnote{Ibid., 10 Jan 1903. On Kiplingism, the \textit{People} commented that in the early stages of the Philippine war, it was urged that it was a humanitarian struggle, and the idea was to carry the Bible and a better civilisation to the benighted natives. Afterwards, the motive became that of the buccaneer, the pirate, the horse-thief. The islands, according to Imperialist Beveridge, are "so valuable that they should be held by us". The same theory of morals, the \textit{People} concluded, would apply to a man who sees that another man has a fine farm, and decides it is so good it ought to be stolen. (People, 9 Feb 1901).} An ASL pamphlet, \textit{Why I Am A Socialist}, cited India, starving in the presence of walled-up and plentiful food supplies, as a monument to the capitalist order.\footnote{George D.Herron, \textit{Why I Am A Socialist}, p.16.} It was not just British imperialism the ASL found objectionable, but capitalist imperialism in general. Socialist imperialism, however, was another matter, a view shared with the followers of Bernstein. The \textit{People} insisted the New Hebrides were geographically desirable adjuncts to have under Australian control, "and with a Socialist Commonwealth, instead of a Capitalist one, the question of acquiring them and telling the robber class of the world to keep their 'hands off', would be worth the effort..."\footnote{People, 15 March 1902. See also Herron, \textit{Why I Am A Socialist}, pp.16-7, and \textit{People}, 10 Jan 1903.}

In line with their compassion for oppressed peoples under imperialism, the ASL also took up the cause of the Russian Jews,\footnote{People, 11 Nov 1905 L.} and to a lesser extent, that of the Australian Aborigines. The \textit{People} made it clear that the ASL's primary sympathy lay with the white Australian working class, as though concern for one necessarily excluded the other to a degree. In response to a politician who claimed that blacks were better provided for than poor white people, the \textit{People} observed: "Since the marketable pigs handled by the Premier are better cared for than the blacks, where do the 'poor' whites come in?"\footnote{Ibid., 12 July 1902.} And after a series of articles exposing the cruel treatment of blacks in Western Australia, the \textit{People}'s final verdict was that it was doubtlessly true, but that the clerical and lay howlers against black slavery were...
canting, hypocritical frauds, as their hands were stained with crimes of white slavery. The motive behind publicising the bad treatment of Australian Aborigines seemed to be more to condemn capitalism than to arouse sympathy for the oppressed.

During the period 1900-1906, the Australian Socialist League moved from a stance of attempting to outbid the Labor Party by proposing similar reforms more 'sincerely', to a position of implacable revolutionism, which rejected all reform agitation as counter-productive and a diversion from the central task of destroying capitalism. Either the ASL did not share, or did not understand, Marx's vision of a healthy inter-relationship between revolution and reform.

This change, however, made no perceptible difference to the ASL's approach to working class racism. Its primary strategy remained winning working class votes, albeit with a single revolutionary demand, not a string of reforms. The new all-out emphasis on the end-goal possibly encouraged the ASL's complacency about racism. It believed, in this period, that nothing short of the abolition of capitalism could cure any of the existing evils, and that any improvements in the meantime might strengthen, rather than weaken, capitalism. This 'the worse it gets, the better it gets' attitude, coupled with the continuing electoral emphasis, confirmed the ASL in its disregard for the problem of working class racism.

Yet, the ASL accused the Labor Party of aiming at the nation, not at the working class, by appealing to "national prejudices" and attempting to harmonise the conflicting class antagonisms of the society. The Labor Party was typically referred to as the "Bogus Labor Party", and its official organ as the "Shirker". It was accused of lacking a proper class analysis of the state. But even if the ASL understood the true nature of the state,

89.People, 30 April 1904.
90.ibid., 21 Feb 1903.
91.The Senate elections of 1901 and the NSW state elections soon after, had been contested on much the same platform as that drawn up in 1898, but never again. The official history explained that these were the last occasions on which the elections were contested with such a palliative platform and manifesto, the 1901 Conference abolishing these and substituting in their place one demand only - Collective Ownership of the Land and Socially Operated Means of Production, and Production for Use.(Socialist Labor Party of Australia, The Unity Question, p.4).
92.People, 14 July 1900, 16 Feb 1901, 5 Jan 1901, 27 May 1905. The ASL particularly despised the Labor Party, because of Labor's support for arbitration. See, for example, People, 8 March 1902 L.
93.People, 19 July 1902 L, 2 Dec 1905.
and the Labor Party did not, in practice this made no difference, as both parties bent all their energies on gaining control of this capitalist state, and by the same means. Shortly before the 1901 elections, the People explained why the ASL was running for the Senate.

In order to give practical effect to the principles of Socialism through the Ballot-Box, the members of the Australian Socialist League have decided to enter the Political field, recognising that only by this means can the working class obtain control of the Governmental machinery, and the aims of Socialism be realised.\textsuperscript{94}

The ASL, like the Labor Party, neglected the battle on the economic front, or, in Sorelian terminology, on 'the terrain of the class'.

The ASL's concept of revolution was essentially that of revolution from above: a change of government would change the economic structure.\textsuperscript{95} Industrial action had virtually no role to play in this process. The workers would be given collective ownership after they had used their vote wisely, as a reward for intelligent behaviour. The ASL's election campaign of 1901 was "the ringing of the first blow struck for economic freedom in Australian politics".\textsuperscript{96} According to the People, the SLP alone stood uncompromisingly against capitalism: all workers had to do was to vote the SLP in to voice their opinions and make their demands, a party, not of time-servers and sycophants, but of men with grit and intelligence; the SLP was the creation of the working class, born from the loins of that class, and it would not hedge or trim, it would not recede from the class position it had assumed; it was the mission of the SLP to enlighten the workers and to lead them into triumphant possession of their common heritage by way of the Ballot Box.\textsuperscript{97}

So, if the SLP was the true party of the working class, then it logically followed that any other party was both incorrect and dangerous. Even if a little removed geographically, such groups required dedicated debunking.

A member of that angelic host, the Queensland Social-Democratic Vanguard, had a chat with some A.S.L.ites in the Domain on Sunday. He was a dapper little chap, and what he didn't know about Socialism was his most striking characteristic... If he is typical of the brotherhood, they should all go for a long excursion in their van - say to New Guinea.\textsuperscript{98}

The ASL positively revelled in its purity, in the fact that it was 'as narrow as science and as intolerant as truth'.\textsuperscript{99} This sectarianism was very much in

\textsuperscript{94}People, 16 Feb 1901. See also, 5 Jan 1901.
\textsuperscript{95}ibid., 28 Dec 1901.
\textsuperscript{96}ibid., 5 Jan 1901.
\textsuperscript{97}ibid., 26 Jan 1901, 28 Dec 1901, 11 Jan 1902, 25 Jan 1902, 22 March 1902.
\textsuperscript{98}ibid., 13 Dec 1902.
\textsuperscript{99}See, for example, The Unity Question, p.5; People, 26 Jan 1901, 5 April 1902, 13 Dec 1902.
the De Leonite tradition. In *Socialism Versus Anarchism*, De Leon declared that the SLP, like all Truth, could bide its time, and proceed serenely along its orbit. De Leon demanded iron discipline within the party, rejected the Marxist concept of a mass party, favoured a small elite party in a superior position of authority over the working class for the purpose of thwarting proletarian spontaneity, and insisted up until 1905 that the party dominate the trade union movement. All these political traits derived from the original assumption that truth and goodness inhered in a select few.

Accompanying these vanguardist sentiments on the part of the Australian De Leonites, was a very poor opinion of Australian workers. Moroney, for example, announced at Marx Hall that the Australian workers lacked any conception of working class revolutionary politics, and the socialists were the only people who regarded the oneness of working class interests the world over. And federation, "the binding of Australia's Democracy with brutal 'constitutional' chains devised by Australia's Plutocracy", had been aided by "the Servility and Class Ignorance of the majority of Australia's workers". It was a Crime, opposed uncompromisingly only by the socialists, "the fighting vanguard of the working-class". Independent industrial organisation was mistrusted by the ASL, because, apart from doubting the importance of the economic struggle, unions would be composed of backward elements, unless guided by the ASL. In that case, industrial action might be useful. "In the properly conducted union, the union that moves hand in hand with the S.L.P., even the old weapons of the strike and boycott may serve some good purpose; and such a union is a valuable weapon of offence and defence to the workers".

The ASL, the Chosen Ones of De Leon, believed firmly in its unique ability to lead the workers of Australia to their salvation. Nevertheless, by its own formula for revolution, to lead the class also entailed gaining its approval. The ASL was strung out between elitism and populism. Its paper was called the People, and its whole strategy was dependent on popular support, yet it believed that the working class was naturally reformist and incapable of becoming a class-for-itself, without the guidance of one party and no other. It also believed that all proletarian energy should be directed

102. *People*, 22 March 1902.
103. *ibid.*, 4 Jan 1902.
104. *ibid.*, 16 Nov 1901.
to one purpose only, the final overthrow of the capitalist system, and that in the meantime, the evils of the system had simply to be borne, not opposed. Racism proved the immorality of capitalism, but nothing could, or should, be done about it.

In short, racist practice was to be dealt with only after the revolution, and racist beliefs were not considered a hindrance to the movement for socialism, because this movement depended on atomised working class electoral support for the SLP, not industrial solidarity as well.
CHAPTER FOUR.

RENAISSANCE: 1906–1910

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A *Times* editorial in 1908 attributed the objection to Asians in the Transvaal and Australia to "business hatred, far deeper and more deadly than race hatred, the name of which it borrows, because race hatred can be represented as an ordinance of nature, primal, inexorable and rooted in the order of things".¹

Australian legislation continued to ensure that business remained overwhelmingly white. The Excise Tariff Act, the Customs Tariff Act, and the Australian Industries Preservation Act of 1906, the Bounties Act of 1907, and the Manufacturers Encouragement Act of 1908 all aimed at defeating any residual non-white competition.² Where loop-holes were left, complaints were made.³

In this period, Japan succeeded China to first position in Australian demonology,⁴ and Australian racism developed a strong attachment to the Great White United States. It felt it had gained both knowledge and inspiration from the American example. Britain was blamed for America's 'unfortunate Negro problem', and California was deemed exemplary in its attitudes and actions towards Chinese, Japanese, and Indians.⁵ The visit of

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3. In NSW, for instance, the Chinese were accused of infiltrating the ladies' underwear market, for which garments could be made silently at night, and to compound the disgrace, they slept in the rooms where the garments were manufactured, and subsequently sold them as clean. (*NSW Parliamentary Debates*, 11 Aug 1909, cited in Huttenback, *Racism and Empire*, p.291). And in Victoria, in 1909-10, there were minor anti-Chinese movements amongst retailers in Horsham and Bendigo, which called for boycotting of Chinese shop-keepers. (*Yong, The New Gold Mountain*, p.77).
4. Although Australia approved the 1911 renewal of the 1902 Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Norris believes the withdrawal from the Anglo-Japanese Commercial Treaty in 1908 reflected growing public uneasiness about Japan, which was seen less as the present ally of Britain and more as the future enemy of Australia. After Japan's victory over Russia in 1905, the Asian hordes were regarded as a military threat to the White Australia Policy. (*Norris, The Emergent Commonwealth*, pp.105, 154; I.H.Nish, "Australia and the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1901-1911", *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Vol IX No 2, Nov 1963, p.212). Both political parties increased defence expenditure, and opted for greater strategic independence from Britain, but not to the extent of alienating Australia from the defensive network of the Royal Navy. In 1909, Labor Prime Minister Fisher ordered three destroyers; later in 1909, the Deakin Fusion Ministry decided to build a modern fleet unit, and introduced legislation for universal peace-time service with compulsory military training for cadets from 14 to 20; in 1910, a Fisher Government Defence Act extended the ages from 12 to 26. (*Norris, The Emergent Commonwealth*, p.108).
5. Huttenback adds: "A short-lived journal named *White Australia* displayed on..."
the Great White Fleet in 1908 was greeted enthusiastically, whereas in 1906, when a Japanese naval squadron had visited Australia, the press alleged the sailors were distributing pornographic post-cards and the ships were filled with naked prostitutes.\(^6\) A novel published in 1909, *The Australian Crisis*, described the horrors of a Japanese invasion, unwittingly encouraged by the stupidity of the British ruling class and its concern for the alliance with Japan.\(^7\)

This suspicion of British imperial aims was often tinged with anti-Semitism. For example, the *Bulletin* invented a composite character, John Bull-Cohen, representing British imperialism acting at the will of Jewish financiers, and in 1909, H.I. Jensen wrote in *The Rising Tide* that Australia and New Zealand were allowing themselves to be fleeced wholesale by "hooknosed moneylenders" in the shape of British capitalism.\(^8\)

The labour movement was proud of its opposition to all other races. In praising the record of the Fisher Labor Government of November 1908 to June 1909, Spence cited the improvement of defence, the commencement of the Royal Australian Navy, the establishment of an arms factory, and better administration of the White Australia Policy.\(^9\) Yarwood describes Labor as assuming the mantle of guardian of the nation's homogeneity.\(^10\) And, retaining its 1905 Objective, in 1908, the Federal Labor Party added also as first item on its Fighting Platform, 'Maintenance of White Australia'.

In 1906, V.S. Clark wrote that Chinese competition impressed workmen with their need of government protection, and with the racial limitations of

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7. The novel ends with the White Guard preparing to expel the Japanese from part of the Northern Territory, Australia Irridenta, where a new Japanese empire was in the making. It was the final struggle between White and Yellow "FOR AUSTRALIA IS THE PRECIOUS FRONT BUCKLE IN THE WHITE GIRLDE OF POWER AND PROGRESS ENCIRCLING THE GLOBE". (Kirmess, *The Australian Crisis*, p.335).
socialism, as labour sympathy extended only to those who were consciously seeking popular ideas or were at least restless with the spirit of reform. "Discontent is the badge of brotherhood. The passive hosts of the Orient are natural enemies of socialism. They represent an impending economic peril to white workers..."11

* * *

The 'racial limitations of Australian socialism' were not challenged until the advent of the Industrial Workers of the World in 1907. Childe considers that the most momentous event in the political industrial history of Australian labour, since the historic decision in favour of political action in 1890, was the establishment of locals of the IWW. "It was this body which once more revived the doctrines of revolutionary Socialism on the industrial field which the small bodies of orthodox Socialists, who had split off from the Labour Party, had failed to keep alive on the political field". Childe argues that circumstances of the period predisposed the toilers' minds to a receptive attitude towards these teachings, as the legal delays of the Arbitration Court procedure, and the frequent defeats of the workers, caused many to look more sympathetically on the old direct method. Also, the failure of the Labor Parties to gain tangible results, after 15 years of concessions to the middle classes, induced "a feeling of pessimism with regard to reformist tactics". The attack on craft unionism also appealed to workers who had experienced its divisive effects.12

Fitzpatrick believes the IWW mixture from America fell into an Australian mould already prepared by circumstances.

The appearance of the I.W.W. on the Australian industrial scene gave centre and direction to the typical restlessness of a working class which, lately worsted in a conflict of its scattered and unco-ordinated unions with the strong employers' organizations assisted by the governments, retained a realisation that the basic problems of industry as they concerned the worker could not be settled by Labor Parliamentarians at the Federal and State Capitals, or at any rate could not be settled by them alone.13

Bedford maintains the IWW ideas circulating in the labour movement after 1907 were the expression of two principal tendencies: first, the desire of skilled and unskilled workers for more effective union organisation; second, the

rejection of the political party and arbitration courts. As Gollan points out, the IWW raised important organisational issues, because, unlike the situation in the United States, where the IWW was seen as an alternative to existing unions, "the influence on Australia was to suggest a re-organization of existing unions," by pointing towards the linking of separate unions within the same industry, and the diminishing of the influence of the numerous small craft unions. Many workers saw the IWW insistence on industrial unionism and class solidarity as the cure for the obvious deficiencies of the existing set-up.

Gollan notes that the IWW gained their greatest popularity on the coalfields: miners were already critical of the Labor Party, and soured by six years of abortive arbitration. In August 1907, the northern district miners, with Peter Bowling as president, adopted the IWW Preamble. Early in 1908, the Melbourne Trades Hall Council Executive was asked to report on a motion: "That in view of the fact that Arbitration Courts and Wages Boards have failed to give the protection to the workers that they so much desire, the Trades Hall Council be requested to consider the advisability of organising on the lines of the I.W.W." The response was a detailed report, which condemned the divisive effects of craft unionism, and recommended a central fighting fund for the union movement, but it did not endorse the programme of the IWW. In April 1908, the NSW Trade Union Congress in Sydney debated at length a resolution moved by the Newcastle Labour Council:

That whereas it has been demonstrated that our present system of craft unionism is hopelessly impotent to prevent the exactions of concentrated capital; and whereas the position of the workers is year by year becoming more insecure; and whereas it is absolutely necessary that the workers should be organised industrially in order to cope successfully with combinations of capitalists, be it therefore resolved that this meeting adopts the constitution and preamble of the I.W.W.

Gollan maintains that, although this motion was lost 55 to 23 in favour of an amendment proposing the "Federation of the whole of the labour organisations of Australasia", the IWW ideas were nevertheless given serious consideration.

16. Child, Unionism and the Labour Movement, p.120.
It appears that all sorts of unions, large and small, were open to IWW ideas. IWW Club correspondence files contain letters from various unions requesting a speaker to address them about the IWW and explain the constitution and preamble. A sure indication of the spread of IWW ideas was the hostility shown to them by Labor politicians: Holman, for instance, blamed the IWW for the 1908 strike in Broken Hill. And Childe believes that in 1909 there was quite a body of opinion in the union movement in favour of a general strike, if the leaders of the Broken Hill strike were found guilty on the sedition charges. This direct actionist temper soon found expression in the great upheaval in the Newcastle coal-mining industry in 1910.

However, if the influence of the IWW on the mainstream of the labour movement was significant, its influence on socialist groups was fundamental and far-reaching, for it was the ideas of the IWW that caused Australian socialists to reconsider their capitulation to working class racism.

* * *

The period 1906 to 1910 marks a crucial phase in the development of organised socialism in Australia. The ASL monopoly was challenged, and by groupings that appeared to have much greater appeal. This was also the period of the formation of IWW Clubs and the first penetration of Wobbly ideas, which affected all groups, but to differing degrees.

The ASL was not happy about the situation, and the competition aggravated its tendency to socialist self-righteousness. It regarded the growth of other groups as proof of their lack of principle, and this attitude made it universally disliked by the rest of the left. At the June 1907 conference in Melbourne that aimed at unifying socialist groups throughout Australia, the ASL, now the Socialist Labor Party, and convert to the IWW, argued that it was "the most scientific organisation represented", and the only one that had recognised that socialism could not be achieved by political means alone, and the only one that advocated the economic organisation of the working class on the 1905 Preamble of the IWW. Its delegates consequently insisted that the only scientific basis for unity was for the other socialist bodies to accept the revolutionary principles, methods, and tactics of the SLP.

20. Child, *Unionism and the Labour Movement*, p.120.
Delegates to the Socialist Unity Conference in Melbourne in June 1907. Socialist, 22 June 1907.
This was not acceptable to the other groups represented: the Queensland Social Democratic Vanguard, the Sydney International Socialists, the Sydney Social-Democratic Federation, the Barrier Socialist Propaganda Group, the Victorian Socialist Party, and the Kalgoorlie Social Democratic Association. The SLP departed, shaking the dust of socialist unity off its feet. The Queensland Vanguard and the Kalgoorlie Social Democrats also declined to join: they could not accept the resolution passed that no member of the United Socialist Organisation seek election as the candidate of the Australian Labor Party until the ALP adopted a Socialist Objective. The Sydney Social-Democratic Federation, which had been formed as a branch of the English SDF by ASL renegades, also declined affiliation, but by June 1908, it had ceased to exist. The Broken Hill Social Democratic Club was invited, but did not attend. The Socialist Federation of Australasia that emerged from the conference only comprised, therefore, the Victorian Socialist Party (1,400 members), the Sydney International Socialists (120 members), and the Barrier Socialist Propaganda Group (40 members). Outside this centrist fold, the SLP remained implacably dedicated to the destruction of both capitalism and the Socialist Federation of Australasia. However, the ban on Labor candidacies caused tension even within this residue of like-minded groups, as did the

23. The Vanguard, although claiming 300 members at the time of this unity conference, was in an advanced state of decay and absorption into the Labor Party, and even its independent contributions to the labour press were infrequent. In April 1910, it called for support of Labor candidates under the slogan 'Be Vigilant, White Australians!' (Queensland Worker, 2 April 1910). By 1912, its existence can no longer be proved, 'socialism' in Brisbane being represented instead by the Queensland Socialist Fellowship and the Socialist Christian Brotherhood, which characterised Moses as 'A Great Strike Leader', considered God had raised up Andrew Fisher to introduce Socialism, and called for national unity to defend Australia from outside enemies. (Queensland Worker, 1912, 1913).

24. Flame, Feb 1907.

25. To the chagrin of the SLP, De Leon praised the unity conference and the Federation in the American Weekly People, which caused great amusement all round in the SFA. Scott Bennett wrote that he would have given a fortune to have seen the faces of Moroney and Batho when they opened their copies. (Letter from Scott Bennett to 'Frank' [probably Anstey] on International Socialist Club letterhead, Sydney, 12 Nov 1907, IWW Correspondence).

26. The mainstream of the VSP preferred to continue co-operation with the Labor Party and was wary that the Sydney IS might push the SFA in the direction of opposing Labor candidates. However, some members of the VSP favoured Sydney's harder line on the Labor Party, and this section succeeded in winning a VSP referendum on the issue in October 1908, thereby sending two VSP candidates into the electoral fray, to poll abysmally, in December 1908. (Osborne, 'Tom Mann', pp.137-52, 181).
motion passed at the First Annual Conference of the SFA in 1908 that declared against a programme of palliatives, and urged workers to concentrate their energies upon abolishing capitalism by perfecting their industrial organisations, "and only using the ballot for Socialist propaganda". When, in December 1908, the VSP paper, the Socialist, advised VSP members to vote Labor in most cases where there was no SFA candidate, the Sydney IS passed a resolution that such advice was "contrary to the principles of the Socialist Federation of Australasia". R.S.Ross hotly defended his editorial decision:

It appears to me as unreasonable as reactionary to declare in effect that questions upon which Socialists are divided - such as religion, citizen army, immigration, palliatives, and so forth - shall not be debated, when plainly these are the questions requiring full, calm and dispassionate examination.28

At the 1909 SFA Conference, the VSP lost its motion that there be freedom of voting where there was no Socialist candidate, and was faced instead with a decision that its members could not vote for, or support, any candidate not approved by the general executive or special conference.29 The Socialist described this decision as "one huge blunder", and predicted that "insularity beyond a practicable stage is the rock upon which the S.F.A. may split".30 Acrimonious correspondence between Melbourne and Sydney expressed the increasingly divergent viewpoints within the Federation. The Broken Hill section, and the Socialist Party of South Australia, established in February 1908 and welcomed into the SFA, were caught between the firing lines.

At this stage, differential degrees of enthusiasm about the IWW did not disrupt the smooth functioning of the SFA to the extent that the more immediate question of the relationship to the Labor Party obviously did. The Unity Conference had unanimously resolved "that the time has arrived for the re-organisation of the Australian working-class on the lines of the Industrial Workers of the World", and adopted the Preamble.31 The 1909 SFA Conference decided instead to declare only for Industrial Unionism, apart from any preamble or disputation, probably to avoid conflict along Chicago versus Detroit lines. This split did not really intrude into Australian revolutionary politics until 1910; the differences in the SFA over the IWW merely revolved around intensity of commitment to the basic principles.32

29.ibid., 25 June 1909.
30.ibid., 9 July 1909 L.
32.The original 1905 Preamble declared that, between the oppressors and the oppressed, a struggle must go on "until all the toilers come together on the
Attitudes varied from lip-service and occasional criticism on the part of the VSP to a much more enthusiastic support from Sydney and Broken Hill. This difference was both cause and effect of the more general political differences, but the IWW as an issue in itself did not present serious trouble at this stage. Disagreement within the Federation over the merits or otherwise of the IWW instead took the form of differing responses to the SLP, which initiated the formation of IWW Clubs in October 1907. Sydney's greater enthusiasm for the IWW was expressed in its growing proximity to the SLP.

The politics of the VSP made it much less amenable to Wobbly ideas than the Sydney and Broken Hill groups, which embraced Wobblyism with eagerness. And the SLP, under De Leonite influences, underwent wholesale conversion to the principles of the IWW. The degree of acceptance of IWW ideology provides the clue to explaining the response of these groups to the problem of working class racism, as 'confrontationism' was inherent in Wobblyism.

In his history of the American IWW, Brissenden records that among the first words uttered by William D. Haywood, in calling the first IWW convention in 1905 to order, were words of criticism of the American Federation of Labor political as well as on the industrial field'. In 1908, the 'overalls brigade', including many disenfranchised migrant workers, packed the convention, and succeeded in substituting "until the workers of the world organise as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage system". Conlin claims this was not intended to place the IWW in an inflexible anti-political actionist position, but was merely a tactic to defeat De Leon's attempt, in Elizabeth Gurley Flynn's words, "to tie the industrial union movement to the apron strings of the Socialist Labor Party". (Bread and Roses Too, pp.57-61). The minority section under De Leon, upholding the 1905 Preamble, withdrew, and established separate headquarters in Detroit. De Leon enunciated the 'sword and shield' concept of working class emancipation: industrial action would wrest the control of industry from the capitalists, while political action, by neutralising the state apparatus, would defend this action. The larger 'non-political' section remained based in Chicago, and became what is most commonly known as 'the' IWW.


Prominent ISers, such as Holland and Scott Bennett, participated in IWW Club activities, until Club meetings were changed to clash with the traditional, and apparently immovable, Sunday evening meetings of the IS. This was probably an SLP move aimed at limiting IS influence in the Club. (Letters from Holland and Scott Bennett to secretary of Sydney IWW Club, 23 Sept 1908, IWW Correspondence). And Ross accused the IS of modelling their conduct to suit the SLP, particularly over the Labor Party issue. (Socialist, 22 Jan 1909).
for its discrimination against Negroes and foreigners. 35 Brooks' *American Syndicalism* cites Haywood also for stating his ultimate aim was: "One great organization - big enough to take in all nationalities - an organization that will be strong enough to obliterate state boundaries, to obliterate national boundaries, and one that will become the great industrial force of the working class of the world". He announced his intention of "going down into the gutters" to reach the unskilled, the frequently jobless, the migrant, and the migratory worker. 36 Conlin points out that implicit in the Wobbly notion of industrial organisation was the inclusion of unskilled workers whom the AFL regarded as unorganisable, and that the organisation of unskilled and other groups traditionally overlooked or excluded in many AFL unions, such as immigrants, Negroes, and women, in fact became an IWW priority. "Wobblies excoriated the AFL's concept of an aristocracy of labor in every particular. It was to be no mere special-interest group but a class organisation, a mass movement". 37 The American IWW has even been described as a revolt against the failure of orthodox unionism to organise the unskilled, particularly the migrants. 38 Wobbly propagandist A.E.Woodruff denounced the craft unionist for looking down upon the unskilled as distinctly inferior beings, unfit and undesirable. "Foreigners, negroes and Chinese were beasts to be especially abhorred..." However, the new working class, the "Machine Proletariat", Woodruff argued, differed essentially from the craftsman, as the idea of an exclusive property in skill had disappeared and along with it the contractual notion, the aristocracy of labour idea, pride in production, and contempt for foreigners. "The new unionism, organising on the basis of the machine, welcomes every improvement and development in industry, excludes no worker from the machines on any grounds of undesirability (there being no barriers of race, creed, color, sex, age or skill)..." 39

The IWW in Australia, as exponents of One Big Union for all workers, inherited this hostility to any ideology which tended to divide workers at the point of production. Anti-racism was an essential component in the IWW

39. Woodruff, *The Advancing Proletariat*, pp.27-9. This American IWW publication was a popular one amongst the Australian Wobblies, who distributed it, and many other American pamphlets, zealously.
formula for revolution: workers could take and hold the means of production only if the ultimate form of solidarity, the One Big Union, had been reached. This belief was as basic to the Australian IWW as to the American. The first IWW Club was established in Sydney on 22nd October 1907 with 42 members. In 1908, Clubs were set up in Cobar, Adelaide, and Melbourne. Whatever their impact on the working class as a whole, the IWW Clubs certainly led the vanguard of the class in the socialist groups into assuming a confrontationist position on the question of racism. Both factions of the IWW agreed on the importance of countering racism in the working class movement, as both factions emphasised the need for better industrial organisation; their disagreement centred on the utility of political action in addition to industrial. This difference did not affect their respective standings on the issue of racism. Both adhered firmly to internationalism, in theory and practice, as a fundamental principle of revolutionary industrial unionism.

40. The SLP espoused De Leon's 'sword and shield' ideas, but the 1909 IWW Constitution provided that, until the IWW could become launched as an Industrial Union with a minimum membership of 5,000, the Clubs were to continue as a propaganda and educative force. (Rushton, 'The Industrial Workers of the World in Sydney, 1913-1917', p.53). 41. This point is developed in this and subsequent chapters.
The effect of the IWW on the racial attitudes of other revolutionary formations is most obvious in the case of the ASL, which took its cues very closely from the American Socialist Labor Party connected with the IWW's establishment. The *People* duly noted the advent of the IWW late in 1905, commenting that it appeared to be forging ahead and should kill Gompers' capitalist craft unions. But at this stage, the ASL did not take Wobblyism completely to heart, but merely admired from afar. "The I.W.W. has a grand ideal and magnificent tactics as its theory". The *People* advised every Australian socialist to read De Leon's lecture on the Preamble.42

Throughout 1906, then, before the penetration of Wobbly ideas was really felt, the *People* exhibited the same response to working class racism as it always had. The ASL still considered that capitalism was the only 'problem'. Racist attitudes on the part of one group of workers towards another, by virtue of the way capitalism threw them into competition with each other, was regarded as inevitable. It was not a problem to be confronted; it would cease along with capitalism itself. The ASL was like the parent of a child frightened in the dark, who, instead of explaining to the child that ghosts did not exist, told the child it would no longer be frightened in the morning.

Suddenly, the ASL, which became the Socialist Labor Party of Australia at Easter 1907, seemed to become aware of the pertinence of the race question. The *People* announced in July 1907: "The I.W.W. is right; it is the true economic organisation. It embraces all workers - skilled and unskilled - black, white, brown, or yellow. Its door is open to all honest wage-workers".43 This conversion to Wobblyism is detailed in the SLP's own official history: it required drastic revision also in the Party's all-out emphasis on electoral activity. In 1907, the history states, the SLP of Australia, like the SLP of America and Great Britain, realised the absolute futility of expecting socialism to be accomplished by political means alone. It recognised now that the ballot had to be backed up by the organised economic might of the working class, as set forth in the 1905 Preamble of the IWW. The SLP launched the first IWW Club, because it acknowledged that "the economic arm is indispensable to the Revolutionary act of taking and holding the plants of production, and is the frame of the Government of the

42.*People*, 18 Nov 1905.
43.*ibid.*, 13 July 1907.
Co-operative Commonwealth".44

This new-found necessity for promoting the practical organisation of the working class at the point of production at last caused the SLP to admit that there was a race question, and that it was not a question that could be shelved, pending the revolution. It was seen now that it was an obstacle to be overcome in order that socialism might be achieved. The conscious linkage of this new approach to working class racism with the influence of Wobbly ideas is apparent in the People's response to the whole issue in the first year of the SLP's IWW Club promotional activity. It noted, for instance, in October 1907, that capitalists had no prejudice of race, creed, colour, age, or sex, being always ready to combine with other capitalists of any race in the congenial act of robbing the workers of all races. It asked why the workers should not profit by the example set by their betters: Why should not they too eschew questions of race, color, or creed, when the question is one of the material interests of ALL workers? Is not every worker whether black, white, brown or tawny, entitled to the whole value of what he produces by his labor? Do you say Yes? Then up with the Industrial Workers of the World.45

The connection between anti-racism and Wobblyism was obvious, even to the Daily Telegraph. In May 1908, it alleged that the IWW would invite Chinese and Japanese workers to Australia in order that they might be enrolled in the IWW. The People denied any such recruitment drive, but explained that the object of the IWW was certainly to build up an organised working class the world over, irrespective of colour, race, or creed.46

In classic Wobbly fashion, the SLP now blamed craft unionism for the racial exclusiveness of the Australian workers. In an article entitled 'Organising the Jap. An Object Lesson to Craft Unionists', the People began by rubbishing the myth that Asians were poor unionists, implying they were actually superior, as the only difference noted, in organising among Japanese workmen in America, was their loyalty to the organisation after having taken the pledge.

None of the Japanese or Chinese who become members fail to realise their duty as to paying their dues and keeping in good standing. This cannot be said truthfully, of all the 'whites'. The Japanese and Chinese can be organised as rapidly as any other nationality, and when once pledged to stand with you, no fear or doubt need to be entertained as to them, during labor trouble.47

44.SLP, The Unity Question, pp.4, 11.
45.People, 19 Oct 1907.
46.ibid., 23 May 1908.
47.ibid., 30 May 1908.
And, under the heading 'Craft Unionists Don't Want "Chow" Unionists', the People lamented the refusal of union officials to allow 300 Chinese cabinet-makers into the union, launched into a long diatribe on the racist mentality of craft unionism, and eulogised the aims of the IWW.

If the Chinese agreed to join the union and demand the same wages as their white brothers, why were they not taken in? "East is east, and west is west". Yes: geographically. But economically the eastern and western workers are wage-slaves - are members of the working class. If those "chows" continue to work for less than the whites, their competition will have to be met with in the market, how, then, is the union going to prevent it? By special "labor" legislation or by enforcing Chinese-made furniture to be branded as such; or to expel the Chinese from the country? That is the craft union idea of dealing with the question. If the I.W.W. were organised in Australia those Chinese would have been accepted as members of the organisation. Here was a splendid opportunity to demonstrate the oneness of labor. Show to the eastern workers a practical illustration of the international solidarity of labor... and make the workers of that country the friends of the workers of Australia instead of their enemies... The workers of the world are wage-slaves subject to capitalist conditions, therefore the Industrial Workers of the World takes in all workers irrespective of race, color or creed.48

SLP anger at this craft unionist mentality was unabating. The People referred to "those unionists whose prejudices against the Asiatic worker makes solid universal working class action almost impossible..." The SLP now regarded racist ideas as positively dangerous to the cause of proletarian emancipation, and was adamant that the IWW pointed the way forward.

Surely, from an economic viewpoint, it is more desirable that the despised Asiatic workers should be organised with the Australian working class - or the workers of the world - than organised against them, and now that China and Japan are both rocking in the cradle of modern capitalism there is much more to be feared from their teeming millions organised on the basis of militarism and racial prejudice than organised on the basis of the I.W.W. Preamble with a recognition of the commonality of working-class economic interests irrespective of geographical or racial boundaries or unwarrantable racial prejudices... Let the slogan ever be: "Workers of the World, Unite!"49

Wobbly-conscious references became less frequent as IWW ideas penetrated deeply into the heart and soul of the SLP, and a gut anti-racism developed. The People argued it was pointless for workers to join in the demand for exclusion, a far cry from their previous position: "The workers cannot keep them out, because the working class does not compose the whole of the organised or dominant part of society. The organised part of society that controls to day is the employing class, and it is at their will and desire that exclusion or admittance will be regulated". The People listed four 'Cold

48. People, 11 July 1908.
49. ibid., 25 July 1908.
Facts for the Consideration by the Working Class': the Orientals are here; they are wage-workers; they have the same commodity to sell as other workers - labour-power; and they are as anxious as other workers to get as much as possible for it. "To say that you can't organise them is a mistatement". The average worker might rebel at first, if asked to belong to an organisation that took in "Japs, Chinks, Dagoes and Niggers", but, the People insisted, he should be shown that he already belonged to their organisation, because of his membership of the working class. The ASL now saw the solution as the organisation of all workers, not the demand for restrictive immigration legislation.\(^50\)

The connection between the demand for a White Australia and the creation of division in the ranks of the working class was at last understood by the SLP. Its previous commitment to the belief that restriction was necessary "under the present competitive conditions" was categorically rejected. The White Australia idea is cherished lovingly by thousands of the "free" and "enlightened" citizens of this empty continent. Race prejudice is fostered: the common class interests of the workers negated: and the merry game of exploitation continues all the more cheerfully whilst the white slave inflates his chest as he voices his supposed superiority over his colored fellow-slave. The last refuge of the "White Australian" is the economic argument: that restricted immigration holds up the standard of living. To substantiate this turn-about in SLP thinking, the People added that immigration was a less important increaser of the supply of labour than improved machinery and the concentration of plants, so to expect relief from stopping immigration was folly. And, as the over-supply was so large anyway, all discussion on this, that, or the other little detail was idle. "One cannot be wetter than wet", the People commented, then advised its reader not to fly off the handle like a Bulletin maniac.\(^51\)

The practical importance of combatting race prejudice was spelt out frequently in the pages of the People, where it had previously been dismissed as a problem that would disappear along with capitalism. What was urgently needed, the People decided in March 1909, was a complete entente cordiale between the world's workers of every race and colour, so that if we cannot prevent the gathering to battle, we may realise in some sort the vision of Marx (we think) who pictured two armed hosts who instead of rushing against each other with the instruments of murder, throw them aside and end the war - not with a bloody massacre, but with a fraternal embrace.\(^52\)

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50. People, 30 May 1908.
51. ibid., 4 Sept 1909.
52. ibid., 27 March 1909.
The *People* noted that race hatred suited the exploiters, a point realised by the old ASL, but now the SLP was careful to add that wage-slave solidarity was the *bête noire* of these exploiters. The *People* had become aggressively anti-racist; it was no longer embarrassed and confused by the problem. "The S.L.P. knows neither race, color, nor creed. In its estimation a German, a Jap, or Chinaman, is a man; and a Briton or an Australian is no more, and no less". In October 1909, the *People* published a 'workshop comedy', which demonstrated how racism divided the workers on the job and thereby 'benefitted the boss'. Class before race was preached continually by the *People*.

The Far Eastern question is not a race question - it is a matter of class. As capitalism develops in China so will the Chinese workers develop Socialist organisation. The Australian working class must treat the chinaman as a fellow-worker - just as the capitalist treats the Chinese rulers as capitalists. "Divide to govern" is the maxim of every ruling class. Those who would divide the workers by pandering to race prejudice are enemies of the working class.

The fact that the White Australia Policy was used by Japanese capitalists, to persuade Japanese workers to scab at a distance on the coal strike, was taken as a case in point by the SLP. Contesting Newtown in the NSW state election of December 1909, leading SLPer Moroney declared uncompromisingly that, if the Australian workers had international solidarity, there would be no Japanese coal in Sydney. To cheers, he announced: "The Japanese are our fellow-workers".

In the light of this new-found awareness of the danger to working class organisation of any ideas or practices that ran counter to working class consciousness, an even more strident hostility to imperialism and militarism was now expressed. At the mention of conscription, the *People* inquired why the working class of the world were enemies, and for whose benefit armies and navies were maintained. "To send members of the working class to mow down the aboriginal or weaker races, to steal territories, and increase the power, profits, and opulence of the capitalist parasites of the world..." In the lead-up to "Vampire Day" in 1908, the *People* noted that the public educationalists of Australia were busy instilling the poison of militarism and race prejudice into the young and plastic minds of her children, and portraying the subjugation of weaker races by fire and sword and theft of

55. *ibid.*, 9 Oct 1909.
58. *ibid.*, 21 March 1908.
territory as the one noble duty of a Great Christian Nation. And the SLP called on the workers of Australia to oppose the "slavery in Papua", the fact that Papuans were forced into wage-slavery after their land had been stolen from them, amidst hypocritical lies about encouraging the natives in habits of industry. "Enforced slave labor to assist the planters is the aim in view. This enslavement of the Papuan natives should be prevented in the first stages of its development... It's up to the working class of Australia to take a hand in this and fight it. The Socialists fight against all forms of slavery". Also, the victims of internal Australian colonialism received more sympathy than before. The People noted that the squatters had supplanted the native game with flocks and herds: "So the blacks, deprived of their natural food, spear the white usurpers' sheep and cattle for food, and are then dragged by a chain around the neck into a Court of which they know nothing, not even the language, and are often passed into the hangman's care".

In the early years of the century, the ASL had argued it was a 'better' proletarian party than the Labor Party, because of its harder line on coloured aliens. From 1907 onwards, it maintained the opposite. Nothing, the People insisted, could be more Anti-Socialistic than the Objective of the Bogus Labor Party. "The bogus Labor objective avowedly aims at the creation of a national (sectarian) sentiment and the promotion of racial purity; that is to say, the erection of race - and color barriers to prevent the attainment of the Socialist ideal - the solidarity of the World's Workers..." In its report to the International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart, the SLP quoted this objective, and commented that the Labor Party therefore rejected the international character of the labour movement and deliberately placed an obstacle in the way of progress. Not only did the Labor Party prove it was not socialist by its espousal of racial demands, but the SLP considered that this revealed it was not even a decent labour party. Of the Port Melbourne Labour Council meeting that decided the stranded Bulgarians found eating from hotel rubbish bins should be arrested as undesirable immigrants, the People offered the following comment. The Labor Party evidently does not recognise the class interests of labor. Whether the men were Bulgarians, Spaniards, or Americans, or Australians, they belonged to the working class, and it would at least have been thought

59.People, 23 May 1908.
60. Ibid., 12 Sept 1908.
61. Ibid., 14 Dec 1907.
62. Ibid., 13 April 1907.
63. Ibid., 18 May 1907.
that their interests would have been championed by the so-called representative of labor... Would it not be the right course to urge the solidarity of the workers of every country, race, and creed? Not by pandering to the ruling class and preaching the "brotherhood of Capital and Labor" will the social revolution be effected, but by stating boldly that the Working Class and the Employing Class have nothing in common, and urging the workers to stand together and make "an injury to one the concern of all".64

Wobbly jargon had become an integral part of the SLP's new anti-Labor Party vocabulary.

Billy Hughes, in particular, was singled out for abuse. His idea, the People declared, was that the working class of each country, instead of fighting the capitalists and defending their wives and little ones from the vultures in their midst, should be patriotic and defend the property of the capitalists, Hughes' property included.

Now he is a rich middle-class politician with property, he is afraid that the little brown man in the East is contemplating taking his worldly goods, and in order to protect his own personal interests and those of his propertied friends, Mr Hughes seeks to compel every male between certain ages to devote a portion of his life to military service... to protecting "our" land from invasion by the Jap... In seeking to manacle the workers with Conscription laws Hughes and his colleagues are traitors to the working class and treacherous to the cause of labor.65

The SLP had at last come to the Wobbly recognition that those who own Australia should do the fighting. It recommended that workers should only fight internationally against International Capitalism, recognising their common interests regardless of race, colour, or creed.66 The People claimed the Fisher Government was no more a Labor Government than any of its predecessors, because it stood for capitalism, wage slavery, conscription, militarism, and race hatred.67 It was outraged by the PLL President's comment that the Labor Party wanted to make Australia a place where white men might meet as brothers, whether they were employers or employees. The SLP alleged the Labor Party was a fraud upon the workers and a side-tracking institution in the interests of capitalists, as it persuaded the workers not to do away with wage slavery, but to try to live together as brothers with those who plundered them.68

In the Senate election campaign at the end of 1909, an SLP candidate, speaking in Newcastle, specifically attacked the Labor candidates for favouring a White Australia and the purity of the Anglo-Saxon race. The

64. People, 22 Feb 1908.
65. Ibid., 27 Feb 1909.
66. Ibid., 29 Feb 1908.
67. Ibid., 19 June 1909.
68. Ibid., 9 Oct 1909.
SLPer, Mackenzie, claimed that the issue that confronted the working class was not nationality, and the talk about pride of race was a diversion from the real issue. The working class, he continued, had been befuddled too long with the colour and nationality question.\(^69\)

By March 1910, the SLP regarded the racism of both the Labor Party and the Fusion Party as evidence of their fundamental similarity. "Both are yelling for a White Australia, therefore both are opposed to Labor Solidarity, both draw the line at the color of a man's skin... Both are wholly pro-Capitalist and Anti-Labor".\(^70\)

The SLP was now a 'better' proletarian party precisely because it opposed labour racism.

\(^69\)People, 27 Nov 1909.
\(^70\)ibid., 12 March 1910.
The Victorian Socialist Party

With the exception of the SLP, all socialist groups in the period 1906-1910 regarded Melbourne as the Mecca of Australian Socialism. The Victorian Socialist Party was not just an organisation; it was a way of life. Like the German Social Democrats and their consciously 'cradle to grave' activities, the VSP moved relentlessly towards breaking down all barriers between political and personal life. The Socialist was smugly proud of the totality of VSP existence. A comrade who broke a leg was reported as elaborately as a prime minister who broke a promise. The VSP was concerned not just with the creation of the new society within the shell of the old, but with building socialism in one city. Its growth was astronomical by Australian socialist standards. Launched on 1st September 1905, it increased its membership from 50 to 800 in seven months and was able, on 2nd April 1906, to commence weekly publication of the Socialist. On its first anniversary, the Socialist recorded a membership of 1,490.

Unity in diversity was the chief characteristic of Party politics, though this unity was to crack noticeably in the post-Mann era. Osborne notes that Mann's role was like that of a priest ministering to a varied and unwieldy congregation, and that the Party frequently exhibited the same lack of a firm, guiding ideology for which it criticised the labour movement generally. The catholicity of the membership was placated, instead, by a very loose description of aims and objectives; the disparate elements in the Party were bound together by the salvationist enthusiasm and hard, practical reformative work. The VSP deliberately aimed to make all sorts and conditions of socialists, liberals, radicals, and humanists feel welcome in its ranks. This catch-all aspiration involved a conscious rejection of sectarianism. However, this approach proved in later years to mean different things to different Party members.

Mann developed and encouraged this non-sectarian stance, yet Mann and his close political associates never intended that a friendly approach to other progressive forces prevent VSP adherence to fundamental principles: the

71. See, for example, International Socialist Review, 22 June 1907; Flame, July 1907.
72. Party enterprises included a general grocery store, a bakery, and a bank; a Socialist Sunday School catered for the proper development of comrades' children; and regular sporting fixtures and numerous social occasions kept members constantly involved in Party-sponsored activities.
73. Socialist, 1 Sept 1906.
74. Osborne also claims many women, attracted to Mann, joined the VSP, making it a popular haunt for radical men. ('Tom Mann', pp.127, 130, 146).
VSP was to influence the Labor Party, not vice versa; the VSP was to stand firm in its anti-racism against the prejudices of the wider labour movement. The VSP, under Mann's guidance, construed its role as being the socialist conscience of the whole labour movement, of which it was, none the less, an integral part. It sought to encourage the Labor Party in the direction of socialism, yet in time, the norms and values of the Labor Party instead infected VSP politics. Likewise, Nadel points out that, though Mann himself repudiated racism frequently and publicly, he seemed to have had less influence over the VSP on this issue than on any other. After Mann's departure in late 1909, the reformist, Labor-orientated sections of the VSP increased their influence. Mann's readiness to ignore what he termed 'half-inch points', both amongst members and between the Party and the movement, was taken to mean that serious dissent over fundamental issues should be tolerated, and that the Labor Party should be supported unconditionally. Where Mann became increasingly disillusioned with prospects for converting the Labor Party to socialism, the VSP moved in an opposite direction. The worries and concerns of the Labor Party entered very much into VSP thinking, on race, as on other issues. Although the rank and file of the VSP, even in Mann's day, was not whole-heartedly anti-racist, members were aware that the weight of the Party, in the form of Mann, was vigorously opposed to racism, and that a racial viewpoint would never be officially sanctioned. On the other hand, Mann was initially prepared to debate the issue in the Party press, until, realising that reason did not necessarily triumph over prejudice, he was forced to censor the racial viewpoint.

Utterances in the Socialist reveal the immense differences between comrades on the issue. On May 1906, the statutory greetings were sent to socialist comrades throughout the world, and John Curtin taught the speakers' class that Australian capitalism as a distinct and separate entity did not exist, as capitalism was one huge organism, and so the necessity of abolishing such a universal entity gave socialism an international character. Yet two months later, the Socialist allowed the following:

If the Chinamen cannot get into Australia from the outside, they will try and beat us from the inside. The Melbourne Traveller for June, photos Kwong Tuck, merchant, of Cairns, Queensland, with his three wives and fourteen children. Ullo! Ullo! This is not only double-banking, but treble-banking us. Kwong is no Socialist, of course, but he is a decided Societarian. Has he got three houses for his little lots? No! They all rabbit-hutch in alle

75 Nadel, 'Frank Hyett', pp.22-3.
76 Socialist, 5 May 1906.
samee general store. "Allee samee bag o' lice", as a Little Bourke-street cabinet maker said when asked how he provided his employes.77

By contrast, the Socialist also printed a poem written for it that announced:

We blow no trumpet of a clan
No race's watchword call;
Our chime is Earth, our kindred Man,
Our cause the Cause of all.78

Tom Mann soon joined the fray, appearing to take to heart Champion's earlier comment that the greatest struggle was not with the outside world, but in removing the prejudice of friends.79 In an editorial in September 1906, Mann stressed the necessity of removing the "unwarrantably narrow idea" that had been attached to Melbourne socialism and added confidently, or at least optimistically, that nothing was more cherished by VSP members than the Red Flag, symbolising the oneness of the interests of our common humanity the world over. As we sing the 'Red Flag', Mann wrote, "we realise that it wipes out all racial hatreds, gets rid of national frontiers, and demands of us that we shall recognise all men as brothers, not in words merely, but in deed and in truth".80 The Socialist explained that socialists had purposely adopted a single colour flag, not a tricolour, as representing the oneness of the human race. "Above every other flag, higher than any national emblem, the Red Flag denotes human solidarity, based upon the political, social, and economic freedom of all peoples".81

But despite such infusions of cosmopolitanism, the Socialist closed the year with a two-page article by a Dr MacDonald who was worried about aliens taking over New Zealand, and an hysterical piece by Mrs M.E.J. Pitt on Australian race suicide or national extinction, the process of a young nation falling into decay "ere it has reached its meridian" and crying out for people "till the alien invader fills the void, or, happier issue, her people drive out the enemy of humanity, Capitalism..."82

Considering the record to date, an editorial of March 1907 sounded unjustifiably optimistic.

Racial hatreds are rapidly disappearing, because it is known by all tolerably well-informed that there exists no rational grounds for quarrel between the workers of the different nations, and the same knowledge enables us to see quite clearly that the workers of every nation have abundance of reasons for quarrelling with the Master Class, the Capitalist Class, the Land, Money, and

77. Socialist, 14 July 1906.
78. ibid., 1 Sept 1906.
79. ibid., 27 April 1906.
80. ibid., 8 Sept 1906.
81. ibid., 22 Sept 1906.
82. ibid., 22 Dec 1906, 1 Dec 1906.
Confusion was rampant, however, as revealed from 20th April 1907, when 'Hypatia' incidentally stirred up the ants' nest of VSP racial thought. The ensuing 'Brotherhood Debate' demonstrated not only the disagreements between members and contributors on the issue, but also the fuzzy thinking on the part of the participants, even of some on the supposedly anti-racist side of the debate.

Hypatia, for instance, slipped into the mentality of blaming the objects of racism, not the racists. She argued that, if the United States had recognised the law of brotherhood, she would not have slave-trafficked in Negroes, who had now increased so rapidly they represented "a national menace". And, as for Australia's coloured immigration, she considered it insufficient to justify the cry of the alarmist. This seemed to be the crux of her argument: Australia had made a national fool of herself by over-reacting. "A few trades were threatened; we took fright at the yellow peril, built a huge white barricade, and hid behind it. And all the world on the other side of the barricade pokes fun at us". Hypatia was particularly concerned at Japan's opinion in this regard. She considered it illogical and against British traditions of fair play for so much of the huge continent to be left arid and undeveloped, just because the white man could not live there, when it might become "a veritable treasure house" through the employment, or she may as well have said exploitation, of coloured labour. "The Aborigines of Australia might as well have declared that no white man should take possession of their (?) country, as that we should claim a similar distinction now". So much for the rights of Aborigines in the arid and undeveloped areas.

W.J.Baxter took issue with Hypatia on three counts: first, over her remark that it was climate that made people darker, as Baxter insisted white skin pigmentation proved a race further removed from its brute origins than coloured races; second, over her assumption that white people could not live in the tropics, as he reckoned he could shovel brimstone in Hell if the wages were good enough; and third, for her implied complacency about different races living together in close proximity. "Contiguity without admixture of the races has never yet been possible. And the result in all cases has been the degradation of both peoples". Baxter concluded that the

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83. Socialist, 30 March 1907.
84. ibid., 20 April 1907.
duty of Australian socialists, as brothers of all that lives in human form, was to leave the coloured brother to work out his own destiny in his own country. 85

Hypatia's reply was a curious mixture of principle, pragmatism, and prejudice. "We repudiate the rights of a privileged class, and uphold the rights of a privileged race. We protest against the monopoly of the wealthy class, and are guilty of greater selfishness ourselves". This selfishness risked making an enemy of a clever neighbour, and to Baxter's substantive charge, she replied that racial instincts would prevent intermarriage, except in the very lowest strata of society. In an amazing display of acrobatics in logic, she explained: "If we are superior beings we will not intermarry with an inferior race. If we prove ourselves to be but the victims of external circumstance, lacking in self-control and self-respect, then our superiority is but a chimera of the imagination, and we are in no sense better than the races we despise". 86

Bernard O'Dowd's intervention was the most highminded, albeit more from a liberal-democratic standpoint than a proletarian-socialist. He declared he had "no interest in an alleged form of Democracy which does not include in its ranks all men, irrespective of race, colour, rank, or progress". In response to Baxter's concern for the plight of white womanhood, he stated simply that, if women's loathing for such union were as universal as Baxter claimed, it would not occur. O'Dowd argued for an immigration quota, if considered essential, but with the criterion of colour absolutely eliminated, as the superiority of western civilisation over eastern was a debateable proposition, and local disadvantages from the presence of coloured people was largely traceable to lax administration of existing laws. He pointed out that Australia would welcome the Magyar Kossuth and the descendants of the 'Black Huns', but not the dark Syrian Christ, the dark Sanscrit Aryan Buddah, and the pale-yellow Chinese Confucius, without compelling them to write, in Basque, Turkish, or Mongolian Laplander dialect, 50 words of an Argus leading article. 87

M.E.J.Pitt's contribution to the debate was prefaced with the stock excuse that the millenium was not yet, so its ethics could not be applied to present-day complicated commerce, whether in merchandise or men. Pitt's internationalism was non-existent, and even her humanism was partial.

85. Socialist, 27 April 1907.
86. Ibid., 18 May 1907.
87. Ibid., 25 May 1907, 8 June 1907.
The federation of the world, the perfect brotherhood of man, would surely be quite as complete, quite as much in accord with the divine laws of harmony, without any blending of the white and coloured races. The thing is repulsive, and quite impossible from the normal white woman's point of view, however feasible it is to the normal white man.

The only women who were deaf to the insistent voice of race purity were "the flotsam and jetsam, the wreckage of the Capitalist system". Pitt had turned the socialist argument on its head. Capitalism was no longer indicted for its role in fostering racial divisions, but for its de facto encouragement of miscegenation. Pitt looked forward to the evolution of a World-Wide Democracy whose racial constituents should be:

Each kin to each in Law prescribed degree,
Divine in mind as hue, with one fair goal
Binding the links of that democracy
Of human love that circumscribes the Whole
No race brew drained from lees of poison wart,
From fell man-presses Slavery's eras saw,
No mongrel masquerade of types distort,
Nor bastard fruit of man-perverted Law. 88

The Brotherhood Debate would not die down. Lanyon felt obliged to warn O'Dowd that "once the door is thrown open, a wave of Asiatic scum will break upon Australia, and the white workers will know a time of poverty hitherto unexperienced". 89 And MacDonald, who had been so concerned for New Zealand's racial purity, sought to reconcile the advocacy of International Brotherhood with White Australia principles, by arguing they were identical, as it was for mutual benefit, economically and morally, that "our Eastern friends" were excluded. Instead of challenging racism, he argued for exclusion, because of the existence of racism. "To admit the alien... while he is treated as a dog by all classes, utterly misunderstood, and forced to act as a destructive agency upon our economic revolutionary movement, would be to take the high road to race extinction". He added for good measure: "We are ahead of them anatomically as a race..." 90

Attempting to wind down the controversy, O'Dowd congratulated all the participants in the debate. Yet this back-slapping all round somehow ignored the fact that a vital principle had been thrashed out, and the Party found decidedly wanting. O'Dowd's next poem, in the Socialist of 30th November 1907, rang a little hollow.

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88. Socialist, 15 June 1907.
89. ibid., 22 June 1907.
90. ibid., 29 June 1907.
Forth from One Eternal Father
Destined for one common good,
Come the sons of men, revealing
Universal Brotherhood.
Breaking barriers of hatred,
Prejudice and racial wrong,
Flooding all Earth's dreary places
With the universal song.

For the next nine months, the Socialist was quiet on the question of
racism, apparently as an editorial gesture towards ending dissension. The

tactic failed, as one VSP arch-racist, Walter Mizon, became so incensed at
the suppression of his opinions on this and other matters that he started up
the Supplementary Socialist in March 1908. The first issue claimed that nine
contributions to the Socialist had not been published, while "the columns of
the paper have been filled to repletion with the rhapsodical ravings of the
fat man's friend, for the wholesale importation of colored labor to compete
in the already over-crowded labour market for an existence..." Mizon claimed
these rhapsodical dreamers, in their zeal to swamp Australia with every
race, creed, or colour, "NO MATTER WHAT THEIR STATE OF PROGRESS", were
forgetting they had "WHITE BROTHERS AND SISTERS HERE ACTUALLY STARVING!" The
'rhapsodical ravings' were evidently O'Dowd's contributions to the
Brotherhood Debate. In response to O'Dowd's declared lack of interest in a
democracy not open to all races, Mizon argued that shaving with a razor was
not wrong, yet it would be fatuous to put a razor in the hands of an idiot
or a two-year-old child, as neither had progressed enough to know how to use
it. "But this is just what Mr O'D would do. He would put the razor of
Democracy into the hands of ALL, no matter what their 'progress', and the
Fat Man is not slow to take advantage of it, and thus the razor cuts us as
well as those who use it".91

Mann launched an implied attack on Mizon from the editorial heights of
the Socialist. He wrote that nothing could better serve the interests of the
Plutocracy of all lands than that the Workers should be led to believe that
the workers of one continent must look upon those of another as their
enemies. Capitalists were relying on racial animosities to checkmate the
overthrow of Capitalist Class Rule, and the superficial amongst the workers
were unconsciously helping them. But Socialists were not going to be drawn
off the track by subterfuge; the doctrines of Brotherhood, based on Sound
Socialism, would remain for ever. "True to your colours, comrades,

91.Supplementary Socialist, 3 April 1908.
absolutely International, genuinely Cosmopolitan! Salvation for all, irrespective of Sex, Creed, Race or Colour!" In the same issue, an article by O'Dowd commented that if 'they', presumably Mizon and his ilk, were right, then equality was wrong, brotherhood was wrong, and liberty was wrong. He insisted that every Socialist and every lover of democracy, of justice, of the love of man for his brother, must needs join in protest against the widespread attempts to convert the national sentiment in favour of a decent standard of comfort in Australia into a hellish hatred of the nascent democracies and socialisms of India, China, and Japan, because of the colour of the people of those countries.92

Curtin also joined battle with the anti-racists. In an editorial in September 1908, he wrote that "Workers of the World Unite!" was the Damocles sword threatening the life of Capitalism. With misguided confidence, as far as the VSP was concerned, he predicted: "Racial animosity is dying, class animosity is sharpening".93

After the volley of exchanges with "Mizon's mob", the Socialist again opted for relative quiet on the racial front, though articles on the origin of the species, eugenics, and race suicide indicated, in a roundabout way, sympathy with a race-conscious world vision. Occasionally, more direct mutterings broke through the silence. Socialism, the Socialist assured its readers, would give racial individuality its greatest impetus since history began.94 And in October 1909, 'Dargo' asserted that women's emancipation would aid racial purity.95

But Mann's impending departure provoked an onslaught of internationalist rhetoric. He was credited with having challenged the racial arrogance of the Australian labour movement. The Italian comrades expressed their "heartfelt appreciation" for Mann's interest in their welfare, and their "unbounded admiration" for his Internationalism.96 Mann's farewell messages warned against a retreat to the insularity he had always opposed.97

Yet Mann's efforts to instill racial tolerance into Party members had obviously met with resistance. He was somewhat more successful in his anti-militarist campaign, although the seed of the division over conscription that was to bedevil VSP politics in later years, was nevertheless apparent.98

93. ibid., 25 Sept 1908 L.
94. ibid., 5 Feb 1909.
95. ibid., 1 Oct 1909.
96. ibid., 24 Dec 1909.
98. ibid., 16 June 1906, 24 July 1908. See also VSP Minutes, 4 June 1908, 11 Aug 1908, cited in Nadel, 'Frank Hyett', p.21.
To Our Brothers of the AMERICAN FLEET.

Socialism Alone can Abolish War and Make Human Brotherhood Possible.

Socialist, 28 Aug 1908.
the Great White Fleet visited Melbourne, the VSP produced leaflets that called on the American crewmen to join "a Far Greater Fighting Body! The Great Class-Conscious Fighting Proletariat of the World". Mann forcibly laid down the line against the adulation of the Fleet, which he called "Dreadnought drunkenness" or "fleet epilepsy", and outlined his Hobson-based views on imperialism. Curtin pushed the connection between imperialism, racism, and the promotion of militarism in Australia. In response to the Deakin Government's Defence Bill in October 1909, he explained that international understanding on the part of workmen was a menace to the exploiters, who benefitted from racial hatreds. "Working-class solidarity is the slogan of our time. We have no king". But, as Osborne notes, Curtin's position on racism was "at best equivocal", and he did not extend his attack on racism to a questioning of Australia's immigration policies. This, Osborne suggests, shows that VSP members were more ready to condemn racism in the general context of imperialism than in the specific context of immigration.

Also, a strongly nationalist streak is evident in VSP denunciations of imperialism. It was felt that Australian democratic purity had somehow been spoilt by its association with British imperialism. Capitulation to classic labour nationalism was obvious in the offended tone of the Socialist editorial in response to the Times' comment that Australia lacked a great poet or a great poem. Australia was writing a poem, the Socialist insisted, and it was "the silent reconstruction of Society". The echo of Laneism reverberated throughout the pages of the Socialist: "there are those of us who can see clearly both a fertile, cultivated, and self-dependent Australia, with its deserts abolished, a perfect Socialist State, rendering the Capitalistic droughts of the past impossible..." And under the dubious heading 'Australia Felix', the Socialist explained that, although most socialists were cosmopolitans, many of them yielded a very fond allegiance to the Idea of Australia Herself:

Australia, not the political entity, but the spiritual emanation from this virgin continent, has whispered in our ears so long such bright prophecies

100. Ibid., 15 Sept 1906 L, 22 Sept 1906 L.
101. Ibid., 8 Oct 1909. See also, 11 Sept 1908, 26 Feb 1909, 12 March 1909.
103. Socialist, 19 Jan 1907 L.
104. Ibid., 26 Jan 1907.
of a realised Utopia, such dreams of a great new race, free, strong, good and self-dependent, and such hopes of the nearing of a time when evil exotic institutions shall fade away like a noxious mist before her morning sun... a free tolerant, cultured, self-dependent, and equitably governed Australia, freed from hate, caste, snobbery, and social injustice and crime.105

Hypatia had expressed concern lest the White Australia Policy offend Japan. Osborne writes that this pragmatism was an important part of the broader internationalism of the Party's middle class literati, whose primary concern seemed to be with the quality and potential of Australian life. They believed insularity should be abandoned, because it hindered the development of a worthy national identity. But it was not that Australia should seek to merge herself into the stream of international brotherhood, as Mann desired, but that Australia should open herself to foreign influence to derive from other nations the recipe for a powerful, distinctive nationalism.106

So, although Mann's principal support for his internationalism came from these 'middle class literati', it appears they were motivated by different concerns. Mann's internationalism was the practical class conscious recognition of the need for proletarian solidarity; the 'internationalism' of Hypatia, O'Dowd, Champion, and J.P.Jones could more fittingly be described as cosmopolitanism, which, in the Australian context, was frequently a euphemism for cultural cringe.107 Even Mann explained in 'A Letter to the Young Men of Melbourne' that Laborism alone was parochial, insular, and sectional, whereas only Socialism was thoroughly International and absolutely Cosmopolitan.108 Our comrades, he wrote confidently, realised they were members of a worldwide Brotherhood and Sisterhood. "No narrow nationalism can satisfy our people. Nothing short of Cosmopolitanism can really satisfy a world citizen".109

105.Socialist, 10 April 1908.
106.Osborne, 'Tom Mann', p.144.
107.See, for example, Socialist, 21 April 1906. Indeed, the VSP took 'cosmopolitan' work so seriously that a Cosmopolitan Committee was formed early in 1907 to establish contact with Melbourne's European communities. Osborne notes that the Committee's activity was stimulated in part by a persistent hungering for European cultural associations.('Tom Mann', p.127).
108.Socialist, 11 Jan 1908.
109.ibid., 31 July 1908 L. But the VSP reached its peak of overtly self-conscious Cosmopolitanism, bordering on at least race consciousness, if not racism, in August 1908, when it staged an 'International Night' at the Bijou Theatre. The Socialist proudly reported of this cosmopolitan zoo that nine nationalities were represented on the stage, and indulged in extensive and stereotypical description of the exhibits.(Socialist, 14 Aug 1908). And Camusso's Restaurant, belonging to a comrade or contact, was a popular haunt for those members of the VSP who liked to indulge in gastronomical cosmopolitanism by regularly eating Italian food.
The confusion and oscillation on the issue of racism and nationalism was simply a reflection of the generally disordered state of the Party. Osborne blames the VSP's diversity, size, and propensity to engage in a wide range of activities for creating a rickety structure containing an unwieldy variety of attitudes and dispositions. But perhaps it would be more accurate to trace the problem back further, and to argue that the VSP's 'diversity, size, and propensity to engage in a wide range of activities' was itself the result of a more fundamental defect that lay in the very origins of the VSP, in its self-defined role as a pressure-group within and without the Labor Party, and its boasted political open-mindedness. Lloyd Ross recalls of the VSP and the Labor Party that members seemed to move easily from the one to the other or to be members of both. And it is certainly true that the VSP recruited many people attracted to the Mann, not the movement. This is not to disparage 'growth' or 'a wide range of activities', but when built on diversity, as in the case of the VSP, it is not surprising that the Party harboured within its ranks White Australia fanatics, eugenicists, social Darwinists, Yellow Peril pushers, and other representatives of the Anglo-Saxon master-race. It was the VSP's fetishism of diversity that frustrated the attempts of the principled anti-racists in the Party to formulate an anti-racist line demanding the adherence of all members.

Its pressure-group status vis-à-vis the Labor Party drew into the VSP both revolutionaries aiming at completely transforming the Labor Party by a steady intrusion of VSP influence, and others, frankly reformist, who wished simply to encourage the Labor Party to carry out its programme. The tension and disagreement about the Labor Party and its potential found expression in the Socialist. Many in the VSP considered the Labor Party had outworn its usefulness.

"You're the old Labor Party", the young man said, "And your numbers are still pretty strong; But you don't seem to work as you used, with your head. Do you think you can last very long?"
"You're the old Labor Party", the youth said again. "You don't shake it up anymore. If you don't take more trouble - to put it quite plain - You'll find yourself shown to the door."

110.Osborne, 'Tom Mann', p.149.
111.Graeme Osborne has drawn my attention to the possibility that Mann's eagerness to ignore minor political differences was in reaction to his experience in Britain, and especially to the rigid sectarianism of the SDF.
112.Lloyd Ross, John Curtin, p.21.
113.Socialist, 3 July 1908.
The VSP also criticised the "fiscal treachery" of the Labor Party, and its support for arbitration, but generally, VSP 'hostility' to Labor was within Labor parameters; it pulled up the Labor Party for not being true to its own principles, rather than proposing different principles.

Just as the VSP was inconsistent in its response to racism, so its attitude to the industrial organisation of the working class oscillated too. In 1907 and 1908, the Socialist gave considerable coverage to the IWW, but there is evidence that VSP members never really took Wobbly ideas to heart; the coverage was very much a one-Mann campaign. When the Melbourne IWW Club was formed in March 1908, the Socialist admitted that VSP members were ignorant about Industrial Unionism and confused about the aims of the Club. It felt obliged to explain that the Club was not a Union, but a society with the object of organising the Industrial Union, and that it was not a "boozing show" or an athletic club, merely a body or party of workers. By this stage, in Sydney or Broken Hill, no such explanation was necessary, nor had it ever been

1908 was the 'highpoint', speaking purely relatively, of IWW influence in the VSP. After 1908, as Osborne notes, "I.W.W. influence within the Party declined, and its leading proponents soon resigned". When Mann was in Broken Hill during the strike, R.S. Ross, as editor of the Socialist in Mann's absence, launched the first VSP implied criticism of the IWW. In the midst of his fury at the Supplementary Socialist, he stated: "That their leader is tolerated as a member of the I.W.W. Club is just a sufficient reason for every Socialist remaining outside the club..." However, he was forced to climb down over this wild misstatement. A fortnight later, the Socialist printed the Club's denial of Mizon's membership and apologised, as "an organisation accused of harbouring Mizon has a right to resent the calumny".

Mann's return from Broken Hill precipitated a further onslaught on Party ears about industrial unionism. Over several Sunday night lectures, he argued that Australia was not ready for revolutionary political action, but could be easily aroused as to the importance of industrial unity, and recommended that politics be dropped for a time in order to improve industrial

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114 For example, see Socialist, 29 June 1907, 6 July 1907 L, 13 July 1907 L, 9 Nov 1907, 28 Dec 1907 L, 18 Dec 1908. Also Osborne, 'Tom Mann', pp.152-3.
115 Socialist, 20 March 1908.
116 Osborne, 'Tom Mann', p.117.
117 Socialist, 8 Jan 1909.
118 ibid., 22 Jan 1909.
TOM MANN

As the Capitalists wish to see him.

Socialist, 23 April 1909.
organisation. But, despite the customary applause that followed anything Mann said, Mann had as much difficulty in converting the Party to an emphasis on industrial organisation as he did in attempting to persuade it to adopt internationalist principles. The VSP's orientation towards the Labor Party made it resistant to the message of both industrial unionism and true internationalism.

More eulogies to industrial unionism formed the backbone of Mann's farewell speeches and messages in December 1909. After his departure, little more was heard on the subject; VSP adherence to the IWW Preamble remained purely formal. In April 1910, the Socialist reported the resignation of two comrades who could not endorse industrial unionism, but made no effort to defend the policy. It was far more concerned a fortnight later, when J.P. Jones regretfully resigned under SFA rules, because he was a Labor candidate for the Legislative Council.

120. See, for example, Socialist, 24 Dec 1909.
121. ibid., 1 April 1910.
122. ibid., 15 April 1910.
The Barrier Socialist Propaganda Group

The Barrier Socialist Propaganda Group was formed in Broken Hill early in 1906, apparently as a left breakaway from the Broken Hill Social Democratic Club. In May 1906, the Group commenced monthly publication of the *Flame*, which appeared weekly from August 1908 until it collapsed in May 1909. This collapse was no doubt encouraged by the departure of the editor, R.S. Ross, to Melbourne, and the defection of his second-in-command, H.J. Hawkins, to the Socialist Labor Party.

Hawkins deserves special mention, because it was he who introduced the ideas of the IWW to this small Broken Hill group, before the larger Sydney and Melbourne organisations had really grasped the import of Wobbliness. It was Hawkins, as one of the Broken Hill delegates to the 1907 Unity Conference, who moved the resolution in favour of organisation on IWW lines. Presumably, Hawkins' interest in the IWW was a factor in his joining the SLP, as the 'political wing' of the IWW Clubs. Certainly, his early concern with Wobbly ideas ensured that the BSPG shifted to an anti-racist position slightly earlier than its Sydney counterpart.

The early issues of the *Flame* bear the marks of the Group's development in the womb of the Social Democratic Club, where, according to the *Socialist*, "incoherence and vague Utopianism" were rampant. Incoherence was certainly evident in the contradictory stance on racism and nationalism, the mixture of nationalist and internationalist sentiment within a few column inches of each other. The very first issue of the *Flame* commented that the way to foster an Australian national sentiment was to think and act nationally, and that this national sentiment and imperialism were antithetical. This question was taken up in detail towards the end of 1906 in an article entitled 'The

124.*Socialist*, 21 Sept 1907. The style of the *Flame* was polemical and stirring. The confident new sub-title, which started appearing in mid-1907 was:

*The Tongue of the Revolution...*

It teaches the Secret of Manhood - the Watchword of those who aspire -
That Men must follow Freedom, though it lead through Blood and Fire. Even as far back as its very first issue, this conflagrationist approach to political propaganda is evident. In an editorial 'Applying the Match', the *Flame*, mixing its metaphors rather badly, asserted that the only safety for the workers of the Barrier in the night of the storm, which presumably would dampen the tongue of the revolution, would be their understanding of, and adherence to, the philosophy and science of Socialism. *(Flame, May 1906).*

125.*Flame*, May 1906.
Australian Republic. The Case for Real Nationhood'. As an example of the pernicious effect of the imperial veto, "the greatest blot on our Federal Constitution", the Flame cited the case of the White Australia legislation. Joseph Chamberlain threatened that if the Alien Immigration Restriction Act contained any provision more stringent than the education test it would probably be vetoed... In that one instance alone is shown the sorry plight Australia is in. That one measure vitally affects the foundation of our National life, and yet we have to bow to a foreign authority with regard to whom we shall admit to our national household. Would we tolerate such a procedure in our private life? Would we allow any Parliament or Council to say that we were not to debar any person no matter how objectionable in manners and habits - to enter our homes? No; decidedly not. Yet we are such arrant fools as to submit to the same thing in our national life...

The fact that the Labor Party voiced stronger objections to this example of imperial interference than any other party, endeared it to the BSPG. The author of this article claimed it was the only party that showed any inclination towards Nationalism.

Let the Labor members be patriotic, and the dawn of Australia's Independence will soon tip the sun-kissed hills of the future. This is not a country to be ashamed of. And it is imperative that we build up a nation worthy of our pride and adoration... I love Australia above any other country... The only time I would take up arms would be to defend Australia from invasion... If Australia wants to control her own destiny she must be self-governed and self-contained under a Republican form of Government, and never while she is subject to a foreign power...

Yet this wholesale capitulation to labour nationalism was accompanied, in the same issue, by a statement that petty nationalism had no place in the world-wide labour movement, as such sentiments were fostered by capitalist politicians in order, by dividing the workers, to continue to plunder them more easily.126

This vacillation on the race and nationality issue appears to be very much a product of the general confusion in the Group's politics in the first year. At a superficial glance, the Flame's understanding of socialism was so fatalist that there would be little for the workers to do but allow blind economic forces to fulfill their destiny.127 However, the fatalism was strangely qualified. The BSPG believed socialism was only inevitable in the same way that progress was. Evolution demanded socialism as its next step, so it also demanded working class revolution as the means to continued improvement; the inevitability of socialism was actually dependent upon deliberate activity.128 This emphasis on evolution places the BSPG, at this

126.Flame, Nov 1906.
127.ibid., loc.cit.
128.ibid., June 1906.
stage, well in the revisionist wing of the Second International. However, it is not possible to claim for the early BSPG the coherence and consistency even of Bernstein. Before 1907, the politics of the Group were very muddled. Socialism was described as the medium whereby all things will be made new, and Mother Earth made to pour forth righteousness and fellowship, peace and plenty. The *Flame* also indulged in regular printing of dictionary definitions of socialism, preferring Webster's 'fanciful pictures in the air' to Marx's refusal to establish blue-prints for the future. Yet the BSPG still asserted its fundamental adherence to Marxian socialism. Great as was Henry George, the *Flame* commented, Marx towered over him in intellect and scientific mentality. However, the extent to which Marxist theory was properly understood in this early period was obviously limited.

By May 1907, the BSPG had resolved its internal contradictions on the question of racism: initial oscillation between capitulation and confrontation gave way to a determined class approach to the whole issue. The ideas of the IWW were crucial in this change, although Tom Mann and the Sydney International Socialists were also considered anti-racist models. Internationalism was seen as a logical extension of class consciousness; national working class action was the embryo of International Working Class Solidarity. Patriotism was characterised as "a popular hysteria which makes men fight for their masters' markets". And imperialism was appraised in other than Australian nationalist terms. India, for example, was described as the most cruelly robbed and outraged country that had yet come under British bludgeoning and blackmailing. The *Flame* noted with approval the signs

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129. Part of this problem was the Group's initial obsession with rationalism, or it may be fairer to say, Ross's obsession with rationalism. See, for instance, *Flame*, May 1906, June 1906, Nov 1906.
130. *Flame*, May 1906.
131. ibid., Oct 1906.
132. Confusion is obvious. For example, economic determinism was conflated with individual environmental conditioning, being defined as the principle that people are moulded by the conditions that surround them, hence the necessity to provide the best conditions possible to every human being, giving each one equal opportunities for education and development. Even the abolition of surplus value and the division of labour was interpreted as a retreat to primitive but affluent individual autarchy, where every worker would provide all for himself and his family and keep the surplus value he created. (*Flame*, May 1906).
133. For example, the IS Club was hailed for being true to its name, in that its membership comprised many nationalities, "yet all united as a common brotherhood under the banner of revolutionary socialism". (*Flame*, 5 Sept 1908).
135. ibid., 13 March 1909.
of Indian determination to revolt against the "inhuman legalised butchery and outrage". Even the Chinese were defended on the basis of their oppression under British imperialism. When a Chinese was arrested at Silverton for possessing opium, the Flame pointed out that it was opium for which England went to war with China, and which she forced down Chinese throats at the point of the sword. "Verily do the chickens of Capitalism come home to roost", was the Flame's almost sanctimonious conclusion.

In dealing with the issue of Italian immigration to the Queensland sugar fields in mid-1907, the BSPG adopted an internationalist perspective, in contrast to the Sydney International Socialists, who had not yet attained such a level of consciousness. The Flame argued that every effort to attract population to Australia was motivated by the desire of employers for cheaper and more subservient labourers, but hastened to add that, if capitalism was international and exploited labour regardless of race, colour, or creed, so also was the working class international. The BSPG planned to use its international working class links to checkmate the moves of the employers right at the start. The Group wrote to the Italian Socialist Party, explaining that fresh attempts were being made to obtain cheap slaves for exploitation by the Australian capitalists, a demand filled in the past by convicts, Chinese, and 'Kanakas', who were deported from their homes by fraud and force, and now to be filled by "our Italian fellow-workers". This fraternal concern is evident throughout the letter, which was devoid of the nationalism apparent in early issues of the Flame. "We write", the letter explained,

to warn our friends, the Italian proletariat, not to be deluded by the specious offers and lying statements of the capitalist press and the shipping agents and other procurers of capitalism... Let our Italian comrades clearly understand that, if they are decoyed into the labor contracts of the sugar planters, they will be below standard, and they will, by the terms of their contracts, be outside of many of the provisions of the laws by which the Australian workers have sought to protect themselves... In their own interest we urge Italian workers not to be made tools of by the Australian capitalists, to their own undoing, and to the detriment of the Australian working-class, and as revolutionary Socialists we appeal to our Italian Socialist comrades to give these facts the widest possible circulation in Italy, and to use all their influence to defeat the manoeuvres of our mutual enemies of the international capitalist class.137

Of course, it could be argued that the primary motivation of the BSPG was concern for the 'detriment of the Australian working-class'. But even so, the

137.ibid., May 1907.
problem was never approached with this perspective prominent, as the BSPG now realised the importance of working class solidarity against the capitalist over such issues. Unlike reformist trade unions and the Labor Party, who generally responded to the threat of cheap labour by blaming the victims rather than the bosses, the BSPG understood that such a reaction merely played into the hands of the employers and increased the potential of the immigrant group to reduce working class pay and conditions. The way to defeat the plans of the capitalists was therefore to warn the likely 'cheap labourers' and work unitedly with immigrants who Nevertheless arrived, in joint resistance to employer attacks on all wages and conditions. To do otherwise, the Flame argued, was illogical from a working class viewpoint. "Away with windy word-spinners whose muddled brains cannot grasp the inner meaning of every-day facts: who stupidly deny the existence of the class-war between Labor and the capitalists, and who play into the hands of the latter by fostering race prejudice and so blinding the Australian workers to the real and only method of settling the labor problem". The Group stressed the necessity for working class solidarity against the class enemy rather than national solidarity against the imagined enemy:

The Socialists have no quarrel with the workers of other races. We seek by international organisation to prevent capitalism from using one race against another, either in peace or in war and when, owing to our organisation being as yet imperfect, our efforts temporarily fail, we yet recognise that our fellow-workers, though used against us, are not the real culprits, but that the capitalists who entice them into the labor market to undersell us, or impress them with armies to seek to batter us down by force, are the enemies with whom we must deal. 138

The Flame also pointed out that the problem of bad pay and conditions was never purely the result of cheap labour being introduced into Australia, but was endemic in capitalism and its international methods of exploitation. The solution, therefore, was not restrictive immigration legislation, but the overthrow of the whole system:

The crisis of capitalism is approaching, and not by petty attempts at reforms, but by determined organised effort will capitalism be overthrown. All endeavours to prevent the introduction of cheap labor into Australia, THOUGH THEY SUCCEED, will yet fail to save us from the results of cheap production in other lands. Ultimately we must go down, or by overthrowing capitalism begin to live. 139

Embracing revolutionary industrial unionism had shaken the Group out of 'incoherence and vague Utopianism'. The Flame considered the decision of the

138.Flame, May 1907.
139.ibid. loc.cit.
Unity Conference to adopt the IWW Preamble, as recommended by the BSPG, was momentous and would be far-reaching. The Flame argued that industrial unionism was both flawless in theory and correct and undeniable in practice, so it was the unionism for those workers seeking foundational change rather than cyclic palliation. Once understood, the Flame predicted confidently, the system would spread throughout Australia like a flame, because it recognised the fundamental importance of economic action. And organisation on such lines, by virtue of its superiority, would naturally supersede the old forms of organisation: "Craft unionism is surely gliding into the past, and its fighting crew will have to board a staucher vessel - Industrial Unionism bound for Socialism".

Under Wobbly influence, the BSPG likewise considered the Labor Party was gliding into the past. In its early period, the Group had conceived of its role as leading the Labor Party more rapidly on its socialist path by improving the class consciousness of Labor politicians and voters. From May 1907 on, the Flame insisted that the working class must actually take possession of society, not just send a majority to parliament to attempt a patch-work of tin-pot reforms. The Flame was emphatic that there was only one way to socialism, through revolution, but that this did not necessarily mean blood and slaughter any more than the Parliamentary Labor Party meant working class representation. This process of disillusionment with the Labor Party paralleled the Group's hardening on the question of racism from May 1907 onwards. The BSPG changed not only its attitude to the Labor Party itself, but also to the state intervention that the Labor Party propounded. The Flame suggested that the Arbitration Award was like taking a hungry man to a cookshop window and telling him to feast his eyes on the delicacies inside. Of course, if he broke the window, it would be wrong, the Flame commented bitingly. The cruel waste of union funds over the arbitration swindle, the Flame considered nearly as sad to contemplate as the sinful waste of money on parliamentary elections. "In the first instance, the unionists purchase a punch on the nose, and in the latter, a kick on the trouser seat". And Labor support for protection was also an object of derision by 1909.

140.Flame, July 1907.
141.ibid., 10 April 1909.
142.ibid., May 1906, June 1906, Nov 1906, Feb 1907, March 1907.
143.ibid., 10 April 1909.
144.ibid., 13 March 1909.
145.ibid., 27 March 1909.
146.ibid., 17 April 1909.
Howard mentions the appearance of a Barrier Socialist Group, "advocating the I.W.W. doctrines of unrestricted class warfare, to be waged on the industrial front without the help of parliamentary representation", and records that in February 1908, a delegation from this Group approached the Amalgamated Miners' Association to urge adoption of the Wobbly Preamble, but were met with a firm rebuff. Yet the Group appeared to have some success in discouraging the all-out emphasis on parliamentary action. The Barrier Daily Truth noted in April 1909 that a reaction is setting in against the reliance upon political action as a means to obtain the objective of Labor. The belief is growing that perfect industrial organisation is of more value than anything else, and that politics, to be of any use at all to the workers, must be based upon, and rise out of, industrial unionism.

Whatever the influence of Wobbly ideas on the Broken Hill labour movement, the impact on its most advanced section, the Barrier Socialist Propaganda Group, was considerable. IWW ideology transformed a muddled, reformist, parliamentary socialist grouping into a coherent, revolutionary, industrial unionist organisation. The transition to uncompromising confrontation of working class racism was part of this Wobbly legacy.

The International Socialists

In contrast to the 'armchair socialism' of the International Socialist Club itself, its propaganda wing, the International Socialist Group, was refreshingly activist. The solid finances of the Club enabled the Group to commence weekly publication, on 14th February 1907, of the International Socialist Review for Australasia. This journal, edited by Harry Holland, continued successfully until 30th April 1910, when it was incorporated into the new party newspaper, the International Socialist. The Review boasted of its affiliation with the International Socialist Bureau, and its politics were well in line with the International, but, like the Flame, its politics changed dramatically during the period of its publication. Its staple reprints were the writings of Kautsky, Wilhelm Liebknecht, and Hyndman. Blatchford was quoted occasionally, but by October 1909, was being criticised for his jingoism.149

However, the Review's early utterances on the subject of imperialism and racism were not quite so critical. Although Britain was described as "surely and brutally sowing the wind in India", and Hughes attacked for his condemnation of Keir Hardie's "outspoken utterances against the murderous barbarity of English rule in that vast and ancient Empire", the activities of the CSR Company in Fiji were described as "a blot on the name of British Administration".150 This implied the possibility of an unsullied imperial administration. British rule in the South Sea Islands was castigated, not for its exploitative imperialist function, but for its shortcomings within the imperialist framework; it was contrasted unfavourably with German rule in Samoa. The Germans, the Review alleged, realised their responsibilities towards the natives more than did the British, as they strictly enforced the regulations regarding the sale of drink and opium to coloured people, and, in modern Gastarbeiter style, deported the Chinese plantation workers as soon as their term of labour was expired. To explain the 'difference' between German and British imperial exploitation, the Review pointed out that the German imperial officials were able young University men, filled with idealistic enthusiasm, who therefore became excellent administrators, despite some initial blunders. The British, on the other hand, were generally old incapables, ignorant, selfish, boorish, pig-headed, and money-grabbing, who forgot that there was involved "the cause of humanity".151

150. ibid., 18 May 1907, 19 Oct 1907.
151. ibid., 25 May 1907.
The IS, in this period, considered the British had failed in their imperial duty by allowing too much racial inter-mixing. If low-grade aliens, the Review pontificated, are introduced amongst a more childish people, the law should see that the aliens do not mix with the natives. As it was, the influx of 'Asiatics' was injuring the South Sea Islanders, by the introduction of alien vices and diseases. "All the Hindoos are syphilitic, more or less. The disease is spread by both men and women; most of the Hindoo women are practically prostitutes". The Samoans were described as physically and intellectually superior to the Fijians, but of course, "still very childish compared to Europeans". The early Review's apartheid mentality was expounded unblushingly: "very few half-castes in Samoa are any good. Usually they only perpetuate the faults of both races..."152

At this stage, the IS displayed a similar lack of class consciousness about Italian immigration to the Queensland sugar fields. The Review's handling of this issue was less principled than the Flame's, due to the lack of IWW influence, which came later to the IS than to the BSPG, and to the particular outlook of the Review's self-professed expert on the subject, Francis Sceusa. Where the Flame made references to "our friends, the Italian proletariat", "our Italian fellow-workers", and "our Italian Socialist comrades", Sceusa, evidently an Italian racist, was concerned to frustrate "the contemplated 'Chinesation' of the Italian workers", and warned the Italian Socialist Party that canefields work was "unsuited to Europeans" and "degrading on account of its Asiatic and Polynesian associations".153 Even Holland wrote that, now that the era of black slavery in the sugar industry had ended, the CSR Company was determined that the white slaves to be employed should be the cheapest white slaves the world had at its disposal, so it scoured Italy and Austria and other foreign lands for cheap labour to help swell the sum total of its profits, and to lower the living standards of the workers already in Australia.154 There was no reminder, as in the Flame, that it was the capitalists who were the culprits, and that united class action with any 'cheap labourers' who arrived, was essential.

The qualifications attached to the IS's internationalism, at this stage, is evident in its proposals to the 1907 Unity Conference, which claimed that "the work, which interests equally the workers of all civilised countries, is the liberation of the working classes. Conscious of this fact, the Social

153.ibid., 6 April 1907.
154.ibid., 27 April 1907.
Democratic Parties of the world are at one with the class-conscious workers of all countries". So class solidarity was conceived, not in absolute and objective terms, but in partial and subjective terms, as a sentiment to be shared only with the elect of the proletariat. The IS did not contemplate initiating class consciousness by making overtures to this 'cheap labour' or by raising the demand that all labour should be paid at a particular rate.

Sceusa returned to Italy in January 1908. A marked change is apparent in the Review's approach to racism after this date, although it is not possible to explain this by one person's absence. As with the SLP and the BSPG, the crucial determinant of this transformation was the influence of the IWW and the associated insight into the limitations of the Labor Party. The Review started poking fun at that "agricultural idea" of raising a crop of national sentiment, adding that it was not nationalism but internationalism that was the natural development. Of greater individual significance than Sceusa's helpful but coincidental departure was the fraternal literary presence in Broken Hill of IWW ideologue, H.J.Hawkins.

In March 1908, the Review got angry that a Captain Allen of the ship Arno was only fined 10/- for assaulting a Hindu steward, and the "black brother" was fined 50/- for leaving his ship to give evidence. "Wherefore, proclaim it among the heathen that in Australia it's a greater crime by five times to leave work and paralyse the profits of the Master Class than to kick an ordinary wage-slave's spine in, with a possibility of kicking his life out". The once-syphilitic Hindu had at last become, in Wobbly parlance, an 'ordinary wage-slave'.

The Review began advertising the militancy of this previously despised 'cheap labour'. In May 1908, reporting on a strike at a Calcutta jute mill, Hawkins wrote that it proved that the Hindu wage-slave rebels against tyranny just as does his white fellow-workers. "Labor fakirs of the W.M.Hughes type may refer contemptuously to the many millions of India as a 'parcel of coolies', but the above shows that our fellows in that great country have the manhood to resist the tyranny of capital". Nor was the IS, by this stage, still beating about the imperialist bush. In discussing Papua and New Guinea, there were no calls for 'humane administration' or such like, but a straightforward denunciation of Australia's sub-colonising role. The Review expressed

156. ibid., 11 Jan 1908.
157. ibid., 7 March 1908.
158. ibid., 23 May 1908.
no surprise at the ordinance compelling natives to accept employment from private capitalists at the rates offered.

It's not likely that the missionaries - advance agents of the exploiting class - would be likely to raise any objection to a law calculated even at the cost of slavery, to widen the opportunities of the robber class to live without honest labor, but, all the same, the working-class people of Australia should declare emphatically against any such legalised brutality.159

With the impatience of the newly-converted, the IS even expressed irritation with working class racism. Hawkins complained in a Review article that there were some fool white workers who, in their stupid racial pride and ignorance of their own slave position, imagined that they were somehow superior to their fellow wage-slaves of the 'Asiatic' races. They allowed minor differences to influence them, which, were they wise, "would be blotted out by their over-ruling class interest in common, since both are victims of capitalist robbery and oppression". Yet Hawkins was confident that "the white workers and the yellow and brown and black workers are going to recognise their solidarity as a class and end capitalism".160 To stress the point, the Review reprinted from the Cape Socialist a long article entitled 'The Colored Question. Why the Workers oppose each other on "Color Lines", and why they should not do any such thing'. The article pointed out that politicians, aided and abetted by a prostituted press, were doing their utmost to instil the pernicious ideas of racial antagonism into the minds of working men. Their motive was "the old game of setting two sections of the working class by the ears so that, while they are calling each other bad names, their masters may rob them with impunity". The writer insisted the man who sneered at the "nigger", because of the colour of his skin, was ignorant, as science taught plainly that all life has had the same origin. The futility, from a working class viewpoint, of demanding immigration restriction, was emphasised.

The folly of trying to shut out colored workers is easily seen. Firstly, competition will be found wherever Capitalism exists, whether there are colored workers or not... Secondly Capitalism easily overcomes such an obstacle as the prohibition of cheap alien labor. Capitalism knows no flag, no race, no color, no religion... If labor is too dear in one country the capitalist goes to some other country where it is cheaper... It is exceedingly foolish of the trade unionist to think he can protect himself by prohibiting cheap foreign labor. He should not be so ready to condemn the 'alien', whether colored or white. It is too ridiculous to suppose that the colored workers accept low wages in preference to high wages. The colored man, as well as the white man, is compelled to take whatever his master

160.Ibid., 23 May 1908.
chooses to give... White and colored workers! Your only safety lies in unity... Workers, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains, you have a world to win!  

When 12 Chinese coolies were smuggled from Texas into New York in boxes labelled 'Chinese coolie merchandise' and arrived, predictably, dead, the Review drew a class analogy from the incident.

Do you, workers of Australia... think that between you and Chinese coolies no parallel can be drawn... It is not that a man be yellow, or black, or whitish, that makes him different today from others of his race. Difference is determined by his economic position as a unit in society... those who own and control the means of life are socially free; those who own nothing except their vital power are slaves, bought and sold like... exchangeable goods.

Between the Chinese coolie, packed as a living piece of merchandise at one end of a journey, to arrive at the other end a Chinese corpse, and the British worker packed in factory, mine, or mill, to have the life gradually choked and starved and sweated out of him, the Review now saw no real social difference, but indeed a community of interests in wage-slavery. Consequently, "the workers of all lands must unite, to take and hold the means of life, and to put an end for ever to the buying and selling of wage-slaves". Wage workers had nothing to fear from their fellow-workers in any part of the world, and from the capitalists they had nothing to expect but robbery and oppression. "The unity of Labor is its sole protection against Capitalism, which flourishes on the disunity of its victims, the workers".

White Australian workers were even compared unfavourably with coloured workers, in order to make a point. "White Australia is a cry that echoes from the sea-board to the western gates of hell", the Review commented, "yet Afghan camel drivers forming a union were forced to throw rocks at white scabs. And when the Westralian Italian timber-getter struck, it was the white Britisher that had to be held off the scabbing job with a heavily loaded revolver". The IS also pointed out that white workers under capitalism were often forced into the depths of degradation. The Review remarked of the appalling conditions and wages at a flour and starch mill, "what about the foregoing as a champion illustration of White Slavery in White Australia".

162. ibid., 17 Oct 1908.
163. ibid., 16 Jan 1909.
164. ibid., 19 Dec 1908.
165. ibid., 23 Jan 1909.
This increasing awareness of the irrelevance of racial differences in the common experience of exploitation finally brought the International Socialist Group to a critical position on the Labor Party's role in fostering divisions amongst the working class through the demand for a White Australia. The 1909 Political Labour League Conference agenda paper proposed that, as a preliminary step towards the realisation of a White Australia, all coloured aliens be compelled to register themselves at the Intelligence Department, that no government licences of any description be granted to coloured aliens, and that by 1920, all coloured aliens be deported. The Review alleged that this agenda paper betrayed the mixed economic interests, the middle class interest predominating, of the PLL. 166

The IS now delighted in waving proof of coloured militancy in the face of the Labor Party. Before printing a letter received from the Australian Cingalese and Indian Reform Association in Dallarnil, Queensland, offering sympathy to the striking Broken Hill workers and the incarcerated Tom Mann, the Review commented that this letter was interesting, as coming from the "coloured alien section", and that the White Australia Labor Party might learn something from its message. 167 Labor Party racism was now seen as yet more proof of its reactionary role. "For the Socialist the word frontier does not exist... The establishment of Socialism, therefore, on any national or race basis is out of the question". 168

The new-look IS criticism of the Labor Party on the issue of racism clearly reflected IWW influence. The demand for a White Australia was contemptuously referred to as a clap trap election cry. It was noted that during the federal elections, Labor candidates urged the absolute necessity of defending our dear homes against the 'Yellow Peril' - our dear homes that we do not own, the Review added. These White Australian fools, it continued, "cannot see that this White Australia cry is only used to stir up racial class hatred... Was ever the need of industrial organisation more plainly shown?" 169 In contrast to the Labor Party's campaign, the IS federal election pamphlet for Holland's candidature in West Sydney announced that the Socialist movement was International:

No flag have we, nor nation, nor cult nor creed have we;
The wide earth is our country - our clan Humanity!
The interests of the Working Class - like the interests of Capitalism - are the same in all countries. We do not fight for Class Privileges, but for the

167. ibid., 13 Feb 1909.
168. ibid., 10 April 1909.
169. ibid., 9 April 1910.
abolition of Class Rules and of the classes themselves. We are against every form of exploitation and oppression, whether it be against a class, a party, a sex, or a race.  

Before coming under IWW influence, the International Socialists had been firm adherents of the parliamentary road to socialism, and their racial attitudes had reflected this political method. For instance, in 1907, Holland had argued that, at the ballot box, workers could vote out the Class State of Capitalism and vote in the Social-Democratic Republic. The Review explained that the only reason for the present slavery was that the workers kept voting themselves into renewed slavery, as they allowed their rulers to do their thinking for them, so they did not know how to exercise their vote correctly. The solution was for the workers of farm and factory "to unite at the polls and secure possession of the instruments of production and distribution, and then being both owners and producers they will retain the whole product and can produce until their wants are satisfied with no care for falling or rising prices, overproduction or crises". The IS proposals to the Unity Conference argued that the working class could not carry on its economic struggle, and develop its economic organisation without political rights. "It cannot effect the transfer of the means of production into the possession of the community, without having first obtained political power".

However, by the time of the First Annual Conference in mid-1908, the IS had relegated political activity to superstructural status vis-à-vis the industrial struggle: it merely completed the revolution in a formal sense. In October 1909, the Review declared that anyone who believed that socialism could be realised by the ballot alone was crazy. The state elections of December 1909 were contested quite blatantly for purely propagandist

171. Ibid., 1 June 1907.
172. Ibid., 13 July 1907. In 1907, the IS appeared to be concerned primarily with the plight of the diminishing middle class in the face of the growth of monopoly. Its strategy for change relied on a coincidence of interest between the vanishing middle strata of society, particularly the small farmer, and the proletariat. This concern for the small farmer is reminiscent of the reformist wing of the German Social Democratic Party, which, in the 1890s, well before Bernstein's theory was enunciated, distinguished itself as a political current by its espousal of demands to protect the viability of small farming. Like their German counterparts, the IS in 1907 objected to the squeezing out of the farmer by capital intensive agriculture. (See Manifesto presented to Unity Conference in International Socialist Review, 25 May 1907).
174. Ibid., 20 June 1908.
175. Ibid., 30 Oct 1909.
reasons. And the West Sydney federal election pamphlet of 1910 explained that the struggle of the Working Class against Capitalist exploitation was necessarily an industrial and political struggle, the political struggle growing out of, and reflecting, the industrial struggle. The industrial unions, weakened by sectionalism, had to come together into one great united organisation that would marshall its forces for the locking-out of the Exploiters and aim at capturing the machinery of Government to give constitutional endorsement to the will of the Working Class.

This downgrading of political activity to mere constitutional endorsement of the achievement of the industrial struggle was the result of IWW influence. Thanks to the Barrier Socialist Propaganda Group, the SFA had associated itself with revolutionary industrial unionism from its inception, but genuine permeation of Wobbly ideas, in the case of the Sydney branch, seems to date from the start of 1908. In May 1908, the Review referred to the Trade Union Congress's rejection of the IWW Preamble by only 55 votes to 23 as "the most significant figures registered in the press for a considerable period", and added that it was fortunate that the Preamble was not endorsed until people understood it. A few weeks later, the Review commenced regular coverage of IWW Club meetings and featured many articles on industrial unionism.

Wobbly influence likewise transformed the IS's earlier vision of "the lawful and pacific character - without grave shocks and pertubations - of the social revolution in Australia". This revolution would merely be "a change of ministry", "a calm sunset", and would encounter nothing more serious than "a lively parliamentary opposition and a protracted passive resistance". The means of effecting this revolution would be long, patient, reformative work, not a change more or less instantaneous... the means will neither be expropriation nor the suppression of the liberty to produce, sell, or buy, or of the right of possession - measures repugnant to Australian sentiment. The measures employed would probably be old middle-class methods, to which the people are accustomed - taxation and competition. The state would drive private competitors out of business, and, in a manner reminiscent of 'socialism in one country', protect national production by not importing. The end-goal, which would emerge almost unnoticed, would be the "Workingman Industrial State, a colossal national domestic economy in which each citizen is employed by the State". However, with the spread of the

179.ibid., 27 July 1907.
ideas of revolutionary industrial unionism, the IS noticeably shifted away from this notion of state socialism by stealth, and adopted a more militant class struggle position.

The workers MUST understand that this is a CLASS STRUGGLE. As a class they must fight on the industrial field - not as a section of a class. As a class, they must fight on the political field - not for all classes, as the middle-class Labor Party declares.

As a class they must STRIKE TOGETHER.
As a class they must VOTE TOGETHER.
As a class, if need be, they must FIGHT TOGETHER. 180

The IS had come to the 'Detroit' position of the IWW. Revolutionary parliamentary action was still accorded an important place in the strategy for revolution, but of primary importance was the industrial struggle.

This new emphasis on the industrial fight marked a departure from previous IS strategy, which had been purely parliamentary. This Wobbly influence explains the IS's love-hate relationship with the SLP, its accelerating disillusionment with the Labor Party, and above all, its radical change in attitudes to working class racism.

The Kalgoorlie Social Democrats

Where the IWW was non-existent, socialist groups tended towards ideological stultification in a Labor and mainstream trade unionist groove. The Kalgoorlie Social Democratic Association, operating in a remote goldfields environment, is such an example. The Association grew out of a Sunday morning economics class in October 1906. It concentrated its activities on propaganda and study, and was allowed a regular column in the Kalgoorlie-based Labor organ, the *Westralian Worker*.  

The Association's president, A.E. Green, later Labor MP for Kalgoorlie, was fortunate enough to be able to afford a holiday in Java in 1907. Returning in September, he lectured to the Association about his trip and, in a demonstration of vandalistic racism, proudly produced a sacred 1,100 year old Hand of Buddha he had stolen. The Association's sensitivity on race issues did not improve markedly from this inauspicious beginning.

In April 1909, an offended letter to the editor from the Association appeared in the *Westralian Worker*. The letter insisted it was a lie that socialists believed in the equality of mankind and that all and sundry of the "Asiatic curse" would be welcomed like brothers, and boasted that socialists the world over had opposed the immigration of coloured races or any other labour that tended to lower the standard of living of workers. But, the letter continued, socialists had always set their face against exploitation of the inferior races by imperial expansion; they agreed with Bax and Quelch that the backward races should be left entirely alone to develop themselves or die out, and that it was the duty of socialists to support the barbaric races in their resistance to aggression. The race problem was purely an economic problem, and when society arrives at that stage when collectivism will replace competition... there will be no fear of races of such widely different characteristics mixing... with a truly free enlightened and well-fed people there would be no more danger of inter-marrying with inferior races.

Until then, the Association assured readers, the socialists would jealously guard the small advance the workers had made in their fight for decent conditions against capitalistic attack with yellow or black hordes.

Continuing the correspondence, another contributor admitted that, for a socialist, the White Australia Policy bristled with difficulties. He wrote

183. See, for example, *Westralian Worker*, 10 April 1908.
that the ambition to keep this vast island continent exclusively for the benefit of the white races was "undoubtedly a very meritorious and laudable one, and its consummation to be devoutly desired", and that, if successful, Australia would "go down to history as a nation of geniuses". The only difficulties he outlined were those of peopling the north and devising methods of exclusion: he was opposed to any cruel and merciless vendetta, much as he regretted there were so many amongst us. It was true they lived in hovels not fit for pigs, but, he pointed out, some Australians did too. Minimum wage laws and limitations of working hours would prevent the Chinese boss exploiting his countrymen. "Inter-marriage with white women would be a curse. Socialists grant this freely", he announced, but added that the abolition of the present profit-mongering system would do away with the compulsion for women to sell themselves to any man, "even to a Chinaman", for the sake of a home. 185

This Kalgoorlie group had tenuous links with the other organisations that either did not attend the Unity Conference or declined to affiliate to the SFA, out of continuing attachment to the Labor Party. In February 1908, the Association received a letter from the Sydney Social Democratic Federation, shortly before its demise, copies of which also went to the Queensland Social Democratic Vanguard and the Broken Hill Social Democratic Club: "To the Socialists there who are true to organised Labor and solidarity, to tell them there are yet in NSW true Socialists and the S.D.F. standing ready to combat the common enemy and true to organised Labor and its political and economic party". The letter argued that to break with organised Labor meant deadly isolation or fratricidal treachery. 186 The Kalgoorlie group concurred with its ailing Sydney counterpart: it announced a month later that "when the elections come round the Socialists will be found standing shoulder to shoulder with the Labor Party appealing to the electors to return a party that will stand for clean government". 187

It is not surprising that the Westralian Worker was happy to grant copy space to the Association. The type of socialism it advocated differed from Laborism only in degree, not in kind. The Association was keen on study and self-education, but it appeared that any transmigration of ideas was more likely to be from the Labor Party to the Association than the other way around. In an industrial oasis, cut off from 'foreign' influences, it was not

185. Westralian Worker, 2 April 1909.
186. ibid., 7 Feb 1908.
187. ibid., 13 March 1908.
likely that the Association could have achieved ideological independence from mainstream labour opinion. The ideas of the IWW, as yet unheard of in these parts, could not provide an alternative world vision. The Association would have been quite remarkable if it had not capitulated, with merely the reservations of the more educated, to labour racism.

On the other side of the continent, however, 'easstalian' workers were being taught — by the Socialist Labor Party, the Barrier Socialist Propaganda Group, the International Socialists, and Tom Mann — that racism obstructed the path to emancipation and that the Labor Party's espousal of racial ideas was one of the many good reasons for getting out of the Labor Party and into a party that would bring, not 'incorrect' nationalist ideas, but 'correct' class conscious ideas, to the workers' movement. In the meantime, the socialist entrists in the Westralian labour movement remained relatively unruffled in their racism. The IWW was yet to come to the west.
CHAPTER FIVE.
REGROUPMENT: 1910-1913

How Labour Governs
Revolutionaries and Reformists

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In 1913, Lenin felt obliged to address himself to the apparent enigma of Australia. "What sort of peculiar capitalist country is this", he asked, "in which the workers' representatives predominate in the Upper House and, till recently, did so in the Lower House as well, and yet the capitalist system is in no danger?" Lenin decided that the Labor Party was really a liberal-bourgeois party, and the so-called Liberals were Conservatives. The Labor Party was the representative of the non-socialist trade unions, unalloyed with any socialist element.

The leaders of the Australian Labour Party are trade union officials, everywhere the most moderate and "capital-serving" element, and in Australia, altogether peaceable, purely liberal.

The ties binding the separate states into a united Australia are still very weak. The Labour Party has had to concern itself with developing and strengthening these ties, and with establishing central government.

In Australia the Labour Party has done what in other countries was done by the Liberals, namely, introduced a uniform tariff for the whole country, a uniform educational law, a uniform land tax and uniform factory legislation.¹

The "youthful" Australian capitalism, to which Lenin also referred, was still overwhelmingly dependent for its prosperity on agricultural exports. However, the policy of diversification in the rural sector was having effect: between 1910 and 1913, wool occupied half the share that it had in the late 1880s of visible export income. Moreover, despite government investment in primary industry, there was a trend towards private investment in manufacturing industry, which, after the Great War, was to emerge as a driving force in determining the pattern of capital formation.² Labour sentiment appeared to favour the governmental emphasis on closer rural settlement, but also acquiesced heartily in the 'New Protection', which nurtured local manufacturing capital. Kellaway appears to agree with Lenin, pointing out that after the coalition of the non-Labor Parties in 1909, the ALP was left as the only representative of 'liberal' doctrines in the Australian political arena.³ Lloyd Ross describes the Australian working class movement as being a mixture of land reformers, middle class liberals, socialists, monetary enthusiasts, trade unionists, and high-tariff

¹. Lenin, *In Australia in Collected Works*, Vol 19, pp.216-7. Lenin was obviously ignorant about many Australian facts, such as the continuing control by the separate state governments of important aspects of economic, political, and social life, and also of the militancy of some sections of industrial labour. However, his uninformed observations nevertheless contain a profound truth: that Labor performed the functions of a liberal, nationalist party.


³. Kellaway, 'Why Does the ALP Support the White Australia Policy', p.76.
The Fisher Labor Government lasted from April 1910 to June 1913. The first legislation passed was the establishment of an Australian navy and introduction of compulsory military training, and the setting up of a Commonwealth bank. Lloyd Ross comments: "Nationalism and socialism were the twin pillars of Labour thought". Though this government did carry out much of the programme formulated in the 1890s, these reforms can hardly be described as socialist. The establishment of a central bank, for instance, served to rationalise the operations of capital and, through its board structure, gave private capitalists increased say in government economic policy. Clark considers Labor was more committed to making the bourgeoisie behave and the working classes respectable, than to the making and unmaking of social conditions. Labor in office continued to uphold the arbitration system and made no attempt to tamper with the power relations in industry. Granting preference to unionists in Commonwealth employment was not a step towards socialism, but towards a stronger conservative union movement. Assessing the situation at the time of the 1912 general strike in Brisbane, Fitzpatrick concludes there was not a tittle of evidence that the capital versus labour situation differed in any essential from the situation in 1890.

The Labor Government administered the White Australia Policy faithfully. The most notorious instance of this was the deportation of Mrs Poon Goey, the Chinese wife of a resident Chinese. This aroused the anger of those racists who argued that such acts encouraged miscegenation, but the Labor Government was firmly wedded to the policy common to all administrations of the Commonwealth, which relied on using the limited number of alien females who had achieved domicile before federation as the best long-term method of ensuring a substantial decrease in the number of aliens resident. "The policy of exclusion was regarded by the public as vital to its continuance as a white race: its execution was seen by the administrator to be vital to his continuance in office".

5. Ibid., loc.cit
Fear of the yellow hordes doubtlessly motivated Labor politicians in their new-found enthusiasm for filling up Australia's empty spaces with good assisted British stock. This marked a departure from labour norms and caused considerable friction between the Party and the movement. In 1912, the Labor Government voted £50,000 for immigration propaganda. The Brisbane Strike Committee attacked the immigration policy on the beautifully logical grounds that if the government could find enough men, as it claimed, to replace all men on strike, then unemployment was so rife that immigration propaganda was simply a confidence trick. There was no such disagreement between the Party in office and the movement, nor between labour and capital generally, on the question of non-white immigration. Such disagreement was the prerogative only of those revolutionary socialists who advocated working class organisation on industrial union lines.

* * *

The two most traumatic events in the socialist movement in this period were the disintegration of the Socialist Federation of Australasia and the split in the IWW. The interconnected reverberations caused drastic regroupment on the revolutionary left.

The Sydney International Socialists continued to push their hard anti-Labor Party position at the SFA's Third Annual Conference in June 1910. The IS proposal that "No member of the Federation shall stand as, vote for, or otherwise support other than a revolutionary Socialist for Parliamentary or Municipal office" was carried 5 to 3, the minority being Ross and Wallace from the VSP, and Lamb, one of the Barrier delegates. Holland from Sydney commented that, if the Socialist Labor Party abandoned its studied campaign and almost continuous fusillade of falsehood against the Federation, there would be no reason why SFAers should not vote SLP in the absence of SFA candidates, as the SLP objective was identical to the SFA's, and it was only on tactical matters and lines of conduct that there was any real divergence. However, by 1911, the International Socialists appear to have again become distanced from the SLP. The International Socialist claimed that the People was making strenuous efforts to create dissension in the ranks of the revolutionary socialists, with a view of striking a blow at the IS, "the

10. Socialist, 1 July 1910.
magnificent growth of which seems to be a source of worry".12

Nevertheless, SFA unity foundered over the proposed amalgamation of the Socialist and the International Socialist in January 1912. The VSP membership rejected the proposal by 78 to 42 in a Party vote, after prominent VSPers had expressed intense irritation with their Sydney comrades.13 Bernard O'Dowd, for instance, considered that there were two broad types of Australian Socialist – the Marxite or De Leon type and the British or Debs type, and that many members of the Sydney branch of the Federation had fallen into the former category, along with practically all the members of the SLP, and the 'Hawthorn Group' in Melbourne. This Marxite type, O'Dowd described as "somewhat doctrinaire, as a rule, given to an almost fetishistic belief in the efficacy of hard and fast rules and doctrines, intense in its devotion to what sometimes seem narrow ideals, but as intense in its hatred and repudiation of all Socialists who do not see their way to subscribe to its set doctrine". The VSP, he considered, was composed of the other type: all held to the common basis of Socialism, but otherwise differed largely among themselves, some being almost Anarchists, others Communists, Labor Party permeators, Fabians, industrial unionists, materialists, advocates of art, literature, and religion as necessary levers to Socialism, anti-militarist supporters of a citizen army, pacifists, and even people opposed to Class War. O'Dowd insisted this more liberal type of Socialist was largely the creation of Tom Mann, who, by his amazing sanity in disregarding what he called "half-inch points" in rules, regulations, and tactics, gathered together from the solitudes into which unwise doctrinaire tactics and indigestible ultra-Marxism had driven them, the very cream of the most advanced and varied ability in Victoria, until a roll of over 2,000 members, a healthy finance, and a vivid propaganda, hitherto unknown, justified his efforts and the wisdom of his methods. O'Dowd felt it probable that the Federation, by tending to stereotype methods and principles, may have emasculated the power of Australian Socialism. If the Socialist, which represented the free, tolerant, broad-minded type of Socialist, was absorbed in the International Socialist, O'Dowd predicted it would mean the death knell of Tom Mann International Socialism. "Socialism itself would revert back to the snarling, hole-in-a-corner, negligible, and narrow, unintellectual impossibilism we had to put up with till Tom Mann's advent". O'Dowd hoped those who valued "the Melbourne condition of tolerance,

freedom, and ability" would vote to save "their noble and necessary little paper". 14

After this vote, about 40 VSP members resigned and formed the Central Melbourne branch of the SFA, apparently in conspiracy with the mysterious 'Hawthorn Group'. 15 About June 1912, the VSP formally withdrew from the SFA, which had been renamed the Australian Socialist Party, 16 and returned to its original occupation as a propagandist of socialism. "It leaves political action to the Labor Party, and endeavours to strengthen the Socialist tendencies of that Party". It applied to the International Socialist Bureau for separate affiliation. 17

The International Socialist was quick to assure its readers that the VSP was no longer a branch of the ASP, and that it had seceded just before it would have been expelled for instructing its advertising agent to solicit advertisements from the Department of Defence. It referred to the "steady influx of a reactionary Labour element". 18 J.R. Wilson, the Man from the SFA sent from Sydney late in 1911 to straighten out the VSP, reported that he had found the VSP loaded with debt, its paper with a paltry circulation, its policy at variance with the SFA, and the membership everything but a united family,

being composed of Laborites, Anarchists, Socialists, Fabians, Single Taxers and Industrialists, believers in Political Action and Direct Action, Beef-eaters and vegetarians, and a few of that peculiar hybrid known as Christian Socialists, whom W. Haywood of America, described as persons drunk on religious fanaticism and endeavoring to sober up on economic truth, as well as a quaint and insignificant sect of spiritualist Sociologists.

So acute were the differences of opinion, the faction-shooter explained, that a split occurred, which none regretted, as the bona-fide Socialist movement was stronger and more aggressive as a result, whereas the VSP was the fag end of the sacred Labor Party. 19

The cause of the split and the continuing basis for ASP abuse of its former largest section was VSP proximity to the Labor Party and the entailed 'softness' over militarism, racism, and nationalism. The ASP was most contemptuous of the VSP's neutral stance on the conscription issue and the

15.Socialist, 3 Jan 1913 L.
16.ibid., 7 June 1912.
17.ibid., 3 Jan 1913 L.
19.ibid., 25 Jan 1913. See also, 14 June 1913, 19 July 1913, 30 Aug 1913.
support for the Defence Act from notable sections of the Party. The
*International Socialist* intimated that this had been a major factor in the
splitting off of the left of the VSP and its formation as the Melbourne
branch of the ASP. It noted that after this separation, invitations were
inserted in the *Socialist* "to persons of all kinds of beliefs to join the
party". The ASP rejected VSP overtures for reunion in 1913.

It is not sufficient that we should be agreed upon Socialism, as an objective
there are other fundamentals as well. Industrial Unionism, Militarism, and
our attitude to all other political parties are matters of supreme
importance, a yes-no attitude to them being entirely out of the question...
the only party at present in Melbourne taking up a definite attitude, re
Labourism and Militarism, is the Melbourne Branch of the A.S.P.21

IS criticisms of the VSP were remarkably similar to earlier SLP
denunciations of the IS and the rest of the SFA. Batho, for instance, noted
that the SFA took in anybody and everybody, as the building up of a sound,
scientific body was not its immediate purpose, and the *International
Socialist* "unrolled tripe by the yard and blundered Marx into error".22

The root cause of this SLP hostility to the IS in 1910-11 was the IS's
support for the Chicago IWW.23 The first Chicago local appeared in Adelaide
in May 1911, when some Chicago-liners took over a meeting called to form
another De Leonite club.24 This Adelaide-based Australian Administration
issued a charter to a Sydney local on 4th October 1911, and, according to the
SLP, members of the ASP formed part of its membership, and the ASP as an
organisation assisted in building up the anti-political IWW against the
industrial and political IWW.25 In 1912, unity negotiations between the SLP
and the ASP failed due to ASP support for the 'Bummery'.26 Rushton, however,
maintains that the motivation of the new IWW faction was not so much

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21.*ibid.*, 7 June 1913.
22.*The Vag*, Random Ramblings, pp.31-2.
23.In September 1910, the *International Socialist* urged the bringing into
existence of the IWW in Australia, as it claimed the present Australian
organisation that bore its name was not connected with it, as proved by its
repudiation of the new 1908 Preamble.(10 Sept 1910). Articles extolling
sabotage appeared in the *International Socialist*, and the ASP distributed
Chicago literature.(See, for example, 31 Dec 1910, 4 Feb 1911). In July 1911,
the *International Socialist* hailed the establishment of the Australian
Administration of the Chicago wing and advertised for all class conscious
workers to join this IWW, "the only true international industrial
organisation which is worthy of the workers' attention".(22 July 1911).
24.*Coates, "Note on the Industrial Workers of the World", Labour History*, No
6, May 1964, pp.27-8; Turner's review of Bedford, *Labour History*, No 5, Nov
1963, p.66.
26.*ibid.*, loc.cit.; *International Socialist*, 1 June 1912.
Chicagoism as dissatisfaction with the identification of the Club with the SLP. This could explain IS dalliance with the new outfit. However, the IS soon got its political fingers burnt, as the new Sydney local was taken over by "cantankerous and disruptive elements", who "declared war against Socialists" and instituted a boycott against the International Socialist. The ASP and SLP moved closer together once more. In May 1913, the federal election was contested on a joint basis, the ASP supplying one candidate for the House of Representatives and the SLP providing three Senate candidates. The International Socialist was now openly attacking the Chicago section of the IWW, both the American and the Australian.

By September 1913, the ASP had performed a political mea culpa, admitting that events had shown that the ASP as a political body had more in common with the Detroit IWW, and that, with the Chicago IWW's growing hostility to Socialism, and VSP moves to absorb the Melbourne branches of the ASP and SLP, there was added impetus to its desire for unity with the SLP. The International Socialist closed the year with the insistence that unity of "Marxian Socialists" was desirable, as "whatever differences there may have been in the past, none of these differences can now be said to exist, the endorsement of the Detroit I.W.W. by the various branches of the A.S.P., having brought both organisations into line with one another... thereby making unity... only a question of time..." The Melbourne ASP, the International Socialist continued, had no intention of considering reunion with the VSP, which supported the Labor Party, and many of whose members supported militarism or even utopian co-operative schemes, chasing every will-o'-the-wisp in the realm of philosophy, thereby discrediting the socialist movement.

Differences between the ASP and the SLP, then, revolved around the choice of IWW faction. Dispute in the old Federation, however, was based on

28. International Socialist, 19 July 1913. What had happened was that Tom Glynn had arrived from South Africa late in 1912, and under his leadership a more classically 'bummery' element formed a parallel organisation, when they failed to gain control of the local, but this Glynn group was not recognised by Adelaide or Chicago. Moyle from Adelaide came to Sydney around Easter and, according to Rushton, succumbed to threats of personal violence and permitted Glynn and the 'bummery' to take over. Rushton refers to this bummery coup as "their only successful revolution". ('The Industrial Workers of the World', pp.62-3, 83). See also, Coates, "Note on the Industrial Workers of the World", Labour History, No 6, May 1964, p.28.
30. ibid., 12 July 1913, 26 July 1913, 2 Aug 1913, 16 Aug 1913.
31. ibid., 27 Sept 1913.
32. ibid., 20 Dec 1913.
differential enthusiasm for the basic tenets of the IWW. This cleavage, which cut through the SFA, placing the IS alongside the rival SLP in opposition to the VSP, manifested itself clearly in the response of the 'two broad types' to the issue of racism in the labour movement.
The Detroit IWW

The Chicago IWW was not, at this stage, proselytising; IWW ideas were still being brought to the Australian working class by the Detroit faction, in close association with the SLP and occasionally the IS. But on the race question, no meaningful distinction between the two IWW factions can be made. In summary, the difference between the two was that the Detroit IWW urged the working class "to vigorously prosecute its emancipatory mission on the political as well as on the industrial field". It maintained the necessity of revolutionary political action, "not to endeavour the absurd and impossible task of gradually ending exploitation by reform legislation; but in order to attack the possessing class in its Parliamentary stronghold, and to use the political arena for the purpose of legalising the workers' industrial struggle". Both factions emphasised the importance of absolute solidarity in the industrial arena, so both factions necessarily confronted any ideas or activities that discouraged such solidarity.

This was the basis for the IWW Club's principled anti-racism, which was filtering through to the rest of the left. In Melbourne, a debate between Edgar of the Carpenters' and Joiners' Union and Halfpenny of the IWW Club revealed the cleavage between Wobblyism and craft unionism. In reply to Edgar's support for the White Australia Policy, Halfpenny commented that it was the workers of the whole human race, not a section of it, that would bring about the emancipation of their class. The Sydney Club, in response to the judicial murder of Japanese socialists in January 1911, announced: "The I.W.W. knows no distinction of race, creed, or colour. Its policy is one of international working-class solidarity". It claimed nine months later that it was taking every opportunity to stem the tide of racial hatred being promulgated by vulgar politicians and superficial pressmen. It declared the IWW was opposed to the White Australia Policy.

The event that prompted this statement of principle was the deportation of Poon Goey's wife. The IWW Club was particularly active on this issue. It wrote an "emphatic protest" to the relevant Ministers and liaised with the Chinese communities over the affair. The Club insisted that the economic and social position of the workers was not menaced by the presence of Mrs

33. An Open Letter from the Industrial Workers of the World Club to the Australian Working Class.
34. People, 11 May 1912.
35. ibid., 28 Jan 1911.
36. ibid., 9 Sept 1911.
37. ibid., 2 Sept 1911, 28 Oct 1911, 4 Nov 1911, 17 Aug 1912, 26 April 1913, 10 May 1913.
Poon Goey, but was in great danger from the reactionary edicts of the politicians. The Minister was informed that it would be better if he devoted more attention to reducing the abnormal accident and death rate in the Broken Hill mines, and ceased issuing inhuman ultimatums and drastic deportation edicts regarding the wives of clean-living Chinese residents. The Minister for External Affairs replied to the original protest, saying he was pleased to note the IWW Club aimed at universal justice and fraternity, but that he nevertheless had to administer the White Australia Policy and was strongly in favour of racial purity, whether for the 'Asiatics' or the Australians.

The Labor Party was roundly abused for its racism by IWW Club propagandists. A report of a meeting in Cessnock mentioned that Fellow-Worker Mackenzie "dived into the Labor party over their white Australia policy showing how the Labor party were keeping the workers of one country at the throats of the workers of another country, and by appealing to racial prejudices kept them divided". And when Western Australian Labor premier Scadden proposed legislation to exclude Italians from the mining industry, the Sydney IWW wrote him a public letter of protest saying that such a barbaric and unjust proposal should not be countenanced by the workers of Western Australia, who are misled by unscrupulous politicians misruling in Labor's name, deluding their unthinking dupes by appeals to racial hatreds and ignorant prejudices, instead of showing that the bad conditions prevailing in the mines of W.A., as in South Africa, lie at the door of the mining magnates and cosmopolitan financiers, combined with the defective organization of the mining industry.

The Club claimed that IWW members could bear testimony from experience in the west to the loyalty of the Italians to genuine union principles, and that the conduct of Italian unionists generally would compare favourably with their Australian workmates.

In a long statement on 'Militarism in Australia', the NSW Executive of the IWW Club despaired that the Australian working class would ever learn to think internationally. "Cannot they understand that to-day there are only two nations in the world - the working class nation, one despite race, creed, or color; and the capitalist nation, one in greed of gain, lust of exploitation,

40. Letter from Minister for External Affairs, 26 Oct 1911, to Geo. Waite Esq, Corresponding Secretary, Sydney IWW Club, *IWW Correspondence*.
41. *People*, 18 March 1911.
and unity of purpose to keep the working nation in subjection". The Club beseeched workers to dismiss the coward panic fears encouraged by those who, in the interests of their masters, waved such a scarecrow before their eyes. In Japan, it declared, the working class was organising for Industrialism and for Socialism, and it was only the racism of the ALP that persuaded Japanese miners not to assist the NSW miners in the 1909 strike. "Divide to govern" had always been the capitalist motto, the Club noted, and asserted that the true safeguard against capitalist aggression lay in the growth of Socialism and in the cultivation of fraternal class relations with fellow wage slaves everywhere, including Japan.

Do not heed the lies of those who seek to blind you with racial prejudice... Don't fight your fellow workers of other lands. Refuse to be divided by race hatred. Make it class hatred instead. As for invasion, it is a bogey! But if it came, what then? The industrially organised workers would constitute a solid force that no army of invasion dare attack... We have no country, for we own no country... The world is our country, and the world's workers, without distinction of creed, or race, or color, are our fellow workers, and fellow citizens... We must be Internationalists, for Capitalism is international too...

The statement concluded proudly that the international union of all workers, irrespective of race or creed or color, the Industrial Workers of the World, was feared by the capitalists of all nations. 43

43. Anti-Militarism, An Appeal from the I.W.W.Clubs to the Australian Working Class.
The Socialist Labor Party

In November 1912, the SLP confidently announced that the People stood alone as the only sound, scientific Socialist paper. The SLP was rather sanctimonious, yet with the exception of the International Socialist, there was truth in its claim, as regards the issue of racism. Only the SLP and the IS, the two quarrelsome identical twins of Australian socialism, took an uncompromising stance on racism. This reflected their politics: with the collapse of the Barrier Socialist Propaganda Group, they were the groups most influenced by the IWW.

As evidence of the "shoddy" being put forward as socialism, the SLP frequently mentioned the temporising on the race issue of the VSP and Labor Party. To counteract such 'shoddy', principled statements of internationalism were liberally scattered throughout the People, as in the period 1907-1910. "We hold no brief for the white race or black race, or any other race... Our brief contains but one clause - the emancipation of the working class - that is all the human race needs to lift it as a whole out of the kingdom of necessity into the republic of freedom". The hope of the workers of the world lay in the consolidated organisations of the workers of the world, as no country or nation could within itself obtain and retain a system such as Socialism demanded; the movement must of necessity be international, therefore Australian workers, if class conscious, could have no objection to fraternising with Japanese, Chinese, German, Italian, Russian, or any other nationality of workers; to refuse to co-operate with all other workers was "to commit economic suicide, to encourage militarism and conscription, murder, and rapine". By fraternisation, these bulwarks of capitalism could not only be weakened, but absolutely destroyed, then the slogan "The World for the world's workers" would be a materialised event, leading to "Socialism and plenty, the enjoyment of all who inhabit this earth, no matter what color, race, or creed..." The People continually reminded its readers that the workers of every country had economic interests in common - to rid themselves of the chains of wage-slavery. Unlike the pre-Wobbly period, the SLP could see the light and wished to lighten the darkness of others. "Racial hatred must be swept aside by class-conscious knowledge. for when the light of class consciousness illuminates the mind darkened with racial and national prejudices the latter will be quickly dispelled..."

44. People, 16 July 1910.
45. ibid., 2 Dec 1911.
46. ibid., 25 May 1912.
In editorial response to the enthusiasm that greeted the establishment of an Australian fleet, the SLP called for recruits to join the Army of Peace, the Socialist Army, instead. "Organise in thought and deed with the Workers of the World. Let no national prejudice or race hatred divide and divert you from the one grand and noble purpose of a True Humanity". The SLP continued to stress the lesson it had learnt from the IWW, that racism hindered progress to emancipation: "Both race and color barriers must be broken down to make way for the International Working-class Army to march into its bountiful and rightful inheritance". It noted that the white worker foolishly regarded himself as the only pebble on the beach and considered himself super-superior to the rest of mankind, refusing the hand of fellowship to his black, brown, or yellow brothers. The People urged organisation, not segregation, as the method by which the working class could gain the power to fight its way out of bondage.

The SLP always emphasised that the enemy was at home, not abroad. In August 1911, the People asked whether the white wage slaves on strike at Lithgow and in Queensland were up against the inferior Jap, the heathen Chinee, the avaricious German, or the enterprising Dago, and gave the answer as none of these: instead, it was the pure, unadulterated, pale-faced Anglo-Saxons. "The enemy of the Australian workers is right inside our own door". When 'Cahill's Cossacks' attacked the Brisbane strikers, the People took the opportunity to point out that it was not a Japanese force that the fighting workers of Brisbane were up against, nor a Chinese or a German force either, but their own colour, race, and breed, their enemy within their own gates. And in opposition to the furore about Chinese sweating, the People placed its line on record, reminding its readers that more than once it had published statements asserting that the white Australian capitalist was on the whole a more insidious sweater than his Chinese brother.

In contrast to the anti-Chinese tenor of the labour movement, the SLP put forward very different ideas concerning both Chinese resident in Australia and in their land of origin. For instance, the People gleefully seized upon a report in the Barrier Daily Truth about a successful Chinese cabinet-makers' union, and headlined its comment 'A Blow at Racial Exclusiveness'. Thus it is proved that the wrongfully despised Chinese are organisable and militant when organised. What a condemnation of the wretched craft union job

47. People, 4 Oct 1913 L.
48. ibid., 22 Nov 1913.
49. ibid., 19 Aug 1911.
50. ibid., 17 Feb 1912.
51. ibid., 6 March 1912.
trusts which have excluded the Chinese from their unions. Down with race prejudice! Our Asiatic fellow-workers have a common interest with us against the capitalist class, and have proved themselves fit to stand in line with us despite our foolishly "superior" airs.\textsuperscript{52}

With reasoned argument, the SLP sought to put the facts of the case before Australian workers. It admitted Chinese labour was cheap in China, but hastened to add that so also was living, and to drive the point home, it published a list of prices prevailing in China. It noted also that a Chinese cabinet-maker had testified in court that he regularly earned between £2/16/- and £5 per week. "This makes the old gag about a handful of rice look a bit silly, doesn't it?"\textsuperscript{53}

But no anti-Chinese incident in this period raised as much ire as did the case of Poon Goey, whose wife and family were compelled to return to China "under the rotten Alien Exclusion Law". The \textit{People} commented on the hypocrisy of the "scoundrels" who were for breaking up Poon Goey's home, then professed indignation at Chinese consorting with white women. "The narrow bigotry which penalises men and women simply because of race or color is nauseating".\textsuperscript{54}

The \textit{People} harped on the awakening throughout the east, which, it predicted, would pave the way for the international consolidation of the world's workers, irrespective of race or colour.

East and West have met for Capitalism; the next stage is West and East to come together for Socialism. Already the nucleus of the future Socialist army has made its appearance in Japan and China. Recent developments are going to accelerate the march towards Socialism in the East. The only hope for peace on this earth is Socialism.\textsuperscript{55}

The SLP argued that the so-called backward races were slowly but surely marching to the front under economic pressure, and that it was only a matter of time before China, Japan, and India would be in line with the west, as regards capitalist development and working class organisation.\textsuperscript{56} As an immediately practical gesture towards realising this prediction, the \textit{People}, on behalf of a Chinese socialist editor, advertised for articles in Esperanto that could either be read directly in China or easily translated.\textsuperscript{57}

The SLP attacked imperialism relentlessly. It noted, for example, that western capitalists had exploited the Chinese, insulted them, and at the point of a bayonet forced them to buy their shoddy and surplus stealings from the western workers.\textsuperscript{58} The \textit{People} exhorted its readers, also, to think of India

\textsuperscript{52}\textit{People}, 12 Aug 1911.
\textsuperscript{53}\textit{ibid.}, 2 Sept 1911.
\textsuperscript{54}\textit{ibid.}, 12 Aug 1911.
\textsuperscript{55}\textit{ibid.}, 21 Oct 1911.
\textsuperscript{56}\textit{ibid.}, 22 Nov 1913 L.
\textsuperscript{57}\textit{ibid.}, 15 Nov 1913.
\textsuperscript{58}\textit{ibid.}, 21 Oct 1911.
and what it entailed - the subjection of the defenceless by fire and sword. But India would yet arise, the SLP predicted, and throw off the yoke of capitalism and thus put an end to the terrible exploitation, murder, starvation, and misery to which its people were subjected.  

The SLP was particularly interested in events in South Africa, but in contrast to its former resentment against the "kaffirs" and "cheap Chinese" taking "white" jobs, it propounded a principled class position. Commenting on a strike by 'kaffirs' in 1913, the People pointed out that, like white men, they wore red rosettes. "It's not the color of the skin, but the man that's in it which tells". Apart from emphasising that the blacks were demanding and fighting for more wages and better conditions, their political militancy was also stressed. But nevertheless, it was the strike action of Indian workers in South Africa that provoked the People into its most detailed commentary on the situation. It described as "a healthy sign" the fact that the poor coolie slave in South Africa had awakened to the knowledge that the strike weapon was a powerful instrument with which to make material protest against the impositions of the masters, and added that it was a step towards the day when the world's workers would be organised "in one international army, irrespective of race, color, or creed, fighting for the complete overthrow of the capitalist system". The SLP insisted capitalism produced similar results in every country, its exploiting conditions awakening the working class of all nations and all races to the realisation that the interests of all wage slaves were common, and that the common enemy of humanity was the capitalist class. "And a greater and more healthy sign of progress could not present itself at the present moment than the working class uprising in South Africa on the part of the plundered Indian toilers - members of our class".

The Papuans were also congratulated, as a result of complaints that they were too rich to work. "Good luck to them! With all the ignorance imputed to inferior races, the Papuans seem to know enough of Capitalism to leave it severely alone..."

Empire and exploitation went together, the SLP explained in a general tirade against imperialism. It noted that all the talk about flag of freedom, liberty, justice, and so on, was a blatant appeal to race prejudice, in order

60. ibid., 19 July 1913.
61. ibid., 13 Sept 1913.
62. ibid., 22 Nov 1913 L.
63. ibid., 11 Oct 1913.
to blind the people to the real motives and methods of the flag-waving poodles of capitalism. The annual "Vampire Day" celebrations always elicited a stream of class-conscious denunciations of imperialism. For instance, in May 1911, a People editorial announced:

The working class owes nothing to the Empire, and has no reason for expressing loyalty thereto. What has the Empire done for the workers? It has exploited, murdered, maimed, shot-down, imprisoned, transported, oppressed and enslaved the workers; its history is one of bloodshed and rapine; its great wealth and ostentatious pomp built upon the bodies, cemented with the blood, sweat and tears, of men, women, children, and even babies and is maintained to-day by the robbery, the degradation of the working class.

In 1912, the People declared that the significance of 'Vampire Day' was the creation of racial hatred and working class divisions. Between the workers of the world, no racial boundary should exist; "Class loyalty should be theirs - not capitalist patriotism".

Some socialists in Australia at this time, most noticeably in the VSP, argued that a citizen army would be of less domestic danger to the working class than an elite standing army, but would nevertheless provide the defensive power such socialists considered necessary. The SLP held such views in contempt. The People inquired whether it would really be in the interests of the Australian proletariat to die resisting an invasion. The SLP could not believe that the Chinese or Japanese would find it to their advantage to order a general slaughter of two million Australian wage slaves already broken in to capitalist domination, and such an invasion would not even lower the standard of living of Australian workers, as one of the first laws of capitalist production was the provision merely of a subsistence wage, though, the People hastily added, the evil effects of it could be mitigated by the workers effecting a corner in labour power by means of class unionism.

The SLP elaborated upon the connection between the promotion of racism and the ruling class interest in defence, and also the Labor Party's sordid role in the process. "In defence of its infamous act of introducing child-conscription into Australia, the Federal Bogus-Labor party are always dragging out the Japanese bogey, and painting a lurid picture of a Brown Australia... a ruse on the part of those politicians to get the working class of Australia shackled to Conscription and militarism". The People advised the workers to get on the track of Socialism immediately, if they wished to spare themselves prolonged and acute suffering.

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64 People, 4 June 1910.
65 ibid., 27 May 1911 L.
66 ibid., 25 May 1912 L.
67 ibid., 18 Nov 1911.
68 ibid., 15 Feb 1913.
prejudices and racial hatreds, fostered by the ruling class and its emissaries, that keeps the workers of each nation divided and ready at command to fly at and tear one another's throats with the ferocity of wild beasts..."69

That the anti-racism of the SLP was a product of Wobbly influence was still very apparent in the years 1910 to 1913. Internationalist sentiment and IWW advertisements were frequently juxtaposed: "The man or woman who preaches the colour line, or stirs race prejudice, is an enemy to the working-class. Agitate for the I.W.W."; "The I.W.W. must be built upon the soil of East and West"; and "Industrial unionism as set forth in the Preamble of the I.W.W., setting forth the urgent need for political as well as industrial action in the direction of overthrowing the capitalist system, is now recognised by the more intelligent and far-seeing members of the toiling mass as the only means of social salvation, and thus the barrier of race hatred and national prejudice is being slowly but surely dispelled..."70

The 1911 May Day joint SLP and IWW celebrations symbolised the Wobbly origins of the SLP's internationalism. The chairman announced that the SLP recognised no race, colour, or creed, as it did not matter whether a worker was born in England, Germany, or the Kingdom of McGowen, because workers were exploited everywhere. And wherever the worker migrated to, Judd continued, the capitalist awaited him, and this capitalist class strove to sow division in the world's army by setting race against race. If the 'Japs' ever came to Australia and took all the workers owned, Judd reckoned they would be able to carry it away in a snuff box. He added that people talked about a White Australia, and had the insufferable cheek to come here and take the country from the 'blackfellow', then tell him to get off the earth.71

Similarly, SLP opposition to militarism was couched in Wobbly terms. The anti-conscription resolution of the 1912 SLP Conference ended: "The workers of the world, being a wage-slave class with economic interests in common, have no quarrel with each other, and urge upon the workers to organise upon the basis of the preamble of the I.W.W. and the S.L.P., for the complete overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a universal republic".72

The SLP was openly contemptuous of groups that had not seen the anti-racist light. M.E.J. Pitt of the VSP scored a running commentary of abuse in the People for her racist writing in the Socialist and Labor Call. In

69. People, 13 Sept 1913 L.
70. Ibid., 24 Dec 1910, 12 Aug 1911, 30 April 1913.
71. Ibid., 6 May 1911.
72. Ibid., 13 April 1912.
response to her attacks on miscegenation, the People referred to "the brain-
benumbing, contortion-producing effect of the 'White Australia' microbe",
and said her membership of the SFA proved what "queer internationalists"
they were, and described, as an exhibition of "sheer ranting, raving, ramping
prejudice", one of her articles that suggested murdering all the white wives
of Chinese.\(^{73}\) When Pitt and the Reverend Frederic Sinclaire took over the
ditorship of the Socialist from Ross in 1911, the People asked its readers
whether they remembered Mrs Pitt, "the race maniac", and emphasised that the
VSP organ was now in the hands of "the shrieking feminine advocate of racial
exclusiveness".\(^{74}\) Later, the People complained that the workers of Australia
did not display much hostility towards the capitalist system that robbed
them, but that towards the Chinese, who generally robbed nobody, they showed
an animosity amounting to a merciless unreasoning hatred. And people like Mrs
Pitt were to blame, as when the Chinese, denied consorts of his own colour,
sought white ones, "some champion of 'Labor', such as Mrs M.E.J.S.F.of A.
Pitt, arises and advocates violence".\(^{75}\) However, the SLP could make no
criticism of the SFA's Sydney branch on the race issue.

SLP attacks on the Labor Party for its racism were even more frequent,
but possibly less indignant in tone, as the SLP obviously expected racism
from the Labor Party, but felt greater resentment when racial ideas were
expressed by so-called socialists. Of the Melbourne Trades Hall Council
speaker who blamed the sweating to the Jews and Assyrians, the People pointed
out that this was shielding the White Australian capitalists, who were also
sweaters, by raising racial prejudices. "It is class, not race, that counts.
The labor misleaders who raise the race bogies are either purposely or
ignorantly traitors to the working class".\(^{76}\) The People pilloried Senator Rae
for stating he was not prepared to extend his socialism to the Japanese or
Chinese.\(^{77}\) It claimed that the preaching of racial antagonism was disgracing
the Labor Party and that revolutionary unionism and revolutionary political
action, without regard to race, creed, or colour, were the present need of
the working class.\(^{78}\) "You laborites of Australia with your White Australia
policy, and your childish aims, you're a miserable crew indeed".\(^{79}\) The People

\(^{73}\) People, 7 Jan 1911, 10 Sept 1910.
\(^{74}\) ibid., 25 March 1911.
\(^{75}\) ibid., 12 Aug 1911.
\(^{76}\) ibid., 17 Sept 1910.
\(^{77}\) ibid., 8 March 1911.
\(^{78}\) ibid., 24 June 1911.
\(^{79}\) ibid., 12 Aug 1911.
assured the "insular laborites" and the Bulletin that, if a Japanese invasion occurred, they could take the credit for jointly assisting in its culmination by instilling and encouraging racial prejudices and hatred. 80

The People expanded on this point in an editorial entitled 'White Australia Run Mad'. It argued that the White Australia Policy of the Labor Party had been pushed to an extent that bode ill for the future, fostering a spirit of racial hatred and national prejudice that could have but one effect, that of further disintegrating and sectionalising the world's working class into antagonistic warring parts of one human family, and thereby stemming the tide of human progress. Already the raciophobic action of the late federal Labor Government had established hostile relations with China and Japan, the Poon Goee incident causing disgust amongst the Chinese both resident and abroad. The editorial then took exception to the state Labor Government's proposal to legislate against the employment of Italians in NSW mines, notwithstanding that Italian miners had proved themselves to be loyal fighters for the principle of unionism in every battle against capitalistic encroachment. No case of scabbing had been preferred against the Italian worker. It was the "height of injustice and folly" to forbid men the right to work because of birthplace, thereby creating an army of workless outcasts, a rod for the workers' own backs. The People placed its position firmly on the line: "Progress demands the consolidation of the working class irrespective of race, creed, or color. A working man is an exploited wage slave the world over, and the interest of the Italian worker is the same as that of his Australian fellow-worker." The SLP revealed, yet again, the Wobbly-inspired nature of its internationalism.

Apparently Australian craft unionism seeks to shelter itself under a monopoly, excluding all and sundry from the means of life whom it considers undesirable, not from any justifiable standpoint, but merely because of race, creed, or color. What miserable prejudice! What unmitigated ignorance! Industrial unionism rises in protest against the insult offered to our Italian fellow workers, and brands those who entertain such a proposal as narrow, prejudiced, ignorant bigots, lacking knowledge of the true aims of a working class movement, and wanting in that spirit which makes the world akin, and progress possible. 81

The SLP stood uncompromisingly on the race issue and despised the Labor Party for its capitulation to, and encouragement of, working class racism. Where it had previously denounced the Labor Party for not succeeding in its declared objectives, the SLP, having absorbed the tenets of the IWW, was now

80. People, 12 Aug 1911.
81. ibid., 30 Aug 1913.
completely contemptuous of such objectives. It was immune to Labor ideology; it followed the commandments of industrial unionism. "The 'Labor' Party has no ideal worth mentioning, merely silly nationalism, and bureaucratic politician-controlled State factories for making working men into crawlers". It expelled a comrade Pennington for verbally supporting the Labor Party in the 1910 federal election. It noted that Labor governments legislated to imprison strikers and even to jail boys who objected to compulsory militarism. It despaired of Australian wage slaves who chose to manacle themselves with capitalist courts and judges 'awards'. The SLP was bitterly opposed to all the Labor Party stood for, not just the maintenance of racial purity and the cultivation of a national sentiment.

82. People, 25 Nov 1911.
83. SLP, Central Branch, Minute Book.
84. People, 21 Oct 1911.
FLOWERS FOR LABOUR'S MAY-DAY
'ALL A' BLOWIN' AND A' GROWIN'
The International Socialists and the Australian Socialist Party

In a 'May Day Retrospect' in 1912, Holland explained he had re-read the first minute book of the International Socialist Club, which showed that one of the earliest conflicts between the IS and ASL elements was over the White Australia clause. ASL men in the Club had moved that the Club endorse the White Australia principle, but the motion had been defeated. "Undoubtedly the coming to Australia of Socialists from other countries... brought the leaven of Science and of Internationalism". So Holland is admitting that the IS Club took up an anti-racist stance in opposition to its ASL element, not because of any indigenous leanings in that direction, but because of the 'overseas' influence in the Club. 85

However, it was the 'overseas' influence of the IWW that was most important in establishing anti-racism as an accepted principle in the Australian socialist movement. Certainly, the International Socialists continued to acknowledge their anti-racist debt to the IWW and the concept of industrial unionism.

For instance, the International Socialist came down heavily on the white unionists of Thursday Island for scabbing on a strike by black non-unionists, adding that Industrial Unionism would render organised scabbery impossible, whereas sectional organisation made it inevitable. 86

Industrial Unionism, which is the only organisation that can successfully fight the combination of the masters, recognises neither sex nor color line; but will strive to make all industrial workers class conscious, and militant members in the vast army which is slowly but surely organising on the proletarian side of the barricade. 87

The IS considered it was the duty of every working class man or woman to study the principles of Industrial Socialism as advocated by the IWW, which organised all workers industrially, whatever their race, colour, creed, sex, or calling. "As the capitalist robs all of them, so they must fight as one in ending robbery at the source of production". 88 The International Socialist explained that, because the interests of all workers were the same, the IWW took in all nationalities and colours, the only foreigner being the boss. 89

When the Australian Socialist Party contested the 1913 state elections, Mick Considine of the Broken Hill branch and candidate for Sturt declared that on the industrial field the ASP stood for industrial unionism on the lines of

85.International Socialist, 4 May 1912.
86.ibid., 18 June 1910.
87.ibid., 8 July 1911.
88.ibid., 30 March 1912.
89.ibid., 6 July 1912.
the IWW, as it was essential for the working class to sink all differences of craft, creed, or colour.  

Of course, internationalist sentiment without direct reference to the IWW was even more frequent. The ASP clearly understood the function of racism in capitalist society, and attempted to counteract it. The *International Socialist* deliberately championed the cause of Chinese resident in Australia. When 19 Chinese were arrested in Sydney for gambling, the paper pointed out that, up to the time of its going to press, the Stock Exchangers were still at large. Obviously, the Chinese should have taken the precaution of being born rich and influential. The *International Socialist* particularly emphasised industrial militancy on the part of Asians and the need for accepting Chinese into unions. It recalled the revolt of Chinese sailors against the white boss on the *Cranley* and the scab action of English sailors. It noted the Lithgow Chinese who refused to provide blacklegs with vegetables, and the Japanese in British Columbia who downed tools in sympathy with the white strikers and were scabbed on by Englishmen. It advised the white worker to take the Chinese into his unions, as the Chinese worker was a friend not a foe. "Like their white brothers, they want to better themselves. His conditions are in our hands. Unite we must".

The *International Socialist* was positively iconoclastic about the average man's concern for racial purity. Socialists, it declared, did not care tuppence for a White Australia. It despaired that workers wasted so much time on free trade, militarism, White Australia, and other nostrums, while the vital issue of International Socialism versus Capitalism confronted them. At an open air meeting, Brisbane ASPer Jack Read appealed to all present to drop the bogus cry of a White Australia and to organise without distinction of race or colour. The *International Socialist* despised the insularity and racial arrogance of the average man.

In a country like Australia, where Jack is supposed to be as good as his master, one would think that race hatred would be a thing unknown, yet what do we find? The most bitter, unrelenting hatred displayed towards anything and everything raised outside of Australia... in Australia, it is considered quite smart to say the most brutally, rude, and insulting things about people from other countries. The Australian who has never travelled beyond his own woodheap, is the greatest offender... This feeling is encouraged by

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92. ibid., 17 Feb 1912.
93. ibid., 20 April 1912, 27 Sept 1913.
94. ibid., 20 April 1912.
95. ibid., 14 Sept 1912.
96. ibid., 28 Sept 1912.
unprincipled people, whose policy it is to set people at each other's throats... why anybody living in this country should be persecuted because they were not born here is a problem that only the wool-gathering brain of the sheep-like Australian could solve.\textsuperscript{97}

The ASP scorned the VSP for falling prey to White Australian ideas. The \textit{International Socialist} rebuked R.S. Ross for using the White Australia legislation as proof that political action could help workers. It claimed this was rejecting the materialist conception of history, the internationality of the working class, the necessity for industrial unionism, and the commodity status of labour power.\textsuperscript{98} When the ASP set up in Melbourne in opposition to the VSP, its recruiting pamphlet called for the support of "Jew, Gentile, white or colored, man or woman - you who are despised, betrayed, beaten and baffled in a score of countries..."\textsuperscript{99}

The proximity of the VSP to the Labor Party obviously affected its standing on the race issue; the IS, on the other hand, was implacably opposed to the Labor Party and all its works. That the Labor Party was racist was simply one of the many indictments brought against it. Volumes could be written about the evil effects that follow the cultivation of national sentiment, the \textit{International Socialist} alleged, and yet it was brazenly stated as the intention of the ALP to cultivate it in this Labor-fakir-cursed country, and thereby add to the crushing burden of the workers. When the Australian worker learnt to think for himself and abandoned the habit of allowing his misleaders to think for him, the IS hoped he would see in the crime of cultivating national sentiment a good and sufficient reason for throwing the Labor Party overboard and putting in its place a party that would cultivate international sentiment, thereby welding the workers of Australia to those of foreign countries.\textsuperscript{100} The 1911 Labor Conference, which called for white people marrying people from eastern countries to be criminally penalised, showed the Labor Party was "either stupidly middle-class or consciously anti-Socialist".\textsuperscript{101} That White Australia was a plank of the Labor Party platform proved the platform was anti-working class.\textsuperscript{102}

These types of charges against the Labor Party were spread generously throughout the \textit{International Socialist}.\textsuperscript{103}

The IS indicted the Labor Party for its role in the Melanesian labour

\textsuperscript{97}\textit{International Socialist}, 11 Oct 1913.
\textsuperscript{98}\textit{ibid.}, 4 Oct 1913.
\textsuperscript{99}\textit{Collection of pamphlets and handbills} 1907-54.
\textsuperscript{100}\textit{International Socialist}, 23 July 1910.
\textsuperscript{101}\textit{ibid.}, 4 Feb 1911.
\textsuperscript{102}\textit{ibid.}, 16 March 1912.
\textsuperscript{103}\textit{ibid.}, 17 Dec 1910.
debate, for encouraging the white workers to see their enemy in the 'kanaka' and not in the man who enslaved them both. "A political cry of the Labor Party became the deportation of the kanaka. The dispossession of the slave-owner and ownership of the sugar industry by the working class does not seem to have been thought of". It noted that Labor members and anti-Labor members alike had voted for the huge gift of public money to the growers for kindly consenting to exploit white slaves instead.104

The International Socialist felt superior to the Worker, by virtue of its class conscious knowledge. "We know, if the Worker doesn't, that the workers of every race and country own no country". It rebuked the Worker for saying that twenty years ago Australia threatened to be "a reeking hive of Mongolian humanity", but that this was prevented by law and the force behind it. The International Socialist knew the real sinners were the exploiters, but the Worker crowd had not realised this; they made the Chinese victim the scapegoat and allowed the real enemy of the workers to continue his depredations.105 The ASP predicted that, as the elections drew nearer, the cry against the foreigner would increase in volume, "the main object being to detract attention from the industrial ills that afflict labor, and the shortcomings of those who were sent into parliament to formulate remedial measures".106

The IS was intensely irritated by any contact between the ALP and the International Socialist Bureau. It resolved that the ISB and the world's Socialist Parties should be provided with a comprehensive statement about the Labor Party's White Australia, conscription, and arbitration policies, and its action in prosecuting and jailing trade unionists in times of industrial warfare. It decided also that a protest be sent against any member of any Socialist Party speaking in Australia in support of the Labor Party, "which repudiates the class struggle and internationalism".107 The contradiction of a party that supported the White Australia Policy being represented at the ill-fated Vienna International Socialist Congress was forcibly spelt out by Holland.

In Australia, the Labor Party declares for the maintenance of a "White Australia" - indeed, on the day prior to its decision to send a delegate to the International Socialist Congress, the Federal Labor Conference placed the White Australia plank at the head of its fighting platform. All Socialists repudiate the right of any race to arrogate any portion of the world's

105.ibid., 30 Sept 1911.
106.ibid., 2 Nov 1912.
107.ibid., 16 Dec 1911.
surface to itself, and the Labor Party's White Australia policy is reprobated wherever there is a Socialist movement. Socialism says: "Workers of all countries unite!" Black men and white men, yellow men and brown men, will sit at the Vienna Congress, and they will proclaim that the interests of all workers in all lands are identical. At Vienna the Labor Party's delegate will agree to this. But when the Chinese or the Japanese Socialist delegate comes to Australia he will either find the gates closed and barred against him, or that he can only gain admittance on payment of £100 poll tax. At Vienna the Labor Party's delegate will by his presence repudiate such an anti-working class attitude. In Australia the Labor Party will continue to administer the law as it stands and as the Labor Party made it. And the Labor Party, while proclaiming international brotherhood and identity of interests will, in Australia, proceed to criminally prosecute and jail and otherwise penalise white workers who marry with colored workers.108

The International Socialist vigorously and frequently denounced imperialism and its supporters, particularly amongst the working class. "A working man who is a jingoist is an an awful apparition, a demented patriot, a foolish flag-worshipper, a thoughtless clod, a relic of pre-historic times, a savage blood-spiller, a bore to all sensible men".109 It referred to the rule of British capitalism in India as "one unbroken record of rottenness, of tyranny and of shame".110 In South Africa, it claimed the real reason for the establishment of the South African Defence Force was the fear of a native uprising, an uprising that would be wholly justified and should receive the sympathy and support of every white wage-slave, as their economic interests and those of the South African natives were the very same.111 It noted also that the Papuan administration was endeavouring to break the Papuan of his habit of preferring the bush to wage slavery, and was doing all in its power to cultivate in him a taste for the blessings of civilisation and "hard yacker", so that he might become plastic material in the hands of the white nabobs in the grand scheme of fortune-building.112

The ASP made no distinction between British imperialism and Australian imperialism in Papua. "Does it really matter whether the worker is under the British or the Australian flag, seeing that both are emblematic of the slave State?"113 The ASP held no brief whatever for Australia. The IS referred contemptuously to the "moon-madness known as patriotism" that, along with provincialism, was pumped into men and women from their early infancy, so they grew up to believe that their country was the finest on earth, their state the most progressive in the country, and their town the most sanitary

109. Ibid., 2 Nov 1912.
110. Ibid., 14 Feb 1911.
111. Ibid., 3 Feb 1912.
112. Ibid., 6 May 1911.
113. Ibid., 6 Dec 1913.
and intellectual in the state. The ASP poured scorn on the new national song, which, it alleged, appealed to national, racial, and jingoistic prejudices, and was plentifully streaked with cheap piety, saying in effect: "We have a vast country which is God's own domain. We are white people, and intend to hold this continent - God's domain - for our own white race". It asserted the song was an unblushing appeal to patriotic insanity.

To push the connection between racism and militarism, the International Socialist told the 'socialist fable' about the people of a certain country who were always electing a capitalist parliament, which promised to make things better, but instead things got worse. The politicians explained the situation to the indignation meetings. "You see it is this way: there are the Japs, the Chinese, and other colored races, who are waiting to rush into this country to take your country, your jobs, and your wives from you. You must keep your country white, arm yourselves and drill, wave your flag, sing 'Rule Britannia' and Hallelujay, hurrah for the Empire and the King. That will scare the foreigner and save the situation". The workers were greatly impressed and fell in with the idea, and the politicians passed an Act declaring that every working class boy would have to drill and be commanded by an officer from the other class. A few, however, whom the press called 'deluded workers', 'pro-niggers', 'Socialists', and other contemptuous names, did not go along with this solution, but the majority, being very patriotic and soft in the head, became very warlike and broke up the meetings and smashed the windows of the halls in which Socialists and anti-militarists

114. International Socialist, 3 June 1911.
115. ibid., 6 Dec 1913. The International Socialist had noted earlier that up to thirty years previously, Australian patriotism had been practically unknown, and that the colonists would have laughed at the idea of a system of military conscription and an independent navy. But then local manufacturers began to make a footing, which necessarily altered some of the ideas of the people. "Whereas previously there was little to defend, the subsequent growth of capital and wealth, and all the interests it implied, fostered that contemptible spirit of patriotism whose battle-cry is 'My country, right or wrong!' Consequently, the demand has arisen by the possessing class for a system of naval and military defence for the preservation of the coming class's property". (International Socialist, 4 Feb 1911).

116. In March 1912, International Socialist editor Harry Holland was one of the first parents convicted for failing to register his son for military training. (O'Farrell, Harry Holland, militant socialist, p.47). The ASP pamphlet The Crime of Conscription announced: "Let those who own Australia fight for Australia... THE SOCIALISTS COUNSEL ALL WORKING CLASS BOYS TO REFUSE DRILL... We, the Revolutionary Socialists, shall propagate the idea of the general strike to block you and the class whose tool you are from marching armed forces against the workers of this or any other country... we Socialists are no patriots!". (pp.13-5).
IN MY NAME - AFTER 1900 YEARS.
met. The tale ended with a strike and the politicians assuring the boss that when they got the compulsory military training scheme perfected, they would send the soldiers in with orders to shoot to kill.117

The International Socialist urged all Australian boys to resist militarism and to join the International Socialist movement, which united the working class of the world, including the Chinese, against the capitalist class, including Australians, "The people of China are not our enemies, nor are the strikers; but the capitalists of every nation are our direct antagonists..."118 The ASP stood firmly on the left of the Second International on the issue of militarism. In a long editorial defending the Hardie-Vaillant amendment for a general strike in the event of imminent war, the International Socialist argued that Australian comrades should discuss the possibilities of their being able to act with comrades in other countries, "and through the threat of industrial war force the capitalists to refrain from military war". The editorial quoted from the Australian IWW manifesto against war as showing the spirit of organised Industrial Unionism in the country:

Working men and women, do you know that the soldier, the army of soldiers, though it were millions strong, is helpless unless the working class in farm, field, and factory, remains at work... Organised industrially in one class union, you will have in your hands a mightier power than the armed force, and one that cannot be used against you... By organising the I.W.W. Union in Australia, and affiliating internationally with the working class in other countries, we shall knit together a mighty force which will enable us to achieve emancipation from capitalism...119

The ASP rejected completely the scaremongering basis of the argument for conscription. It regretted that the fool crowd, in their ignorance of history and blinded by racial hatred and parochial prejudice fostered by the press, swallowed the Yellow Peril bogey.120 The International Socialist was appalled at the sight of the sap-headed workers drilling to defend the property of

118.ibid., 17 Feb 1912.
119.ibid., 24 June 1911. By 1913, however, the ASP was not so confident about the aims of some sections of the International. It accused Keir Hardie of knowing about the ALP's defence plans in advance and not giving the information to the ISB, and Macdonald of failing to raise at Westminster the question of emigrant sons being fined and imprisoned for refusing to drill. And it denounced the ISB itself for refusing the application of the Socialist anti-militarist parties of Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa for representation on the Bureau and telling these parties they must first join with the sham 'Labour' and militarist parties in their respective colonies. (International Socialist, 18 Jan 1913).
120. International Socialist, 3 Dec 1910.
people who evicted them when they owed a few shillings, stupefied by the cry to defend Australia from the Asiatic hordes, "while the parasites swoop down on them from the surrounding fashionable suburbs, and gobble up their belongings...".\textsuperscript{121}

The \textit{Bulletin} was singled out for abuse: it was scared of the Japanese, and not without reason, as it had been insulting them with monkey caricatures for many years.\textsuperscript{122} The ASP considered the 'Jap' could not possibly be a greater infliction on a long suffering public than the \textit{Bulletin}, as there was no protection from this White Peril except a knowledge of Socialist economics. "We must recognise the capitalist is the only alien and is with his henchmen of the Press and Pulpit, the sworn enemies of the working class".\textsuperscript{123} When the \textit{Herald} argued that compulsory training would inculcate a sense of Patriotism and foster a belief in national unity, the \textit{International Socialist} summed up its case against militarism by pointing out that patriotism and national unity meant racial hatred and international prejudice, and that these were only of service to the exploiters of the workers.\textsuperscript{124}

The ASP, then, differentiated its politics very definitely from the Labor Party's, and an important consideration in this respect was the Labor Party's racism. It summarised its objections to the admission of the ALP to the Vienna Congress "inasmuch as the Labor Party repudiates the principles of International Socialism, denies the class struggle, and stands for the interests of the small capitalist class".\textsuperscript{125} It noted that Labor Party support for arbitration meant the taking away of the right to strike, and that it was only by the paralysis of industry that the wage-slaves could force their oppressors to concede to their always more than moderate demands; the Arbitration Court existed to say how much the workers should be legally robbed of, and to see they were penalised if they objected. The ASP considered one might as well ask the sharks in Port Jackson to arbitrate with their victims as to ask the employers to arbitrate with the workers; the strike was the workers' "natural weapon" and was far more reliable than the self-seeking politician.\textsuperscript{126} And this robbery, the ASP declared, was the same, whether the robber's name was Private Capitalism or State Capitalism. The Labor Party was proposing nationalisation of trusts and combines, but the

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\textsuperscript{121}\textit{International Socialist}, 26 Oct 1912.  \\
\textsuperscript{122}\textit{ibid.}, 12 Aug 1911.  \\
\textsuperscript{123}\textit{ibid.}, 28 June 1913.  \\
\textsuperscript{124}\textit{ibid.}, 12 Oct 1912.  \\
\textsuperscript{125}\textit{ibid.}, 11 May 1912.  \\
\textsuperscript{126}\textit{ibid.}, 14 June 1913, 17 June 1911; Holland, \textit{Labor Leg-Ironed}, p.19.
\end{flushleft}
plutocrats were proposing the same in America, Russia, and Japan, as a help to capitalists in distress. There was as much resemblance between socialism and nationalisation as between the sun and the moon. Those who looked to the state as the true Commonwealth and wanted it to take possession of the sources of wealth, the International Socialist maintained, necessarily drifted into nationalism and hostility to neighbouring countries. "From nationalism flows conscription, racial hatreds, tariffs, and many other evils..."

The ASP recognised the connection between the Labor Party's enthusiasm for "state-backed schemes for class co-operation" and its racism. The ASP, in fact, first germinated as an anti-Labor Party tendency within the SFA. The principal storm point of the 1910 SFA Conference was the Sydney IS motion, eventually carried, banning SFA members from voting for, or supporting, other than the candidate of a Revolutionary Socialist party for Parliamentary or Municipal office. Holland argued:

Our political movement exists to destroy the Class State... Instead of worrying over our inability to vote for our enemies let us rather be glad that we are sufficiently class-conscious to refuse to render the enemy any assistance whatever. Let us hasten to perfect our organisation so as to be in a position to place our own candidates in the field... Given that the IS was in tune with IWW thought and the VSP was out of tune, this emphasis on political activity may seem contradictory at first, but it was an essential component of the IS criticism of the VSP that the VSP was happy to leave political action to the Labor Party. In line with the Detroit position of the IWW, the IS enthusiastically pursued both independent political activity and industrial unionism. "The S.F.A.", Holland declared, "is essentially a political organisation. Politics is one of its methods - its destructive method against the Class State. Industrial Unionism is its constructive method." The proletariat, the ASP insisted, should try to destroy, not conquer, parliament, as reform of politics was useless. "Each conscious abstainer puts himself in revolt against the false dictatorship of Cabinets... The power to paralyse production is stronger than all the politicians, priests, and plutus put together..." The ballot would fail those who trusted to the ballot alone; the ASP would cease to be a

International Socialist, 13 April 1912.

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revolutionary organisation if it ignored industrial organisation. The ASP regarded the IWW as a much-needed counterbalance to what it considered as a pernicious trend towards Bernstein's position in the Second International. Fortunately for the workers and their cause, a new, intense, and vital movement, Industrial Unionism, is growing up side by side with this creeping, parasitical Revisionism; and as Industrial Unionism represents the workers, and Revisionism represents the bourgeoisie making a final attempt to strangle scientific Socialism, we know that in the end the people will prevail.

Those who imagined the ALP was a true working class party and the ASP consequently unnecessary were wrong, the International Socialist insisted, because "the Labor Party stands for the cultivation of a national sentiment, and the fostering of racial prejudices by advocating a White Australian policy, at the same time firmly bolstering up Capitalism with a compulsory military training scheme..." The fundamental difference between the Labor Party and the ASP was that the former sought to encourage the wage-earners of the Commonwealth to rely on pure and simple political methods, whereas the latter recognised the necessity for industrial organisation and urged the workers to organise in the places where they worked.

In stark contrast to the Labor Party's reformist nationalism, the ASP's anti-racist position was a reflection of its emphasis on solidarity at the point of production. It strongly advocated both revolutionary industrial unionism and revolutionary political action, in uncompromising opposition to the Labor Party. Labor Leg-Ironed urged workers to unite, industrially, in one great revolutionary organisation on the One Big Union lines of the IWW and, on the political field, in one big revolutionary Socialist Party.

So organised - and with our organisation built on a solid foundation of working-class knowledge - with no divisions of race or creed, color or sex, we might well laugh our exploiters to scorn, smash through the awards and penalties of their Arbitration Courts, tear down the superstructure of their legal power to oppress, and swiftly plant the Red Flag - emblem alike of working-class revolt and of humanity freed - on the world's citadel of industrialism.

The IS's original scathing comment on the Labor Party's overtures to the International Socialist Bureau was that it had searched Marx's 'scriptures' in vain for an amendment on the lines of "White workers of the world, unite!"

134. ibid., 15 July 1911.
135. ibid., 18 Jan 1913.
137. International Socialist, 30 Dec 1911.
The Victorian Socialist Party

The variegated political nature of the VSP continued, in this period, to be reflected in the Party's diversity of opinion on racism and the related issues of imperialism, nationalism, and militarism. For every internationalist sentiment expressed in the Socialist there was at least one hysterically racist, to redress the 'balance'. 1911 is a good example of oscillation, as for the latter part of 1910 there was virtually no mention of the race issue, except in relation to the debate on militarism.

When the Japanese socialists were executed in January 1911, the Socialist editorial felt moved to add to their tributes that the Red Flag symbolised equally the red blood of the 'Jap' and the red blood of the White, as the working class was one. "The world for the world's working class". And soon after, the Socialist attacked the "invariable custom of unmannerly papers", whenever a person out of the prevailing nationality or colour did anything possible wrong, to pillory his nation or his colour with abusive epithets such as the "negro convict King" and the "Japanese murderer So-and-So". The Socialist wondered how people would feel if the practice was applied fairly all round, and people were to read every morning in staggering type such headings as "The White Forger Jones", "The A.N.A. Wife Deserter Smith", "The English Garotter Brown", "The White Wesleyan Card-Sharper Thomas", or "The Scotch Embezzler M'Mammon".

However, the Socialist adopted a very different tone towards the contemporary South African situation, compared with the People and the International Socialist, which concentrated on exposing the super-exploitation of black and coloured labour and also the industrial and political militancy of these workers. The Socialist, on the other hand, made no mention of the struggles of black or coloured workers, showed concern expressly for white workers, and wallowed in anti-Semitism. The indomitable Mrs Pitt referred to the opposition to the Boer Ministry as "the paid assassin of Jew Capitalism", whereas Kruger had kept "Jew London" at bay. And the VSP was offended at some "capitalist apologist" telling an election audience that the only Socialism known in the world was that of the Australian Aborigines. The Socialist reacted to this as to slander and made it clear how offensive the charge was. It explained that Aborigines, far from reaching even "the crude Socialism involved in the idea of a nation", had not

138 Socialist, 3 Feb 1911 L.
139 ibid., 31 March 1911.
140 ibid., 28 April 1911 L.
even reached that primeval socialistic organism known as the Tribe, as the "so-called Tribes" were only for ceremonial purposes. It disdained any association with what it regarded as a backward community, by imputing that the basis of Aboriginal society was "absolute individualism".  

Further, where the IWW Clubs, the International Socialists, and the SLP were outraged by the treatment meted out to Poon Goey and his family, the VSP drew very different lessons from the case. Instead of attacking the assumptions of the White Australia Policy, the Socialist argued that the best way to preserve a White Australia was to refuse to admit any alien without a wife, to lessen the "social evil" of miscegenation. It regretted this would result in the presence of a few young Chinese, but felt this was preferable to the half-caste race that was already rising under the present conditions, which allowed the "horrible sacrifice of our own young girls". It was considered essential that alien women accompany any alien man admitted, "for the protection and moral safety of our own young girls". 

It insisted the Labor Party must reconsider its administration of the White Australia Policy, to prohibit aliens entirely or only allow in men with wives, as refusing alien women entry encouraged illicit relationships between Chinese men and white women, which was "revolting in the extreme". 

Yet only two weeks later, and with the air of an injured innocent, the VSP attacked H.S. Chamberlain's *Foundations of the Twentieth Century* for favouring racial purity. It declared the whole book, race question included, was a violent invective against Socialism, Democracy, Evolution, and Progress.

An old supporter of Mann's, G. Brown, who replaced Curtin as honorary secretary in 1911, was well aware that intra-party tension on the race issue had not been resolved in the Brotherhood Debate. Writing in December 1911, he argued:

The Socialist movement is supposed to preach the brotherhood of man. It is supposed to be a party that ignores races, colors, and creeds, and yet we find that a section - I hope for the movement's sake, it's small - preach race and color distinctions. The movement is international in character, and yet we have comrades imbued with the spirit of nationalism.

This obvious tension continued into 1912, finally arousing editorial
comment in April. In January, W.J. Baxter referred to the wisdom of the settler in "bad blacks" country keeping a gun by his side. But a week later, O'Dowd exhorted comrades to get in touch with "Asiatic sojourners" in Australia, with a view to getting them into the movement and securing friendly co-operation with "advanced bodies of political and economic thinkers in their countries". Again, in March, the Socialist suggested that as China was now a republic something could be done towards preparing it for socialism by distributing VSP literature among, and inviting to our meetings and to join our ranks, the "goodly number of intelligent and educated Chinese in Victoria". After all, the logical outcome of the teaching of Confucius was Socialism.

The April editorial was ambiguous at best. It certainly would not have given comfort to any internationalists remaining in the VSP and probably served to reassure the racist elements, as the whole tone of the editorial was summed up in its heading, 'Problems for Australian Socialism. Our Peculiar Needs. Australia Not Europe'. The main 'problem' was described as the "doctrine of brotherhood or fraternity, considered in its relation to the local doctrine of a white Australia". Also, the editorial continued, there was "the extremely grave problem of what is the right attitude of socialists towards the ruling and preparing for civilization of the... peoples of Papua, and our own aborigines". It claimed that questions relating to the doctrine of brotherhood and "these peoples" were "peculiarly Australian problems", which Socialists, if they were not to be mere drawing-room theorists, must face, "instead of squabbling about theoristic European tactics".

The VSP, then, considered the dissonance between internationalism and White Australia a 'problem'. It could not resolve this problem by rejecting the White Australia Policy outright. Nor could it see that it was no business of socialists to prepare any people for civilisation and that Aborigines were not 'our own'. It would appear that the editorial was a veiled request to the Party to temper its residual internationalism to suit the mood of mainstream labour opinion, and that the 'theoristic European tactics' to be left alone were the principles of working class solidarity regardless of race.

Such an editorial marked a significant divergence from the views of Tom Mann. Nor would Mann have approved the obvious interest in eugenics displayed

147. Socialist, 5 Jan 1912.
148. ibid., 12 Jan 1912.
149. ibid., 1 March 1912.
150. ibid., 12 April 1912.
in Party press and Party pulpit. In October 1913, a Dr Bottomley lectured to the VSP's Sunday evening Gaiety Theatre crowd on 'Selection, Natural and Social'. He outlined the potential of eugenics for improving the race and the possibility that a system of certificated breeders could be an artificial replacement for natural selection, the efficient operation of which had been jeopardised by the reduction in warfare. Following Havelock Ellis, Bottomley saw nothing wrong with schemes for "race improvement", except under capitalism, and regarded socialism as a period in which eugenics could enter its own. The VSP audience expressed it appreciation enthusiastically. It would be difficult, also, to imagine Mann publishing the Socialist Sunday School scholar's report of the Gaiety lecture by Professor Baldwin Spencer: it commented that the Aborigines were apparently savages, because if you gave them a fish they gave half of it to somebody else, displayed complete bemusement at Aboriginal customs, and concluded that "we must keep the Northern Territory and the aborigines for ourselves. We must civilise the aborigines. A reserve would be grand for them to live in".

In this period, the VSP even began tempering its attacks on imperialism, by occasionally expressing sentiment for the idea of a "British Commonwealth of Nations" and for a less reprehensible nationalism. Naturally, the Socialist objected to the fuss about George V's coronation, as did many in the Labor Party, but the poverty in England and the wars for colonies were never mentioned, and the main import of the diatribe against monarchy was that Queen Victoria had succeeded in keeping France at arm's length "in the interests of her German relatives". The VSP went even further along the nationalist track. The Socialist explained that, though most comrades were "cosmopolites" and did not worry much about national distinctions, there were also many who were "not at all adverse to having a day to celebrate the oneness of the English-speaking peoples" and "the comparative freedom of many of the British dominions". Empire Day was considered to be a perversion of the "pure patriotism" that the VSP felt was a prerequisite to its style of internationalism. The Socialist regretted that employers played upon workers' instinctive love of the land of their birth, hence its perversion, but insisted this love of the familiar could be manipulated into a worthy

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153. *ibid.*, 24 Oct 1913. It is unlikely that Spencer would have expressed such views in quite the manner described. For discussion of Spencer's anthropological ideas, see Mulvaney, "The Australian Aborigines 1606–1929: Opinion and Fieldwork", *Historical Studies, Selected Articles*, pp.44, 53-4.
emotion.

The Socialist, nevertheless, recognises that there is a patriotism which is good because unperverted... It is evil for an Australian to hope that Australia will beat Japan in war. It is evil for an Australian to be content if Australian workers are well-fed while Japanese workers are starving. It would be an excellent thing if Australians so loved Australia that they should determine that here, first of all, should the workers be freed. And that love is a patriotism which Socialists fain would foster.155

This harking back to the spirit of William Lane reduced the making of a revolution to a national competition, an ideology akin to 'socialism in one country', but before the event.

Discussion of the defence issue also provoked apologetic nationalist preambles. An editorial in December 1910 denounced militarism, but to save misunderstanding, the editor prefaced his remarks with the assertion that "I am proud to be an Australian, am ready to defend Australia, believe I have something to defend. Should occasion arise, I hope I shall be as ready to defend Australia as I should be to die for it".156 The editor, then, was quite happy to fight for his country; he merely drew the line at fighting for his king as well. Curtin, however, evidently impressed with Hervé's *My Country Right or Wrong*, considered that no one particular country was so superior to others as to be worth fighting for. He said Herve's book had removed all his doubts.157

But the doubters were many. The editor again lamented that good old labour nationalism had "lost itself in capitalistic Imperialism", as nationalism, logically extended, meant at least consideration for the nationalism of all other countries. So R.S.Ross was espousing a nationalism with a categorical imperative attached, a duty to do unto other nations as you would have them do unto you. He complained that the Party of "a national sentiment", which he obviously considered was being betrayed, was going to England almost *en masse* "to buttress and strengthen the court ceremonial of caste and ruling-class, and give Australia's sanction to piratical and capitalistic conquest under the name of Imperialism". It was the duty of the Socialist Party to steer the Labor Party back to its cultivation of a national sentiment and away from the imperial variety.158

Late in 1911, the Reverend Frederic Sinclaire, who, with Marie Pitt, edited the paper during Ross's stay in New Zealand, declared he was opposed

156. *ibid.*, 2 Dec 1910 L.
158. *ibid.*, 27 Jan 1911 L.
to defence preparations of any kind. This provoked a debate on the issue, similar in ferocity to the earlier Brotherhood Debate. One female accused Sinclaire of being prepared to hand over his womankind to the "conquering Jap". Maurice Blackburn was also aggravated by Sinclaire's pacifism, because he reckoned the attack upon the citizen army was an attempt to discredit the Labor Party with the workers, which was likely to boomerang anyway, as the worker did not want disarmament. "He wants, among other things, a White Australia, and he believes that he cannot keep Australia white without defence".

Brown, who had noted the discrepancy between the VSP's supposed internationalism and its sheltering of racists, drew attention also to the Party's inconsistency on the defence issue. He pointed out that one could not loyally support the SFA's anti-militarist position and at the same time support the armed nation. He predicted that national jingo would say he had forgotten that the Chinaman was a low, blood-thirsty, uncivilised race, and added he had not forgotten these opinions of the "Chink", but that he knew different.

The Party, like its co-editors, was divided on the issue. The Socialist officially adopted a non-partisan viewpoint, allowing both sides free play. Those who supported the 'citizen army' claimed this was somehow different from supporting militarism, and those who opposed the citizen army were either principled anti-militarists or those who feared the domestic uses to which this army might be put. Much of the debate centred on efforts of the 'militarist' camp to quieten the fears of this latter group. On both sides, much naivety about the functions of the state was revealed; the VSP had childlike faith in capitalist legality. For instance, it argued that the Defence Act should be amended to forbid the possibility of its use in civil strife. Occasionally, an internationalist note was sounded, but with declining frequency. Alfred James, like Brown, an old supporter of Mann, appealed to a return to class thinking, away from race thinking: "Australian and American workers would do well to regard the Yellow Peril as an exploded myth, and turn their attention to that more immediate peril which is white, brown, or yellow, according to the color of the capitalists' skin".

160. ibid., 8 Dec 1911.
161. ibid., loc.cit.
162. ibid., 15 Dec 1911.
163. ibid., loc.cit.
164. ibid., 27 June 1913; Osborne, "A Socialist Dilemma" in Curthoys and Markus, *Who Are Our Enemies?*, p.120.
Without Mann's guidance, racism became more respectable in the VSP, and his principled but non-sectarian approach was translated into reformism and opportunism. Basing its strategy on winning the Labor Party over to socialism, long after Mann had decided such an approach was pointless, the VSP remained impervious to the ideas of revolutionary industrial unionism and did not, therefore, like the IS, the BSPG, and the SLP, embrace the vehement anti-racism that accompanied genuine commitment to Wobbly politics. The Socialist rarely mentioned the IWW, in contrast to the International Socialist and the People, which often read like advertisements for the IWW from start to finish. Occasionally, the VSP expressed its belief in industrial unionism and addressed trade unions on the subject, but, given the almost complete absence of coverage to industrial union ideas, this tactic was probably aimed more at gaining contacts in the trade union movement than at spreading Wobbly ideas. Unlike the IS, the VSP was still enamoured of established trade unionism, and this difference was one of the many causes of tension between the two poles of the SFA. At the 1910 Conference, Melbourne favoured furthering industrial unionism by working through the existing trade union movement, and Sydney proposed the building of IWW Clubs. The VSP argued that the SFA could not afford to antagonise the trade unions, as it was convinced that, like the Labor Party, the trade unions had a "socialist future". The VSP had chosen to transform the vogue for industrial union ideas into a renewed concern for the role of the traditional trade union movement. Worse still, the Socialist made the American IWW sound like a charity for intractable aliens, commenting it had done "the finest work" among the alien wage-slaves of Eastern Europe and Western Asia, which no political party could do, as these serfs could not be naturalised even if they would, and probably would not if they could.  

Debate between Sydney and Melbourne over the Labor Party caused an even greater furor than the issue of trade unionism. Ross, as editor, described preference for the Labor Party against other non-socialist parties as "almost a duty". He declared himself at a loss as to why the Sydney comrades wanted SFA members debarred from voting for some years. The VSP majority

165. According to the Socialist, the VSP addressed the following unions: Hairdressers and Wigmakers Society (10 Feb 1911); Sewerage and General Laborers' Society (17 Feb 1911); Melbourne South branch Amalgamated Society of Engineers (17 Feb 1911); Wharf Labourers' Society (10 March 1911); Clothing Trades Society (31 March 1911). 166. Socialist, 10 June 1910 L, 8 July 1910 L. 167. ibid., 3 March 1911 L, 13 Dec 1912 L. 168. ibid., 30 May 1913. 169. ibid., 3 June 1910 L, 10 June 1910 L.
continued to regard voting as a private matter; a *Socialist* editorial asserted that the SFA had no more warrant to lay down mandatory restrictions regarding one's vote than it had to declare that no Socialist should drink beer, eat meat, or wear a red shirt.  

The split was approaching. Where the IS and SLP protested furiously at the ALP sending a delegate to the Vienna Conference, the *Socialist* boasted that this was partly due to the VSP members inside and outside the Labor Party. The VSP was reassured by the admission of the British Independent Labour Party that the International would not apply any extremely dogmatic test. It felt that it would do the Labor Party a world of good to enter the orbit of International Socialism, and publicly dissented from the Sydney protest to the ISB. In the post-Mann period, the VSP seemed unashamed that it was growing away from its revolutionary counterparts in Sydney and closer to the Labor Party, without the Labor Party moving any closer towards the VSP. "Impossibilism, indeed, is the chief enemy we have to fear in our attempt to bring Australasia into line with the International Socialist movement... Sydney's love for the S.L.P. and making of the S.L.P. an exception to the non-voting stipulation is an indefensible surrender of its own logic as to non-voting". The VSP was a political aggregation that raised its search for a lowest common denominator into a principle. In 1912, it enunciated a minimalists' lament.

Wouldn't it be a glorious ambition for Victorian Socialists to frame so liberally their own constitution as to unite under the one Red Flag all the opposing and differing elements of the Socialist army? Little more is needed than an agreement to welcome, and gladly and sympathetically tolerate, men and women of all grades of society, and of all schools of methods and tactics...

Let Melbourne Socialism, the *Socialist* announced, proclaim itself the haven of all Socialists, without distinction of class, sect, theory, or tactical view; let it rid itself of every rule and every alliance that made for intolerance, dissension, and ineffectiveness, and let it invite all Socialists to join its ranks, and encourage them, each in his or her own way, to push the common chariot along, and to illumine this bourgeois-ridden country with something like human ideals, towards our common desire, the City of the Social Revolution. It particularly inquired why those numerous Socialists who wanted to help the Labor Party should be excluded.

170. *Socialist*, 15 July 1910 L.
171. *ibid.*, 16 Feb 1912.
172. *ibid.*, 8 July 1910 L.
173. *ibid.*, 15 March 1912.
174. *ibid.*, 29 March 1912 L.
That the VSP felt threatened by the split is evident. Of mushroom parties, breathing a year or two then expiring, it declared it had had enough. One Big Party was a consummation as devoutly to be wished as the One Big Union, and, in a comment indicative of resentment of the IWW, this Socialist editorial added that, if the VSP were not quick about it, the One Big Union would be around before its Socialist protagonists were united. The VSP felt it should be the nucleus of the One Big Party and the renegades should return, as it was the VSP that was wise enough to give principles their foremost place and tactics their secondary place, instead of vice versa, and experienced enough to reconcile a workable tactic with a revolutionary position. "It is in the direction of breadth and not of narrowness, the direction of tolerance and not of intolerance, of Catholicity and not of Calvinism, that unity and solidarity and power lie". It claimed that splits were not due to differences in principle, but to human nature. "All that divides the Socialists are their personalities... What we have to learn is to give-and-take". Australia needed a United Socialist Party. "It can quite easily be done if each existent Socialist organisation is ready to surrender something for unity". 175

Yet the VSP had surrendered nothing for the unity of the SFA. It had dogmatically pursued its anti-dogmatic position and acted contrary to the letter and spirit of SFA resolutions, whenever it deemed it necessary. It preached critical support for the Labor Party, not unconditional support for the Federation, as it believed the Labor Party would become socialist. Its affection for the Labor Party encouraged a cross-fertilisation of ideas, which mainly encouraged the flowering of reformism and the cultivation of a national sentiment.

175. Socialist, 16 May 1913 L.
The Western Australian Socialist Party

The seeds of the dissension that was to plague Westralian socialism in 1912 could be seen germinating as early as July 1910. At a meeting of the Kalgoorlie Social Democratic Association, several comrades declared their support for the international socialists in the eastern states, objected to the nationally orientated reformism of the Labor Party, and recommended revolutionary socialism and industrial unionism, leading to the complete overthrow of the system. Officially, however, the Kalgoorlie socialists and their Perth contacts favoured critical support for the Labor Party, which prevented their affiliation with the SFA.

Organisationally, Perth socialism tailed Kalgoorlie, but in June 1911, the Perth Socialist Party was formed, which merged into the Western Australian Socialist Party in February 1912, along with the Fremantle Socialist Party, the Midland Junction Socialist Party, the Northam Socialist Party, and the Kalgoorlie Social Democrats. The ideas of the IWW do not yet appear to have penetrated the corporate mind of Westralian socialism. A lecture by a comrade Mills to the Kalgoorlie branch on his overseas tour revealed near-ignorance about the IWW. He described the American organisation as labourers who, outside of the fruit-picking season, devoted their time to preaching "divine discontent" and welcomed jail for street speaking, as a means of provision for their unemployed, till the jails were full. Not surprisingly, comrade Mills criticised the Sydney IS for its anti-Labor Party line.

The WASP produced a paper called Dawnward that lasted nine months. The first issue, in July 1912, announced: "it is impossible to conceive a Socialism that is not evolutionary". Dawnward said little on the race issue: its stance could best be described as reluctant anti-racism, with dissenting racist members. The editor, Monty O'Dowd, admitted that he believed the race question would be a problem even after Socialism had placed

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176. Westralian Worker, 22 July 1910.
177. As far back as 1896 a Social Democratic Party existed in Perth, but bad times drove many of its members back east, and the Labor Party absorbed the rest. Monty O'Dowd, son of Bernard O'Dowd, began Esplanade meetings when he arrived from Melbourne in 1909, and a Socialist Fellowship was formed, which included Labor politicians, even premier Scadden. This group was stillborn, but then Monty Miller and other stalwarts arrived, leading to the organisational progress of 1911. (Socialist, 9 Aug 1912).
178. Westralian Worker, 21 June 1912.
179. Dawnward, 1 July 1912. L. As Monty O'Dowd was largely responsible for launching this paper, it seems reasonable to assume that the choice of title was deliberately the same as his father's most important poetical work.
the races on an industrial equality, and reckoned the old cry of "The Proletarian has no Fatherland" should be changed to "The Workers will own their Fatherland". But when the Hotel and Restaurant Employees' Union refused membership to a Chinese chef, Dawnward disapproved. "While the Chinese are within the Commonwealth they should be if workers - in the labor movement". Dawnward opposed overt proletarian racism.

"E's a furriner, Bill, 'eave arf a brick at 'im". This is the spirit that the "West Australian" would have us believe still lingers in the workers. The "West" alleges that the Fremantle lumpers attended in force to protect a travelling showman from the resentment of Italian residents. The showman had used the insulting expression: "Dirty Dago". Turn on old Time, thine hourglass, and let us welcome in the solidarity of the workers.

The WASP, then, disapproved of hostility to immigrants already in the Commonwealth, realising the dangers of such divisions to established trade unionism; it did not, however, extend this principle any further, by disputing the bases of the White Australia Policy.

Editor and secretary, Monty O'Dowd, encapsulated the WASP's line on racism: he was an anti-racist racial purist. He considered there was an economic and a racial objection to the Mongolian, but regarded the Perth Trades Hall's refusal to allow the Chinese to become unionists as a suicidal policy, especially as there was a case on record in Melbourne of the white cabinet-makers scabbing on the Chinese union. He felt the only "cure" for Chinese immigration was better economic conditions in China, which would be assisted by the withdrawal of European exploiters; a "Yellow China" was a better policy than a White Australia, "Racial Purity" being the term that would denote a correct attitude on the question. "The white and Mongols must learn to understand and to respect each other, and a mutual recognition of the inadvisability of mingling their stock should follow". As for the fear of invasion, Monty O'Dowd considered it had some grounds and he looked "to the nation" to remove this possibility, by populating the north. He believed in the establishment of an "Armed Democracy", otherwise known as a Citizen Army, because he saw little reason to hope that any invasion would stop at colonising empty spaces, the wealth of south-eastern Australia being too tempting a bait. "However, both on this matter and on the Chinese question, views are divided. Many regard the 'Japanese scare' as a mere hoax".

Before the referenda and the federal elections of June 1913, Dawnward outlined the choice as being between a government that could use the defence forces against the people, but was unlikely to, and one that probably

180.Dawnward, 7 Dec 1912.
181.Ibid., 1 Sept 1912.
182.Socialist, 9 Aug 1912.(Interview with O'Dowd).
would. The editor's retort was that the same was true of the *Bulletin* and that after all, *Dawnward*'s object in life was not necessarily to disagree with the *Westralian Worker*. Monty O'Dowd explained the WASP would be confining itself to propaganda work, realising the futility of independent political action. "At present we are critics of the Labor Party, although preferring them to the Liberal Party. We do not consider the time ripe to oppose them". The unions were tending towards socialism, but the political party towards liberalism. "A big split will take place, and the advanced men and the bulk of the unions, together with the present Socialist bodies, will become the New Socialist Party".

Despite this confidence in the hybrid nature of the Labor Party, it was the Perth branch of the WASP that split. The *International Socialist* told the story in September 1912: "the militant section severed and formed a branch of the ASP. The old party was, like the Melbourne branch, more in sympathy with the Labor Party, than with the ASP, and considered that the IS was too revolutionary, started "Dawnward" to fill the want for something more in touch with laborism". The *International Socialist* described the new Perth ASP as "a branch of real live, class-conscious Socialists, with the International spirit". This left breakaway took 14 members initially, including Monty Miller and Annie Westbrook, who later joined the IWW, then merged with the 34 members of the Industrial Branch of German Workers. The new branch ordered 16 dozen *International Socialists* weekly, which it assured Sydney headquarters would be "pushed with renewed energy by the International firebrands of the West". Monty O'Dowd, as editor of *Dawnward*, was not amused.

The split was over fundamental politics, including internationalism. Perth ASP secretary Gibson described the *Dawnward* crowd as "a sort of quasi-Liberal-cum-Labor-Fakiration", with "one believing in a white Australia, another in Arbitration, and another in Christian Socialism, etc., etc". Gibson could not imagine anyone calling themselves a socialist remaining in the party. Organiser Rutherford was similarly contemptuous of their record on militarism.

184. *ibid.*, 1 Sept 1912 L.
187. *ibid.*, 12 Oct 1912,
188. *ibid.*, 19 Oct 1912, 22 Feb 1913.
They appear to believe that a Citizen Army has nothing to do with militarism. They support the Labour Party's Conscription Act, which is more drastic and despotic than the German Act. Bluntly, we say they are a barrier to the progress of scientific socialism. Our members are quite convinced that the Socialist Labour Lackeys are completely in the hands of the Scadden Government... They seem to exist to assist the political Brethren to keep their seats...  

Another Perth ASP comrade recalled being denounced as "too revolutionary" by Monty O'Dowd and the secretary of the Trades, who, he said, believed in "a white Australia, Conscription, Arbitration, 'a step at a time', and other Stone Age principles..."  

191. *ibid.*, 22 Feb 1913.
Just as the Sydney International Socialists had acted as a pole of attraction for the disaffected left in the Victorian Socialist Party, so the IS performed a similar function in the Western Australian Socialist Party. The Australian Socialist Party that was formed in mid-1912 around this IS nucleus soon established branches not just in Melbourne and Perth, but also in Brisbane, Adelaide, Broken Hill, Hobart, Lithgow, Ipswich, Rockhampton, Woonona, Port Pirie, Leichhardt-Annandale, Balmain, Newtown, Hawthorn, Mt Larcom, and Auburn. The ASP was as uncompromisingly hostile to working class racism as was the Socialist Labor Party, which was more slowly consolidating its footholds in Sydney, Waterloo, West Wallsend, Cobar, and Cessnock. Both the ASP and the SLP were indebted to the IWW ideas of revolutionary industrial unionism for their anti-racist stance. Disputes between them stemmed primarily from the division within the IWW itself. That this split so intimately affected ASP/SLP relations is a testimony of the importance of the IWW to both organisations. The impact of the IWW on the VSP, however, was negligible. As the remaining right rump of the old Socialist Federation of Australasia, it continued, in the name of its vaunted broad-mindedness, to reveal instinctive loyalty to the Labor Party and its ideas, and not to revolutionary politics. After Mann's departure, anti-racist influence in the VSP was inadequate to prevent the drift towards capitulation to labour nationalism and working class racism. The VSP did not heed the message of the IWW: that the road to emancipation was not through parliament and the construction of a socialist state, but through industrial struggle and the destruction of the capitalist state. It was the Detroit faction, in the form of the Sydney IWW Club, assisted by the SLP and ASP, that was bringing these ideas to militant workers. During the Great War, these ideas were to be presented even more forcibly by the Chicago wing in its paper Direct Action.
CHAPTER SIX.
DIRECTING THE ACTION: 1914-1917

War and the Workers

The Detroit IWW
The Socialist Labor Party
The Australian Socialist Party
The Victorian Socialist Party
The Social Democratic League of New South Wales
The Chicago IWW
In Australia, contrary to the pattern in the manufacturing heartlands of Europe, the war caused unemployment, due to the dislocation of trade, and, as
government and private finance dried up, the situation deteriorated further.\footnote{Turner, \textit{Industrial Labour and Politics}, p.72. The percentage unemployed rose from 5.3 in 1913 to 11 in 1914, then settled down at more than 6 for the rest of the war. (Gollan, \textit{The Coalminers of New South Wales}, p.143). Amongst trade unionists, the percentage rose more markedly, from 6.5 in 1913 to 9.3 in 1915 then to 7.1 in 1917. (Turner, \textit{Industrial Labour and Politics}, p.253). In Sydney, those particularly affected were wharfies, painters and dockers, seamen, transport workers, and general labourers. (Rushton, 'The Industrial Workers of the World in Sydney, 1913-1917', p.85).} Also, real wages were 10.4\% lower in 1916 than in 1901. Fitzpatrick believes this depression of real wages and conditions was the chief cause of the great strikes in the coal, shipping, and railway industries in 1916-17.\footnote{Fitzpatrick, \textit{The British Empire in Australia}, pp.473, 490, 494.}

Militarism, McQueen insists, was the logical outcome of racism, as the White Australia Policy could only be maintained by preparedness; he admits militarism was a late comer to the nationalist tradition, but became important as the means of keeping Australia white.\footnote{McQueen, \textit{A New Britannia}, pp.80-9. Yet, as O'Farrell points out, after 1914, anti-militarism became an avenue for the attempt of militant socialists to solve their constant problem - the establishment of contact between vanguard and working class. "In anti-militarism, militant socialists could put forward their creed at its best, capitalism at its worst".} Yet, as O'Farrell points out, after 1914, anti-militarism became an avenue for the attempt of militant socialists to solve their constant problem - the establishment of contact between vanguard and working class. "In anti-militarism, militant socialists could put forward their creed at its best, capitalism at its worst".\footnote{O'Farrell, \textit{Harry Holland, militant socialist}, p.46.}

Labor had been in power in the Commonwealth, with a short interlude, and in NSW, since 1910. Initially, the outbreak of the war diverted attention away from the failures to implement its programme, but as time went on, workers became restless. Gollan notes:

The rising cost of living, together with the questionings of the war, made trade unionists more inclined to accept some of the conclusions, if not the argument in full, of the revolutionary socialists and the I.W.W. In particular, there was a growing belief that Labor politicians, once elected, deserted those who had placed them in positions of privilege and power.\footnote{Gollan, \textit{The Coalminers of New South Wales}, p.143.}

According to Lloyd Ross, the Labor leaders were stunned by the war, because they lacked an intellectual basis for an independent attitude in foreign affairs. And the unions were isolated from contacts abroad, absorbed in daily routine, saturated with craft outlooks, which kept apart the different unions, and were full of satisfaction little distinguished from apathy, because of recent social reforms.\footnote{Lloyd Ross, "The Rôle of Labour" in Grattan, \textit{Australia}, p.245.}

Yet occasionally, the unions were not apathetic, but hysterically
patriotic, refusing to work with 'enemy aliens', a situation that made the internationalist elements of the labour movement despair. And the Labor Government was not chary about a vigorous prosecution of the war. It established a policy of censorship, suppression, and imprisonment that was as drastic as any in the world.\(^7\)

However, there is evidence that the rank and file were less impressed than were their 'leaders' with the need for war-time sacrifice. In 1916, 1.7 million man days were lost, as no union leadership was able to stem the rank and file. And this militancy grew to what Turner describes as "a tidal wave" in 1917.\(^8\) Describing the outbreak of the 1917 general strike in Sydney, due to the introduction of a speed-up system in the Randwick Railway Workshops, Campbell writes: "It only needed a slight puff of wind to fan the glowing coals of working class anger into a white hot blaze".\(^9\)

Of course, the principal cause around which the militant sections of the labour movement rallied was the campaign against conscription. Yet even this opposition to 'compulsory militarism' was not fought mainly on internationalist assumptions. To begin with, as Gilbert notes, each rejection of conscription was in part an expression of national, as opposed to imperial, patriotism, and a victory for the slogan "Australia first and the Empire second".\(^10\) Moreover, two days before the first referendum, Labor Call listed 'Ten Reasons for Voting No', of which the first was "because I believe in keeping Australia a white man's country. 'Yes' would commit Australia to sending 16,500 men away monthly for an indefinite time. Soon all except those utterly incapable of service would be gone, and this country would have to resort to importing labour". The labour press accused the Nationalist Party of insidiously breaking down democratic institutions, racial ideas, and progressive legislation, even though the Nationalist Party Platform of January 1917 specifically mentioned the importance of upholding the White Australia Policy. The arrival in Fremantle of a boatload of Maltese immigrants on the eve of the first poll was used by anti-conscriptionists for all it was worth.\(^11\)

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However, Jauncey maintains the prospect of cheap coloured labour to replace white men at the front did not appeal to employers.

In the rural districts in New South Wales farmers voted heavily against conscription in order to assure sufficient labour to harvest their crops... Some of the large firms in Sydney quietly supported anti-conscriptionists, believing that the higher wages of white labour meant greater sales than the lower wages of coloured labour, which was generally felt would replace the conscripts. Some of these firms made considerable contributions financially to the anti-conscriptionists.12

But despite the racist orientation of some anti-conscriptionists, genuinely internationalist elements were also involved. Jauncey believes the IWW must be listed as one of the factors in the defeat of conscription in Australia.13 E.H.Lane agrees.

The I.W.W. played a most prominent and uncompromising part in the anti-conscription campaign. Unlike the official Labour movement, the I.W.W. with rare courage and reckless of all consequences denounced and exposed the true causes of the war as a deadly clash of interests of conflicting imperial capitalist groups.14

Childe considers the IWW prepared the field where the Labor Party afterwards reaped.15 Anti-conscription, starting as the concern of the IWW and the socialists, became the official policy of the whole labour movement.16 The 'No' campaign was an example of a genuine united front, representing such diverse trends as socialism, reformism, syndicalism, trade unionism, and pacifism.17 Predictably, throughout the referenda and election campaigns, the conscriptionists tried to tar the Labor Party and anti-conscriptionists with the IWW brush. Turner explains why.

As its influence had grown, the I.W.W. had increasingly become the bête noire of respectable opinion, conservative and labour alike. Deliberately and publicly, the I.W.W. affronted the accepted values of trade unionism and arbitration, ethics and religion, parliamentary democracy and the monarchy, the sanctity of property and the purity of the race. It was held responsible for the strike wave, for the defeat of the politicians by the industrialists within the Labor Party; most heinous of all, it was anti-conscription, anti-war, anti-British, pro-German - or so respectable opinion said... To the I.W.W. these allegations were a medal awarded for distinguished conduct in the class war.18

As Rushton notes, the war had a radical effect on the public image of the IWW. It was regarded as the source of all those sentiments and attitudes that were anathema to a society at war: a rejection of patriotism, nationalism,

13.Ibid., p.228.
and loyalty to the Empire, and a refusal to regard enemy aliens as evil monsters. "From a ginger group on the periphery of the labour movement, it was transformed into the most provocative and vocal, if not the most important, organ of anti-conscription". Gollan notes that, as the war progressed, revolutionary defeatist ideas, which initially touched merely the fringe of the labour movement, influenced in diluted form the thinking of broad sections of the people.

The details of the persecution of the IWW is a story in its own right. The atmosphere is best captured by the manifesto issued by the NSW acting premier Fuller, at the outbreak of the Sydney general strike in August 1917:

TO THE PEOPLE OF N.S.W.

The enemies of Britain and her Allies have succeeded in plunging Australia into a General Strike...

At the back of this Strike lurk the I.W.W. and the exponents of Direct Action...

Every striker is singing from day to day the hymns of the I.W.W. and marching to their music...

Obviously, this was exaggerated, but even on sober reflection, IWW influence in the union movement was considerable. It gave impetus to the One Big Union movement of 1917, which "captured the imagination of thousands of unionists". McQueen believes that the emergence of the IWW meant that the old pattern of Australasian life was largely over. "For as long as it seemed possible to build a 'Workingman's Paradise' in Australia, Marxism remained little more than an interesting topic for discussion". Childe considers that, philosophically, the interest of the IWW lay in the fact that it was the first body effectively to offer Australian workers an ideal of emancipation alternative to the somewhat threadbare Fabianism of the Labor Party.

21. The story is told by Ian Turner in Sydney's Burning.
25. McQueen, A New Britannia, p.191.
The pace of revolutionary development in the war years, then, was set by the IWW. It went its own way and left the other revolutionary groups with the vexed problem of their relationship to the IWW, which was fast becoming the closest to a mass revolutionary organisation the Australian working class had ever seen. It was openly contemptuous of its Detroit rival and always branded it as a tool of the SLP.

The feeling was reciprocated. In 1916, the IWW Clubs became branches of the Workers' International Industrial Union, a move initiated by the Detroit nerve-centre in September 1915, in order to dissociate itself from the odium attaching to the Chicago IWW. Yet the SLP was visibly crumbling. The People was forced to go fortnightly in November 1915 and monthly in December 1915. The war was blamed for this crisis, which mysteriously did not affect other socialist organisations, which prospered rather than perished in the war years.27

Once again, it was IWW troubles that frustrated the renewed attempts at unity between the ASP and the SLP, as the ASP co-operated unashamedly with the Chicago IWW in the anti-conscription fight and, around 1916, appeared to prefer them, once more, to the WIIU. In the early months of 1914, negotiations seemed to be proceeding smoothly, but the proposed One Big Paper was not to eventuate, as the negotiations in 1914-15 broke down over press details and amalgamation of printing equipment.28 Being removed from these pressing problems, the Melbourne branches of the ASP, SLP, and Detroit IWW convened a unity conference in January 1916 in an attempt to force the hand of their respective Sydney headquarters, but headquarters were obviously uninspired by the Melbourne moves.29 In August 1916, the International Socialist referred to the "scurrilous attacks that have appeared in almost every issue of the People since the beginning of this year". In September 1916, ASP members formed a rival WIIU at Newtown.30

Surprisingly, unity negotiations re-opened in 1917, the two parties agreeing in April to unite on the principles of Marxian scientific Socialism and endorsement of the 1905 Preamble as amended September 1915, and that the name of the united party be 'The Socialist Labor Party of Australia'. But

27.Even the VSP, which had been declining, reported late in 1916 that it had recruited 60 members in one week, and that if this rate was maintained, it would be 1,000 strong by Christmas. By August 1917, it had £350 in a fund for acquiring a larger hall.(Socialist, 24 Nov 1916, 31 Aug 1917).
29.International Socialist, 1 Jan 1916.
the ASP wanted to retain 'International Socialist' as the name of the paper, rather than the SLP's suggestion of 'Revolutionary Socialist'. The SLP argued Socialist Parties could be international without being revolutionary, but revolutionary Socialist Parties were obviously international. Besides, it insisted the ASP had been wrong and that wrong should give way to right: it would be against the best interest of the United Party to retain the name of a paper that had been responsible for leading honest workers to associate themselves with the anti-political IWW against the Detroit IWW; only the SLP had consistently followed the Detroit line, so unification had necessarily to be on SLP terms. The attempts at unity ultimately failed.31

On the whole, however, the war conditions tended to break down sectarian barriers. All organisations indulged in united front work against militarism and, in particular, conscription. The VSP, which received a new lease of life through such activity, was the most enthusiastically unsectarian.32 This spirit was paralleled by all the anti-militarist organisations, the SLP/WIU being the most aloof. Although there were important differences amongst the groups over this anti-war activity, the urgency of the battle against conscription encouraged the burying of these disagreements in the interest of defeating a genuine threat to working class liberties. After all, as Turner points out, the three main socialist organisations had all identified themselves with the Hardie-Vaillant 'war against war' resolution at the Amsterdam International Socialist Congress.33

The war, as a manifestation of the most unacceptable face of capitalism, appeared to offer growth prospects to all radical movements, with the possible exception of the SLP. But it was undoubtedly the IWW that dominated the left arena. The paramountcy of the IWW irritated all the other groups, who were jealous of its success and its working class base. The IWW also offended a weird and wonderful little grouplet, the Groupe d'Etudes Scientifiques (Late 'Modern School'), located at 181 George Street West. This Groupe is interesting only for its obscurity and the extent of its detachment from the real world, particularly the labour movement. It resented the conflation of Wobblyism with anarchism and, in an indignant letter to the International Socialist, contrasted the IWW's "absurd so-called Individualism" with its own "logical and scientific Anarchism".34 In

33.Turner, Industrial Labour and Politics, p.70.
a 1914 pamphlet, the Groupe claimed the IWW's apparent rejection of politics was a clumsy, jesuitical attempt to confuse themselves with the anarchists, and maintained the IWW was an authoritarian organisation, a rotten mass of rules and regulations, with a constitution that was the symbol *par excellence* of tyranny.  

To the ASP's credit, in 1917, the *International Socialist* acknowledged receipt of a letter from Xarus Sphynx, Medicine Man and Pope of the Anarchist Church in Sydney, and in reply, paid generous tribute to the record of the IWW during the Great War.

The mere fact of a repudiation by the Boss Medicine Man does not disprove that the I.W.W. are Anarchists. On the contrary, the I.W.W.'s are men with the courage of their convictions, who, instead of founding little Bethels with weird-sounding foreign titles calculated to repel the common wage plug of this country, have come boldly out into the market place and preached to the people...  

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35. *Groupe d'Etudes Scientifiques*, 'Manifesto-Protest, Jesuitism of the Industrial Workers of the World'.

The Detroit IWW

In its pamphlet *The Two Wars*, the Detroit IWW defined the Social Revolution as a complete change in the economic conditions of the people through a complete change in the relations of labour to the source and means of human existence. Such a change required thorough-going industrial solidarity, therefore craft unionism, by its divisions and non-recognition of the class struggle, was obsolete. Only by industrial unionism could the real embodiment of the Solidarity of Labour be presented. "It is the power of the closed fist of class unionism as opposite to the weakness of the limp and open hand of class disunity - craft unionism". This closed fist did not regard the strike as its final aim, but as an instrument of defence whilst making for its goal, as it held that the working class Objective MUST be to take and hold, as Collective Property, the Land and the Co-operatively-operated Means of Production. Such a strategy for revolution presupposed absolute unity amongst workers, so, for the same reason as the IWW denounced craft unionism, it rejected also racial divisiveness.

Lay aside national prejudices, crush race hatred beneath your heel, join in true comradeship with the workers of all lands into One Great Union, for, in the words of Karl Marx: "You have nothing to lose but your chains (economic poverty and servitude), and a World to Gain". Agitate! Educate! Organise!

So, standing on the twin bases of supreme industrial organisation and revolutionary political action, the Detroit IWW was thoroughly opposed to any trace of working class racism. It passed resolutions denouncing the "unreasoning racial prejudice" manifested throughout different parts of Australia against German workers. Such inhumanity was considered proof that the Australian workers failed to realise the grandeur of the Marxian ideal, that the Workers of the World must unite to win their freedom from industrial slavery. The Detroit IWW reminded workers they should not overlook the fact that the aid of all workers of every race was needed to combat the power used against them, as it was only by International Working Class Solidarity that the Kaisers of Capitalism on the mining fields of Australia, as in every land, could be overthrown from their positions of overlords of the toilers.

When the Sydney wharf labourers followed the patriotic example of the Helensburg and Hetton miners, refusing to work with enemy aliens, the IWW resolved that to victimise fellow workers, whose loyalty to labour

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principles was not questioned, was
calculated to further disunite the workers for the benefit of the exploiting
class, who in every country foster war and race animosities for their own
gain and aggrandisement. The universal unity of labor is the only hope of
the world to be free from parasites of high and low degree, and unless this
principle is recognised, the workers whether unionists or not, will be
mental and industrial slaves and slaves unworthy to be free.39

The IWW Club pointed out that this display of national hatred would foster
strike-breakers in future labour struggles and that the militarist menace in
Europe would not be overthrown by "intolerant reactionary appeals to
benighted racial prejudices", which were destructive of industrial unity.40

The Club contended it was the bounden duty of the Labour Council to make an
official pronouncement opposing the cruel crusade against peaceable alien
citizens, and sent a letter of commendation to the Furniture Trades Union
for disdaining to indulge in "Jingo man-hunts and the victimisation of
helpless women and children by disloyal labour patriots".41

The Detroit IWW did not urge Wilsonian-VSP peace measures, but argued
that wars would never cease under capitalism, so it was the work and mission
of the politically and industrially organised working class to abolish
capitalism.42 At the 1916 Socialist May Day demonstration, the IWW Club
moved that "the only way to prevent a recurrence of the present calamitous
conflict is for the workers to think, work, and organise on international
lines, seeing that they have a common interest in combining against those
who profit by the exploitation of labor". The Club called for "the
industrial and political unity of the working class throughout the world".43

George Waite, IWW Club secretary, explained that the SLP and IWW Club
advocated Political and Industrial Unity of action to win the earth and the
blessings of Peace, Progress, and Freedom for the working class of all
races, and was opposed to Sabotage and Secret Society methods as being in
utter conflict with the spirit and principles of Scientific Socialism.
"Militarism must be combatted by intelligent organisation and resistance
without violence".44

Of course, the Detroit and Chicago wings agreed on the fundamental
importance of combating racism in the labour movement. This was because
both preached the importance of industrial organisation as the means to

40.ibid., 10 June 1915.
42.IWW Club National Executive, The Worker and Militarism, p.48.
43.People, May 1916.
44.ibid., Aug 1916.
effect change, and, although the Detroit IWW believed also in political action, it had no illusions in capitalist parliamentary machinery. The Detroit IWW was, however, less iconoclastic about its anti-racism than was the Chicago IWW. It appealed occasionally to democratic and humanitarian sentiments and even to "fairplay" in its efforts to counter racial intolerance. The voicing of such respectable notions was symptomatic of the Detroit wing's more entrist attitude to the labour movement: it did not wish to alienate ordinary workers by extravagant deeds and utterances. But it never temporised on principles. Its anti-racism was by no means as noisy as that of the Chicago wing, yet it was none the less solid and unrelenting. The occasional moralistic gloss did not really impair the class-war thrust of its anti-racist argument.

45. *People*, 24 Dec 1914, 10 June 1915.
The Socialist Labor Party

When war broke out in August 1914, the SLP had been continuing its uncompromising hostility to all forms of racial prejudice, a position that had evolved under the influence of the Detroit IWW since 1907. The SLP argued that the solution to the problem of 'cheap labour' was not simply raising wages to the 'pale-faced' level, but in the abolition of the wage system, which would require international proletarian solidarity. "The workers both East and West must organise... International organisation of the workers of the world on the basis of the I.W.W. preamble is the only way out..." It still rubbished the age-old invasion bogey, which it pointed out had been used to justify the Hard-Labor Party's conscription infamy. It attacked the white South African worker for his aristocratic and snobbish attitude to the black worker. "As long as the Black and White workers had their teeth in one another's neck all was well for the Rand capitalists". The People predicted the white wage slave would be forced to fraternise with the black wage slave, for the sake of mutual protection and to prevent division of their forces.

Certain braggarts get up and prate about the inferiority of the black, but fail to prove their case from a wage-slave's viewpoint. On the contrary, their interests are identical... White, yellow, red, or black, without regard to creed, or caste, the working-class men and women should organise industrially and politically upon the base of the class struggle... The People elaborated on black militancy in South Africa, and also in the South Sea Islands, where it said the Islanders were beginning to understand what their labour-power was worth, and were learning to organise and agitate. The People warned its coloured brothers that big ships and guns would come along, if they did not behave themselves and consent to exploitation.

On the outbreak of war, the SLP, unlike the ASP, did not express an unbounded optimism in the Second International's mechanism for preventing war, but its initial reaction was cautiously confident.

Alone, the Socialist, whether of German, French, British, Austrian, or Russian origin, sets his face against nationalities, and says we are of one brotherhood, our God is humanity, our religion is to do good, and our country the world.

We set our face against petty national prejudices, and consider that no one country is so superior to any other country as to justify the sacrifice of a single life in its defence...

How much longer, fellow-workers, are you going to allow your class to be

46. People, 9 July 1914 L.
47. ibid., 23 July 1914.
48. ibid., 5 Feb 1914 L.
49. ibid., 25 June 1914 L.
divided by those petty cries of creed, colour, caste, and nationalities?... The SLP reminded workers they had nothing to lose but their chains, and a World to Gain. "Lay aside national prejudices, crush race hatred beneath your heel, join in true comradeship with the workers of all lands into One Great Union". It noted that every capitalist country had its reserve army of unemployed, its semi-starving many, its millions of toiling men, women, and children in field, factory, mine, and workshop, on ship and wharf, dragging out a dull, monotonous, drab existence at best. "What have these to defend? What have these to fight for?..." The SLP disagreed with those cataclysmic socialists who argued the war would help the progress of socialism; it rejected the idea of 'After the holocaust, us', as it realised war was inimical to the growth of proletarian solidarity. "Reaction, and not progress, may follow on the heels of war". It believed the war could give the capitalist class a new lease of life, due to the national hatred showing itself between German and British, German and Frenchman, German and Belgian, German and Russian, and noted that in Australia, anti-German hatred was being fostered to an extent verging on frenzy. The SLP stressed that such conduct did not make for the establishment of fraternity, and the fact of socialists taking national sides in the bloody contest, extolling the virtues of one ruling class section against the virtues of another, was hardly a safe way towards achieving the organisation of the world's working class. After the war, the mountain of racial hatred and national prejudice that had been built up as the result of the war had to be broken down, and the SLP reckoned that, if workers were only organised within nations on craft union lines for capitalist purposes, permitting national prejudice to consume them through the economic positions of nations in the world market, then the present war would not be the last. The domino-capitulation of the European socialists to the necessity for national defence disgusted the SLP. As long as Russian workers harbor the notion that they have a culture to protect from the despoiling hands of the German; as long as the German workers hold fast to the idea that they have a Fatherland to guard against the ravishes of a Russian barbarian; as long as the French workers have a capitalist Republic to defend against a neighbouring militarism not very widely different to its own; as long as the British workers have a country to fight for that boasts of starving millions; as long as the workers of the world are prepared to allow sentiments, false sentiments at that, to govern their thoughts and actions, just so long will the world be beset with racial

51. ibid., 15 Oct 1914.
52. ibid., 22 Oct 1914.
53. ibid., 12 Nov 1914 L.
hatred, national prejudices, and bloody wars.  

Implied allegations that the Second International had failed to prevent war, because of its non-Wobbly organisation, became more explicit, as the SLP received more detailed information about the behaviour of the various sections at the commencement of hostilities. In an editorial entitled 'Why Didn't the Socialists Stop the War?', the People explained that, apart from the SPD being made up of Reformists and Revisionists as well as Revolutionaries, there had been insufficiently effective organisation behind the idea of the General Strike to be able to enforce it. This proved how powerless workers were with those little toy-guns called craft unionism. The methods of the S.L.P. on the political battleground, and the I.W.W. Club on the industrial field, will form the basic revolutionary methods of the new international. The economic organisation is the force behind the ballot that must be organised on an international basis, as outlined in the Preamble of the I.W.W., standing firmly bedrocked on political as well as industrial action. Ballots and not bullets, industrial organisation of the working class and not its military mobilisation, are the means by which the world's workers are going to win emancipation from Capitalism and Wage-Slavery.

In the meantime, the SLP regarded it as a duty to stem the tide of national hatred and propagate Internationalism and Revolutionary Socialism.

On the home front, the SLP voiced its disgust with those sections of the Australian working class who patriotically boycotted fellow-workers of 'enemy' nationality. The People praised the record of German and Austrian wharfies in Sydney, commenting that they were always more reliable unionists than some of the element voting exclusion to foreigners. This action was a flagrant violation of a most vital working class principle, "that the workers of one country should not foment enmity with the workers of another country, but foster fraternal international relations to organise an international working class to fight the one common enemy, the international capitalist class". It was, moreover, making a rod for the Wharf Labourers' Union own back. The General Executive Committee of the SLP made an "emphatic

54. People, 7 Jan 1915.
55. ibid., 18 Feb 1915 L.
56. ibid., 4 March 1915 L. At its annual conference at Easter 1915, the SLP officially resolved that, whilst deploring the present European war, it regarded war as inevitable under the capitalist system of production for profit, which fostered international commercial rivalries and kept the working class divided by racial and national prejudices. The resolution likewise regarded the helplessness of the European Socialists to stop the war as inevitable, as the so-called 'International' was based on non-Socialist principles. The one bright spot was the heroic stand made by Liebknecht, Luxemburg and others, "thus vindicating the true Socialist attitude towards the war and Socialists of other lands". (People, 8 April 1915).
protest" against such inhuman and cowardly action, calculated to destroy working class international relations by fomenting national prejudice and racial hatred. The People commented sarcastically that it had always thought that unionism was created for the purpose of fighting the capitalist class, not German, Austrian, or Turkish workers. It complimented the General Labourers' and Railway Workers' Association for righteously refusing to victimise unionists on account of nationality. "Class loyalty knows no geographical boundaries". And, to demonstrate the lack of logic on the part of the Wharf Labourers, it pointed out that the Australian wives and children of foreign wharfies would be "the unfortunate victims of mad-dog patriotism".

The SLP Central Branch unanimously resolved to draft for the 1915 Conference a protest against this patriotic union tactic. The Conference accordingly resolved, "emphatically" as usual, that such an attitude was not calculated to draw the working class into closer unity.

Further, the Socialist Labor Party of Australia contends that the working class, instead of wasting its energies fighting individuals of its own class... should unite all of its energies to organise into one large combined industrial and political organisation that should have as its aim the overthrow of capitalist domination of production and distribution for the profit of a few quarrelsome individuals, and re-constitute society upon a new base. The collective ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange to be operated for the use and benefit of humanity. Not until then can we successfully abolish wars and unite the human race.

The SLP threw itself wholeheartedly into Anti-Conscription League activities, with reservations only about throwing in its lot with the Chicago IWW. A People editorial announced: "Australia is in danger. At least the working class of Australia is in danger. The conscription conspiracy is raising its head and gathering all its force to shackle the workers with the chains of compulsory militarism".

This discarding of sectarian practice was an indication of the extent of the threat to working class organisation posed by conscription, as the SLP was still confident of its unique ability to lead the working class on the correct path to emancipation. It believed that, unlike other groups, it understood the mission of class-conscious revolutionary industrial unionism in the approaching social revolution, and emphasised that only the SLP had

57. People, 10 Dec 1914 L.
58. ibid., 17 Dec 1914.
59. SLP Central Branch, Minute Book, minutes of special meeting to deal with conference business, 13 April 1915; People, 8 April 1915.
60. People, July 1916 L.
consistently proclaimed the principle enunciated by De Leon in his address on the Preamble to the Constitution of the IWW: "Without political organisation the Labor movement cannot triumph, without economic organisation the day of its political triumph would be the day of its defeat". 61

Being the only correct revolutionary party in Australia, the SLP assumed the working class would join its ranks en masse with the expected disillusionment with the Labor Party. Even after the 1917 split, the People pointed out that, while the working class were honest in their belief that the remodelled Party was on the right Labor track, the new Party was still travelling on a capitalist road, still stood for capitalism, and that the position had not fundamentally altered. 62

Support for a White Australia was, in the SLP's opinion, part and parcel of the capitalist politics of the Labor Party. Moreover, the Labor Party would even betray its White Australia principles, if capitalism demanded it; the White Australia platform of the Gaol-'em'all Labor Party was a mere vote-catching puff. "Then it was the brown man and yellow chow who were the great menace to civilisation - now its the white Hun!.. Well, since the last Anglo-Japan treaty and our Eastern neighbour became Australia's ally, relations are less strained and prejudice not so pronounced". But if the Labor Party recanted on its White Australia ideal, and Japanese workers supplied Australia's labour shortage, the SLP stressed that this would not be the fault of the Japanese workers.

"Why, then, regard the working-class brown man as an enemy when he is a helpless economic victim of a capitalist circumstance, while raising your hats to the real enemy inside the land of your birth who though having a whitish exterior is corruption within? The enemy of the working class of every land is in its own midst. Capitalism - with its exploiting class, its system of wage slavery and poverty-breeding conditions - is the enemy to be fought.

The People was convinced that the complete failure of reformist ideals must ensure a change of working class attitudes to capitalism, so that socialism would prevail. 64 In his address to the Sydney Labour Council, arguing against his expulsion, E.E.Judd of the SLP indicted the Political Labour League for advocating the creation of "an Australian sentiment". Judd insisted the workers of the world should create among themselves not national sentiments, but an international sentiment, and that any party that

61. SLP, The Unity Question, p. 6.
63. ibid., 9 Sept 1915.
64. ibid., 28 Oct 1915.
assisted in building up a national sentiment was going against the best interests of the world's workers.65

The SLP rejected totally the state-based reformism of the Labor Party, which, it claimed, had superimposed upon the workers "a crowd of parasites and legal barnacles at every point of the industrial compass".66 The 1915 SLP Conference protested, again emphatically, against the nationalisation schemes of the so-called Labor Parties, whose State enterprises contained all the bad features of private capitalism with the added evil of bureaucratic methods.67 "Capitalist class ownership through the State is a negation of Socialism..."68

In short, the SLP called on the Australian working class to discard Labor theory and practice, as obvious barriers to emancipation; instead, it recommended the combination of revolutionary industrial unionism and revolutionary political action as the method for achieving socialism. Such a recipe for the regeneration of society necessarily depended on the breaking down of all obstacles to proletarian solidarity.

65.SLP, Sydney Labour Council and the War.
66.People, 27 May 1915 L.
67.ibid., 8 April 1915.
68.SLP, Sydney Labour Council and the War.
The Australian Socialist Party

In its report to the International Socialist Congress that was to have been held in Vienna in August 1914, the ASP continued clearly to dissociate itself from the racism of the Labor Party. This racism was regarded as one of the many proofs of its suspect class composition. The Political Labour League, the report noted, was practically captured by small capitalists and men on the make, who agreed in maintaining a White Australia, whereas the ASP refused to draw the colour line. It upheld a principled internationalist position throughout the war, frequently expressing such in contradistinction to the performance of the Labor Party. In April 1915, it commented that caste and racial hatred were in evidence at the NSW PLL Conference when one delegate called another a "Dago". The ASP Brisbane branch's manifesto declared of the Labor Party:

Jingoism is fostered and race prejudice encouraged. Other races are regarded with animosity and hatred, and thus the workers are split up into hostile groups. The solidarity of the working class is ruthlessly sacrificed to the cultivation of an "Australian national sentiment"... The Labor Party is no longer a working class party; it is the party of the rising Australian manufacturers... we call upon the Australian working class to organise both on the political and industrial field...

In September 1916, a Chinese, Jay Kew, wrote the 'Ipswich Notes' for the International Socialist.

The ASP drew a connection between reformism and racism, on the one hand, and revolutionism and internationalism, on the other; rationalism, State ownership, and Fabian Socialism did not threaten society, whereas the religion of Internationalism was dangerous to the ruling class. A favourite capitalist device was to convince workers they should hate foreigners. Nevertheless, distance did not lessen the ultimate interests of workers, who were all slaves to little pieces of paper called title deeds, stocks, bonds, and mortgages.

In a lengthy article in November 1916, the ASP denounced the anti-conscription elements of the Labor Party for using such a racial idea as the White Australia Policy in their campaign. It admitted the possibility that an influx of 'cheap coloured labour' would seriously react upon wages and conditions, but argued that it was nevertheless wrong to shut the door of

70.ibid., 10 April 1915.
71.ASP Brisbane Branch, Manifesto.
73.ibid., 26 June 1915.
74.ibid., 24 June 1916.
75.ibid., 27 May 1916.
the country to people whose skins happened to be a shade darker at a time when efforts should be made to rid the world of national animosities. If the workers of Australia wished to perpetuate the abominable institution of militarism, the *International Socialist* considered they could not discover a more happy way of so doing than that embodied in the White Australia cry. The ASP recommended, instead, a principled stand over wages and conditions for all, with no immigration restrictions.

The only solution, in our opinion, is to refuse to work alongside any person, be he or she black, white, brown, or green, who receives less than the standard rates. Open the door of Australia to all peoples. Widen the scope of unionism by admitting all workers, no matter where they hail from. Abolish craft distinctions and link up upon the basis of industry. Cut out the cancer of job-hunting and make the objective, not a "fair day's work for a fair day's pay", but "The whole of the product of labor to labor", and with these things done the bogey of "cheap colored labor" will vanish... to be replaced by the International Co-operative Commonwealth.76

The ASP was adamant that, although it despised employers using certain labour, because it could be forced to accept the cheapest rates, it none the less had nothing against the Oriental wage slave.77 It described the White Australia Policy as a "national shibboleth", and listed the main obstacles to working class unity as being religion and patriotism.78 A correspondent in Longreach, Queensland, complained to the *International Socialist* in October 1917 that "a blind, unreasoning worship of the White Australia fetish" was bringing his WIIU propaganda up against a solid concrete wall, as workers were objecting to the idea of having "Chows" and "Niggers" in the union.79 In December 1917, the *International Socialist* reprinted from the *Internationalist* a long article on 'White Workers Insane Prejudice', which pointed out clearly the dangers to working class organisation of racism, and argued such prejudice of white workers could only be removed by a proper understanding on their part of the basis upon which society was built. Race prejudice had no rational foundation:

It is to the interest of the white workers to join hands with their colored fellow workers to combat the mighty forces of modern capitalism. Organise as a class! It is the only hope. To neglect doing so is fatal to the interests, not only of the white workers, but criminal to the colored workers, a treason to humanity.80

The ASP also denounced the shibboleth of protection and its nationalist connotations.

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76.*International Socialist*, 18 Nov 1916.
77.*ibid.*, 3 March 1917.
78.*ibid.*, 8 March 1917 L.
79.*ibid.*, 20 Oct 1917.
80.*ibid.*, 8 Dec 1917.
81.*ibid.*, 23 May 1914, 18 Nov 1916.
In reacting to the racist trade union practices of the war years, the ASP was stridently vicious in a way only paralleled by the Chicago IWW. Before any such action occurred, the *International Socialist* expected racism to manifest itself in all its bitterness, considering a war was being raged, and asked how could it be otherwise when large and influential papers and journals were deliberately cultivating race prejudice. But it hoped for the best and heaved a literary sigh of relief when a few jingo-inspired members of the Sydney Wharf Labourers' Union unsuccessfully sought to bind members to refuse to work with Germans, an action which the ASP said would have "eternally disgraced the union". It added it was bad enough for workers to be fighting each other in Europe, but to do it here as well would be the limit of working class stupidity. When the Wharf Labourers' Union did finally display "suicidal national prejudice", the *International Socialist* was scathing in its attack. The criminal, cowardly, despicable and utterly illogical attitude taken up by the patriotically inflamed section of the wharf labourers is enough to make a lunatic mourn for their sanity... The foreign element in the unions have been characterised by their consistently militant attitude for unionism, and yet the men that have worked alongside them for the last 20 or 30 years would patriotically shove them on the industrial scrap-heap... the wharf labourers are playing into the hands of their industrial oppressors, and are disuniting themselves; have they not considered what a dangerous body of men they are creating of their one-time workmates?... the bosses will seize the first opportunity that presents itself to divide the ranks of unionists... It is time we recognised no boundary lines; no nationality. Time we sunk all our racial and religious prejudice and united our class the world over in the one common cause against the common enemy, the exploiting capitalistic brigands that oppress us to-day.

The ASP reaction to the burning of the Broken Hill German Club, to avenge the deaths caused by two Turks firing on a picnic train, was that it was just what might be expected of the horde of uneducated and uncontrollable savages who recently attacked the Socialist Hall. "When the boneheads are in the majority they are apt to adopt prehistoric methods when displaying their patriotism..." And when the NSW Labor leader Holman was contemplating depriving German-Australians of the vote, the *International Socialist* commented that this attack on civil rights was accompanied by all the worst features of racial hatred and bigoted, callous persecution. It pointed out that in Germany there were millions of Russians, French, Poles, and Danes, who had not been ignominiously deserted by their own class. After

82.*International Socialist*, 12 Sept 1914.
83. *ibid.*, 24 Oct 1914.
84. *ibid.*, 12 Dec 1914, 2 Jan 1915.
85. *ibid.*, 9 Jan 1915.
noting that in Western Australia thousands of foreign workers had been thrust into misery and degradation, not by the brutal capitalist class, but by their own flesh and blood, the International Socialist added ruefully that the fostering of primeval passions by those who ought to know better would not make the task of Socialists any easier.86

On a lighter note, the ASP poked fun at the "plute press" campaign about all the German names discovered in the documents seized from the Chicago IWW. The supposed German names, it noted, included Swedes, Danes, Russians, and Cockneys, and one of such purely Irish origin that if its owner had got any German blood in him it must be due to the indiscriminate ravishings carried on by Hessian mercenaries in the pay of the Dutch kings of England. "The average wage-slave would rather own that his father was a Cab Horse in Karlsruhe and his mother a Meat Axe in Delmenhorst than be of the same breed as the reptile, crawling, pin-minded politicians of this country". The average Britisher believed that his ancestors came right out of the Ark with gumshoes on, and founded a little Bethel all on their own, and many convict descendants, the International Socialist added in an anti-criminal aside, were the people now striving by any means to perpetuate race prejudice.87

A sad example of the 'tyranny of distance' was that when war broke out, the ASP remained confident in the 'war against war' credentials of the Second International, long after it had collapsed. On 15th August, the International Socialist announced that it behoved all International Socialists to keep their heads and refrain from being drawn into the "seething vortex of raging Jingoism", and urged workers not to blame each other.88 It maintained the Socialists of Europe were organising a general strike to hamper warmongers, and comrades Liebknecht and Luxemburg had accordingly been assassinated by the German military authorities.89 For the ASP, the issue was clear. "It is feudalism versus feudalism, militarism versus militarism, and Kaiserism versus Czarism". It assumed European Socialists were enlisting only under compulsion.90 The Anti-War Manifesto issued by the Melbourne ASP declared that the war could be stopped, if the workers realised they were being used as pawns by the money interests of Europe. It was convinced that "our comrades of the bellicose nations are at work, laying bare the economic

87. ibid., 28 Oct 1916. 32 other statements of anti-racist principle appeared between January 1914 and March 1917.
89. ibid., 22 Aug 1914.
90. ibid., 29 Aug 1914.
background of this latest financier's villainy..." In somewhat misguided enthusiasm, the ASP pounced on the German Socialist manifesto received after war broke out, but before news of the SPD's capitulation to the needs of the Fatherland. It compared the SPD's stated internationalism with the "Shout for your own side! Hurrah for a White Australia and the cursed German!" attitude. Of course, when the tyranny of distance had been overcome, the ASP response to the previously admired fraternal organisations was morosely different. " 'The working man has no country', said the authors of the Communist Manifesto, but the Socialists of Europe have been indulging in a lot of revisionism lately".

By implication, the ASP Administrative Council's Manifesto on War finally rejected the Second International and all its misdeeds. It urged the working class to concentrate its efforts on the building up of an International Industrial and Political Union that, at the declaration of war, would simply refuse to murder at the call of the Capitalist Class, and would aim at the complete overthrow of the capitalist system, thereby ensuring peace. It admitted regretfully, by the end of November, that the possibility of promoting a general strike had receded. In January 1916, it commented that those alleged socialists who, in the Reichstag and in French and British Parliaments, voted war credits, were not socialists any more than Fisher, Pearce, Hughes, and their followers were socialists, though nominally representative of the working class.

For the rest of the war, the ASP diligently supported the oppositional elements in the old International under Luxemburg and Liebknecht, and reported closely on the development of the USPD. It denounced the tendency of Socialists on each side to point out the shortcomings of the other, without examining their own part in the failure to prevent war. It did not hesitate to outline these failures on both sides, and gave warm praise to

92. *ibid.*, 26 Sept 1914. It discounted, as lies of the "Yellow" press of the Commonwealth, the first information about mid-September that European Socialists had done nothing to prevent the war, and expressed its confidence that "against war and militarism the Socialist party throughout the world is as solid as a rock". (*International Socialist*, 12 Sept 1914).
94. *ibid.*, 14 Nov 1914.
95. *ibid.*, 28 Nov 1914.
96. *ibid.*, 15 Jan 1916.
98. *ibid.*, 26 Dec 1914, 2 Jan 1915.
those individuals, groups, and parties, particularly the Russian Bolsheviks, who did not fall prey to warmongering sentiment. It seemed confident that the Socialist movement, purged of its reactionary elements, would reappear with greater strength after the war.

The ASP realised the connection between militarism and racism:

In Europe we have lately seen millions of so-called Socialists swept off their feet by emotionalism. From preaching the solidarity of international labor they have gone to the other extreme of Imperialism and nationalism, and have responded to the cry of 'to arms' with as much enthusiasm as the most rabid of racial and national bigots...

At the threat of conscription, the ASP moved into anti-militarist top-gear. It worked enthusiastically in the Anti-Conscription League, rejecting proletarian participation in the war, not on pacifist grounds, but on revolutionary.

Australia's danger does not come from Europe, but it is right here within our midst, and comes FROM THE INDUSTRIAL BANDITS WHO LIVE AS PARASITES UPON ITS PEOPLE. Remember that the main war is the CLASS WAR BETWEEN THE WORKING PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA AND ITS PARASITES UPON THE BATTLEFIELDS OF INDUSTRY. And the main issue is - VICTORY FOR THE WORKING CLASS IN THAT WAR...

Unlike the VSP, the ASP did not tail the anti-conscription faction of the Labor Party. It not only rejected this group's use of the White Australia idea, but also rubbed its entire anti-conscription credentials. The ASP insisted every Labor Party member was a conscriptionist, because every Labor Party nominee endorsed still the 1910 Defence Act for voteless 14 year old lads, and the "purified" Labor Party in the House of Representatives had assented to the Unlawful Associations Bill, which aimed at suppressing any militant organisation. When the Labor Party split, the ASP, unlike the VSP, was not overimpressed. The International Socialist simply commented that the ASP had done its duty from the start. However, in March 1917, a small section of the ASP in favour of supporting the new Labor Party at elections, resigned and formed the Social Democratic League of New South Wales.

The mainstream ASP remained implacably hostile to the Labor Party, "the snivelling wowser party of petty capitalism". In 1915, the ASP predicted that the Labor Party would sink lower and lower until it was utterly discredited, when the field would be clear for a true revolutionary

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104. *ibid.*, 17 March 1917 L.
105. *ibid*.
106. *ibid.*, 31 March 1917.
107. *ibid.*, 30 May 1914.
party. To counter the Chicago IWW's 'iron law of conservatism' for all political parties, the ASP replied that revolutionary political action had never been tried, so could not be condemned. Of course, the ASP never argued that political action should replace industrial action, only that it was a vital supplement. A 1914 ASP Election Manifesto announced that the emancipation of the working class could only be effected by transforming craft unions into industrial unions, then transforming the capitalist state into an instrument for the socialisation of the means of production and exchange. The ASP sought to master the capitalist state only so as to abolish it.

So, although the ASP in this period was opposed to the 'non-political' stance of the Chicago IWW, it nevertheless adhered to the fundamental principle of revolutionary industrial unionism. "The political field is the realm of education, but on the industrial field lies the real economic power. There lies the power of the Master who controls the power of the Worker who produces... let us organise the workers to take and hold the means of production". There were many hostile references to craft unionism, frequent articles espousing industrial unionism, and even evidence of cooperation between the ASP and the Chicago IWW.

It would appear, then, that there was no substantial difference between the ASP and the SLP: both stressed the importance of revolutionary action on the economic and political fronts. The original Detroit Preamble appeared in the International Socialist from 1914 onwards. Melbourne Cup Day in 1915 was celebrated by a joint social for the ASP, SLP, and Detroit IWW. The characteristics that explain the principled anti-racism of the ASP and SLP were the same characteristics that, in theory at least, made unity possible. Both were revolutionary organisations with an emphasis on working class solidarity at the point of production; both had complete contempt for Labor-Party-style State Capitalism and national sentiment. "The State is an instrument of oppression controlled by the dominant (capitalist) class... used to oppress the working class and to bolster up capital. It follows, then, that political governments are executives of the capitalist class, through which they uphold and perpetuate their class rule politically and

109. ibid., 17 June 1916.
110. ibid., 19 Sept 1914.
111. ibid., 3 Feb 1917.
112. ibid., 27 June 1914, 30 Oct 1915, 26 Feb 1916, for example.
113. ibid., 4 Dec 1915.
industrially...

This knowledge had escaped the VSP. Re-unity between the ASP and the VSP was beyond the realms of possibility. ASP attacks on the VSP were qualitatively different from its attacks on the SLP: they were directed at fundamentals, not style. In December 1916, the ASP alleged:

The V.S.P. is a mixture of sentimentalists, reactionaries and radical thinkers with a sprinkling of Socialists. The organisation seems to have no set principles or particular aims, both inconsistent and contradictory in its propaganda. It is an organisation that seems a breeding ground for political opportunists, always apt to lose its identity by intermingling with other organisations. It acts as a buffer between the revolutionary element of the working class and the reactionary forces of the Labor Party and the Trades Hall Council, making more noise than progress.

The Victorian Socialist Party

The capitulation of the Labor Party to supplying "the last man and the last shilling" was obviously disturbing to the majority in the VSP. The Labor Party's action appeared to vindicate the gloomy predictions of the more left-wing Australian socialist groups. The war also revealed to the VSP the danger of patriotic sentiments. The VSP stance on the war, then, was similar to the left of the Labor Party's, as the VSP still cherished the idea that the 'good' elements in the Labor Party must triumph over the reactionary.

However, unlike the ASP, SLP, and both IWWs, the VSP regretted the war, partly because it was a falling-out between the white workers of the world. When the Port Melbourne stevedores boycotted their German workmates, the Socialist protested that this was violating trade union principles, but in arguing against the action, referred to the debt to German citizens who had helped in the pioneering of Australia. "This continent has to have people or go under to other people. Let us make it a haven for the white peoples of the world". The Socialist even stated that the boycott of unionists was a violation of the spirit and text of compulsory arbitration. Perhaps Nadel's assessment of prominent VSPer Frank Hyett could be extended to most of his comrades: that he was strongly anti-militarist and internationalist, but his internationalism was limited to European workers.  

Certainly, the heartsearching about the White Australia Policy and racism generally, which the war caused, did not redound to the internationalist credit of the VSP. A racist anti-war cartoon was featured on 6th November 1914, and it was suggested by some members that the war was caused by British "racial decay" and that the application of international principles in immigration laws was disastrous for any nation. Racial homogeneity was regarded as a crucial aspect in Japan's new-found power. The Bulletin was quoted as saying that the Flag wanders all over the place, but that the Race remains, unless a country is stricken by conquest or gives way to the craving for "cheap labour" and "foolish intermarriage". No self-respecting socialist periodical would have given the Bulletin space. Perhaps as atonement, the following week's editorial reminded socialists not to let their internationalism be overridden by nationalism. In October 1915, an editorial criticised the White Australia Policy, but on pacifist-humanist

117.Nadel, 'Frank Hyett', p.82.  
118.Socialist, 22 Jan 1915, 5 Feb 1915.  
119.ibid., 12 March 1915, 19 March 1915.
Socialist, 6 Nov 1914.

War and the Deity

German Leader Passes.

Death of Ludwing Frank.

Would They Be Expiated?

From "Chicago Daily News."
grounds only. This editorial argued that, for the sake of peace, white people should accept coloured peoples as fellow-human, and that war-creating cries such as the Monroe Doctrine and the White Australia Policy must be jettisoned, if humanity was ever to steam into the safe waters of the "Harbor of Peace, Progress and Plenty". Giving Marx a populist twist, the *Socialist* raised the cry of "The World for the World's Peoples". In the same issue, Frank Anstey MHR was allowed to regret that the mutual hacking match of the white races had left Japan to pursue her ends without restrictions, which violated the rights held by the white races in China, as a result of trade and treaty. Anstey commented sarcastically that Japan was regarded jubilantly as the foe of jankerdom, the friend of liberty, the white man's hope, the protecting arm of Australia, and that the things we could not get from Frankfurt could be got from Tokyo. When 'A Lover of Peace and International Justice' objected to Anstey's diatribe, as being "directly antagonistic to the platform of a journal of International Socialism", the editor replied that space had been given to Mr Anstey's article because it was tremendously informative.

At the Bijou Theatre in December 1915, the VSP anguished over the question 'Can We Preserve a White Australia?' The speaker argued that the overflow of population from the tropical areas must gravitate to the climate which Nature had apportioned for the coloured peoples, so, in the face of this natural law, it would be best to encourage Hindu emigration to the Northern Territory, as "Hindoos come from the same Aryan stock as ourselves". She believed that coloured peoples should be given fair play as fellow human beings and that the dictation test should be in English, not in a European language, to avoid a needless affront to the Japanese. The cheap labour problem would be solved, she insisted, if no one was underpaid and if the land was restored to "the people".

The Eurocentric limitations of the VSP's internationalism were spelt out forcibly in an editorial in February 1916. "We want population, and we shouldn't care what white race we recruited our forces from so long as its representatives blended with us and aided in the building up of a great homogeneous nation. We simply can't afford to quarrel with any European nation". The VSP feared the treatment of German trade unionists might impair the prospects for Anglo-Saxon immigration: earnest and strenuous efforts would be needed to assure intending emigrants from Europe that they would not

121. *ibid.*, 3 Dec 1915.
suffer the same experiences as fell to the Germanic elements in the community during the war, as Australia desperately needed white immigrants. Australia should welcome the citizens of any and every white race with open hands, open hearts, and waiting jobs, socialise all the industry and commerce of the nation, and reward personal worth, communal service, inventive talent - for peace and not war purposes - and intellectual, scientific, artistic, and mechanical achievement with the highest honours. We would then need no immigration lecturers to chant the Commonwealth's praises in the effort to attract population; Australia would be the Mecca whitherward the progressive liberty-loving hosts of all the white races of the earth would turn their faces and wend their way, to make their homes in some part of its wide domain.122

Frank Anstey was again given racist space in the Socialist in 1917. He had evidently stated on the VSP Sunday night platform that Australia had "gone to the pack" as a white man's country, and every day was bringing ample proof of it.123 This left-Labor viewpoint was about where VSP internationalism stopped. The Socialist declared that Joseph Cook, being a portion of the wreckage of the "colored Labor Party", was gloating over the possibility of a Fusion victory at the polls and the resultant importation of a stream of cheap, servile, Hindu workers, for the benefit of the great employing capitalists who were financing this Win-the-Class-War Party. And it noted that, in America, the MPs and the press were urging the labour movement and the public to take down the barriers and let in a flood of Asiatic and coloured labour. The closest the Socialist came, in this period, to a principled position was a solitary reference to "the utterly unscientific idea of 'Race'"124 but calls for international proletarian solidarity were notably absent.

They were certainly not made by Adela Pankhurst, who severed her connection with the Women's Political Association and became the VSP's organiser in January 1917.125 Like the 'VSP' MPs, and most of the Party, Pankhurst was concerned about the suggestions that all the "citizens" of the Empire, brown, yellow, and black, should be recruited for the war, and was worried that Australia might follow such an example. In June 1917, the Socialist recorded that a large audience was "plainly stirred and impressed"

122. Socialist, 18 Feb 1916 L.  
123. Ibid., 1 June 1917. Nadel records that it was Anstey who had the doubtful distinction of preparing the most racist argument against conscription that appeared in the Railways Union Gazette - an evil grinning Buddha with a warning about Asia waiting while whites butchered each other. (Nadel, 'Frank Hyett', p.79).  
125. Ibid., 26 Jan 1917. The VSP retailed plaster-of-Paris casts of Adela Pankhurst, 15" by 14" for the reasonable price of 3/6. (Socialist, 1 June 1917).
by Pankhurst's "invaluable and long-to-be-remembered lecture" on 'Australia's Colored Problem'. In this lecture, Pankhurst implied that, although race prejudice was distasteful, it was nevertheless regrettable that racial purity was being broken down by increasing dependence on coloured labour. She considered that the peril of a wholesale invasion of coloured labour, particularly into the sugar fields, threatened Australian democracy, and disregarded the contention that coloured workers should be accepted and organised into trade unions, on the ground that there was the social point of view, as well as the industrial.

Colored people had different ideas of morality. No law or sentiment could prevent the mixture of races where masses of aliens came into a country... the introduction of colored labour would make such scenes and deeds as would make us wish we had never been born. Supposing the colored people came in, and were given the franchise, they would soon outnumber the white, and, outnumbering the whites, would want their customs and ideas made legislative enactments or established institutions. Polygamy was not a vice among Mohammedan people, but a religious duty.

To ensure peace, Pankhurst suggested the organised workers of Australia send a mission to Japan to ensure that Japan did not feel insulted about the Immigration Restriction Act and to work out some compromise in return for friendship, as whether it was liked or not, the guns of the coloured people were going to be more numerous. She considered there was no question between white and black that could not be fraternally settled. "The remedy for Australia's colored problem, as the remedy for the unjust distribution of wealth, was the acceptation [sic] of the Socialist ideal and the Socialist Party, with the recognition of the law of life as love of mankind and the brotherhood of Humanity". This finale was greeted with "loud and prolonged applause". 126

Adela Pankhurst, then, viewed socialism as a means of reducing racial tension; she did not appear to regard the combatting of racism as a necessary prerequisite for the attainment of socialism. Her vision of socialism was not only Australia-bound, but parliamentary in method. "For the sake of Australia... we should begin a Labor agitation for Peace, led by our Parliamentary representatives". Apart from the abolition of conscription, the War Precautions Act, and Censorship, these parliamentary gurus should demand repatriation to rural co-operative colonies, nationalisation of monopolies, shipping, insurance, and banking, advocate increased pensions, the raising of the school-leaving age to 17, an immigration policy that would attract a white population to Australia, and a friendly agreement with

126. Socialist, 8 June 1917, 15 June 1917.
Japan on the subject of the entry of her citizens. "The old system is breaking down, and the time for Socialism has come. The programme outlined above is just a few practical steps to the goal". 127

The VSP argued against Imperial Federation not on socialist, but on nationalist, grounds: it would take from Australia her rights and powers over her army and navy, over trade and commerce, and over immigration. 128 The VSP even hastened to explain that loyalty to the Red Flag was not traitorous. In marked contrast to Mann's famous address on the Red Flag, a Socialist editorial in April 1917 dismissed the idea that a choice between the Union Jack and the Red Flag was necessary, as the Red Flag was merely symbolic of social betterment. "It is not national or anti-national. It is the emblem of social striving equally for every country... The Red Flag is not any more or any less related to the national flag than are other emblems of the community effort and hope". 129 Pankhurst argued that national independence would help protect Australia from invasion, as history had shown that the enthusiasm for Republicanism and Freedom had been the best protection of the United States in its early days. And under the heading 'The Great Betrayal', Pankhurst predicted that future generations would curse the "arch-traitors" who were allowing English capitalists to control Australian development. 130

Apart from some semi-jingo correspondence about how the British Empire was worth preserving, imperialism was attacked on humanitarian grounds. One contributor to the Socialist confessed to see a contradiction in the assertion that an alien race ruling in India was the cause of all prosperity, whereas an alien race ruling in Australia would be the ruin of the country. Dispossession of the American Indians, the Aborigines, and the Maoris was denounced. "The white man's civilisation - spread among the aboriginal races per medium of rum, Bibles, bullets, physical and moral iniquities of every description - is a glorious thing - to wipe the colored man off the face of the earth, and enable the pale-face to annex his happy hunting-grounds". Even Pankhurst abhorred the racial presumptions of Empire-building. She commented that, long before Britain was a State at all, an ancient and marvellous civilisation had existed for uncountable centuries in India, and that England's imperial policy of extending her Indian frontier could be

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127. Socialist, 13 July 1917 L.
128. Ibid., 23 Feb 1917 L.
129. Ibid., 27 April 1917 L.
130. Ibid., 20 July 1917, 3 Aug 1917 L.
responsible for a call of men and money in Australia. "Imperial Federation is an aggressive move against the workers of other nations. If you are true to your class, you will defeat it".\textsuperscript{131}

On the whole, however, the residual anti-racism of the VSP was expressed more in humanist terms than class-struggle terminology. And even this type of anti-racism was submerged in the generalised racism evident. Class-conscious resistance to this mainstream VSP racism came only from C.W.Green, Alf James, R.G.Blomberg, and the Party's small Marxist group.\textsuperscript{132} It appears extremely unlikely that the VSP would not have rushed to the defence of Australia, if invaded by coloured people. Although the VSP applauded the anti-war elements in the Second International, preference was given to the pacifist orientation of the British left-Labour group rather than the revolutionary defeatist position of Luxemburg and Liebknecht. The Socialist referred approvingly to those whose nationality was not restricted to one particular portion of the globe, but was a loyalty requiring devotion to the whole of humanity and the recognition of all the members of the human family as sisters and brothers. The VSP even sought to make the capitulation of the Second International explicable by embracing national integrity as a vital principle. It noted that the French CGT could hardly be expected to overlook the fact that it had seen the violation of the neutrality of Luxemburg and Belgium and the German invasion and occupation of parts of France. "The United States of the world, the form of human organisation which all must do their best to realise, can only be established when nationalities, however weak, can be assured that their independence and development will be respected. Then will collaboration between the peoples be possible". There was no strenuous assault on the majority position in the International, but only a mournful resignation to the unfortunate circumstances that prompted such a capitulation.\textsuperscript{133}

\textsuperscript{131}Socialist, 7 Aug 1914, 3 Dec 1915, 6 July 1917.
\textsuperscript{132}Osborne, unpublished seminar paper, p.9.
\textsuperscript{133}Socialist, 19 March 1915 L, 26 March 1915, 2 Oct 1914. Part of the VSP's attraction to the 'Zimmerwald Lefts' in the Second International was that they represented a clarion call to close up the ranks and to forget and forgive the blunders of the war's inception and since.(VSP, Socialists and the War, Recent Authoritative Manifesto of Special International Socialist Congress, Zimmerwald). The VSP deeply regretted the postponement of the Stockholm Conference in 1917, as being an adverse reflection on the power and prestige of the Socialist movement. "Their destiny is to make themselves a power greater than any of the Great Powers, and thus to establish universal brotherhood and world-wide economic independence".(Socialist, 15 June 1917 L).
Even before war broke out, it was obvious that the VSP was prepared to fight to the last member and the last Socialist to keep Australia white, despite support for the Hardie-Vaillant proposal to stage a general strike in the event of war. Curtin carefully distinguished between "the willingness to share in repulsing foreign onslaughts" and "a license to shoot, sabre, kill, and murder our own kith and kin". Tommy in the ranks must be loyal to Tommy in the factory, he commented, but not, evidently, if the factory was overseas. The 1914 May Day issue carried two frenetically racist contributions. One letter expressed the belief that the yellow man was starting a career that would outrival England's and that, because Japan's arbitration was the sword, so must Australia's be, unless she was to be a coloured country. The writer feared Australia would be, if the empty spaces were not quickly filled, and added this was why he would go the whole hog in defence. The other contribution was from Senator Rae, who explained that the enormously expensive compulsory system of military training would never have been sanctioned by Australians, "except for the very real fear that the coloured races in the overcrowded countries of Asia were a menace to our safety, and even to our very existence". Ross also assured comrades at the Bijou Theatre that, if the yellow races did threaten the Commonwealth, he was sure the white natives of Europe and the USA would come to the help of Australia, and mentioned the! general strike as one way of preventing war.

The VSP, then, regretted that war had broken out between European nations, which weakened their relative position vis-à-vis the "yellow races". It also supported the idea of an Australian citizen army to prevent aggression from the coloured races, agitating only for the removal of the nastier militarist overtones and the possibility of its use in a domestic context. The VSP had a touching faith in capitalist legality. And, rather than calling for a revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system, as the only means to ensure peace, the VSP toyed with ideas within the framework of Wilsonian international relations and disclaimed any class-based opposition to the war.

The contradictions in the VSP's politics surfaced in the anti-conscription campaign. The VSP obviously took heart that part of the Labor

134. Socialist, 6 March 1914 L, 22 May 1914, 5 June 1914, 10 April 1914 L.
135. ibid., 1 May 1914.
136. ibid., 12 June 1914.
137. ibid., 1 May 1914, 12 June 1914, 26 June 1914 L.
138. ibid., 23 Oct 1914 L, 30 Oct 1914, 5 March 1915 L.
British Labor Party: "Why, I'm blest if you're not a bigger toad than I am."

Socialist, 28 Jan 1916.
Party was with it in this fight.\textsuperscript{139} And, unlike the ASP, the SLP, and the IWWs, the VSP was prepared to pander to racist fears to help the no-conscription cause. In the lead-up to the first referendum, the \textit{Socialist} maintained that of more importance to Australians than the balance of power in Europe was the balance of power in Asia, and for the maintenance of that, Australia absolutely needed to be in the highest possible state of defence. "To unduly weaken ourselves unnecessarily in this region of the world by a war in Europe would be a deep blunder."\textsuperscript{140} So the VSP preferred Australian workers to be killed resisting the yellow races than squandered in a war between white people on the continent. The other racist aspect of the anti-conscription campaign played on by the Labor Party and echoed by the VSP was the fear of coloured immigration to replace the gap created by conscription. A few days before the referendum, Hyett lectured on 'The Great Issue' to comradely cheering. The \textit{Socialist} reported that some weighty revelations were made on the subject of coloured labour, and that this theme took up the major portion of Mr Hyett's time and was "exhaustively considered".\textsuperscript{141}

The VSP also opposed conscription on war-supportive grounds. The \textit{Socialist} claimed conscription was not necessary, because the Allies had twice as many in the field as "what our enemies have", and mere excess of numbers against modern armaments led to wasteful sacrifice. The war had never been a danger to "our Empire", but had caused considerable increase of "our possessions". Coercion would be an all-round blunder:

A financial blunder, because Australia cannot stand the cost; economic, because our greatest need is population; political, because it will increase class antagonism; military, because it will lower efficiency and morale; and a moral blunder, because coercion, to the risk of unnecessary death, of a small minority cannot be justified by any moral principle, religious or otherwise.

Conscription, the VSP insisted, would be the last straw on the debt and tax carrying Australian camel and would operate against Australia's chief need, more population and self defensive power.\textsuperscript{142}

The success of the 'No' campaign and the purging of the Labor Party confirmed the VSP in its belief in the parliamentary road to socialism in one white country. In a debate between the IWW and VSP, the VSPer, Smith, insisted that wages had only been raised after the right had been given by parliament. "When Democracy rules, then good conditions are in operation".

\textsuperscript{140} ibid., 6 Oct 1916.
\textsuperscript{141} ibid., 6 Oct 1916.
\textsuperscript{142} ibid., 6 Oct 1916.
Smith admitted the Labor Party was a middle class party, but alleged it was the duty of Socialists to remove that influence and create a true working class party that would produce good laws for the welfare of all.143

The VSP still firmly defined its role as reforming the Labor Party; it believed in organising votes, not industrial muscle. "The executive power of the State is greater than the power of industrialism, though the power of the workers to make themselves the State, if they use their votes in the right way, is ever with them". To rob capitalism of its power, it was necessary to rob it of political power, "the only real strength of Capitalism". Ignoring completely the power of capitalism at the point of production, the Socialist enjoined its readers to think over the power of the vote and to use it to send into Parliament men of their own class, who would serve them and help to abolish the system that robbed them.144

The VSP detested the perfectionism of the 'impossibilist' position. Its evolutionary socialism made it content to work within the best of a bad lot of political parties. Rather than hoping for disillusionment with the Labor Party, the VSP warned against disappointment. It insisted the Labor Party represented a very distinct advance and that, as it did not profess to be revolutionary, it could not be held responsible if it disappointed revolutionaries. "A revolutionary programme must come from revolutionaries. Their hour is clearly not yet".145

After the split, the VSP was fiercely loyal to the left. And, always looking on the bright side of reformist politics, the VSP viewed the 1917 electoral defeat as a splendid chance for the Labor Party to recover its lost punch and redeem itself. "There was no pleasure in fighting governing Laborites. We cannot look back upon Labor's record since the war started without feeling humiliation and pain... Labor can repair all damage and march forward to ultimate victory with heads bloody but unbowed".146 The VSP even considered that the purged Labor Party dealt with the burning question of a White Australia on "unambiguous, sound and fundamental lines".147

143.Socialist, 15 Oct 1915. This line of argument was reiterated editorially two years later. "It will be a sorry day for democracy when people despise the vote... Representative Government is an advance on all previous forms of government, and as it is in its evolutionary stage will take us into fuller and freer democracy. Meanwhile, it is asinine to refuse to vote because the results of voting do not give perfection... opinion when organised can be made powerful under almost any circumstances".(Socialist, 9 Nov 1917 L).
144.Socialist, 10 April 1914.
145.ibid., 13 Nov 1914.
146.ibid., 11 May 1917 L.
147.ibid., 26 Oct 1917 L.
The VSP was practically indistinguishable, politically, from the left of the Labor Party. It rejected arbitration, but was enthusiastically state socialist. "What could be done in our fair Australia to the salvation of its people is conveyed powerfully in one word – Nationalisation! First, gold; then, wheat; next, meat; possibly, all mining". Personal relations between VSPers and left Laborites were obviously cordial and occasionally close.

E.J. Brady writes that the VSP was more Fabian and united than movements in NSW. It was certainly classically Fabian, but it was by no means united, even after the 1912 split rid the VSP of practically all its revolutionaries and left the right faction to pursue its inevitability of gradualism and its piecemeal social engineering, with the minimum of criticism. Strongly held differences of opinion were still evident in the Socialist, but unlike the situation before 1912, these were now differences purely within reformist parameters. Notably, opposition to racism within the Party was rarely argued from a proletarian-solidarity viewpoint, but almost always from a middle class humanitarian persuasion. Most significant, however, was the relative lack of even this sort of criticism of racism in the war years of the VSP. The 'human brotherhood' brigade were losing heart; Bernard O'Dowd, their chief exponent, had resigned, angrily, in 1914.

148. Socialist, 7 Sept 1917, 20 Aug 1915 L.
149. IWW Correspondence.
150. Brady, The Red Objective, Ch.12.
The Social Democratic League of New South Wales

The VSP had moved a long way from the politics espoused by Tom Mann. Strangely, it was in NSW, not Victoria, that Mann-style politics was resuscitated. It became apparent, early in 1917, that there was unrest within the ASP in NSW over the oppositional line on anti-conscription Laborites. Evidently both the ASP and Chicago IWW in Broken Hill supported left-Labor MP Percy Brookfield. In March 1917, 11 Sydney comrades resigned and announced their intention of supporting the new Labor Party at the elections. 152

This breakaway from the ASP eventually formed itself as the Social Democratic League. What was peculiar about it was that, although being orientated more towards the left of the Labor Party, it was also decidedly more sympathetic to the Chicago IWW than was the ASP, which was definitely Detroit-minded by this stage. But perhaps this juxtaposition was not peculiar, but a logical retreat to Mannism. Mann had always argued that independent political activity reduced the power and influence of a revolutionary party, as it exposed its electoral weakness, which, from the party's viewpoint, should not be regarded as a weakness, but as an inevitable stage of growth. In harness with Mann's de-emphasis on political action was his concern for industrial organisation. The SDL appeared to share his belief that running parliamentary candidates was more trouble than it was worth, that it would be easier to give qualified support to socialists within the Labor Party, and to concentrate the League's energy on industrial work. The SDL was adamant that it was not a political party. It announced it would be critical of, but not hostile to, the new Labor Party, with no tie upon members as to voting, and would attempt to spread Socialist and Industrial Unionist ideas in the Political Labour League, trade unions, and other working class organisations. 153 The first issue of the League's paper, the Social Democrat, in September 1917, emphasised the necessity for joint use of political and industrial action for the establishment of the Socialist Republic. 154

Just as the Chicago IWW, in practice, acknowledged the need to bore both within and without the industrial organisations of the working class, so the Social Democratic League adopted a 'within and without' approach to both

152. International Socialist, 3 Feb 1917, 8 March 1917, 31 March 1917; Socialist, 30 March 1917, 6 April 1917, 27 April 1917.
154. Social Democrat, 8 Sept 1917.
industrial and political labour organisations. And it appears that IWW remnants were attracted to the League, having learnt the hard way that the forces of the state would not crumble at the singing of "Hallelujah, I'm a Bum" and that the success of the campaign to release the imprisoned Wobblies depended on the industrial and political muscle of the mainstream labour movement. Significantly, members of the Detroit IWW also joined the League. The Bulletin accused the SDL of having members with strong IWW tendencies. The League was unashamed. It replied that members of the IWW were to be found in any association of human beings in Australia, save perhaps the Employers' Federation and the Chamber of Manufacturers. Another crime discovered by the "journalistic sleuth-hound", to which the SDL pleaded guilty, was the doctrine of Internationalism. The Bulletin had accused League members of not believing in the patriotism of country or the obligations of nationhood. The SDL replied that it hoped to repeat the offence and to deserve the pains and penalties attached thereto.155

The 'crimes' of Wobblyism and internationalism were interconnected. The SDL announced that it based its propaganda on the principles of 1. The Class Struggle, 2. Industrial Unionism, 3. Anti-Militarism, 4. Internationalism. As the capitalist system of production is international in its scope and operations, and as consequently the working class are uniformly condemned to economic dependence upon and industrial subjection to the capitalist class, the international identity and unity of working class interests is obvious; therefore, internationalism must be recognised as an indispensable industrial and ethical principle by all who aspire for industrial freedom.156

The Social Democrat argued that the class struggle was colourless, that it was not a struggle between white and black men, between brown and yellow men, or between males and females, but a struggle between those who did all the work and had nothing and those who did not work and had everything.157 It noted that, in order to prejudice the minds of workers against new ideas that might assist struggle, the capitalist press and politicians branded such ideas as 'foreign' and therefore no good. Workers, it regretted, accepted these sophistries, because their racial prejudice was easily aroused and nourished.158 The Social Democrat gave the workers internationalist advice: "Cast off your foolish racial prides and patriotism as you would a plague, and cultivate friendship, for you will need each

155. Social Democrat, 22 Sept 1917.
156. ibid., 8 Sept 1917.
157. ibid., 15 Sept 1917.
158. ibid., 2 Nov 1917.
other's help to rebuild the world".\textsuperscript{159}

So, although the SDL hoped to link up with the VSP and other groups in South Australia and Western Australia,\textsuperscript{160} its stance on the Labor Party was inherently more critical than that of its Victorian progenitor. The VSP used the Labor Party split to justify its long-time orientation towards the Labor Party as a whole; the SDL was sufficiently impressed by the split to change from a hostile attitude to the Labor Party towards critical support for its left rump. Such a stance allowed more time and energy for industrial agitation. Independent political action was regarded as premature. The SDL, consequently, was an amalgam of the disenchanted or exhausted from all other groups – the IWW, the WIIU, the SLP, and, most importantly, the ASP. And it reflected its origins in the common ground between these groups. It stood firmly on the side of revolutionary industrial unionism and did not conceal its sympathies for the aims of the IWW. Its internationalism was an expression of this position.

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\textsuperscript{159}Social Democrat, 2 Nov 1917.
\textsuperscript{160}Similar developments occurred in South Australia and Western Australia. In August 1917, the Westralian Worker reported that the new Social Democratic League of Perth sought to band Socialists together into a body similar to the SDL of NSW and the VSP, which would be open to all Socialists who were not members of any party opposed to organised Labor. It was to be the advance guard of the labour movement.\textit{(Westralian Worker, 10 Aug 1917).} In October, the Socialist reported the SDL of Perth was making great headway. \textit{(Socialist, 5 Oct 1917).} A Social Democratic League of South Australia was formed about the same time.\textit{(Social Democrat, 8 Sept 1917).}
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One Enemy, the Employing Class

DIRECT ACTION

[Image of a figure raising a fist with factories in the background]
The Chicago IWW

In calling on workers to join, the IWW explained it was composed of wage workers only, but that these were of all nationalities, speaking all tongues, yet all of one nation, the working class. "There are no barriers of race, creed, color, sex, age or skill, to entrance into its fighting ranks". Its members paid allegiance to no imaginary boundary lines and claimed no country except the world; being propertyless and landless, they had no patriotism nor reason for patriotism. 161 "The antagonisms between races and nationalities can only be abolished when the idea of class solidarity has been accepted by the workers. In the task of promoting that idea, the I.W.W. is the only organization that is meeting the needs of the times". 162

This claim is justified to the extent that no organisation was as vociferously anti-racist as the IWW. In Direct Action's life-span of little over three and a half years, between January 1914 and August 1917, there were no less than 44 longish articles on the evil effects of racism in the working class movement, as well as numerous short anti-racist asides, and the whole anti-war propaganda was implicitly anti-racist.

Typical of the short, sharp, anti-racist comment was "Let us rally the forces, which no language or creed can divide" and Marx's "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded". 163 But Marx's more famous rallying cry of "Workingmen of all countries, Unite!" was the quotation most frequently used by Direct Action to fill its post-lay-out gaps. It announced that the time had arrived when it became imperative, in the interests of all workers, young and old, skilled and unskilled, black, brown, or brindle, to organise on the lines which capitalist development and economic conditions dictated. 164 Tom Barker wrote enthusiastically of the Tresca Agitation: "Truly the days of International Unionism are with us, when the barriers of national prejudice will no longer divide and separate the workers". 165 On May Day 1917, Direct Action explained that the object of May Day was to wipe out the bitterness, bigotry,

163. Direct Action, 1 May 1914, 15 June 1914.
164. ibid., 9 Oct 1915.
165. ibid., 10 March 1917. In Minnesota, four Montegrin workers, including three Wobblies, were framed on a murder charge, leading to agitation in North America, Italy, and Switzerland, involving not only the IWW, but the Socialist Party of Italy, the Italian Labor Federation, the Italian Socialist Federation in Switzerland, and the Federation of Building Trades of Switzerland.
and prejudice existing amongst the workers of different countries and to unite them in the bonds of universal brotherhood.

Capitalism is international, the master class is internationally organised, and the working class must be internationally organised also. The cry amongst the workers should be: "What are you, worker or parasite?" and not that inane cry of "where do you come from?" The bosses never worry themselves where each other comes from.166

Farrell claims that, by totally rejecting all the "benefits" of the White Australia Policy, the Wobblies resolved the "problem" of applying internationalism to the Australian situation, but in a way that no one in the mainstream labour movement could possibly accept. This, he feels, was an embarrassment to the "more responsible" critics of racialism. Farrell dismisses the mode of expression of the gut anti-racism of the IWW as "crude, emotional, irresponsible and escapist". One cannot help feeling these adjectives describe perfectly the promulgation of the White Australia Policy. Yet Farrell describes Wobbly rejection of the White Australia Policy as showing a "strange and perverse enthusiasm" and a "totally impractical" approach. Wobbly unwillingness to come to grips with the solid working class adherence to racist ideas, which made abandonment of the Policy quite impossible, proved, to Farrell, the Wobblies' lack of realism. He writes:

Their escapism was in fact symptomatic of the enormous problem faced by parties dedicated to dogmatic internationalist purity but operating in an environment in which racialism was strongly entrenched and closely intertwined with the basic aspirations of the working class. The A.W.U., in championing racialism and exclusionism was simply continuing to reflect a popular and primitive creed sanctioned by the labour movement's entire history and experience in this country: in openly opposing racialism the I.W.W. had issued to the labour movement a frontal challenge which in 1915 had very little appeal to the working masses.167

Farrell implies that 'dogmatic internationalist purity' was the problem, not working class racism. And he makes a distinction between 'responsible' and 'irresponsible' criticism of racism. Surely all criticism of prejudice is responsible. He seems to suggest the IWW would have grown more rapidly if it had 'soft-pedalled' on the race issue. But if the IWW had done so, it would not have been the IWW: anti-racism was a fundamental tenet of its ideology.

However, the IWW did not discount the difficulties in surmounting racial prejudice. In an article on 'Racial Antipathy' in October 1915, Direct Action argued that, in organising all workers into One Big Union, the chief difficulty lay in racial antipathy, as capitalist exploiters were crafty

166.Direct Action, May Day 1917.
enough to use racial differences to promote dissension and check, if not prevent, the world wide union necessary for the existence of a stable, united, and happy society.\footnote{168}

On the other hand, though aware of the strength of working class racism, the Australian IWW, like its American counterpart, believed that racism and craft unionism were together becoming relics of the past. An optimistic article on 'The Approaching Revolution' claimed that, just as capital was becoming cosmopolitan, so were the people themselves. Workers of all nations, it noted, were compelled to work side by side in the same industry and this tended to break down the old national hatred that for centuries had characterised the craft unionist; the modern proletariat was to be found everywhere propagating the doctrine that the workers of the world should unite and capture the earth for their own use. "The war of the future will not be a national war, but an international civil war, between the workers on the one hand, and the owners of the earth and their satellites on the other. Masters, try how you will, your day is doomed. Your revolution has been accomplished; ours is yet to come".\footnote{169} Direct Action argued that it had been the curse of the labour movement in the past that it had never realised, except in an occasional hazy manner, that the interests of the working class of all countries were identical. The ruling class would continue to be successful in stifling the rising tide of discontent, it predicted, as long as Labour was disorganised and as long as national prejudice and indifference continued. But better days were coming, Direct Action assured its readers, for the IWW was laying the foundations of a new International that would not be "a fiction of Socialist papers", but a real and glowing force that would rejuvenate and emancipate the working class. Predictably, Direct Action was scathing about the performance of the Second International at the outbreak of war.\footnote{170} Trades unionism was a relic of the past, Direct Action insisted, and stood in the same relation to Industrial Unionism as a donkey-cart to a modern motor-waggon. "Revolutionary Industrial Unionism embraces every individual, unit, section, branch, and department of industry. It takes in every colour, creed, and nation".\footnote{171}

Direct Action noted that the craft unionist cherished the quaint delusion that it was possible to have a thoroughly White Australia, yet the

\footnote{168 Direct Action, 23 Oct 1915.}
\footnote{169 ibid., 31 March 1914.}
\footnote{170 ibid., 1 Sept 1915. For responses to the capitulation of the Second International, see Direct Action, 15 Oct 1914, 15 Dec 1914.}
\footnote{171 ibid., 24 June 1916.}
craft unionist had never had the power to enforce it, and never would. Moreover, the craft unionist stupidly did not object to being robbed by a white employer, only a gentleman of colour, and while disliking coloured labour, refused to organise in the only way that would give him power to control at any time an influx of the coloured labour to which he objected. "Contrast the narrow parochial outlook evidenced by the 'white Australia' policy with the world-outlook of Karl Marx, when he sent his famous cry ringing down the ages: 'Workers of all countries, Unite!'" A working class organised upon industrial union lines, *Direct Action* explained, would be able to so control industry as to check a sudden influx of coloured labour not so organised, if necessary, and to secure by concerted action the immediate reception of coloured workers into the unions of their respective industry. *Direct Action* considered that the worker in Australia who was deluded with the belief that his material progress would be endangered by, for example, Japanese immigration, would do well to realise the fact that Japanese competition in the labour market was just as much a reality as if the Japanese were rubbing elbows with him at the factory gates or factories were established throughout Australia in which none but Japanese were employed. Such was the tendency of capitalism with the development of faster and cheaper methods of transportation, and the only solution was class organisation, irrespective of colour or creed. Meanwhile, *Direct Action* was pleased to note that the Japanese workers themselves were waking up, as capitalist exploitation on a large scale always produced that effect.

To counter Anglo-Saxon industrial chauvinism, the IWW frequently mentioned 'foreign' militancy. For instance, when thousands went on strike on May Day in Russia and Italian workers staged a general strike, *Direct Action* commented that the despised foreigner was certainly showing some points in class fighting to his supercilious brethren in more "civilised" countries. "If the patriotic British and Australian slave would condescend to learn a point or two from the 'ignorant foreigner', there would be fewer fines and broken heads after strikes". And when the employees, mostly Spanish and Italian, conducted a successful strike at the Mourilyan sugar mill at Innisfail, *Direct Action* stressed that these men knew how to stick together and were good direct actionists. "Solidarity is a wonderful factor nowadays, and the old parochial ideas are dying out, which divided the workers in the past. One Big Union for all workers whatever the creed or

language. United, the working class are invincible". 175

The IWW was particularly hostile to the Australian Workers' Union, which it contemptuously referred to as the "One Big Onion". This aversion was partly because the AWU jumped onto the industrial unionism bandwagon, choosing to interpret the One Big Union concept as meaning that all other unions should be swallowed up into a massive AWU-dominated proto-ACTU. But it was also partly because the AWU was probably the most racist union in the whole of Australia. In a pamphlet entitled Why the A.W.U. Cannot Become An Industrial Union, the IWW replied to the OBU pretensions of the AWU: "Still it refuses to enrol within its ranks all Asiatic workers and natives of the South Sea Islands. Yes, an A.W.U. cocky or carrier is too respectable to belong to the same union as a rebellious Asiatic worker, who is up against the boss on the job. It denies the class struggle, the real fundamental basis from which the One Big Union idea is built". The new unionism debarred no worker from membership, no matter what creed, nationality, or colour he might be; only bosses or exploiters of labour were debarred from membership. 176 In April 1915, Tom Barker argued in Direct Action that, because the IWW was organised upon the basis of the class struggle, it consequently welcomed all members of the working class, irrespective of their varying creeds, colours, languages, and so on. The AWU, on the other hand, was an organisation based upon the identity of interest between the slave and his master, a denial of the class struggle. "The A.W.U. stands for the white man alone, and treats all coloured workers with unconcealed contempt. The man of colour, although working for the same skinner and exploiter as the white, is denied the right of organisation, in order to make the demands of his class more effective". Tom Barker outlined the role of the AWU in the Northern Territory. The 600-700 white workers were organised in the White Australia AWU and the 2,500 coloured workers were not allowed to join, although on many occasions they had shown stronger unionistic sentiments than many AWU members. For instance, in a recent strike of whites, the coloured workers consistently refused to scab in spite of tempting proposals made to them by the employers, but were still refused AWU tickets after the strike was broken by white scabs. Barker could not see why a white skin cast any more of a halo around the chains of wage-slavery than a brown one. He commented that the AWU was so proud of the chains that

175. Direct Action, 1 Oct 1915.
176. Sydney IWW, Why the A.W.U. Cannot Become an Industrial Union, pp.9, 12.
it desired a monopoly of them, and in attempting to be exclusive, was playing into the hands of the employers. "The Class War is a nobler sentiment than the Race War, for it strives for the abolition of chains and not for their perpetuation". Coloured and white, Mohammedan and Catholic, beer chewer and teetotaler, Socialist and conservative, were all subordinate to industrial slavery, Barker explained, as continuing profit was the only thing the masters desired. The mode of production was international, it was scientifically organised, it was callous, cold-blooded, and brutal. The IWW, therefore, stood for Revolutionary Economic International working class unity. As the coloured workers of the Territory were an economic factor either for or against the working class, they had to be organised for their own class against the employers, and as the AWU had refused to do so, the IWW announced it would. "A start has been made and literature in Chinese printed by the I.W.W. is to be spread far and wide, and by education and enthusiasm we are going to weld the coloured workers into a militant, virile organisation". A few months later, Direct Action referred to the short-sighted policy of the largest Australian union, of ignoring the necessity of forestalling the capitalist in the organising and utilising of our coloured neighbours, but added it was better that their organising be left to the members of the only union that was likely to be of any use to the workers.

The IWW was similarly unimpressed with the AWU's record in Queensland. It noted that at the start of the sugar crushing season in 1915, AWU officials endeavoured to debar the Japanese workers from the right to live, but without success. Also, workers at Goondi, in complete solidarity, including Japanese, wanted to use direct action for wage increases, but AWU officials intervened. Relations between the AWU and the IWW were obviously very strained, on account of the race issue. An AWU member objected to a Wobbly chairing a strike meeting on the basis that men who allowed Chinamen to join the same union were no good. The Wobbly was unabashed. He inquired whether the AWU member went to church, and when he replied yes, the Wobbly asked couldn't he get a white man to worship instead of a Jew.

177. Direct Action, 1 April 1915.
178. ibid., 15 July 1915.
179. ibid., 23 Oct 1915.
180. ibid., 20 May 1916. It appears the IWW did achieve some success among coloured workers in tropical Australia. A fellow-worker Cubillo in Darwin sent the names and subscriptions of 19 Malays, Filipinos, Japanese, and Cingalese, who had formed a recruiting local in Darwin. Cubillo was
IWW members were also active amongst the Italian and Slav workers in Western Australia. *Direct Action* claimed that the Labour Federation had started to publish matter in Italian only for fear that the Italians would soon all be organised into the IWW, but insisted the Federation, with its childish belief in arbitration, was too late. "The I.W.W. is in the West for good, for it is already meeting with a hearty reception from the workers whom at one time were despised and persecuted by the very men who to-day are evidently anxious to collect their dues, if not to organise them". In March 1916, Tom Barker received a letter from Cannata of *Il Proletario*, saying he would send the Italian pamphlets ordered through fellow-worker Haywood and that he was glad that the Italian workers in Australia were awakening. Broken Hill local seriously considered that all fellow-workers should learn Esperanto to overcome intra-local language problems, appointed an organiser to work exclusively amongst Italians, and nominated a Russian and a Bulgarian to work amongst their respective compatriots. The local even translated the trial proceedings of the Sydney Twelve for its Russian following. In fact, the foreign language press distributed generally by the IWW was a testimony to its internationalist sincerity: *A Bermunkas* (Hungarian), *Allarm* (Swedish-Norwegian-Danish), *Solidarnose* (Polish), *Darbininku Balsas* (Lithuanian), *Het Light* (Flemish), *Il Proletario* (Italian), *El Rebelde* (Spanish), *Rabochaya Rech* (Russian), and *A Luz* (Portuguese).

As with the Wobbly aversion to the AWU, hostility to the Labor Party was aggravated by its racism. *Direct Action* referred to Labor MPs as patriotic parasites and heaped scorn on the idea of cultivating national sentiment.
"The machine we are striving to construct... must take the workers of each nationality and drive out of their minds the ideas of national supremacy and put in their places ideas of class supremacy". 185

The IWW did not even fall prey to Irish nationalism, despite a heavy concentration of Irish Catholics in the organisation. Direct Action attributed the 1916 Easter Rebellion's failure to advance the workers' cause to the nationalist elements in the movement: "many of the leaders were purely and simply nationalist politicians, having no enthusiasm for working class emancipation, but simply wishing to emancipate the Irish from British domination; so that, as far as the movement was nationalistic, we could not expect economic results". Direct Action also commented that the rebellion showed that drilled soldiers would shoot down their fellow-workers, so the workers had either to break up imperialism and militarism or gain half the army to their side. 186

Unfortunately, Direct Action was suppressed in August 1917, but its reaction to the February Revolution in Russia was one of enthusiastic concern that it not degenerate in a nationalist direction. Direct Action pointed out that the liberties so dearly bought in the first stages of the French Revolution were lost sight of in the great wave of patriotism to drive the invaders from the borders. "The same thing will blot out the liberties gained by the Russians unless they keep some of their powder dry for their enemies in their own country". 187

In considering the record of British imperialism, the IWW concluded that the British Empire was an aggregation of countries from which the original possessors of the soil had been either driven off, exterminated by war, decimated by famine and disease, or enslaved for purposes of exploitation. 188 It recalled the Natal Government's imposition of a tax on the natives to induce them to join the ranks of wage-labour, and that when some of the police tax-collectors failed to return, the capitalist press suddenly discovered that white civilisation in South Africa was imperilled, the military were called, and the unfortunate natives massacred by the thousand. Direct Action pointed out that the game failed, because the Zulu, unlike his supposedly civilised white brother, still refused to be industrialised. 189 In Papua, similar trends were afoot. In response to a

185. Direct Action, 1 Jan 1915.
186. ibid., 27 May 1916.
187. ibid., 21 April 1917.
188. ibid., 25 Dec 1915.
189. ibid., 31 Jan 1914.
capitalist in Papua who argued the natives should be forced to work, as they were deteriorating in every way, owing to their lazy existence, *Direct Action* decided the solution to the class struggle was simple. "All we require now is a little patience and the capitalists and other loafers will 'deteriorate' themselves off the planet".\(^190\) *Direct Action* also printed a long exposé of the appalling treatment of Indian coolies in Fiji since the 1876 annexation, particularly by the Australian CSR Company.\(^191\) In short, the IWW stressed that to wage slaves there was no advantage in an Empire "upon which the sun never sets and the sun of justice never rises".\(^192\)

No organisation was more irreverent about the 'war effort' than the IWW. Underneath a gruesome war cartoon covering the entire front page of the *Direct Action* of 10th August 1914, the Wobblies explained what the war was about:

For the workers and their dependents: death, starvation, poverty and untold misery. For the capitalist class: gold, stained with the blood of millions, riotous luxury, banquets of jubilation over the graves of their dupes and slaves. War is hell! Send the capitalists to hell and war is impossible. In an 'Open Letter to the Workmen of Australia', this issue warned workers they had nothing to gain through war and the only people who did were the four or five leading financiers of the world, who had engineered the war to further their own interests. The editorial stressed the importance to the ruling class of the inculcation of patriotism in war-time. "Hangers-on of the system, the whole host of rulers and statesmen, pillars of church and state, politicians of every hue, are all endeavouring to infest the workers with the microbe of patriotism, in the name of which half the crimes of history have been committed". Differences of language and geographical boundaries that separated the workers in imagination, but not in the reality of their common interests, were chosen as pretexts by the "blood-thirsty tribe", to shatter the bonds of the ever-increasing international fraternity and solidarity of the working class, that their own interests might remain safe from proletarian aggression for some further period.\(^193\) Tom Barker gave workers the following advice:

> LET THOSE WHO OWN AUSTRALIA DO THE FIGHTING.
> Put the wealthiest in the front ranks; the middle class next; follow these with politicians, lawyers, sky pilots and judges. Answer the declaration of war with the call for a GENERAL STRIKE...
> Don't be fooled by jingoism: The workers have no quarrel with Austria,

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193. *ibid.*, 10 Aug 1914 L.
Pay No Rent, No Debts! Give the Employer a Chance To Show HIS Patriotism.

WAR! WHAT FOR?[

War! What for? For the workers and their dependents: death, starvation, poverty and untold misery. For the capitalist class: gold, stained with the blood of millions, costly luxurious banquets of jubilation over the graves of their dupes and slaves.

War is hell! Send the capitalists to hell and wars are impossible.
Germany or Japan. The workers in those countries are as ruthlessly robbed and exploited as the workers of Australia.194

The IWW urged workers to make class before country their motto, as they had interests in common with workers of all nations and they should organise together to fight the war promoters. "Workers of the World! Unite! You have no country to defend. You have a common enemy to fight!... you have nothing to lose and a world to gain". Direct Action beseeched all workers to join the One Big Union.195

Where other revolutionary organisations were indignantly hostile to workers who boycotted 'enemy aliens', the IWW was downright insulting and laid the blame generally at the door of craft unionism. The Helensburgh miners were ridiculed for refusing to work with two German unionists, simply because they hadn't been intelligent enough to have been born under the protective folds of the Union Jack.196 Under the heading 'Patriotic Boneheads', Direct Action mused how the boss must smile to himself when he witnessed his slaves, in this case the Melbourne Wharf Labourers' Union, scrapping and snarling at each other like wild beasts, and realised how successfully his agents, in the shape of press, parson, and politician, had chloroformed the minds of his slaves. Direct Action was curt and to the point. "Now then, you boneheads, rub the rust off your thinking apparatus and ask yourselves a few questions, and don't always depend upon the boss and his hirelings to think for you". It emphasised that International Capitalism would be abolished only when the workers of the whole world, without any regard to colour, creed, or sex, took over the machinery and instruments of production, and used them for the benefit of the world's workers. Direct Action instructed the "Mr Blocks" not to let a few honeyed words from the boss lead them away from their class, insisting that it was a thousand times better to be a traitor to your country than a traitor to your class.197 When the Sydney wharfies rose to the occasion, because the Empire was in danger, Direct Action commented that once again it was evident that the curse of craft unionism, with its narrow, prejudiced, and insular principles, was eating the heart of the working class movement and destroying the solidarity necessary for successful warfare against the masters of the bread. It added there was room in the IWW for any worker of

195.ibid., 1 Oct 1914.
196.ibid., 15 Oct 1914.
197.ibid., 1 Jan 1915.
any nationality, creed, or colour.\textsuperscript{198}

Displays of a lack of class consciousness often provoked the IWW into impatient revolutionary arrogance. When Townsville workers persecuted four fellow German workers, \textit{Direct Action} informed them:

It is simply because you are so stupid and ignorant and do not understand your position in society... We will help you, with all your faults, to think this matter out, and organise you on a solid basis on the lines of the class struggle, where the workers will not fight in sections, but as a class.

We, the wise ones, who object to this system of legalised plunder, will very shortly form a local of the I.W.W. in Townsville, and it is up to you, "Mr Blocks", to get rid of your stone age ideas and come along and join in the fight for freedom.\textsuperscript{199}

This patronising vanguardism probably did not endear the IWW to the average Townsville 'bonehead', but it cannot be denied that the Wobblies stuck to principle to the point of insolence. They preferred to batter home their internationalist ideology, even at the risk of alienating the boneheads; they could not conceal their contempt for the "mugs" who allowed their opinions to be manufactured for them by priests, parsons, politicians, newspapers, schools, and so on. They groped instinctively towards a recognition of the problem of hegemony. "The proletariat holds the same opinions as the capitalist class in spite of the fact that their interests are not identical". The IWW realised that while the ruling class controlled schools, churches, and press, it was impossible for most workers to think for themselves. Reflecting on this "scientific course of stultification", \textit{Direct Action} was not surprised that droves of gulled workers could be found willing to don the uniform of slavery and wholesale murder and rush to the aid of the master class by slaughtering their foreign-class-brothers, others of their own class.\textsuperscript{200}

We have not penetrated... far enough into the enemy's country to overthrow capitalism. The ignorant worker is the soldier we have to overcome; him we conquer by the appeal of reason... An industrial International must in very nature overleap the narrow parochial spirit upon which patriotism is built... This solidarity in industry evokes a new spirit in the working class, which finds expression in the sentiment: "The world is my country; the workers of the world my countrymen"...\textsuperscript{201}

The IWW appreciated the need to counter capitalist ideology as well as capitalist power, a realisation shared in varying degrees by all the socialist groups of the time. Militarism, like racism, was a threat to working class advancement at both the ideological and practical levels.

\textsuperscript{198}\textit{Direct Action}, 1 Jan 1915.
\textsuperscript{199}\textit{ibid.}, 1 June 1915.
\textsuperscript{200}\textit{ibid.}, 15 May 1915.
\textsuperscript{201}\textit{ibid.}, 24 June 1916.
"Australian Trade Unionists, your patriotism prolongs the war and helps British capitalists to crush the unions of your fellow-workers in England. Be true to your class, stay at home and organise industrially, the only way of safeguarding the interests of the workers". The IWW argued that, apart from the obvious opportunities for making vast profits, the war was useful to the capitalist class as a means of keeping down surplus population, creating divisions among workers, and checking their rising aspirations. If another world war ever occurred, Direct Action considered it would undeniably be partly the fault of the proletarian "advance guard", through its failure to point out the lessons that the present war taught.

These lessons were essentially the dangers of allowing divisions to occur in the international proletarian army and not engaging in continual militant struggles. The IWW did not expect a rejuvenated International to arise phoenix-like out of the ashes of the Second. It predicted the emergence of a new IWW International, which would be properly organised, unlike the First, and revolutionary, unlike the Second, which had revealed the shortcomings of "political Socialism". Tom Barker argued the only way to avert war was for the international working class to pick up the broken threads of their organisation when the war was over and to trust only their force as a concrete organisation throughout the world; the future lay with the working class itself and was not in the hands of the gods, arbitrationists, politicians or others, as Adela Pankhurst believed. The overcoming of racism was to be both a method and an aim of the new order.

It is from the working class that the final word will come that will settle war for all time. We shall go back to our homes and rest assured that no more will they become ashes at the bidding of a sordid master class. For we shall stop war, and shall put by racial hatred and prejudice for the International Solidarity of Labor. We shall in the future society be all workers, working for the common good, and war shall be relegated to the dark ages of barbarism.

On a scurrilous note, the IWW advised the "patriotic mugs" who were anxious to go to the front, but were rejected as unfit, to fight against the laws that debarred them, in the hope that this would rid the country of every mug and leave the intelligent men behind for the One Big Union propagandist.

202. Direct Action, 1 June 1915.
203. ibid., 1 April 1916.
204. ibid., 29 April 1916.
205. ibid., 1 June 1915.
206. ibid., 15 July 1916.
207. ibid., 10 Feb 1917, 27 Nov 1915.
208. ibid., 5 Aug 1916.
209. ibid., May Day 1915.
The IWW attitude to conscription was that it was a "mighty weapon" in the hands of the master class, hence, it had to be faced, grappled with, and fought. In an article in July 1916, urging a general strike against conscription, Direct Action insisted conscription was wanted, not for military service for the duration of the war, but for Industrial Slavery.

But the IWW stood out firmly against any use of racial sentiment in the 'No' campaign. This did not mean that it denied the likelihood that conscription would assist the importation of "unfortunates" with the object of lowering the standard of working class life. Yet the IWW was careful to emphasise that the objection was to the indenturing, not the colour, of this labour. When the trade union movement became concerned in October 1916 about a boatload of Maltese immigrants, probably "lured to Australia under false pretences", the IWW line was that, if it could be proven these men were indentured labour, the unionists were right to be angry, but it feared there was a good deal of racial hatred at the bottom of the cry against the Maltese. The IWW argued that the vexed question of Maltese labour would not be settled by boycotting a few Maltese, because they happened to be Maltese. It felt the "only logical solution" was to accept the Maltese as fellow labourers, provided they were prepared to stand out for the same conditions. The IWW was confident they would, as the Maltese was at heart a unionist with a better spirit of camaraderie than many pence card unionists. Direct Action called on the labour movement not to abuse a few unfortunate Maltese.

The Direct Action that appeared on the day of the first referendum took up a clearly anti-racist position and sought to dissociate the IWW from the simple anti-conscriptionists who wanted to rely on a voluntary system to win the war for the master class, because they wanted to keep Australia white.

The I.W.W. does not object to colored labor, simply because it is colored labor, nor does it oppose conscription merely because the introduction of cheap labor is the motive, but we attack it because it will deprive us of the right to educate and organise our class-brothers, be they black, white or brown, for the overthrow of the Capitalist system. Our outlook is an...

211.Senator Pearce, Minister for Defence, had said no more could be sent away than at present, even with conscription, and the British Government had just stated they did not require any munitions from Australia. (Direct Action, 22 July 1916).
213.ibid., 20 May 1916.
214.ibid., 14 Oct 1916.
international one, recognising no country but the world, and no races but masters and slaves. Our mission is to organise the world's slave class. We are ANTI-CAPITALISM, and being so are anti-everything that makes for the perpetuation of the system.215

After the campaign was over, it published a letter from an 'Agnostic International Socialist', a letter misinterpreted by Farrell,216 remarking on the introduction into an otherwise great campaign of the ancient bogey of race hatred. The author of the letter was in no doubt that the anti-conscription speakers who used that bogey as a weapon to fight conscription probably met with a fair measure of success. "But", the writer was confident of the IWW, "I think, you will agree with me that race hatred keeps the workers separated, and the churches keep them ignorant. A combination of the two coils has for ages blighted the brains of the workers..."217

Rushton implies that the anti-racism of the IWW was its only un-Australian characteristic. Just as he regards the IWW in the USA as a belated expression of American frontier radicalism, so he locates the Australian Wobblies in the masculine bush ethos of mateship and rugged individualism. He incorporates them into the Australian Legend. "In only one important area did the I.W.W. ethos differ from the tradition that helped to mould it. The I.W.W.'s genuine internationalism provided a marked contrast to the typical Australian nationalism and narrow racist outlook which, according to Ward, was intensified from the time of the gold rushes".218 He argues that the war stimulated IWW ideology, as it forced the IWW to develop and make explicit the basis, nature, and effects of patriotism and nationalism, the function of imperialism, the importance to the worker of a true internationalism, and the awareness that the proletariat must be anti-racist. He claims the IWW was the only segment of the labour movement that was not afraid of the "yellow peril" and that its internationalism was derived from its revolutionary ideology.219 But the ASP and the SLP were also undaunted by the 'yellow peril', and the SLP was racist, though verbally revolutionary, in its early days. What is true is that the anti-racism of the ASP and the SLP sprang from their acceptance of the IWW's revolutionary method - the organisational principle of industrial unionism.

Rushton maintains that no one used the word organisation more frequently than the IWW, but that no one practised it less. This misses the point. The IWW in Australia did not harbour the illusion that it was ready to organise Australian workers into the One Big Union; it was still in the stage of forming 'recruiting locals', not establishing a dual union structure. It saw its role as being to impress workers with the need for better organisation, in other words, to use the word 'organisation' frequently. As Bedford points out, the term 'industrial unionism' was both the organisational procedure of the IWW and the philosophy of its members. Even if Rushton is right about IWW practice, its enthusiasm for organisation, in theory, is obviously the key to its anti-racism.

Organisation was fundamental to the IWW, as any division or divisive ideas would prejudice the effectiveness of the fight against the ruthlessly efficient state. The very concept of the One Big Union implied the necessity for absolute unity. The Wobblies recognised the strength of the capitalist system and sought to create a unified, disciplined, and centralised counter-force by combatting all capitalist and craft union ideology aimed at segmenting the workforce, ideologically, and all capitalist and craft union practice aimed at segmenting the workforce, in practice. The Preamble stated:

We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the evergrowing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping to defeat one another in wage wars... These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organisation formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

The IWW aimed at creating a totally new union structure, but while espousing this 'dual unionism', the Australian IWW recognised the need to spread its ideas by working within the existing trade unions. But in 'boring from within', the IWW never contemplated transforming the union.

221. Direct Action, 10 June 1916. Tom Barker admits the IWW never became in any sense an industrial union, but claims the IWW was "an outside influence on the unions through their membership. Our ideas were propounded and made to stick at the branch meetings of the unions and our influence there was very considerable". (Fry, Tom Barker and the I.W.W., p.20). This reluctant practice of 'boring from within', which was not pursued by the American IWW, was common sense in a relatively well-organised labour movement, and where the IWW, compared to the US, was relatively unorganised.
itself, as this was considered impossible; it aimed, rather, at recruiting rank and file militants and spreading the Wobbly gospel of organisation as the key to emancipation. Talking about organisation was not the opposite to organising in practice, as Rushton appears to think: it was its prerequisite. Education about the system and the consequent need for organisation had to precede, or at least accompany, actual organising activity. The IWW did not consider objective economic interests as a sufficient basis for proletarian organisation. A change in consciousness was also essential; the class had to become a class for itself. Direct Action explained that, until workers understood the fundamental facts of their existence, there could be no cohesion, purpose, or collective will. Knowledge was the key to power. Anti-racism was obviously a basic aspect of this requisite knowledge, and the IWW pushed anti-racism as an essential component of its educative programme. The IWW believed it was its function to educate the workers of the world into right ideas concerning the economic relationship of the workers of the world. "First, education; second, organisation; and finally, emancipation". Education was about the need for organisation; emancipation was about the organisation of the whole of society into the One Big Union, the Wobbly version of 'the administration of things'.

Part of the Wobbly indictment against trade unionism was that it did not educate the class and even promoted ideas such as racism, which positively retarded the development of class-consciousness. The IWW argued the capitalist system could not be challenged until the working class became class-conscious and saw itself as one class and saw its class power. Revolutionary industrial unionism was to be the expression of this growing class consciousness. The projected One Big Union, with its rallying cry of "an injury to one an injury to all", could be seen in its pre-emancipatory phase before the inclusion of the rest of society, as the ultimate realisation of the working class as a class-for-itself. Childe is incorrect to claim that the IWW did not consider it possible or necessary to convert a majority of workers to its creed, as it believed that a class conscious minority could carry along with them the inert mass of boneheads. On the contrary, the IWW saw the boneheads as a deadweight who had to be educated before revolutionary industrial organisation, and therefore emancipation, was possible. Internationalism was obviously part of this necessary

222 Direct Action, 15 June 1915.
223 ibid., 11 Dec 1915.
224 ibid., 12 May 1917.
education for boneheads, who were invariably portrayed as patriotic mugs and boss-lovers. The IWW aimed to conquer the ignorant worker by the appeal of reason. In this battle, it went armed with Marxist theory. And it was on the basis of Marxist economics, with a peculiarly Wobbly twist, that the IWW argued against immigration restriction.

The arrival in this country every year, of thousands of immigrants, is thought by the average wage-slave to be the cause of unemployment, but they forget that this curse is world-wide, and that these workers have themselves been forced to leave the land of their birth by the unemployment existing there...

The real cause of unemployment is because the workers have not reduced the hours of their labor in proportion to the productivity of the machine... It makes "suckers" of the employed and scabs of the unemployed.

The solution was Industrial Unionism: to organise wage workers so they could shorten hours, slow down on the job, and restrict out-put by systematic sabotage, and so provide more work for the jobless, which would automatically raise wages and better conditions of all workers.

Of course, the IWW made the usual points about the uses to which immigration was put by capitalists, and disparaged the 'Paradise of Labour' lies made by politicians on their annual ramblings abroad and the "decaying advertisements" in the foreign press. The IWW insisted there was no country under the sun where the working class enjoyed life to the fullest extent.

So, just as the IWW sought to counter working class racism, it also attempted to direct proletarian grievance away from blaming superficialities like immigration and towards blaming capitalism. Part of this whole education was a consistent debunking of the Labor Party for pandering to nationalist and racial prejudices in enunciating its White Australia policies, supporting the jingo imperialism of Britain, and calling on the workers of Australia to murder their fellow-workers of Central Europe in the interests of the capitalist class. The extent to which workers kow-towed to the Labor Party infuriated the Wobblies. Tom Barker complained that the working class would tolerate more oppression from their "own" party than they would from the declared political party of the employers. For instance, the Labor Party had sold arbitration to the workers, which not only prevented workers bettering their conditions and made criminals of strikers, but also sanctioned the unlimited right of employers to exploit and remain dominant

228. Direct Action, 15 May 1914.
229. ibid., 1 June 1914, 15 June 1914, 15 July 1916.
230. ibid., 9 Oct 1915.
ALL GOVERNMENTS ARE CONTROLLED BY THE CAPITALISTS, WHETHER CONSERVATIVE, LIBERALS, LABORITES, OR SOCIALISTS. THE WORKERS COMBINED INTO ONE BIG UNION CAN ALONE DICTATE TERMS TO THE CAPITALIST, BECAUSE ON THE SURPLUS PRODUCT OF LABOR, IS BASED THE SYSTEM OF EXPLOITATION. ORGANISE, YE WORKERS, FOR THE MASTERY OF THE WORKSHOP, OF INDUSTRY, OF SOCIETY.

*Direct Action*, 1 Aug 1914.
over the working class. The pernicious effect of arbitration was both material and ideological: "The Arbitration Court has bled the pockets and befogged the minds of the Australian workers...". Nor was the Labor Party's version of socialism anything other than state managed capitalism, the IWW argued. And this was not even a step towards socialism, as the IWW insisted that the transition from capitalism to socialism could not be effected through government ownership, which was not even a buying-out of capitalism, but a bailing-out, a help to capitalists in distress. After all, the IWW reminded workers, the function of the class state was simply to perpetuate plutocratic power, the state being one gigantic scheme of oppression and exploitation. The nature of the state was crystal-clear to the IWW. "The State does not represent society, but only tries to administer things in the interests of the ruling minority".

But, though recognising the true nature of the state, the IWW was not hostile to reforms under capitalism, as long as these were not regarded as sufficient, and were the result of a working class victory and not a gift from above. Particularly, the amelioration of the material exploitation of the proletariat was regarded as progress. Any diminution in surplus value, or betterment of pay and conditions, was an advance and a step towards ultimate victory. Revolutions, the Wobblies realised, were not made by a demoralised and beaten working class, but by a working class on the offensive, continually making demands on their employers. Memory of victory would provoke new demands, and each little battle would strengthen the organisation and build a revolutionary movement by the changing consciousness of the workers in struggle. The IWW did not depend on theory alone, but also on economic necessity, to persuade the workers into industrial unionism. The worker's brain was best reached through his stomach: "the appeal to his sense of solidarity is apt to be most successful if it is made to the stomach first, then to his intelligence...". The militant thread in Australian unionism was drawn into revolutionary politics by this economist tactic.

231. *Direct Action*, 15 June 1914, 1 Jan 1915 L.
Apart from making life more bearable for workers, reforms were also an important component of the IWW strategy for revolution. This was because revolution was to be the result, not of a forcible seizure of state power or the winning of an election, but of mass proletarian organisation. The building of the One Big Union presupposed the formation of the proletariat as a class-for-itself, a process dependent upon the propagation of class-conscious ideas and their successful application in class struggle, in the winning of reforms in the pre-revolutionary era. The recognition of the mutual interdependence of class consciousness and class struggle was at the heart of the IWW strategy for revolution. Obviously there was no room for racism in such a scheme. Correct theory and successful practice would encourage the organisation of the workers into One Big Union. Opposition to racism was necessary to form the One Big Union, and the One Big Union would not be complete without the workers of all nationalities and races. This One Big Union was, in essence, the revolution itself; the general strike merely celebrated the completion of the revolution, as it would formally install the proletariat as controllers of production, and this would prove that the proletariat had reached the ultimate stage or organisation, that it was a unity. The revolution was therefore the outcome of organisation - at all levels: "the workers can drive away the shirkers and take real possession and control of the world's resources only by beginning at the bottom, that is, by organizing on the job, by making one immediate demand on top of another, and thus gradually growing into control of the industries... by means of knowledge held by our brains and by intelligently organized and co-ordinated industrial action..."

It was this emphasis on industrial organisation that prompted the ferocity of the Wobbly attack on racism. IWW internationalism was not simply a product of its revolutionism; it was given additional impetus by the IWW's particular strategy for revolution, which was essentially an organisational accomplishment. The Wobblies were in business to promote the solidarity of the world's workers. In Australia, they had made a start by convincing many militant workers and most socialist groups of the need for combating racial ideas in the labour movement. The IWW had issued the first effective frontal challenge to working class racism in Australia; it confronted the problem head-on, and did not dodge around it in the ways characteristic of socialism in the pre-Wobbly era. Moreover, it was confident that its message would

235.IWW, The Immediate Demands of the I.W.W., pp.11-2.
spread and that the workers of the world would unite:

   Heart aflame, and by love driven, nation parted now no more,
   We are gathering for the battle that the seers foretold of yore;
   From all peoples we are coming, far and wide the world around,
   And the fight shall not be ended till the last slave's freedom's found.  

236. Direct Action, 15 July 1914.
The Australian socialist movement in the period 1887 to 1917 did not spontaneously generate any current of opposition to racism. Only three such currents can be detected, none of which were indigenous growths. The International Socialist Club of the late 1890s was a drinking establishment for displaced European socialists; Tom Mann was a product of the best traditions of the British labour movement; and the Industrial Workers of the World was a revolutionary aberration thrown up by American society in its period of most intense class conflict.

Of these three currents, the IWW influence is by far the most significant in its impact on the racial attitudes of Australian socialists. Tom Mann's power to repress racism amongst socialists depended largely on his personal leadership qualities, so his effect waned noticeably after his departure from Australia. The International Socialist Club in the late 1890s did not even achieve Mann's temporary success, failing to convince any other group of the need to combat working class racism, and not even convincing itself completely and wholeheartedly. Its anti-racist influence on Australian socialism can be dismissed, because, apart from its ineffectiveness, its internationalism in the last resort was little wider than 'Europeanism'. As a microcosm of the Second International, it was officially opposed to immigration restriction, but, as an implantation in Australian society with no clear strategy for revolution based on working class solidarity, its anti-racism did not meaningfully extend itself to the 'yellow hordes'. And, in the context of Australian socialism, the crucial testing ground was the response to coloured immigrants.

The extent of the effect of the IWW on the mainstream labour movement is open to debate, but its impact on Australian socialism cannot be doubted. The trade union consciousness of Australian socialism, incensed by years of abortive Laborism, was prepared to accept the IWW formula for revolution, because it appealed to this trade union consciousness: the IWW emphasised the struggle on the job. Only the Labor Party, and those socialist organisations on its immediate periphery that remained dedicated to a parliamentary strategy for achieving socialism, remained immune to Wobbly ideology.

What Mann and the IWW had in common was a conviction that revolution would be made by workers in struggle, not by their representatives in parliament. Mann was cautiously approaching this position before the appearance of the IWW in Australia, but its hard-hitting propaganda on this score strengthened his own convictions. His anti-racist influence
effectively merged into the more substantial influence of the IWW, by virtue of his support for it and its anti-racist ideology. The IWW was inherently anti-racist, because its strategy for revolution was the formation of One Big Union for all workers, a method necessarily dependent on the breaking down of all divisions between workers. The extent to which groups accepted this IWW formula for revolution adequately explains their response to working class racism. Before the advent of the IWW, a study of the strategies for change advocated by socialist groups likewise explains their racial attitudes. The crucial determinant in the response to the problem of working class racism was the means of emancipation proposed by any party, whether revolutionary or reformist. This thesis is borne out on examination of the groups concerned.

In the 1880s, the Australian Socialist League was divided on how to react to racism as a belief, because its principal indictment against the capitalist system was its tendency to monopoly, particularly of land. This approach discouraged the formulation of a clear line on racism, as the main function of immigration, in ASL eyes, was to increase land values. The ASL was consequently opposed to all immigration, whether white or coloured, and, as land values would increase with population, whether the working class was divided or not, it did not feel it was necessary to oppose racial ideas amongst workers. It did, however, admit the importance of preventing racist activity on the part of the working class. The ASL considered the time and energy spent on anti-alien agitation, especially in making demands of politicians, could be more productively spent in embarking immediately on proletarian self-emancipation through the formation of co-operative small-group enterprises. Such a strategy for socialism did not depend on large-group solidarity; it would not be frustrated by racist ideas, only by racist action.

The industrial defeats of the early 1890s threw the ASL into a parliamentary strategy of critical support for the Labor Party. As it now believed that parliament was the means whereby socialism would emerge, it made no criticism of labour racism, either as belief or practice, as a strategy based on atomised electoral support would not be hindered by racial divisions in the working class. Indeed, the populist overlay of electoral politics tempted the ASL to accentuate its racial outlook. After 1898, when the ASL declared itself to be in open competition with the Labor Party for working class votes, the ASL not only refrained from criticism of Labor
racism, but attempted to outflank the Labor Party on the race issue. The ASL argued it was a better proletarian party, because of its greater hostility to coloured immigrants. Racism was not an obstacle to the ASL's 'revolution from above', the granting of socialism to passive workers who had done nothing more energetic towards their own emancipation than vote for the ASL. And the ASL believed only this revolution could abolish racism. It saw no necessity to confront racism in the meantime; its parliamentarist method did not require proletarian solidarity.

In 1907, the ASL, now the Socialist Labor Party, very obviously adjusted its strategy for revolution to accord with the position of the IWW. This necessitated a complete turnabout in the SLP's position on racism, as Wobbly tactics depended on working class solidarity at the point of production. The SLP at last regarded working class racism as an obstacle to emancipation. Its denunciations of labour racism were typically couched in Wobbly terminology. It was contemptuous of groups and parties that did not confront racism; it now argued it was a better working class party than the Labor Party, precisely because it did not pander to such backward ideas.

In the early years of the century, groups such as the Queensland Social Democratic Vanguard and the Broken Hill Social Democratic Club, which were firmly orientated towards the Labor Party and the parliamentary road to socialism, were not at all offended by working class racism and nationalism; their response was practically indistinguishable from that of the Labor Party's. And their general criticisms of the Labor Party were no more far-reaching than expressions of impatience with the slowness at which the Labor Party was travelling along this parliamentary road. Socialism, to such groups, was not to be achieved by workers in struggle. They therefore had no reason to oppose working class racism.

The Kalgoorlie Social Democratic Association was identically placed, being slightly later in time but more remote geographically. Westralian socialism did not catch up with events in the eastern states, where IWW ideas were providing an alternative world vision to that of the Labor Party's, until the Western Australian Socialist Party split in 1912. The racism, nationalism, and militarism of the old Westralian groups in the WASP were a crucial irritant in encouraging the breaking away of those comrades who had come under 'eastern' influence. This section formed itself as the Perth branch of the Australian Socialist Party, the IWW-minded successor to the Socialist Federation of Australasia.

The Barrier Socialist Propaganda Group was the first constituent part of
the SFA to embrace the principles of the IWW. The effect was almost as marked as in the case of the ASL/SLP. From being a Labor-orientated, parliamentary socialist grouping, which supported the White Australia Policy and all other vestiges of labour nationalism, the Group, under Wobbly auspices, became a rigorously revolutionary and industrial unionist group, implacably hostile to the Labor Party and uncompromisingly opposed to any signs of racism or nationalism in the workers of Broken Hill or elsewhere.

The IWW had a similar curative effect on the infantile disorders of the Sydney International Socialists. Before seeing the IWW light, the International Socialists, strictly speaking, were misnamed. Their internationalism extended not much further than an expression of solidarity with all other sections of the Second International. After conversion, the IS appeared convinced that coloured workers could do no industrial wrong, and insisted the White Australia Labor Party should learn from these workers it so stupidly despised. Labor Party adherence to the White Australia Policy was cited as proof of its reactionary middle class nature and of the need for industrial organisation on IWW lines. The IS now regarded electoral activity as being only of propaganda value aimed at destroying the state, whereas, in its pre-Wobbly days, the IS had envisaged parliamentary politics as the means of constructing a socialist state. IS adherence to the IWW was instrumental in encouraging its exit from the Second International in the face of the International's capitulation to nationalism on the outbreak of the Great War.

The line-up of the Victorian Socialist Party on the issue of racism is best studied in two distinct phases - during Mann and after Mann. From 1906 to 1910, the heterogeneity of the VSP was concealed under a superficial unity imposed by the characteristic leadership of Mann. In this early stage, the VSP aimed merely at being the left conscience of the labour movement in Victoria, yet Mann was careful to ensure that the VSP influenced the Labor Party, and not vice versa. Mann was an opponent of VSP tendencies to parliamentarism and a principled anti-racist, and from 1908 onwards, an enthusiastic supporter of the IWW. It is evident that many in the VSP did not agree with him on the issue of racism, as IWW influence in the VSP remained limited to Mann and his closest political associates. However, Mann's standing condemned to futility attempts by the more fanatically racist comrades to organise against the official anti-racist line laid down by Mann.

From 1910, the VSP could not seriously be described as anti-racist.
Mann's efforts to interest the VSP in IWW ideas had obviously failed, and the Party drifted closer and closer to the Labor Party, preferring its company, when the crunch came, to that of its one-time fraternal organisation, the Sydney IS. The VSP was blatantly more interested in establishing contacts with Labor politicians and trade union bureaucrats, believing still in the parliamentary road to socialism, in preference to industrial unionism. What little opposition to racism was still expressed in the VSP was more the middle class cosmopolitanism of the 'human brotherhood' brigade than of proponents of proletarian solidarity. Racists were allowed coverage in the party press and time on party platforms, without any trace of party embarrassment. When war broke out, the VSP regretted the falling out between white nations, and would obviously have been happier if Australia were fighting Japan. It regretted the collapse of the Second International, but did not criticise its sections for their capitulation to nationalism.

The spirit of Tom Mann, effectively smothered by the VSP, re-emerged in the Social Democratic League of New South Wales, which split from the ASP early in 1917, in response to the split in the Labor Party. Many tired and battered Chicago and even Detroit Wobblies found shelter in its ranks. It maintained, however, that the anti-conscription Labor Party should be given critical support at elections, because, like Mann, the SDL argued that independent political activity was a waste of deposits and that resources could be more usefully spent concentrating on industrial work. Unlike the VSP, which used the Labor Party split as a post-facto justification for its long-time embrace of the Labor Party as a whole, the SDL only contemplated supporting the left of the Labor Party after the split. The SDL, like Mann, was inherently more critical of Labor than was the post-Mann VSP, and, like Mann, it enthusiastically endorsed industrial unionism and the subsequent need to confront racial divisions in the working class movement.

In the period studied, then, there emerged no indigenous socialist opposition to working class racism. Whether such an opposition might have developed must remain an open question. Trade union consciousness was undeniably strong, but being wedded firmly to nationalism, could not grow into a class consciousness that embraced all workers regardless of race. Even intense and bitter disillusionment with the Labor Party did not cause the ASL, for example, to reject the Labor Party's nationalism and racism. Not unless this disillusionment with the Labor Party could make a
qualitative leap towards disillusionment with the parliamentary road to socialism itself, could any substantial resistance to working class racism be expected. Where Australian labour was enamoured of state-backed schemes for class co-operation, Australian socialism was similarly impressed with state-based schemes for working class emancipation. In the absence of a native revolutionary industrial strategy, confrontation of working class racism depended on the influence of 'foreign' socialism.

However, it was the presence of a native militancy that made this exogenous formula acceptable; the trade union conscious impatience of many workers, particularly those in certain socialist groups, responded warmly to the message of the IWW. By propounding the revolutionary strategy of the One Big Union, the IWW encouraged the class-in-itself to become a class-for-itself, and persuaded socialists that it was not just Australian workers that should unite, but the workers of the whole world.
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