H.E. HOLLAND

AND THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

With special emphasis on the activity of militant socialists.

P.J. O'FARRELL.


This thesis is the original work of the candidate.

[Signature]

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ABBREVIATIONS.

A. to J. Appendices to the Journals of the New Zealand House of Representatives.
A.S.L. Australian Socialist League.
A.S.P. Australian Socialist Party.
A.W. Australian Workman.
C.E.F. Colliery Employees' Federation.
Circ. N.Z.L.P. Circulars issued by National Executive and National Secretary, New Zealand Labour Party.
C.N.L. Commonwealth National Library, Canberra.
E.P. Evening Post (Wellington)
G.E.S. Greymouth Evening Star.
G.R.A. Grey River Argus (Greymouth)
G.V. Grenfell Vedette.
H.P. Holland Papers.
H.C. Holland Collection.
I.S. International Socialist. (Sydney)
I.S.R. International Socialist Review (Sydney)
I.W.W. Industrial Workers of the World.
L.R.C. Labour Representation Committee.
M.W. Maoriland Worker (Wellington)
N.D. No date of publication given.
N.M.H. Newcastle Morning Herald.
N.S.W.P.D. New South Wales Parliamentary Debates.
N.Z.L.P. New Zealand Labour Party. When used as a source note this refers to material held at the New Zealand Labour Party National Office, Wellington.
N.Z.S.P. New Zealand Socialist Party.
N.Z.W. New Zealand Worker (Wellington)
N.Z.W.U. New Zealand Workers' Union.
O.D.T. Otago Daily Times. (Dunedin)
O.W. Otago Witness.
P.& C. People and Collectivist. (Newcastle)
P.L.P. Parliamentary Labour Party.
P.P.A. Protestant Political Association.
Q.L. Queanbeyan Leader.
S.D.F. Social Democratic Federation.
S.D.P. Social Democratic Party.
S.F.A. Socialist Federation of Australasia.
S.L.P. Socialist Labor Party.
S.M.H. Sydney Morning Herald.
W.P. Westbrook Papers.
Henry Edmund Holland died in 1933, two years before the first Labour Government was elected in New Zealand. He had been leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party since 1919, during fifteen years of development in which that party had grown from a representation of four to a position verging on government power. Holland had come from Australia in 1912. There, since the 1890s, he had been prominent in the militant socialist movement.

This thesis is concerned with the development of H.E. Holland as a militant socialist, aiming to indicate his ideas and principles, to show why he held them, and how they affected his actions. The central argument is that militant socialists of Holland's type set out to claim the leadership of the labour movement in Australia and New Zealand. It is the purpose of this study to explain, through Holland, how and why this attempt was made, and how and why it failed, and to examine, in the process, what happened to Holland's ideas and principles. Essentially, this is a 'thesis of plot', in which it is held that the basic explanation for the actions of militant socialists associated with Holland in Australia and New Zealand lies in their wish and attempt to assert themselves as a vanguard in the labour movement.

The term "militant socialist" has been chosen to describe members of the group, associated with Holland, whose activities are examined in this thesis. The term is a relative one, not denoting a static position, but, in relation to the labour movement generally, two broad and distinguishing characteristics, militancy and devotion to socialist theory. Holland and his associates were militant, that is, aggressive, impatient, seeking prompt and sweeping changes, changes so complete as to be deemed revolutionary. They acted with constant reference to socialist theory, both in regard to the kind of changes they wanted and the manner in which such changes might be brought about. At their best, they were enthusiasts, men with a vision and a mission. In terms of Holland, the militant socialist, the object of this thesis is to explain how and why a position of greatest militancy, of closest devotion to theory, was gradually reached, and how and why it was
slowly abandoned. While there were many developments and complexities in relation to detail, the term "socialist theory" denotes, throughout the thesis, two major concepts, class war for possession of the world's wealth between capitalists and workers, and the workers' victory over capitalism in a social revolution. "Socialism" is the society which follows this social revolution. In the New Zealand section of the thesis, the position of militant socialists, has been contrasted with that of "moderates". The term "moderates" has been applied to those who thought in terms of better wages and conditions rather than of social revolution and of gradual change, reform, rather than of revolution.

Before the argument that militant socialists of Holland's type set out to claim the leadership of the labour movement in Australia and New Zealand can be advanced, the significance of "leadership" in this context must be considered. In regard to the social revolution, militant socialists held two associated opinions - that it was an inevitable historic development, and that it would be achieved through the action of the working class, of which they, the militant socialists, were the most advanced and resolute section. They believed that the formation of the workers into a class-conscious unity was a first duty, and in this they relied, in theory, on stating the militant socialist position and depending on what they believed to be its patent truth to convince workers. The workers' refusal to accept their views raised serious problems for men who held that they clearly understood the line of march and represented the interests of the working class movement as a whole. Militant socialists attempted to remedy this position by attempting to gain a position of leadership and control in the labour movement. They believed that such a position would enable them to secure gradually the free acceptance of their ideas, and they saw that, as a minority, the only way to achieve this position, initially, was for militant socialists to use whatever tactical means they could devise. It is argued that in Australia between 1890 and 1912, militant socialists did not progress beyond the stage of minority tactics. The achievement of a degree of leadership in New Zealand brought awareness that the free conversions they postulated were not taking place, and, as Holland saw in 1921, the leadership of militant socialists, in these conditions, did not solve the basic problem - the conversion to a militant socialist position of a majority of workers.
In general approach, the thesis is biographical, but within this framework its construction is related to the central propositions - the attempts of militant socialists to claim the leadership of the labour movement, and the waxing and waning of militancy and devotion to socialist theory.

The Australian section of the thesis, Chapters 1 and 2, covers the period 1868-1912. Chapter 1, "The Making of a Militant Socialist", deals with the formation of Holland's ideas and the unsuccessful attempts of militant socialists, first within the Labor Party, and after 1898, in independent political action, to assume the leadership of the labour movement. The failure of this ambition is attributed to militant socialists' inability to establish any important links between themselves and the majority of the labour movement, an argument which is used throughout the thesis, and which in this chapter is related to the existence and nature of the Labor Party. It is maintained, in Chapter 1, in reference to Holland, that the initial impulse behind the development of militant socialism was not intellectual, but emotional, personal resentment of adverse social conditions, and that this resentment was sustained and embittered by the continued failure of militant socialists to secure general acceptance of their ideas and leadership, a process which issued in gradually increasing militancy.

In Chapter 2, "Highest Hopes", the themes of the first chapter are adapted to the study of militant socialist activity in an industrial context, from 1907 to 1912. The main argument is that between 1907 and 1910 militant socialists made, through industrial channels, their most determined bid up to that time to claim the leadership of labour, a bid which brought them into direct conflict with the Labor Party. The degree of initial success achieved by militant socialists at this time is explained by their attainment of organisational unity, their adoption of a new doctrine, and, most significantly, the coincidence of some of their immediate aims with those of an important section of the labour movement. Eventual failure is ascribed to the relative weakness of the factors making for initial success, when faced with the strength of the traditional outlook and loyalties of the majority of the labour movement, to the opposition of the Labor Party, to the effect of government intervention, which helped to defeat the purposes of militant socialists on important occasions such as that of the Newcastle strike of 1909-10, and to the fact that the revolutionary reforms and methods proposed
by militant socialists were too far removed from ordinary experience to be generally acceptable. Basic to the interpretation of Holland at this stage is an argument of transmutation - that the force which drove him became intellectual as well as emotional, developed from resentment into a firm conviction of the righteousness and inevitability of revolutionary socialism. The explanation of this development is associated with a further argument, that Holland and his colleagues did not distinguish between socialism as an aim and a dogma, and the day to day fortunes of militant socialists. It followed that their successes, however achieved and however limited, were interpreted as steps towards socialism and a confirmation of the militant socialist analysis. In explaining the strengthening of Holland's conviction, the major influence is attributed to his reception in 1907 of a new socialist theory, that of industrial and political action, and to his optimistic assessment of the prospects of militant socialists acting in conformity with that theory. It is argued that the failure of the Newcastle strike and the Labor Party's election successes in 1910 demonstrated that militant socialists had failed to establish effective contact with the workers, and that the activity of militant socialists was no longer a serious threat to the Labor Party. Among militant socialists, the failure of their highest hopes led to confusion and despondency, from which Holland escaped into prophecy.

The first chapter of the New Zealand section "Old Themes in a New Setting" is concerned also with militant socialist attempts, in the period 1912-13, to claim the leadership of the labour movement, also in an industrial context. It is maintained that the pre-occupation of militant socialists with industrial action led to their accepting unity with moderates on the political terms of the moderates. Central to this chapter is the argument that the principal feature which distinguished New Zealand from Australia as an environment for the activity of militant socialists was the absence of an established and successful political labour party. It is argued that this factor affected most importantly the move by militant socialists towards unity with the moderate section of the labour movement, and the reaction towards political action which followed the defeat of industrial action. A further important influence was the fact that in New Zealand, in 1913, militant socialists were confronted with actual success, in politics. Hitherto their approach had been adjusted to failure, and it is argued that the circumstances of Webb's
election in 1913 led to an adjustment of the attitude of militant socialists to their environment, a change from propaganda to education. It is maintained that this period saw the beginning of a fruitful interaction between militant socialists and moderates in the labour movement, a situation which exposed militant socialists to the influence of circumstances and drew them slowly into the existing political environment.

Chapter 4, "War - Crisis for Capitalism?", deals with the war period 1914-18, discussing the circumstances of the reaction towards political action associated with the defeat of industrial action in 1913. The major argument is that militant socialists believed that the war was the beginning of the final crisis for capitalism, and believing that the collapse of capitalism was imminent, they were anxious, and prepared to compromise, to be in a position to take advantage of this collapse. Hence their leadership in the labour movement took the form of seeking working class unity and organisation as a consideration above all others, in a policy of preparedness. It is maintained that the chief development of this period, the consolidation and broadening of the alliance between militant socialists and moderates, particularly in the formation of the New Zealand Labour Party in 1916, was merely another device for attempting to secure militant socialist leadership in the labour movement. Due to their interpretation of the war situation, militant socialists accepted unity with the moderates on essentially moderate terms. With reference to the remainder of the thesis, it is held that while militant socialists achieved a degree of personal leadership in the Labour Party, they did so in circumstances which demanded modification of their position, if that leadership was to be maintained.

Chapter 5, "Socialism and Religion", in which Holland's beliefs are discussed in relation to the themes of religion and socialism, marks a turning point in the construction of the thesis. Previous chapters have been concerned with the activity of militant socialists in fields other than parliamentary, and in a context of failure. The following chapters deal with militant socialists in a parliamentary environment, after Holland's election in 1918, and with a situation in which the success of militant socialists raised acutely, the question of their relation to socialism as an aim. In the remainder of the thesis it is argued, with reference to Holland, that the pressure of parliamentary and economic conditions, the demands of success, and their
place as a minority in the Labour Party forced militant socialists to modify, gradually, their practical position in relation to the achievement of socialism. The purpose of Chapter 5 is to examine those philosophic and religious attitudes of Holland which impinged most directly on his development as a militant socialist. The central argument is that there were fundamental weaknesses and confusions at the basis of Holland's belief as a militant socialist and that he did not find militant and materialist socialism alone, a satisfactory personal belief. The real cohesive force, in an outlook which was essentially religious in impulse, was Holland's intense and consistent moralist standpoint.

The clash between the demands of parliamentary and political life, and hopes among militant socialists for world revolution is discussed in Chapter 6, "Ideology - v - Practical Politics". It is argued that the Russian revolution heartened militant socialists, and that up to 1921, the hope of world revolution inspired them and assisted their claim to a dominant role in the Labour Party, a situation illustrated by Holland's election as Labour Party chairman in 1919. The Russian revolution and the appearance of anti-political militant industrial unionism had two effects on militant socialists in the N.Z.L.P., one immediate and apparent, the other of long term importance and not immediately obvious. The immediate effect was a reversion towards a more doctrinaire position, but the long term effect was to force militant socialists within the N.Z.L.P. to make a fundamental choice, not realised at the time, between adherence to concepts of doctrinaire, militant and revolutionary socialism, and what was essentially reformism. This situation, profoundly affecting militant socialist claims to leadership, for it meant a re-definition of the aims towards which that leadership was practically directed, is revealed in the 1919 N.Z.L.P. land policy. From one viewpoint this was a doctrinaire reversion, from another it was a movement towards formulation of an attractive practical policy. It is further argued that the 1919 elections adversely affected the position of militant socialists within the N.Z.L.P., who were discredited by the complete failure of their predictions. The decline of militant socialist leadership and influence in the N.Z.L.P. is dated from the period 1918-21, after which the party gradually moved into an area of political action where the accepted values were those of the politician, not of the theorist.
The main argument of Chapter 7, "Leadership", in which the nature of Holland's leadership is discussed, is that between 1922 and 1925 the role of militant socialists in the N.Z.L.P. was virtually reversed. Instead of providing the spirit of leadership, Holland acted more as a curb, a conservative factor, at times passively resisting, at times reluctantly following a retreat from militancy and socialist theory. This change is explained in terms of the party structure, and in view of Holland's principles - belief in majority control - which was in fact drawing the party away from the aims of militant socialists. Particular emphasis is placed in this chapter on the argument that Holland's leadership and influence were greatly limited by the structure and organisation of the N.Z.L.P. Relevant to this chapter, and to the remainder of the thesis, is the argument that, particularly from 1926, there was growing feeling within the party that its platform was too remote from the electorate's understanding of its own wants, and that this gap must be bridged, not as militant socialists would have it, by educating the people up to the platform, but by bringing the platform down to the peoples' level.

A detailed illustration of the general theme of the N.Z.L.P. drift away from a militant socialist position is studied in Chapter 3, "Land", which is concerned with the development of the party's land policy 1919-1927. It is argued that it was in relation to land policy that the party made its first major explicit departure from the aim of socialisation, that Holland did not lead policy changes, but fell in with them as they were brought about by others, and that the real emphasis of party concern had shifted from what would happen under socialism, to what would happen under a Labour government. A complex change in the nature of Holland's leadership is also noted in relation to the land policy development. While his influence within the party was declining, his public stature and prestige as a political leader were increasing.

In Chapter 9, "Socialisation, and the 1928 Election" the drift away from a militant socialist position is discussed in relation to the socialisation objective, the keystone of the belief of militant socialists, which was omitted from the 1923 manifesto. Holland's limited acceptance of the party's retreat from this objective is interpreted as a partial loss of faith, and the reflection of significant modifications in his convictions. To support and explain this, several related arguments are put forward, and developed
in this and later chapters. The first is that Holland was increasingly fear-
ful that, given the adverse economic circumstances that existed after 1927,
a governmental attempt to implement socialisation would fail. This was a
qualification of that certainty which had characterised Holland's convictions
since 1907. With this went Holland's growing belief, also conditioned by
worsening economic conditions, that immediate socialisation ought not to be
his first or only consideration. This conclusion was reached from two lines
of approach.—that economic conditions would have to be improved before
socialisation would have any hope of success, and that, for humanitarian
reasons, immediate relief of distress, by whatever means was more important
than anything else. Further, an integral part of the belief of militant
socialists was their consciousness of their role as vanguard. As has been
argued, they no longer filled or even asserted that role within the Labour
Party. This reflected a waning of both militancy and devotion to doctrine
which also had a profound effect on what militant socialists retained of their
beliefs. It is argued that by 1928 both circumstances and his own doubts
were forcing Holland to live on two levels, that of practical politician and
that of militant socialist, with less and less connection between them. The
result of this was the virtual paralysis of Holland as a militant socialist,
a situation connected with the argument that gradually militant socialists
abandoned or shelved their militancy, retaining a measure of devotion to
socialist theory, not as a plan of action, but as a statement about an ideal
society. It is argued also, that the 1928 election involved the Labour Party
in the existing political context more deeply than ever before. The election
saw Labour's plunge into the main stream of political life, a development
represented on the theoretical level by the shelving of the socialisation
objective and in practice by Labour's support of United. The circumstances
surrounding the election saw a further deterioration in Holland's influence
and standing in the party, and a further undermining of his faith.

Holland's attitude to Samoan questions, discussed in Chapter 10, "Samoa",
provides an opportunity to examine the conflict between Holland as a practical
politician and as a militant socialist, and the nature of his idealism. His
attitude indicates, it is maintained, that his essential militancy had not
been abandoned, but repressed, an argument which is used in later chapters
of the thesis.
Chapter 11, "A New Policy", deals with the period 1929-1932, in which a further development affecting militant socialists took place - the trend away from a militant socialist position reached a decisive point in the formulation of a new policy. The central argument is that in these years the emphasis of Labour Party policy switched definitely from a retreat along the path previously laid down by militant socialists, to the formulation of a new policy which signalised the abandonment of a militant socialist orientation and had as its goal not socialism, but the reform of capitalism. Two major influences are held to have brought about this change, dissatisfaction within the party with its rate of electoral progress, and the demands of a situation of economic depression. Prior to this change the spirit of Holland's leadership was in harmony with the party's orientation, afterwards, it was not. It is maintained that the developments studied in this chapter mark the final failure of the attempt by militant socialists to claim the leadership of the labour movement.

In Chapter 12, "Political Non-Unionism", it is maintained that Holland's opinions on the role of unionism in the labour movement exhibit a continued devotion to socialist theory, just as his attitude on the Samoan question shows that his militancy had not been abandoned. The purpose of this chapter, and that on Samoa is to confirm the argument that even in the last years of his life, Holland merited the description of militant socialist.

The theme of Chapter 13, "Discontent", is discontent, the discontent of Holland with his own position, and that of the party with Holland. Holland, it is argued, found his position, as leader of a party whose tendency was towards reform rather than social revolution, increasingly irksome. As has been argued throughout earlier chapters, members of the party were also aware of this difference of outlook and considered Holland's attitude a liability to the party. Holland's death in 1933 resolved these problems of discontent, and the public reaction, which ignored Holland, in death, as a militant socialist, saw him in the light of Labour's adjusted appeal, as a determined, sincere and selfless worker for the social advancement of the people, a reaction which testified to the completeness of his failure as a militant socialist.

In the conclusion, Chapter 14, attention is drawn to the fundamental and enduring problem of militant socialists, failure to win majority acceptance of their views. Their failure to claim the effective leadership of the New
Zealand labour movement, and particularly the N.Z.L.P. is attributed to
the failure of the forces on which they relied for success, the progress
of history and the progress of education, forces which failed to operate
in the way which militant socialists had assumed. In relation to Holland
it is concluded that while he gave his party inspiration, he failed to give
it a sure basis in political reality.
Chapter 1.

THE MAKING OF A MILITANT SOCIALIST.

In this initial stage of the argument that militant socialists of Holland's type set out to claim the leadership of the labour movement in Australia and New Zealand, two themes are examined – the formation of Holland's ideas up to 1907, and the unsuccessful attempts of militant socialists in Australia, first within the Labor Party, and after 1893 in independent political action, to assume the leadership of the labour movement. With regard to Holland, it is maintained that the basic impulse behind the development of militant socialism was not intellectual but emotional, personal resentment of adverse social conditions, a negative reaction which had a positive expression in idealism, the desire for a new society. Throughout this early period it is held that resentment was sustained and embittered by the continued failure of militant socialists to secure general acceptance of their ideas and leadership, a process which issued in gradually increasing militancy. This failure is attributed to the inability of militant socialists to establish any important links between themselves and the majority of the labour movement, a failure due to the existence and nature of the Labor Party.

Of paramount importance in the forming of Holland as a militant socialist was the interaction between his personality and religious convictions and the environment in which he found himself in Sydney and Newcastle in the 1890s, an environment which provided social and economic reasons for his refusal to accept passively conditions of life he deemed intolerable. Holland became interested in reform at a time of ferment within the labour movement. A Labor Party had just been formed, and with enthusiasm for its future went millenial predictions, rumours of revolution and repression, mass meetings, excitement and overwrought emotions. This atmosphere was borne in on Holland through his unemploy-
ment, and his active membership of political organisations, particularly the Australian Socialist League which he joined in 1892, when he was twenty-four.

The Socialist League was formed in Sydney in May 1887, with a membership of thirty or forty. Initially chaotic, its doctrinal position had clarified, by 1889 or 1890, into a general acceptance by League members of state socialism as an aim. This was defined in 1891 by W.G. Higgs, president of the A.S.L., as national or collective ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange of wealth. The A.S.L. was on the verge of disappearance when the 1890 strike led to its revival. Reacting from the crushing defeat of unionism, a number of young radicals joined the League, which, in line with its state socialist convictions, supported the movement towards the formation of a political labour party. The social ferment among workers, which accompanied this movement, was interpreted by militant socialists as the beginning of a social revolution which would "usher in the millenium." Militant socialists regarded themselves as a vanguard, working through the Labor Party as a means of realising their aims. Thirty-five Labor Party members were returned at the 1891 N.S.W. elections, and the role that militant socialists played in this success was an important one.

Extravagant hopes raised by the 1891 success were soon dispelled. The Parliamentary Labor Party split in December 1891. In 1892 Sydney unemployed increased to 14,000. Insecurity was in the air, coming near to panic in September 1892 when the Dibbs' Government, which, with Labor support, had replaced the Parkes' Government in 1891, took strike-breaking action in Broken Hill. In Sydney a section of moderate labour

3. Australian Workman. 22 Nov. 1890.
4. For argument and documentation see writer's article "The Australian Socialist League ..." op. cit. A.S.L. objectives, 1887-1901 are given in Appendix 1.
6. Sydney Morning Herald. 10 Sept. 1892. The events of the strike are described in George Dale. The Industrial History of Broken Hill. Melbourne 1918, pp.21-64.
Henry Edmund Holland at the age of fourteen. A photograph taken in Queanbeyan when Holland commenced his apprenticeship in 1832.
opinion feared that this was the beginning of a general attack on wages and unionism. At an indignation meeting called by the Trades and Labour Council, a speaker declared:

"The workers had endeavoured to ameliorate their position by the ballot box but without success, and if they considered for one moment they could almost hear this hurricane of revolution coming upon them. (Applause). If it were necessary let anarchy reign; they were prepared for the worst. They had their thousands of starving unemployed, and what was worse, they no remedy."  

While some moderates gave way to such hysteria, militant socialists advocated violence. One hundred and fifty armed police assembled in Macquarie Street on 20 September 1892 to defend Parliament House from possible attack, while A.S.L. agitators urged a crowd of eight or ten thousand to "Rush the police" and "Take possession of Parliament House." Order was maintained, but behind these events, according to two of the participants, was a plot to storm Parliament House and install a provisional socialist government. These startling assertions may have had some slight basis in fact, but their degree of truth cannot be tested conclusively in the absence of further evidence. It was during these events, associated with the Broken Hill strike, that Holland was first noted, in the press, as the chairman of an A.S.L. public meeting.

Holland had come to Sydney from Queanbeyan in 1837, when he was nineteen. Born on 10 June 1868, the younger son of an English immigrant employed on a farm at Gungahleen, a few miles from the present city of Canberra, Holland, after elementary schooling until he was ten, and then farm work, was apprenticed at the age of fourteen as a newspaper compositor on the Queanbeyan Times. During his apprenticeship, Holland acquired the habit of indiscriminate reading, and made his first contact with theories of social reform, but his earliest preoccupation was with religion. At seventeen, probably under the influence of his pious mother, Holland joined

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7. S.M.H. 6, 18 July 1892.
8. S.M.H. 19 Sept. 1892.
10. Andrews (Tocsin, 7 June 1900) and Black (op. cit pp.22-24).
11. S.M.H. 22 Sept. 1892.
the Salvation Army in Queanbayan.  

This decision, at once so revealing of Holland as an adolescent, and so important in moulding the fundamental pattern of his life, sprang from religious certainty and enthusiasm. The Salvation Army based its mission on the beliefs that human failure and sinfulness could be remedied only by divine action as seen in the spiritual regeneration known as conversion, and that it was obligatory upon all Christians to serve others. The adolescent Holland experienced conversion, not to traditional Christianity, a balance of doctrines, but to an outlook which divorced reason from belief and exalted the virtues of action. Certain of, and superior in, his own rectitude, trusting to the light within him, Holland called on others to share his experience. Associated with his spiritual regeneration were characteristics, discernible at the time, which remained obvious throughout Holland's life - enthusiasm, a sense of personal mission, a feeling of moral superiority, the desire to attract attention, scorn of moderation and impatience with the slowness of regeneration.

When his apprenticeship terminated in 1887, Holland, unable to find employment in Queanbeyan, went to Sydney where he soon found congenial printery work. At a Salvation Army meeting he met Annie McLachlan, whose father had been superintendent of the Duntroon estate near Canberra. After a short courtship, the couple were married in October 1888, both being just over twenty years of age. Shortly after his marriage Holland accepted an attractive offer to manage the Australian Supplements Company at £3.5.0 a week. The liberal wage proved illusory, for the Company could never pay its manager a full week's wages. Early in 1890 Holland was replaced by Frederick Austin, one of his closest friends, after whom he had named his first son, born in April 1890. Employment was scarce, and Austin had offered to do the job at half Holland's wage. His dismissal, and its circumstances, shocked Holland profoundly. The loss of security,

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14. Mrs. Holland op. cit. pp.8-10, 13-14; Roy Holland op. cit. pp.2-4, 6A.
prospects of advancement and social position, through no fault of his own, implanted in him a resentment which grew rapidly, nourished by his failure to secure employment and re-establish himself. It was this that prepared Holland for his acceptance of militant socialism.

Early in 1891, Holland became friendly with Tom Batho, another unemployed printer, who had joined the Socialist League. As an attempt at self-employment, the two men decided, early in 1892, to start a newspaper delivery business. This came to involve, for Holland, a decision of much greater importance. He found that potential customers would take the daily papers only if he delivered Sunday papers as well. To a Salvationist, this meant profanation of the Sabbath. Nevertheless, it was imperative that he provide for his dependants, particularly as a second son was born in March. Faced with the choice between remaining a member of the Army, and providing for his family, Holland retired from the Army.\(^{16}\)

This incident was the occasion of Holland's withdrawal, but his doubts had been growing for some time, particularly after the visit to Sydney in September 1891 of General Booth. Booth offered workers the distracting solace of revivalist religion, but threatened their security with his pauper immigration scheme. At a time of post-strike depression and widespread unemployment, he announced that English unemployed would be sent to a settlement which he planned to establish in Australia.\(^{18}\) This provoked a bitter reaction from organised labour, which feared that the result of this settlement would be increasing unemployment, the lowering of wages and the arrival of an amplitude of free labourers for strike breaking.\(^{19}\) The reaction influenced Holland. Poverty had become as real to him as his religion and he could not reconcile his two most important concerns. The change in his economic and social position from printery manager and conventional respectability to humiliating unemployment led him to appreciate the essentially conservative, middle-class outlook of

\(^{16}\) Mrs. Holland op. cit. pp.19,56-7; Mrs. Forman to writer, 5 Sept. 1957.
\(^{17}\) Roy Holland to writer, 2 May 1957.
\(^{18}\) S.M.H. 28 Sept. 1891.
\(^{19}\) A.W. 3,24 Oct. 1891; New South Wales Trades and Labour Council Minutes, 5 Nov. 1891 (Mitchell Library); Hummer, 31 Oct. 1891; Worker (Queensland) 21 Feb. 3 Oct. 1891; Commonweal (Melbourne) 3, 24 Oct., 7 Nov. 1891.
He had become, through misadventure, a member of the class to which the Salvation Army conducted its mission, a work not without suggestion that poverty was a disgrace, perhaps even a sin. As one of the regenerate, Holland felt that the Army failed to appreciate the problems of that poverty in which he lived. Again, as one converted, Holland felt that divine action within him ought to have remedied human failure, the consequences of sin. Holland felt poverty not only as a personal humiliation and a barrier to the well-being of his family, but as a social evil, a temporal force militating against spirituality, with which religion should be concerned. When the organised religions turned to the poverty-stricken, it was, Holland felt, with an air of superiority, not with understanding, sympathy or social indignation. As one of the afflicted, this was too much for Holland's pride to bear, and was abhorrent to his sense of religion. His resentment flared out against a Christian world unfaithful to its own principles. The Christian life was being confined to the sphere of religious observance and matters of social, economic, and political life abandoned to their own Godless laws.

While Holland was realising the shortcomings of his religion, his friend Batho was stressing militancy and the application of socialist theory as the true solutions to the problems of mankind. Prompted by Batho, Holland joined the A.S.I. in the later half of 1892. He had abandoned the Salvation Army because it failed to approach the problem he felt as most important, poverty. He embraced militant socialism because it aspired to solve that problem, transmuted the essential impulses of his religion into a pattern adjusted to that problem, and provided an outlet for both resentment and idealism. Dedicated to the termination of capitalism, as an evil, militant socialism appealed to Holland's sense of justice, outraged by the dictates, oppressive and intolerable, of the social structure. This destructive, resentful aspect was akin to the Salvationist's hatred of, and war against, sin. Similarly, the idealist efforts of militant socialists,

directed towards the attainment of a new and happier society, paralleled the religionist's striving for heaven. Moreover, militant socialism stressed those characteristics which religion had developed in Holland, enthusiasm, dedication, a sense of mission, scorn of moderation, impatience, the claim to moral superiority, and, in general, an intense reforming zeal. Like the Salvation Army it held the promise of a heroic life in the service of a cause.

Nor was it a great step from the service of God to the service of man, a step in which both resentment and idealism played a part. The Army itself emphasised service to others, and its theology could be a route back to a purely human view. Original sin corrupted natural man, but this corrupt man, banished from paradise, who could merit nothing for salvation, had a value on earth. The creature declared its nothingness, but this declaration was its own. Resenting his exclusion from paradise, man takes the initiative, demanding the right to make his heaven on this earth, wholly concerned with the world in which he can act. It is, in part, in terms of this logic, resulting as it does in a "deification" of man, that Holland's growing harshness can be understood. For when men take on themselves the duty to live as gods, they tend to become alien to the values implied by the name of man, developing a pitiless hardness towards human personality and a radical contempt for values other than their own. In a formal sense, Holland's breach with religion was final, but his earliest enthusiasm left its mark, setting a moralist direction to his life, checking his acceptance of complete materialism, ameliorating his harshness and remaining an element of uncertainty. It is the purpose of a later chapter to discuss the conflict in Holland between religion and socialism, and its consequences.

Explanation of Holland's adoption of a militant socialist position has been made in essentially emotional terms, negatively in regard to the initial resentment of poverty and of religion's failure to propose a remedy, and positively in terms of idealism, the desire for a better world for men. His action was, at basis, the outcome of congruity of impulse between Salvationism and militant socialism and an element of firm intellectual conviction was not added until 1907.

The emotional basis of Holland's position is clearly visible in the undisciplined and confused socialism he professed in 1892. His resentment was definite and strong, flaring out in attacks on what he saw as unprincipled
capitalist exploitation, but his positive views, as revealed in The Liberal, a weekly newspaper produced for three months at the end of 1892 by Holland, Batho and Charles Barlow, all socialists, were insipid, and confined virtually to advocacy of an eight hour working day. The mild and limited nature of his idealism is in marked contrast to the sweeping vigour of his denunciations of capitalism, a further indication that resentment was his basic motivation at this time. In the wisdom of his later socialism, Holland lamented that within the Liberal there was no attempt to explain socialism, no evidence of any clear grasp of the economics of the labour movement. In 1892 Holland's views were not detailed, reasoned convictions. His position was devoid of any definite intellectual content, being primarily a demand for action towards social reform. This emphasis on activity was the theme of the A.S.L's first publication, Sidney Webb's What Socialism Means, which Holland, as secretary of the League's General Propaganda Committee prepared for the press. Webb held, and Holland accepted the view, that "Socialism is not an elaborate plan of Society, but a principle of social action."  

Holland's desire for action was closely linked with his resentment. This argument can be put forward most strikingly in reference to the Active Service Brigade, which Holland joined in 1893. The Brigade was a secret society among the unemployed, formed as a response extraordinary to suspicions and fears. Some in the labour movement believed, in the later months of 1892, that agents provocateurs were circulating spurious revolutionary propaganda, and fomenting dynamite plots in order to create excuses for the repression of unionism. This belief was held, in an extravagant form by a few militant socialists. At the same time the A.S.L. was dividing

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22. Ibid.  
26. Holland was recorded as a member when the Brigade was re-organised in 1895. Constitution of Australian Order of Industrial Active Service usually known as the Active Service Brigade. Organised 1893. Re-Organised 1895. (Manuscript Mitchell Library). No other membership records are available, and Holland's public association with Brigade activities in 1893 strongly suggests that he was a member from that year.  
27. Ibid.  
28. Tocsin 7,14,21 June 1900, Andrews; See also S.M.H. 4,29,31 July, 10 Oct. 1893 (Aramac explosion.)
into two sections, a larger, moderate wing, led by W.A. Holman, George Black and W.M. Hughes, which co-operated with the Trades and Labour Council, and a militant minority group, which included Holland, inclined to identify itself with unemployed agitation and supporting the Active Service Brigade. The Brigade was organised in mid 1893 by Arthur Desmond, poet and actuary, and a few other disgruntled and unemployed radicals, particularly John Dwyer, formerly a Labor Party organiser, and the unemployed agitator, Tommy Dodd. Its aims reveal both idealism and resentment, with emphasis on the latter. "For the Nation - Social Co-Operation, For the Citizen - Emancipation from Poverty Conditions, Competitive Commercialism, Industrial-Wage Slavery, Tyrannical Authority and Mental Bondage. Essentially a dramatisation of social protest, the Brigade's immediate object was "to assert the right of free speech at public meetings and prevent the manufacture of bogus public opinion," in view of the Reid Opposition's attempt to capitalise on dissatisfaction with the Dibb's Government, by packing meetings and carrying apparently unanimous votes of confidence.

The Brigade was organised at a time when distress and unemployment were widespread in Sydney. In November 1893 heavy rain drove hundreds of unemployed, who usually slept in the Domain, to seek shelter in the city. Holland, who had found work at the Australian Workman printery, and Frank Fox, a fellow employee, persuaded a Sydney Morning Herald reporter to accompany them on one wet night to see two hundred men sleeping on the pavement under the verandah of the old market building. Later, Holland and others counted 893 persons sleeping out of doors. Many unemployed rifled rubbish tins for food, but were usually too dispirited to complain, and radicals grew impatient of this apathy. The publicity given the plight of the unemployed led to numerous offers of shelter, which the leaders of the unemployed were not disposed to accept. One of a deputation to the Lord Mayor exclaimed:

29. Trades and Labour Council Minutes, 14 April, 10 Nov. 1892, 8 Nov. 1893; A.W. 3 Dec. 1892.
30. Standard Bearer, 1 Jan. 1894; Tocsin, 17 May 1900;
31. Active Service Brigade Manifesto in Constitution of ... Active Service Brigade op. cit.
32. Tocsin, 17 May 1900, Andrews.
"As one of the unemployed I am opposed to the granting of any shelter to those men. We do not want this intolerable charity. We want employment, and failing that, gaol rather than charity." 34

It was this irreconcilable temper that inspired the Active Service Brigade, and the Brigade, already known as a disruptive group at public meetings, extended its activities among the unemployed and made little further pretence of secrecy.

As late as 1895, Holland was still concerned with what he saw as the gulf between the practice of contemporary religion and the teachings of Christ. 35 The Brigade took a similar stand, and in November 1893, turned its attention to religion in an attempt to expose the churches as frauds. The Brigade's organiser, Desmond, exhibited that close connection between religious and political radicalism which was a not uncommon characteristic of radicals of this period. 36 Claiming that "Christ was a man of the people and artizan who fiercely denounced the enthroned plunderers of his day," 37 Desmond wished to show that the churches had abandoned true religion. On 19 November, three hundred unemployed assembled near Hyde Park to take part in "an emblematic tableau representing Christianity up to date." 38 Their leaders produced the effigy of a workman clad in rags, nailed to a large wooden cross and labelled "Murdered by the Rich" and "Humanity crucified." With this at their head, the unemployed marched through the city to the Wesleyan mission. After police had seized the effigy, the men entered the revival meeting. Tommy Dodd offered a prayer that the Almighty would help the unemployed. To this he added a denunciation of ministers as hypocrits and was warming to his subject when his voice was drowned out by the fortissimo playing of the organ. 39 There was little, if any, religious feeling behind the Brigade's demonstrations, primarily gestures of resentment and defiance, calculated to shock the respectable

34. S.M.H. 16 Nov. 1893.
38. Standard Bearer, 1 Jan. 1894.
39. S.M.H. 20, 27 Nov. 1893; Worker (Queensland) 25 Nov. 1893.
and attract attention.

Nevertheless, the problem of making traditional beliefs equal to new demands on them was very real to some, such as Holland, as a serious question involving personal integrity. A Christian attempt was made to apply the principles of the "Galilean Carpenter" to social problems, particularly by the Reverend Philip Moses, whose views were published in 1894 by a company managed by Holland. In advocating Christian socialism, Moses tabulated the reasons for social distress:

"Our social ruin is caused by:
1. A false ideal that makes GOLD the God of the State.
2. The ruling classes have stolen and obtained the mastery of
   A. The Peoples' God
   B. The Peoples' Church
   C. The Peoples' Heaven
   D. The Peoples' Hell." 40

This message was received with avowed enthusiasm by the Active Service Brigade, but many, such as E.J. Brady, to whom socialism was "more of a religion ... than an economic system," found in socialism a more satisfactory outlook on life than that provided by religion. However, it was obvious that if the forces of religion and socialism were co-ordinated in agitation towards the same objective, a society founded on justice, their combined efforts would make the task much easier.

Late in 1893 and early in 1894 the Active Service Brigade pursued, with vigour and some violence, its crusade to reform the conduct of public meetings. At a meeting in December 1893, supporting Desmond, whose obsession was the alleged machinations of financial interests, Holland denounced every political faction in New South Wales since responsible government, for none of them had passed legislation to the ultimate good of the people. His remarks met with delighted approval. The Brigade's professed general objects were a purified Labor Party and the dropping of

43. Standard Bearer. 19 Nov. 1893; Worker (Sydney) 16 Dec. 1893.
44. S.M.R. 13 Dec. 1893; Worker (Sydney) 16 Dec. 1893.
the disruptive fiscal question. Its more specific objects were similar to those of the A.S.L., but its less formal declarations were far more aggressive. "We want our own money - the money that we earn - also our land, and by God we mean to have it." In 1893 the Brigade's formal membership was about a hundred, many of whom, like the member who "pulled out a .22 calibre Smith and Wesson to defend his life" at a public meeting, lived in a private world of fantastic suspicions, extraordinary plots, and mental fixations. Holland was attracted to the Brigade's distorted world as an escape from dull reality. In the Brigade it was possible to preserve an illusion of living dangerously, defying imagined threats, attracting startled public attention. There, resentment could be vented in passionate and sweeping attacks, and responsibility ignored.

The decline of the Brigade's agitation dates from the gaoling in June 1894 of its leading members in connection with a libel uttered in the Brigade's newspaper, Justice. After 1895 its activity was confined to increasingly to its Barracks, a large building used both as headquarters and doss house for the destitute. This refuge provided lodging and companionship. There the unemployed sang, talked, listened to socialist lectures and read socialist propaganda. The Brigade offered protection against despair and loneliness, and a mental refuge, socialism. The indoctrination it applied to its members must have been a strength to the left wing of the labour movement long after the Brigade had disappeared.

The Brigade's activity was more spectacular than effective, more an outlet for frustrations than directed towards a plan of reform. It reflected a characteristic disposition of resentment which Holland shared,

45. Standard Bearer, 19 Nov. 1893.
46. S.M.H. 23 April 1894. See Appendix 2.
47. Standard Bearer, 19 Nov. 1893.
48. There were seventy-one members in January 1895 when the Brigade was re-organised. Constitution of ... Active Service Brigade op. cit. Membership had probably declined slightly by 1895.
52. Active Service Brigade. Letters, Handbills, etc. op. cit.; Tocsin, 24 May 1900.
and its significance lies in its fostering and organisation of that resentment, to which its militancy and its acknowledgement of socialist theory were subordinated. In an extravagant and dramatic way, which appealed to the emotions, the Brigade mingled social protest with exhibitionism, religious feeling with posturing charlatanism. More strikingly than any other organisation to which Holland belonged, it showed the more irresponsible aspects of a protest against real evils. As a Brigade member, Holland gathered instruction in militant socialist ideas and methods, absorbed some of its atmosphere of defiant indignation, and found an outlet for his desire for activity, a salient feature of his interest in reform. Holland was still dogged by poverty and insecurity in 1893 and 1894. The Australian Workman official organ of the Trades and Labour Council and Labor Electoral Leagues of N.S.W., could not pay full wages. In 1894 seven members of the staff, including Holland, took over the newspaper. The venture was not a success. The Holland family, now with three sons, had shelter and three meals a day - unlike many others in this depression period - but meals usually consisted of bread and golden syrup. Worry and malnutrition affected Holland's health and he became subject to periods of faintness.53

In themselves, the Socialist League, and the Active Service Brigade, the domain of a tiny group of fanatics and malcontents, were of slight importance. Up to 1898 militant socialists found what significance they had within the labour movement, in support of the Labor Party. This support was given initially, in 1891, because militant socialists had assisted in the formation of that party, its declared objectives were in line with those of militant socialists, and it seemed capable of being made the instrument of the sweeping changes they sought.54 Moreover, the Labor Party, aspiring to represent the entire labour movement, offered an apparently favourable environment for the development of a relation between militant socialists and the workers, for it was obvious to militant socialists that they must secure at least the tolerance of workers if they were to achieve their ends.55 What was this relation to be? Ideally, the

workers would accept the theories of socialism when they were explained, and the Labor Party would be transformed, of its own volition, into the instrument for the implementation of the social revolution. No such enlightenment took place, and the more realistic socialists did not expect that it would. Some militant socialists were contemptuous of "the horny-handed sons of toil who are almost invariably timid in political matters and in essentials conservative," who lacked imagination and true knowledge. They believed that "the social revolution must be achieved by the intellectual whose efforts will be retarded rather than helped by the majority of manual workers."\(^{56}\) In practice, this attitude implied either independent political action, or the achievement of some kind of militant socialist leadership and control within the Labor Party - and it was obvious that independent action, if it appeared not to harmonise with Labor Party aims, would alienate the majority of workers. Other militant socialists, such as Holland, had high hopes that many workers would soon accept their message, but as there was little sign of this, they too tended to fall back on the idea of leadership. While some looked on leadership as the direct route to the social revolution, Holland's view was that leadership might be necessary to ensure that the workers themselves achieved that knowledge which would allow the revolution to take place.\(^{57}\) Of more immediate concern was the performance of the first Labor members of parliament, which emphasised the need for some means of keeping the party moving towards what militant socialists took to be its objectives.

This argument explains the practical basis of the attempt of militant socialists to gain control of the Labor Party, as a means of ensuring acceptance of their views by all workers. The main reason, from this viewpoint, for the failure of militant socialists to achieve their objects is obvious - the existence and nature of the Labor Party. The existence of the Labor Party, supported by the most powerful constituents of the organised labour movement, forced militant socialists to relate their activities to it, if they wished to make effective contact with the majority of workers. For the same reason, independent socialist political action was likely to be rendered nugatory, as later events were to prove.

56. Ibid.
The need to work through the Labor Party again brought militant socialists up against their constant problem of how to get majority acceptance of their views and attempts to circumvent this by tactical manoeuvres eventually failed. The root cause of the failure of militant socialists within the Labor Party was that the party had to deal with a situation in which electoral success was the major determinant. This meant the adjustment of the party's approach and outlook to what the electorate would not only tolerate, but support with votes. And it was an established fact that not even a large proportion of workers wanted militant socialism. Furthermore, Labor members of parliament, however definite their theories or strong their principles, usually realised that some things were politically and legislatively possible immediate aims and that others were not, and this too worked to the exclusion of the ideas of militant socialists. Essentially, it was towards success within, and gradual reform of the traditional framework of society, that the Labor Party was orientated. The necessity for initial success within the traditional framework, entailing a degree of acceptance of its dictates, was wormwood to militant socialists, for the basis of their position was resentment towards and repudiation of existing society, in which their experience had been that of failure. In 1901, W.M. Hughes, a former member of the A.S.L., and then a Labor M.P., summed up succintly this aspect of the position when he remarked that the difference between himself and Holland was that he had been successful while Holland was a failure. 58

Before the militant socialist attempt to gain control of the Labor Party can be examined in detail, a fundamental general question requires discussion. What impelled militant socialists to take up the role they did in the labour movement? E.J. Brady provides a partial, implicit explanation in his description of his fellow A.S.L. members in the early 1890s:

"Self seekers were there, undesirable proselytes and possible traitors, transient emotionalists, folk obsessed by personal grievances, doubtful or unstable characters, but a healthy fraternal core of incorruptibles also, who lacked neither brains nor courage." 59

58. People, 4 Jan. 1902.
59. Brady. op. cit.
Such "incorruptibles" as Holland were the element of continuing political significance and it is maintained that their motivation was increasing devotion to socialist theory, a devotion which sprang from the emotional sources of reaction to resentment and failure. The standpoint of militant socialists in the 1890s, particularly when contrasted with their position later, clearly indicates that the initial impetus was resentment. As a matter of emphasis, the goal of militant socialist endeavours in the early 1890s was to abolish the present society, rather than to set up a new one, and the new society was described in negative terms - a society which would not have the reprehensible characteristics socialists discerned in the world they knew.\(^{60}\) The strength of militant socialists lay in denunciation, dealing with real evils, and the emphasis of activity was on that. Batho later testified to the absence of intellectual argument and conviction when he remarked of that time that "those who shouted it loudest understood it least."\(^{61}\) Holland made a similar admission.\(^{62}\) The developing interest of militant socialists in the socialist intellectual framework which corresponded to their emotional position was associated with their continued failure to progress towards the abolition of the present society and their enduring resentment. In the face of failure, there was a human need for some certainty and the prospect of eventual success. They found this in socialist theory- the analysis of contemporary society, the prediction of necessary historical evolution towards the collapse of capitalism and the triumph of the workers.\(^{63}\) They believed increasingly, because they increasingly needed to believe.

Resentment does not preclude generosity. Militant socialists, such as Holland, wanted a better world for all workers. In this they were not alone, but their position became unique. Gradually they took up the attitude that they alone fully possessed the immutable truth, both in the analysis of existing society and in the detail of a remedy. This attitude, and particularly the outlook it bred, alienated those who were less sure of the final and complete solution to human problems. The belief that they

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\(^{60}\) E.g. see A.W. 22 Nov. 1890; S.M.H. 21 May 1891; Manifesto of the A.S.I. Sept. 1894 (Appendix 1).


\(^{62}\) P. & C. 26 May 1900.

\(^{63}\) Holland. "Collectivism-v-Competition" op. cit.
alone held the truth was the moral basis of militant socialists' bid for leadership in the labour movement. It was a belief that gave rise to what appeared to non-believers to be remarkable arrogance and colossal egoism. Given the identification militant socialists made between the progress of truth and their own personal success; it also produced a determined ambition - for a cause which knew no defeat.

Prior to the 1893 Political Labor Conference, an A.S.L. conference, claiming to represent nine thousand members and possibly representing a thousand, decided on a policy for the Labor Conference. This policy was to ensure that Labor members of parliament behaved to the satisfaction of militant socialists. At the Labor Conference, A.S.L. members such as Holland, recently elected to the committee of the Waterloo Labor Electoral League, and particularly Holman and Dodd, led criticism of Labor members who were held to have betrayed the interests of the party over the fiscal issue and during the 1892 Broken Hill strike. In this, expressed particularly in a motion of "undying hostility" and the adoption of the Solidarity Pledge, militant socialists were allied with unionists and non-parliamentary elements.

Before the 1894 election, the political forces of labour split into those candidates who would support the Solidarity Pledge, and those, mainly sitting members, who would not. Militant socialists led the attack on those who repudiated the Pledge, and supported that wing of the party, headed by the Central Executive, which advocated the Pledge. A.S.L. members Hughes, Holman and Desmond published the New Order, newspaper of the Solidarities. Militant socialists such as S.A. Rosa, A. Thompson, T. Beasley, Reverend Philip Moses, Hughes and Holman, secured nominations

64. See e.g. West Sydney Federal Election. The International Socialist Party to the Electors. Sydney 1910.
65. People, 6 July 1901.
70. S.M.H. 9, 30 Jan., 7, 14 May 1894; New Order, 28 April 1894.
from the Solidarity Party. Militant socialists were confident that the 1894 elections would result in the discarding of the self-seeking traitors elected in 1891, and they made no secret of their wish to secure control and dictate the direction of Labor Party development. This was to take the form of welding all the heterogeneous elements comprising the labour movement into one harmonious, militant socialist unit. Such was their confidence in success in 1894, that the A.S.L. began preparations for the added responsibilities expected after the election. These hopes found a ready adherent in Holland, who entered enthusiastically into the Solidarity Labor Party campaign. He was bitterly disappointed, not only with the election failure, but, later, with the nature of the 1894 Labor Party. It was obvious after the election that the party was not disposed to implement the type of programme desired by militant socialists. While claiming to be socialist, the Labor Party defined socialism as nationalisation of land the financial system and abolition of the Upper House. According to the Australian Workman, which reflected party views, "No party can go further," and it was soon evident that Labor would not go that far.

The confidence of militant socialists in the Labor Party as the vehicle for their hopes was seriously weakened by the outcome of the 1894 elections, and they made some tentative moves towards a more independent line of action. Disillusionment with the Labor Party was given tacit recognition by the A.S.L. in September 1894 with a manifesto which, it claimed, was to pave the way for a parliamentary socialist party. Holland's reaction was to persuade the League of the desirability of issuing a monthly paper, under his editorship, to express the views of the militant socialist wing of the political labour movement. The Socialist appeared in October 1894. Holland's position as editor gave him, to his own

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72. A.W. 14 July 1894.
73. A.W. 20 Oct. 1894; See also P. & C. 2 31 Dec 1898.
74. People, 4 May 1907.
75. A.W. 14 July 1894.
76. S.M.H. 30 Jan. 1895
77. A.W. 14 July, 20 Oct. 1894; Mrs. Holland op. cit. p.31; People, 4 May 1907
79. See Appendix 1.
mind, increased prestige and influence in the labour movement. It also allowed him, then aged twenty-seven, to develop his opinions and express them without check, in a limited, protected context.

Holland's beliefs were still inchoate. Batho described, revealingly, how he and Holland became acquainted with Marx's Capital:

"We were discussing Capital, not that either of us knew much about the famous work of Karl Marx, and were consequently discussing it in the abstract, not in the concrete. He had investigated the cover. I had probed further, just turned it over. 'To study Marx,' said he, 'one required a hard seat, a bare table, and a head swathed in wet ice-cold towels.' I agreed with him." 81

The books which influenced Holland most were Blatchford's Merrie England and Gronlund's Co-operative Commonwealth. 82 He thought in terms of Blatchford's definitions of socialism, "a scientific scheme of national government ... owned by the people." 83 To Holland in the mid nineties, socialism meant wholesale nationalisation. Belief in collective action towards this co-existed in his mind with faith in its historical inevitability. In common with other militant socialists, Holland's ideas were vague and confused. When not indulging in denunciation, he tended to lapse into the nebulous optimism of millennial visions. 84 The detailed programme he advocated was collective ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange, abolition of the Upper House and a compulsory eight hour day. 85 The general similarity of this to the Labor Party platform emphasises the fact that militant socialists' initial misgivings were in relation to the speed in which that party would implement the platform, and whether it would attempt to implement it fully. 86 At the same time, Holland had become since 1892 and particularly after the 1894 elections, more firmly wedded to this plan of reform and more insistent in his demands for its application. This reflected his growing awareness of the Labor Party's increasing recalcitrance. As this became more obvious, he concluded that the viewpoint of militant socialists must be

81. The Vag, op. cit, p.36.
82. Holland, "Collectivism-v-Competition." op. cit.
84. Holland, "Collectivism-v-Competition" op. cit.
85. Socialist, 4 June 1895.
86. Socialist, 30 May 1896.
asserted independently. The Socialis represented such an assertion. So too did his scheme to assemble all N.S.W. unemployed in Sydney to force parliament, which he contemptuously described as "composed of frauds, fools, knaves and clowns engaged in a good old game of bluff," to provide work. This was, as the Australian Workman remarked, "one of those curious expedients which suggest themselves to persons of dramatic ideas and an eye for stage situations." Indicative of the dilemma facing militant socialists – whether to act within the Labor Party or independently – was the fact that while Holland demanded in 1895 that Labor members prevent the transaction of any other parliamentary business until a solution to the unemployment problem was reached, he was also telling the A.S.L. that the time had come for the formation of a distinct socialist political party.

Prosecution for libel and a period of imprisonment added another element to Holland's growing sense of resentment. This humiliation provided a stage on which he could dramatise himself as a social outcast, persecuted for his principles. With Batho, Holland made a precarious living from the sale of the Socialist which had its largest circulation among Newcastle miners. When these miners struck in June 1896, Holland asserted in his paper, that Joseph Creer, superintendent of the Government Labour Bureau, was a drunkard, and had administered the Bureau to the benefit of colliery owners. Holland and Batho were charged with libel. Holland, who conducted his own defence, later gave a flippant account of the court proceedings:

"Batho's plea was to be 'Not Guilty' and mine, 'Justifiable Comment.' Batho entered his plea correctly; and being somewhat absent-minded, I too replied, 'Not Guilty.' The jury was ... a crowd of bald-headed old fellows ... It is an accepted fact that bald-headed men are generally rank conservatives – probably because of their age. Of course there are many exceptions. Acting on that theory and not knowing the jurors personally, we set to work to challenge those with the shiniest pates and the least hair." 92

89. A.W. 23 Feb. 1895.
90. Socialist, 4 June 1895.
Batho was fined £5 and Holland was given the alternative of a fine of £50 or three months' imprisonment. Unable to pay the fine, Holland went to prison. He later claimed that Government officials had told him that if he apologised to Creer the proceedings would be dropped. He consulted his wife who could not bring herself to ask him to apologise "to a man who had taken such a hostile attitude towards the workers." Firm in his rectitude, Holland boasted later, "There is no power on earth that can make us apologise for having done what we consider to be the right."

Materially, life was pleasant enough in the debtors' prison, and the A.S.L. and Active Service Brigade supported Holland's family. Holland's real suffering was humiliation. He claimed that a majority of members of the Legislative Assembly had petitioned the Minister of Justice for his release, and two members had offered to provide a £100 bond of good behaviour, but these overtures were rejected. This claim, implying his importance, and suggesting that he had been victimised, and flippant references to his trial, were Holland's reactions to the indignity of his imprisonment and the social stigma associated with it. His imprisonment set Holland hard in the ways of resentment and rebellion. It confirmed his view of himself as persecuted, and provided material for that dramatisation of himself in which he had begun to indulge. Imprisonment increased Holland's repugnance for the established basis of society and law, and pushed him further towards the position of claiming to serve a higher law than society would yet accept.

Since 1892, Holland's associates, such as Batho and Dodd had led him through a maze of activity in which there was little pause for reflection. This suited Holland's evangelical bent, for his interest lay, not in analysing his exact convictions, but in asserting himself, in applying his energies to the cause of reform. His immediate environment interacted with his natural predilections to issue in a personality in which emotions led

95. P. & C. 16 June 1900.
96. Socialist, 4 Dec. 1896; P. & C. 14 July 1900; Mrs. Holland op. cit. pp.41-45. No further evidence has been found to corroborate Holland's statement.
97. See Socialist, 4 Dec. 1896.
H.E. Holland at the age of twenty-eight. A photograph taken in Newcastle in 1897.
the intellect. He was quick to anger, rash, uncompromising, intolerant, possessed of a flair for the extravagant and striking phrase, and absorbed in the cause to which his evangelism was so well suited, militant socialism. By 1896 he had found an outlet suited to his enthusiasm, the role of militant socialist journalist.

To Holland's fury, the Socialist had been mismanaged during his imprisonment, and in an attempt to revive it, he and Batho transferred their paper to Newcastle in December 1896. After severe initial difficulties, the new paper, the Northern People was placed on a workable basis, and in 1898 Holland secured the amalgamation of Newcastle and Sydney socialist papers in the People and Collectivist under his editorship.

It was in 1898 that militant socialist dissatisfaction with the Labor Party came to a head in Sydney. By this time, most of the moderates, such as Hughes and Holman, had drifted out of the A.S.I., leaving it to the militants. These militants withdrew from the party in 1898, the occasion being the party's shelving of the socialisation objective. In 1896 militant socialists began organising, with more skill than they had before, to bring the Labor Party back to a militant socialist objective. With an eye to the 1897 Labor Conference, these socialists increased their activity in Labor Electoral Leagues, and a significant number gained election as delegates. At the Conference they secured the addition to the platform of "the nationalisation of land and the whole of the means of production, distribution and exchange." Holland and his fellow socialists welcomed this declaration, whose adoption they had engineered, as indication that Labor Party accepted a class basis, and on those terms they were prepared

98. Socialist, 4,12,19 Dec. 1896; P.& C. 14 July, 11 Aug. 1900; International Socialist, 24 June 1911; The Vag op. cit. p.9; Mrs. Holland op. cit. pp.48-50; Roy Holland op. cit. pp.34-36; Mrs. Ivar to writer, 5 April 1958
99. Collectivist, 1 March 1898; International Socialist Review, 13 July 1907; P.& C. 11 Aug. 1900; Mrs Holland op. cit. p.60; Ike Askew to Mrs. Holland, 16 April 1934 (H.P.)
100. Socialist, 30 May 1896; Liberty 22 Feb. 1896; People, 19 July 1902.
102. S.M.H. 27 Jan. 1897.
to give it their active support. In Newcastle, Holland brought the branch of the A.S.L. which he helped to form in 1897, into a close association with the Labor Party. However, those who saw the nationalisation plank as a liability, sought, at the 1898 Labor Conference, its removal from the platform. It was to be inserted as a declaration of principle, but as the Sydney Morning Herald observed after the Conference, "it is still uncertain what became of it." Apparently aware beforehand that the plank was to be dropped, J.O. Moroney, A.S.L. secretary and member of the Labor Party executive, withdrew from party membership. His example was followed by twenty or so active A.S.L. members, including C.M. Barlow, then Labor League secretary, and Holland in Newcastle.

The militant socialist defection was numerically insignificant, but those Labor Leaguers who claimed to be socialists in the general sense, were incensed by the reflection cast on their socialism. Arthur Griffith, secretary of the Parliamentary Labor Party, and a member of the Newcastle A.S.L. claimed that the Labor Party was a socialist party which "must ever be the head and front of the socialistic movement." It sought reform by evolution while militant socialists wanted revolution. This viewpoint differed from the militant socialist one in that it was neither militant nor firmly attached to the essentials of socialist theory - the class war and the overthrow of capitalism. To those who acted on the supposition that the Labor Party represented the interests of the labour movement, "socialism" meant whatever the party proposed to do in those interests, and this would be done slowly, in the light of prevailing conditions.

The withdrawal of militant socialists from the Labor Party came as the culmination of their repeated failures to influence the direction in which that party would move. Militant socialists could not escape the conclusion

104. Newcastle Morning Herald, 13 Jan., 8,12 March 1898.
105. S.M.H. 27,28 Jan. 1898; Nairn op. cit. pp.314-5. The plank was not removed until 1905, but in the confusion of 1898, party members were under the impression that it had been
107. N.M.H. 8 March 1898.
108. N.M.H. 1 March 1898.
that in 1898 the Labor Party had definitely repudiated and forsworn that which socialists held to be of the essence of a workers' party - class principles, the objective of complete national ownership, and the abolition of private property.\textsuperscript{109} To militant socialists this meant that, at basis, the Labor Party was no different from the other, "capitalist" parties. Withdrawal under these circumstances was logical, particularly in view of the fact that their conception of the Labor Party did not compel them to loyalty. They visualised that party as a mass means to achieve a militant socialist end. The militant socialists' conviction of their own superiority, their role as the most advanced and resolute section of the working class, clearly understanding the line of march,\textsuperscript{110} left them in no doubt as to the hands in which the true interests and destiny of the working class lay.

If the Labor Party refused to recognise these interests, then a true socialist party must champion them alone.\textsuperscript{111} This decision, forced on militant socialists by their interpretation of the Labor Party's position, did not involve any change in theory. Holland continued to believe that the government was "the first tool that the workers must own" and the method of seizure was to be through the ballot box.\textsuperscript{112} This attitude, after the breach with the Labor Party, made sense only, as Holland saw,\textsuperscript{113} if the militant socialists set up a political party of their own, which they did in 1901. Thus the militant socialists' defection from the Labor Party changed their role from that of propagandists and a pressure group, to that of independent political actionists, a change whose necessity they recognised and accepted gradually and reluctantly, and then only partially, for when convenient they often retreated to their initial propagandist role.\textsuperscript{114} This change forced on militant socialists a responsibility which they had not carried before, to look at their principles in the light of

\textsuperscript{109} See Appendix 1. Also Andrew Thomson. \textit{A Criticism of the Labor Party's Socialism}. Sydney 1905.
\textsuperscript{110} \textit{Northern People} 23 Jan. 1897.
\textsuperscript{111} \textit{P. & C.} 28 Oct. 1899.
\textsuperscript{112} \textit{P. & C.} 10 Dec. 1898, 10 Feb. 1900.
\textsuperscript{113} \textit{P. & C.} 28 Oct. 1899.
\textsuperscript{114} \textit{P. & C.} 26 May 1900.
electoral reactions. Their new task, to build a successful party from virtually nothing, was far more difficult than their former aim, that of securing control of a developing party already in being. Some awareness of the consequences of withdrawal was undoubtedly one of the factors which kept militant socialists within the Labor Party up to 1898, for some of them, at least, saw that opposition to the Labor Party, which independent socialist action would entail, would arouse the hostility of workers.\textsuperscript{115} The fact that a few militant socialists chose to persevere independently with their mission was, as they interpreted it,\textsuperscript{116} a testimony to the strength of their faith in their idea of socialism, and its inevitability. It also reflected the resentment of a group whose feelings were so strong that they were determined to maintain their position, not only despite majority disapproval but, more particularly, because of it.\textsuperscript{117} To hostile critics, this action revealed not only a remarkable credulity, but that overweening pride, that arrogance associated with what Holland would have called "having done what we consider to be the right,"\textsuperscript{118} a quality described in 1899 by W.H. McNamara, an ex-president of the A.S.L., as "narrow-minded priggishness."\textsuperscript{119}

The militant socialists' assertion of independence in February 1898, was obscured for a time by their sharing with the Labor Party hostility to the proposals of federation of the Australian States, proposals which dominated politics in the late nineties. Early in 1898, Holland took an active part in public opposition to the Convention Bill.\textsuperscript{120} The A.S.L. held that federation would limit political freedom in the States and increase taxation burdens, and denounced its mechanics as infringing the sacred right of democratic majority rule,\textsuperscript{121} objections similar to those of the Labor Party.\textsuperscript{122} However, when Reid modified the federation proposals after

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{115} Flinn to Black, op. cit.
\item \textsuperscript{116} P. & C. 31 Dec. 1898.
\item \textsuperscript{117} Joyce Cary in Except the Lord (London 1953 p.14) puts this proposition in a fictional context. "For the man with a message, opposition, even hatred, is a sign that he is needed precisely in that place where the most violent hostility is to be found."
\item \textsuperscript{118} P. & C. 16 June 1900.
\item \textsuperscript{119} W.H. McNamara to G. Black. 10 Dec. 1899. (Black Papers Vol.1.)
\item \textsuperscript{120} N.M.H. 18, 19, 27 April, 16, 23 May 1898; P. & C. 23 April 1898.
\item \textsuperscript{121} P. & C. 14 May, 10 Sept., 1898.
\item \textsuperscript{122} N.M.H. 23 May 1898; B.R. Wise. The Making of the Australian Commonwealth. London, 1913, pp.259-342; Black op. cit. No.4, pp.22-23.
\end{itemize}
the failure of the June 1898 referendum in N.S.W., a number of Labor members gave their support to the new proposals of the Federal Enabling Bill. To Holland, this seemed treachery. His denunciation flared out with a bitterness that sprang from his resentment of a greater treachery, the failure of the Labor Party to adhere to what he believed were true principles. At a Newcastle meeting in April 1899 when J.S.T. McGowan, J.C. Watson and A. Griffith explained their attitude to federation, Holland, according to his own account, rose and declared that:

"He had no hesitation in branding the three men who now stood before them as political blacklegs - Watson (jumping to his feet and approaching Holland with set teeth and clenched hands): What's that? Say that again. Holland: Political blacklegs! Watson (retiring to his seat): All right we'll deal with you after the meeting. Holland (continuing): By their actions in connection with the Federal Enabling Bill they had blacklegged on all their past professions and principles. ... Watson: It would be a bad day for Labor if ever Holland was its leader. For under the extreme leadership of such men, Labor would get absolutely nothing." 123

This description illustrates another aspect of the withdrawal of militant socialists from the Labor Party. Militant socialists saw themselves as heroes, defending principle, though others might abandon it. One of their fundamental criticisms of the Labor Party was that it lacked courage.

The withdrawal of militant socialists from the Labor Party led to frequent expressions of mutual hostility. Holland denied the existence of any common ground, and as the unpopularity of his new position became apparent, retreated into a world of loneliness, resentment and self-pity, made tenable by an increasingly vehement assertion of his opinions, embittered by reaction. The shift to Newcastle had not helped Holland materially. Breakfast was often a cup of water, and a bunch of home-grown grapes, lunch, a dozen bananas for 3d. The strain on Holland of militant socialism's independent role was great, for it seemed to be remote from any prospect of

123. P. & C. 15 April 1899.
124. N.M.H. 3 March 1898.
126. Mrs. Holland to Mr. and Mrs. Cocking, 28 May 1922 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.); Josiah Cocking to Mrs. Holland, 14 Feb. 1937 (H.P.); Ike Askew to P. Fraser n.d. 1937 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
Holland with Ike Askew, setting out to address a meeting during his "agitator's holiday" in Northern New South Wales in March 1899.
success. Poverty and the apparent fruitlessness of his efforts sapped his self-confidence, and at the end of 1898, Holland felt a deep sense of frustration. Even the socialist movement, he complained, did not appreciate his self-denial and unremitting toil.\footnote{127} He became increasingly irascible, venting his spleen in abuse, inveighing against "... the thieving of the capitalist class, and the doings of the filthy, lying, contemptible creatures who are in the Parliament of this country."\footnote{128} His command of vituperation became electrifying and his editorial policy, belligerent.

"This paper will deal out large doses of peppery gehenna to all who stand in need of that kind of physic. And we don't care a cuss whether you like it or whether you don't."ootnote{129}

This ferocious intolerance further alienated Labor supporters. W.H. McNamara dismissed the "Kingdom of Socialist 'brotherhood'," as advocated by Holland and his associates, as one of "cant & narrow-minded priggishness."\footnote{130} Holland's policy of "peppery gehenna" involved him in another libel action in 1900, in which £30 damages were awarded against him.\footnote{131}

Increasing financial difficulties with the People and Collectivist forced Holland and Batho to appeal to the A.S.L. for assistance, and in December 1900 the paper was removed from Newcastle to Sydney where it appeared as the People, still under Holland's editorship.\footnote{132} Almost immediately, Holland began his first political campaign as one of the six candidates of the Socialist Labor Party,\footnote{133} which the A.S.L. had decided to form, early in 1901, to contest the first Federal Senate elections. The formation of this party, which Holland had been advocating for some time,\footnote{134} was a logical consequence of the withdrawal of A.S.L. members from the Labor Party. However, militant socialists' realisation that practical efforts would have to be made to gain electoral support and some tangible benefits advocated, resulted in a wide gap between their

\footnotesize{128. P. & C. 22 Oct. 1898. \hfill 130. McNamara to Black, op. cit.}  
\footnotesize{129. P. & C. 13 Aug. 1898. \hfill 131. P. & C. 14 April 1900; People, 6, 20 April 1901; The Vag, op. cit. p.10.}  
\footnotesize{132. P. & C. 15 Dec. 1900; The Vag, op. cit.}  
\footnotesize{133. The others were Andrew Thomson, J.O. Moroney, J.J. Morrish, J. Neill and T. Melling.}
avowed ultimate objective - the overthrow of capitalism, and collective ownership - and the S.L.P. platform, a mild reformist one, including old age pensions, abolition of militarism, Commonwealth note issue, the eight hour day, enforcement of union rates of wages, and, far from world brotherhood, the exclusion of undesirable races. The problem of attracting electoral support remained a constant one for militant socialists and gaps similar to this one remained a continuing feature of their platforms. None of the militant socialists polled over six thousand in a contest where the last candidate elected received over 70,000 votes. Holland received 4,771 votes, 1,025 of these being recorded in Newcastle. After the poll, militant socialists claimed that they had not expected success, but had used the occasion for propaganda. In view of the S.L.P.'s rationale, this was an illogical position, an attempt to revert to the standards of the militant socialists' earlier role within the Labor Party and a refusal to acknowledge that the law of political existence must be success. A few months later, the S.L.P. nominated five candidates in the State elections. Holland contested a Sydney Labor seat, Lang, in an acrimonious and sometimes violent campaign, polling only thirty-four votes. Holland remarked that although militant socialists were the economic sculptors, they were working on "the man with the stone head."

The failure in 1901 of independent political action by militant socialists was primarily a reflection of the strength of the Labor Party, whose support was increasing. Obviously, support for militant socialists would have to be drawn from among the ranks of the workers. The more radical workers supported the Labor Party and saw no reason to change their allegiance. The detail of the S.L.P. platform was no more attractive than that of the Labor Party, and, given the increasing number of Labor members of parliament, militant socialists had far less chance of eventually implementing a policy. Rooted as the Labor Party was in unionist develop—

135. People, 16 Feb. 1901.
137. People, 6 April 1901.
138. They were : Thomson, Moroney, Morrish, Neill and Holland.
139. People, 8 June, 6 July 1901.
140. People, 15 June 1901. J.J. Power (576 votes) was elected. E. Jones 447, J.A. Chuck 259, Holland 34. N.S.W. Votes and Proceedings of Legislative Assembly. 1903, V.1, p.741.(p.27); S.M.H. 4 July 1901.
141. People, 20 July 1901.
ment, many workers were bound to the party by traditional union ties. More than this, Labor supporters saw militant socialists as traitors, who opposed the party of reform with bitter criticism, and endeavoured to win away votes, action aimed at retarding and destroying the strongest force for social betterment. Important too, was the contrast in outlook between militant socialists and Labor supporters. For many reasons - differences of temperament, the possession of a degree of economic security, a different appraisal of the best way to effect the best reforms, a basic conservatism - Labor supporters did not share or understand the resentment which drove militant socialists. Practically, the task of militant socialists was to win support away from the Labor Party, but this support was too firmly attached.

Militant socialists professed not to be discouraged by the failures of 1901. Holland turned his attention quickly to one of the main factors governing Labor strength and militant socialist weakness - the support of unions. His aim was to establish the basis of militant socialism among unions, as an essential step in winning away support from the Labor Party. In July 1901 Holland organised the Tailoresses' Union of New South Wales. After an attempt to enforce union rates of pay, Holland led eight hundred and fifty tailoresses out on a strike early in November 1901. Holland was confident of success, for at first the strike had the support of the Sydney Labor Council, but early in December this was withdrawn, probably because the Council had become aware that Holland hoped to use the strike for a militant socialist purpose. Furious, Holland promptly organised a deputation to the Council. After some Council members had criticised Holland as conceitedly irresponsible, and referred to his attacks on the Labor Party, he was admitted, only to vent his feelings:

"The president of the Union, Mr. Holland, intimated that he had been instructed by the union to state that the position in which the union was placed was due to the 'cowardly treachery of the men you call your

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143. Sydney Daily Telegraph, 2, 4, 8, 18 Nov. 1901.
144. Minutes, Sydney Labor Council. 7, 14 Nov. 1901; People, 16, 30 Nov. 1901.
145. Minutes, Sydney Labor Council. 28 Nov., 5, 12 Dec. 1901; Worker (Sydney) 23 Nov. 1901.
executive.' Mr. Thrower [President of the Labor Council]: You must withdraw that assertion. Mr. Holland: I shall not withdraw. Mr. Thrower: You must apologise. Mr. Holland: I absolutely refuse to withdraw or apologise." 147

Disorder followed this exchange, and Holland was told to leave. He replied that he would gladly leave, but would never apologise to the cowards and traitors at the head of the Council. After leaving the room as Union representative, Holland immediately returned in his capacity of reporter for the People. Irate members jumped to their feet, protesting against such brazen impudence. Holland again left, declaring that "he regarded his expulsion as a compliment." 148

As well as illustrating the militant socialists' sense of moral superiority, as men of principle and forthright courage, among cowards, this incident revealed Holland's inability to put aside injured feelings when he faced a situation which required tact and powers of subtle persuasion. Abuse had become his usual reaction when his views clashed with those of others, and he could not see that his belligerence militated against the aims which he professed to hold dear, in this case, the success of the strike. It was only in his later years that he came to see that an aggressive stand usually defeated his purpose. At this time, the destructive consequences of his actions were hidden from Holland by the intensity of his feeling, and by the fact that his defiant disregard for the niceties of negotiation, his impatient denunciations, found some sympathy and support. The Labor Council's withdrawal of support from the tailoresses' strike resulted in bitter recriminations during which two militant socialists resigned from the Council, 149 and four unions passed motions censuring the Council's action. 150 This reflected, not only militancy, but the fact that Holland often enlisted strong minority support in such encounters because he exaggerated, seeming, in the eyes of the

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150. These were the Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners, the Cigar Makers, Boot Trade Employees and Iron Workers Assistants' Union. Minutes, Sydney Labor Council. 9,23,30 Jan., 6,13 Feb. 1902.
radical few, to cut a finer figure. Besides, as with so many issues in which militant socialists were involved, there was an aspect of more general concern which attracted support from outside their ranks. On this occasion, this aspect was the abandonment by the Council of a strike in progress. Such minority support, whatever its nature, tended to confirm Holland in his position. He interpreted the favourable reaction of the few as evidence of a process of conversion to his own way of thought.

The tailoresses attempted to retain support by sending deputations to various unions, but in this they were hindered by a dispute between Holland and W.M. Hughes, and the strike eventually collapsed. The circumstances were such that Holland felt that he had been betrayed and persecuted by the union movement. He believed that the leaders of organised labour, political and industrial, had entered a conspiracy against him, to wreck his enterprises. As before, when his hopes had been destroyed, Holland was bitter and self-pitying, but this time, although resentment blazed out, he had exhausted his resources. He turned, tentatively, to look at the question of what might be learnt from failure.

It was in this frame of mind that Holland approached a disagreement with the A.S.L. that had occurred during the strike. A member of the League executive had complained that Holland was devoting too much time to the tailoresses and not sufficient to the editorship of the People. Perhaps Holland, aware that the winning of unionist support was a prerequisite to the political success of militant socialists, was appalled by the unrealistic attitude revealed by the criticism. He told the executive to find another editor, and resigned, without fuss, in February 1902. His associates were not sorry to see him go. They resented the manner in which he dominated the newspaper, using it as a vehicle for his own opinions. Soon after starting a job printing business in Sydney, Holland accepted

156. People, 1 Feb. 1902; Mrs. Holland op. cit. pp.62-63; Roy Holland to writer, 2 May 1957.
157. People, 8 Feb. 1902.
the editorship of the Grenfell Vedette owned by his friend Holman, a Labor M.P. since 1895. As this was in defiance of an A.S.L. prohibition, directed against Holland, of publications without League approval, he withdrew from the League. The rancour with which the A.S.L. came to view Holland is explicable only in terms of the hatred which a small group of fanatics have for one who is held to have betrayed the cause. The A.S.L. held that Holland's acceptance of Holman's offer was a desertion to Laborism.

Holland's withdrawal from organised socialism in 1902, not to return until 1907 - and then on different terms - was the culmination of several years of defeat, failure and disillusionment. The workers would not receive his message. His fellow socialists did not appreciate his work. The A.S.L., dwindling in numbers and support, devoting much of its energies to petty internal spites and jealousies, was lapsing into futility. Holland accepted Holman's offer, hoping to better himself financially at least. Job printing was unremunerative and Holland had six children to provide for. He was dejected, but he also had hopes. Primarily his disillusionment was with the League, but he also took stock of his position as a militant socialist. The League's apparent drift towards oblivion offered lessons which Holland did not ignore. Was he implementing, in the best way, his basic wish to end the existing social organisation and improve human conditions? Reluctantly, cautiously, he turned again to the Labor Party, for it was, despite its shortcomings in Holland's eyes, a live force in politics. Yet this was something more than tactical, a return to the militant socialists' pre-1893 infiltrating role. In a reversal of his past professions, Holland took up the defence of the Labor Party and its interpretation of socialism. This, it is argued, reveals that his convictions as a militant socialist were by no means unshakable, and supports the argument that up to this time those convictions were basically emotional. All Holland's efforts had ended in failure and the outcome was the calm of exhaustion. Removed from the scene of the conflicts, his emotions temporarily spent, he thought for the first time in a situation of passive acceptance of failure, and turned, as so many have, to see the

158. Mrs. Holland op. cit. p.61.
159. People, 5 April 1902.
virtues of the instrument of their defeat, in his case, the Labor Party.

In Grenfell, Holland continued the Vedette's pro-Labor policy. His evangelism found an outlet in other directions. In October 1902 he cycled 235 miles to Sydney to act as Arbitration Court advocate for the Tailoresses' Union, and in May 1903 took up a campaign for the release of a local young woman convicted of murder. Holland soon tired of Grenfell. He disliked the climate, the cost of living was high, and, above all, he yearned for city life. Moreover the Vedette was in financial difficulties, and Holland's association with it gave him little satisfaction. Soon after the death of his five year old son Edmund, in October 1904, Holland sold his interest in the Vedette, planning to return to Sydney to start his own printery. The fact that Holland abandoned this plan when he was offered the editorship of the Labor Party newspaper, the Queanbeyan Leader, suggests that he entertained hopes of the success of his aims, within the Labor Party. In Queanbeyan, where Holland began the Leader venture in January 1905, he defended the socialism of the Labor Party as democracy fighting against conservatism. This shows a serious weakness in Holland's attachment to militant socialism as he had propounded it earlier, but that his attachment was still strong is suggested by his refusal to stand, when Holman attempted to persuade him early in 1906, as Labor candidate for a Queanbeyan by-election, although Holland may have been influenced by the fact that it was a seat which offered little prospect for the success of a Labor candidate.

As with the Vedette, little success attended the Leader venture. Had

161. Grenfell Vedette, 27 Aug., 17, 24, Sept., 5 Nov., 1902. See also J.C. Watson Committee. Dr. to H.E. Holland, 31 Dec. 1903. (J.C. Watson Papers) (C.N.L.)
163. Minutes, Ethel Herringe Release Committee, 5 May-13 July 1903 (H.P.);

G.V. 22, 29 April, 13 May 1903.
164. Holland to J. Cocking, 13 Oct. 1904 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
166. G.V. 5 Oct. 1904; Holland to Cocking op. cit.
167. People, 6 April 1912.
168. Queanbeyan Leader, 14 Nov. 1905, 6 April 1906.
170. See S.M.H. 8 Aug. 1904. This was borne out by the actual result. S.M.H. 9 April 1906.
his two country newspapers been financially successful, or had he been offered a safe parliamentary seat, it is possible that Holland's energies may have found a home in the Labor Party. Instead, he experienced continued failure. The editing of Labor newspapers forced Holland to keep his more radical journalistic urges in strict subjection, and he was not happy with this curbing of his propagandist zeal. Furthermore, there was a part of Holland that did not relish the compromise with the Labor Party which his editorships represented. Occasionally he glanced wryly at the contrast between his current published professions and his former attitudes. At heart, those former attitudes remained, and it was this, intensified by his failure in the four years following 1902, and the stimulus of new developments in the labour movement, that drove him to return to agitation as a militant socialist. After the Queanbeyan by-election of April 1906, Holland appears to have abandoned whatever hopes he had of success through association with the Labor Party, and he appeared publicly, after a break of four years, as the advocate of class war. At the end of 1906, after the birth of his eighth and last child, Holland left Queanbeyan for Sydney, to launch, in February 1907, a new militant socialist publication, the International Socialist Review for Australasia.

The theme of this chapter has been failure, Holland’s personal failure and the failure of militant socialists to achieve the leadership of the labour movement. The dominant factor in the making of Holland as a militant socialist was failure and his resentment of it. Initially he had found his way to militant socialism through failure to maintain his social and economic position, through unemployment and poverty, through the failure of his religion to satisfy him. The impulse was emotional, and it was only after 1907 that his intellectual conviction became definite and resolute. Failure too, dominated the relations of militant socialists with the labour movement - failure within the Labor Party because that party's first concern was electoral success, to which militant socialists' ideas were
not adjusted, failure of independent action because the Labor Party's hold on workers was too firm to be broken. It was this progression of failures that caused, by way of reaction, an increasing devotion to militancy and socialist theory, just as the culmination of this failure, for Holland, was his dalliance with the Labor Party. What then, would be the reaction to the prospect of success?
Chapter 2.

HIGHEST HOPES.

Between 1907 and 1910 militant socialists made, through industrial channels, their most determined bid up to that time to claim the leadership of the labour movement. It is argued that the degree of initial success achieved by militant socialists at this time is explained by their attainment of organisational unity, their adoption of a new doctrine, and most significantly, the coincidence of some of their immediate aims with those of an important section of the labour movement. Success, and their hopes for further success, were, it is held, what prompted and confirmed the confidence of militant socialists in their new theory of how their aims would be achieved, and what provided their remarkable élan, characteristic of this period. It is in terms of a greater conviction and certainty, that the extreme bitterness of the reaction of militant socialists to failure at this time can be understood. Eventual failure is ascribed to the relative weakness of the factors making for initial success, when faced with the strength of the traditional outlook and loyalties of the majority of the labour movement, to the hostility of the Labor Party, and to government intervention, which helped to defeat the purposes of militant socialists on important occasions, such as that of the Newcastle strike of 1909-10.

Basic to the interpretation of Holland at this stage is an argument of transmutation - that the force which drove him developed from resentment into a firm conviction of the righteousness and inevitability of revolutionary socialism. The explanation of this development is associated with a further argument, that Holland and his colleagues did not distinguish between socialism as an aim and a dogma, and the day to day fortunes of militant socialists. It followed that their successes, however achieved and however limited, were interpreted as steps towards the social revolution and a confirmation of the socialist analysis. In explaining the strengthen-
ing of Holland's conviction, the major influence is attributed to his reception in 1907 of a new theory, that of industrial and political action to overthrow capitalism, and to his optimistic assessment of the prospects of militant socialists acting in conformity with that theory. In mid 1907, when he was almost forty, Holland reached his greatest degree of certainty as a militant socialist.

As before, it is argued that the major cause of the failure of militant socialists to gain the objects they sought was the Labor Party, as both a passive and active force. For three years the activities of militant socialists among unionists seemed a threat to the supremacy of the Labor Party, mainly because militant socialist doctrines proved attractive in a situation in which there was a desire for stronger unionism and dissatisfaction with the arbitration system. However, as was shown clearly in the Broken Hill and Newcastle strikes, most workers refused to follow the urgings of militant socialists, or accept their leadership. This refusal had several aspects. Forceful, determined and revolutionary action, such as militant socialists proposed, was of its nature repugnant to the majority of workers, traditionally cautious and timid. From experience, many believed that the kind of industrial action urged by militant socialists would be unsuccessful, and would retard rather than advance their chances of improving their position. Moreover they did not wish to prejudice, or hesitate in pressing for, the success of the Labor Party, which they believed was imminent, and from which they expected all the improvements they desired. Above all, the revolutionary reforms and methods proposed by militant socialists were too remote from ordinary experience. This was the major continuing obstacle to their success, an absence of firm contact with a majority viewpoint. Any appeal, to meet widespread approval, must be in terms with which many are familiar, it must be in touch with common experience, and it must build slowly from those foundations. The ideas of militant socialists appeared to most workers as a foolish and incomprehensible leap into the unknown. As well, militant socialists were plagued by doctrinal and personal divisions, and too apt to indulge, as Holland did at Broken Hill in 1909, in abuse, and suggestions of violence, which alienated potential support.

Besides its passive influence, the Labor Party was also an active
agent in the failure of militant socialists. Aware of the danger, Labor supporters, shrewd and with superior tactical ability, outmanoevred the smaller, less adaptable force of militant socialists. In the Broken Hill and Newcastle strikes, government action against militant socialists and their plans aided the Labor Party, while sparing it the odium of strike-breaking. The Labor Party made effective use of charges of revolutionary extremism and the I.W.W. bogey, and by efforts to maintain industrial peace and by pointed attacks, pushed militant socialists into the unpopular position of appearing as much anti-Labor - and anti-labour - as anti-capitalist.

The ambitions of militant socialists reached their height in the Newcastle strike of 1909-10, their attempt to constitute an industrial vanguard, and in the elections of 1910. With defeat at that time, militant socialists' highest hopes were bitterly disappointed, and their illusions that they were forging strong links between vanguard and working class, abruptly dispelled. The failure of the 1907 formula of industrial plus political action, as a solution to the problem of the assertion of leadership by militant socialists, threw them into confusion and despondency, particularly as it produced a reaction towards support of Labor. This failure appeared to signify the exhaustion of their tactical alternatives. After this it seemed that their efforts to capture the Australian labour movement would have to be variants on old policies, tried and found wanting. Later, however, anti-militarist agitation became another avenue for the attempts of militant socialists to claim the leadership of the labour movement.

The occasion, and one of the main reasons for Holland's return to activity as a militant socialist, was a marked resurgence within the independent socialist movement in 1906. In September 1905, Tom Mann, the English trade unionist who had arrived in Melbourne in 1903, formed the Victorian Socialist Party with the aim of supporting and educating the

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1. Mann had been one of the leaders of the militant English unionism of 1887-9, which had culminated in the London dockers' strike, and was the general secretary of the Independent Labour Party from 1895-1898. M. Beer, A History of British Socialism. London 1920, Vol.2, p.358; See also D. Torr, Tom Mann and his times. London, 1956, Vol.1. (1856-1890).
Labor Party towards the moderate socialist objective of "co-operation." This party reached a membership of fifteen hundred within a year, and in April 1906 began publication of the Socialist, under Mann's editorship. The following month, a Broken Hill group produced the Flame, a Marxist-flavoured newspaper edited by R.S. Ross. The International Socialist Club in Sydney decided to publish a newspaper also. Originally a social group, this club had been formed in 1898, mostly by German cigar makers. Holland was an early member, and while absent from Sydney retained this association. When the I.S.C. decided to devote its bar profits to a newspaper, Holland was the obvious choice for the editorship, which he promptly accepted, enabling him to return to Sydney, as he wished. It was an excellent opportunity to take part in what appeared to be important developments in the world of militant socialists. Holland attached particular significance to the prospect and possibilities of the Australia-wide unity of militant socialists, as proposed by the Barrier socialist group late in 1906, in accordance with a resolution of the 1906 Socialist and Trade Union Congress at Amsterdam that the socialist vanguard must be organised and unified. The organisation and expression of militant socialists was no longer confined to the tiny and ineffective A.S.L., and Holland, feeling that true socialism was at last on the march throughout Australia, saw enormous possibilities in unity. It was this resurgence

3. Socialist, 1 Sept. 1906.
6. Scott Bennett to writer, 8 April 1957.
6. People, 13 July 1907.
8. People, 13 July 1907.
11. Flame, Nov. 1906; People, 6 April 1907.
12. I.S.R. 14 Feb., 8 June 1907.
of hope, associated with the appearance and activity of new organisations and newspapers, that brought Holland back to life as a militant socialist. Militant socialism was not a satisfactory personal belief unless it was shared by an increasing number of others, and in the new situation there seemed to be a widespread movement destined for success.

Despite his revived enthusiasm, Holland's ideas on the political role of militant socialists were no clearer than before. The socialist resurgence made him less willing to suffer the Labor Party, but he was strongly influenced by the tolerant position of Mann and the Victorian Socialist Party, and the view of the Sydney Social Democratic Federation, which supported his Review, that Labor's "palliative" proposals could be supported. The I.S.C. objective was similar to that of the A.S.L.:

"Socialisation of the means of Production, Distribution and Exchange to be controlled by a Democratic State in the interests of the whole community, and the complete Emancipation of Labor from the Dominion of Capitalism and Landlordism with the establishment of Social and Economic Equality between the Sexes."  

As before, Holland emphasised political action, holding that the working class, rising in its might on the political field, would vote out the capitalist state to make way for the socialist commonwealth. However, he did not reject the possibility of Labor Party infiltration in this new situation. Seeing his mission as essentially propagandist, building working class unity, and emphasising its "natural and inevitable goal," socialism, he was prepared to consider working in a situation of "palliatives", demanding a legalised maximum working day of eight hours or less, and a minimum living wage fixed by parliament. Holland was eager to believe that support for militant socialists was increasing rapidly, but

14. People, 6 July 1907.
15. Worker, 3 Jan. 1907; I.S. 29 April 1911.
17. Ibid.
18. I.S.R. 14 Feb., 20 April, 18 May 1907.
after his experience of the failure of the independent efforts of militant socialists, and of infiltration in the Labor Party, he was uncertain how this would be manifested within the labour movement generally. Meanwhile, the only course was to eschew this practical problem, and devote himself to propaganda, in effect the assertion, as self-evident propositions, of his theories as a militant socialist. When a solution to this practical problem was offered, Holland grasped it eagerly. This solution was that militant socialists, united organisationally and in doctrine, would act on the workers through their union organisation, and in unionist terms. Perhaps militant socialists believed that this method of establishing contact with the mass of workers would by-pass the Labor Party, their former stumbling-block. In fact, it brought them into more direct conflict with that party than ever before.

It was the industrial conflicts of 1907, the influence of Tom Mann, and American theories of industrial unionism, which confirmed Holland's view, first formed in 1901, of the importance of action among unions. In the first issue of the Review, Holland declared his belief in trade unionism as the industrial expression of the workers' recognition of the class war. This strain in Holland's thought revealed the strong influence of Tom Mann, and avoided the perplexing question of the role of a party of militant socialists, while stressing that activity which was the core of Holland's impulse. Following the example of Mann, and of the A.S.I., and logically, in terms of trade unions being the schools of the class struggle, Holland attacked the arbitration system.

The arbitration system, introduced, with Labor Party support, in N.S.W. in 1901 and in the Commonwealth in 1904, was successful as long as increases in wages counteracted the rise in the cost of living, but from 1905 dissatisfaction grew, as unions desiring to take immediate advantage

22. Ibid.
25. Mann. The Labour Movement in both Hemispheres, op. cit. pp.8-10.
of growing prosperity found their claims postponed because of the pressure of court business, and as favourable decisions were reversed on appeal. In February 1907, the upholding in an appeal court of an evasion, under a contract system, of award wage rates, led to alarm in the labour movement. While Labor critics sought amendments to the Act, Holland denounced the system. Although this implied advocacy of strike action, Holland did not make the connection explicit until the Sydney Coal Lumpers' dispute in April 1907. The success of this strike, his association during it with Tom Mann, then in the process of being converted to the principles of industrial unionism, and the impact of industrial unionist propaganda then being disseminated, combined to bring him to the conviction that the class war would be fought, not only with votes, but by industrial action, "at the barricades, industrial and political."

The coal lumpers' strike ended in July; the workers gaining most of their demands, a success which most observers saw as the result of the efforts of the Sydney Labor Council and W.H. Hughes. During the strike, Holland helped to arrange for Tom Mann and Ben Tillet, another English union leader, to speak in support of the strikers. Holland joined them on their platform, announcing that the strike was "the greatest Socialist conflict ever." He greeted its success as the forerunner of "the Social

30. I.S.T. 27 April 1907.
31. I.S.R. 27 April 1907.
32. I.S.T. 29 June 1907; Mann states that he did not declare himself definitely in favour of industrial unionism until late in 1909 (Mann. Memoirs, op. cit. p.201) This is inaccurate.
33. I.S.R. 18 May 1907.
34. D.T. 18, 22 July 1907; Worker, (Sydney) 25 July 1907; I.S.R. 3 Aug. 1907.
35. D.T. 31 May 1907; S.M.H. 3 Sept. 1907.
36. D.T. 3, 8 June 1907; Worker (Sydney) 6 June 1907; I.S.R. 8 June 1907.
37. I.S.R. 8 June 1907.
Revolution in Australia.⁴³ These extravagant claims were the product of a revolution which the strike had produced in Holland's mind. For the first time militant socialists had tasted success. They had actively aided striking unionists, and those unionists had gained most of their demands. Elated, and flattered by his association with two famous English unionists,⁴⁹ Holland ignored the fact that Hughes's intervention was responsible for terminating the strike in defiance of the wishes of militant socialists.⁴⁰ It was this strike, interpreted as a success for militant socialists, that awakened Holland to the possibilities of action in a unionist context, and confirmed his resolve. He believed that the strike had brought about a revolution in the attitudes of industrial workers.⁴¹ After it, he was sure that militant socialism was on the march. As in a revelation, Holland saw not only the crucial importance of unionism as a field for the establishment of successful contact between militant socialists and the workers, but the relevance of the new theories of industrial unionism, those of the American Industrial Workers of the World. He saw all this, not only as a plan for the future, but as an explanation of the failures of the past. It had been the workers' neglect of industrial organisation after the 1890 defeat that had resulted in the entrenchment of a political Labor Party "pledged to a middle-class attitude."⁴²

As failure had fostered the development of Holland as a militant socialist, so did success. It was a measure of success, and its circumstances, that launched Holland on a new and more determined attempt, based on strong belief in a new theory, to capture for militant socialists, the leadership of the labour movement. But from the events of the coal lumpers' strike, a significant trend can be discerned. Militant socialists never knew when to stop. They failed to see the wisdom of pursuing limited objectives, and of making gains in small steps. Once their mission was

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39. I.S.R. 8 June 1907.
40. D.T. 22, 29 July 1907.
41. I.S.R. 8 June 1907.
42. I.S.R. 30 Nov. 1907.
under way, they believed in pushing it, as quickly as possible, to a completely satisfactory conclusion. Practically, this was an all or nothing policy in which the consequence of failure was, virtually, oblivion. Again, this situation reflects the influence of the Labor Party, which, as Hughes's action in the coal lumpers' strike indicates, was anxious to settle for limited gains. Apart from the fact that they claimed to be sure of complete ultimate success, militant socialists were placed in a position of having to outbid Labor.

The I.W.W. was formed in Chicago in June-July 1905. Basic to its inspiration was the conviction that the class war which would lead to socialism would best be waged by organisations of the industrial union type. Craft unionism was deemed useless, and the I.W.W. stood for a revolutionary economic organisation, one great industrial union embracing all industries. The I.W.W. preamble sums up its essence:

"The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people and the few who make up the employing class have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until all the toilers come together on the political as well as on the industrial field and take and hold that which they produce by their labor through an economic organisation of the working class without affiliation with any political party.

The rapid gathering of wealth and the centralisation of the management of industry into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions of to-day unable to cope with the ever-growing power of the employing class, because the trades unions foster a state of things 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. The trades unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These sad conditions can be changed and the interests of the working class upheld only by an organisation formed in such a way that its members in any one industry or in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lock-out is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all."


The first I.W.W. convention was divided on the question of political action. The preamble declared that "... the toilers must come together on the political as well as on the industrial field ... without affiliation with any political party," but this did not solve the problem of the relationship between industrial and political action, and the question remained to perplex and divide the I.W.W. in both America and Australia.

While in America the characteristic appeal of the I.W.W. was to nomadic casual workers, in Australia its initial appeal was to militant socialists, and its early role, that of the industrial aspect of the militant socialist movement. Two major considerations commended the I.W.W. to the leaders of the A.S.L. The first was their admiration of Daniel De Leon, one of the sponsors of the I.W.W., the second, the problem of defining the relations between militant socialists and unions, which had disturbed League members since their repudiation of the Labor Party in 1898. Finding themselves in unions pledged to the Labor Party and Labor Council, A.S.L. members who were unionists were very conscious of the disharmony between their political and industrial allegiances. A.S.L. branches were discussing this problem at the time the I.W.W. was formed, and the I.W.W. soon engrossed A.S.L. attention as it seemed to provide a solution to the very problem of integration which perplexed them. I.W.W. propaganda, begun by the S.I.P. at the end of 1906 appealed to Holland also, for as a statement of theory, it seemed to answer his question of how militant socialist could act most effectively within the labour movement.

The principles of the I.W.W. came before the assembled socialist organisations of Australia in June 1907 when a conference to discuss unity was convened by the Victorian Socialist Party. Holland believed that unity among militant socialist would enable them to make the most of any opportunity. Delegates attended from the Socialist Labor Party, the International Socialist Club, the Social Democratic Federation of Sydney, the

45. People, 21 April 1906.
47. I.S.R. 14 Feb., 11 May 1907.
48. In May 1907, this group abandoned its other title - the Australian Socialist League. People, 4 May 1907.
Barrier Socialist Group, the Queensland Socialist Vanguard, and the Victorian Socialist Party; representing, at their own calculation, nearly two thousand socialists. At the conference, the Socialist Federation of Australasia was formed, with Holland as general secretary. The S.L.P. refused to affiliate, holding that other organisations ought to join the S.L.P., but before that party withdrew, the conference declared its faith in the I.W.W. by adopting its preamble, resolving "that the time had arrived for the re-organisation of the Australian working class on the lines of the I.W.W.", and elaborating this resolution in a manifesto. This met the full approval of the S.L.P. which had further intensified its I.W.W. propaganda, not only in Sydney, but in Melbourne and the Newcastle district. However, the S.L.P., claiming to be the orthodox fount of I.W.W. doctrine, asserted that most of the conference delegates knew little of I.W.W. principles, a well-founded contention. What the delegates did know, they interpreted to suit themselves. As a militant unionist, Tom Mann saw the I.W.W. preamble as a concise and striking expression of his own arguments. He merely garnished his old appeals with I.W.W. terms, and his plea for federation was far removed from the I.W.W. concept of a new unionism, one big union, not merely a federation of existing craft unions.

It has been an argument of this thesis, that in Holland's formative years as a militant socialist, up to 1907, his attitudes were basically emotional. In consequence, discussion of his position from the aspect of intellectual content and social and political philosophy has been

51. People, 10, 27 Aug. 1907; I.S.R. 22 June 1907; Flame, July 1907.
52. See Appendix 3. Manifesto of the Socialist Federation of Australasia. June 1907. The resolution was moved by the Broken Hill delegates.
53. People, May, June 1907 passim.
54. People, 17 Aug. 1907.
deferred until it could be examined in relation to its emergence as a major theme after 1907. From that year, Holland's understanding of, and belief in, detailed theories became a determining factor of considerable importance in his actions. It is maintained that a degree of success and the adoption by militant socialists of an industrial theory was the most important cause of this change. The predominant influence in Holland's intellectual development as a militant socialist was, directly and indirectly, the theories of Marx and Engels. Basic elements of Marxist theory - class war, capitalist exploitation, immiserisation, approaching crisis, abolition of private property, collective ownership - were held generally among militant socialists in the 1890s, not so much as a plan of action, but as an explanation and description of society as they saw it, and as justification of, and support for, their emotional position - resentment. Moreover, as Holland and Batho admitted, these theories were not fully understood, developed or related, and in keeping with the preponderance of resentment, it was capitalist exploitation which received most attention. The doctrinal content of Holland's position gradually increased. Entering the A.S.L. as an organisation for the expression of protest and the securing of reform, Holland found that it drew on a substantial body of theory, with which he slowly familiarised himself. Militant socialists, in a situation in which their efforts were failing, needed reassurance, and they found this in an increasing reliance on theory. In view of the Marxist analysis of society and the prediction of historical evolution towards the collapse of capitalism and the triumph of the workers, failures could be seen as temporary set-backs, while an irresistible historical process slowly worked to a conclusion that would mean success.

In the 1890s the emotional nature of the attitude of militant socialists, together with the demands of a political context, occasioned an inconsistency of temper between their denunciations and their constructive proposals. Thus the tone of Holland's few theoretical excursions was mild in comparison

56. Holland, "Collectivism-v-Competition" op. cit. See Appendix 1.
57. People, 6 July 1901.
with his frequent attacks on capitalist exploitation. This situation was changed in 1907. What was missing from the attitude of militant socialists in the 1890s was a means of conducting the force and heat of emotions to the realm of theoretical expression. Of its nature, political action excluded force, but industrial action did not - the word "strike" had violent connotations which "vote" lacked - and the taking up by militant socialists, of industrial theory and action brought about a marked change in the nature of their conviction. This change can be seen by comparing the outlook of Holland in 1907 with his views in 1908. In February 1907 he referred to:

"the crowning triumph, when organised Labor, marshalled under the banners of International Social - Democracy, shall vote out the Capitalist State to make way for the Socialist Commonwealth." 58

On a similar theme, in May 1908, he spoke of:

"a united working class party in Australia, a party that in its own irresistible strength would march - whether peaceably or with war banners of physical force flying - to its final triumph." 59

The new element was the possibility of violence. This related to Holland's acceptance of the new industrial theories, expressed in the I.W.W. The deficiency these theories seemed to remedy was one of method. Experience had shown that political action alone did not produce the results militant socialists desired, but industrial action might, as the coal lumpers' strike seemed to suggest. The tremendous influence exerted on Holland by this strike is explicable in two ways. It is obvious that he was ready to accept industrial action as a solution to the problem of militant socialist leadership. Political action had proved ineffective, the alternatives should be explored. Moreover, any success in which militant socialists had taken part was taken as a vindication of the theory or general principle under which they had acted, in this case, a fight on the industrial field. 60

Because his new theory of industrial plus political action integrated all he knew and all he felt, and because it promised success, it resulted in a remarkable strengthening of Holland's conviction in the correctness and righteousness of his position. Together with this,

60. I.S.R. 27 April 1907.
the possibility of violence lent his belief a tension not present before, so that earlier expressions of the militant socialist position, such as the 1894 A.S.L. manifesto, seem, in contrast, torpid, made more in sorrow than in anger.

In 1920 Holland made a declaration of the content of his socialist convictions which sums up briefly the essentials of his belief after 1907:

"Personally I stand where I have ever stood - for one big union in the industrial field and one big party on the political field, each with the revolutionary purpose of overthrowing capitalism and writing victory for socialism. I am first and last a Marxian Socialist ..." 61

The core of Holland's belief was the class struggle, between the capitalist class of exploiters, owning the land and machinery, and the working class, owning nothing, but producing all wealth. The poverty and misery of the working class was increasing as capitalists grew fewer and more powerful. The basic position of Holland as a militant socialist was that the workers must demand and get all the wealth they produced. To do this they must abolish the wages system, that is, wage slavery. For this it was necessary for all the workers to unite in one big revolutionary industrial union and in one big revolutionary socialist political party, to fight the capitalists, to wrest temporary concessions from them, but always to keep moving towards the social revolution. This meant the overthrow of the capitalist class, the destruction of its legal power to oppress and the capture of the machinery of Government to give constitutional endorsement to the will of the working class which would be to decree the ownership of the world and its wealth by the workers. Although this was essentially a Marxist position, Holland claimed that he did not accept the whole of any writer's theories. He did however, acknowledge his acceptance of Marx's theories of economic determinism and surplus value, and the theory that ultimately class antagonisms would disappear and production and distribution would be carried on by an association of the whole people on a basis of social service. 62 When Holland spoke of "socialism" he meant the process postulated in this complex of theories. The practical


and detailed attempt to apply these theories in the political and industrial situation between 1907 and 1910 is the next concern of this thesis.

From mid 1907 until the collapse of the Newcastle strike in 1910, militant socialists saw their mission with a clarity and confidence they had not known before. Of primary importance was work within the unions:

"The comrades must get into the Unions and permeate them with straight-out Revolutionary Socialism and Industrial Unionism. We must make ourselves prominent in our particular Union so that we have a chance of being its delegate on the Trades Hall Council and then we would eventually be able to outweigh the reactionaries who are on the Council." 63

At the same time workers were enjoined to use their political power, and after the coal lumpers' strike, Holland was anxious to "force the struggle into the political field."64 He reasoned that, "as the maritime war of 1890 brought along the political revolution of 1891, so out of the 1907 waterside war comes yet another revolution."65 Choosing the electorate of Darling Harbour, where many coal lumpers lived, Holland entered the State election campaign in August 1907. His main opponents were two candidates claiming Labor support, John Norton and W.M.Daley. While Holland asserted that the Labor Party had betrayed unionists in the coal lumpers' strike, Labor speakers described the International Socialist Party as "a curse on society" and Holland as "a Mad Mullah in an impossible cause."66 Norton was elected in a poll which placed Holland third.67

The result incensed and alarmed Labor supporters, who recognised fully, for the first time, that militant socialist in a vote-splitting role, could affect, adversely, Labor's fortunes. This reaction confirmed Holland's view of the strength of his position.68 In 1901 he had polled thirty-four votes in Lang, and he contemplated with pleasure his 746 votes in 1907, "a gain of over 2,000 per cent in six years."69 Hitherto, electoral

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64. See Appendix 3. S.F.A. Manifesto.
68. I.S.R. 17 Aug. 1907.
The prospect of further such vote-splitting and unionist defections dismayed Labor Party members, particularly as after the 1907 elections they looked forward to a Labor Government in 1910. In 1908 G.S. Beeby, a Labor parliamentarian, lamented, "It is quite possible that before long there will be three parties in politics, as the extreme Socialist wing threatens to try to obtain representatives in the House." This threat appeared a real one to Labor supporters because militant socialists had achieved unity and some limited successes, widespread, energetic and spectacular activity exaggerated their potential influence, and they were making a determined effort to wrest the control and allegiance of the union movement from the Labor Party. In this design, militant socialists put forward the general principles of the I.W.W. - class war, industrial unionism, and the strike as a means of action - and it is in relation to their effort to get unionists to accept, or at least act on these ideas, that the attempt of militant socialists to capture the leadership of the labour movement between 1907 and 1910 is to be examined.

Unity among militant socialists in 1907 was followed by intensive I.W.W. propaganda from both the S.F.A. and S.L.P. The formation of the Federation had led to a bitter S.L.P. attack on Holland, the beginning of an animosity which continued to divide militant socialists. Though the friction was, as Holland admitted, fundamentally the outcome of personal hatreds, occasional doctrinal differences did occur. These were expressions of a difference in temper, shown in relation to the I.W.W. To

70. Ibid; Minutes, Sydney Labor Council, 24 Oct. 1907.
74. People, 13, 27 July 1907.
the S.L.P., action was coming to mean I.W.W. propaganda;\textsuperscript{76} to Holland the I.W.W. meant strike action.\textsuperscript{77} The S.L.P. thought of the I.W.W. as a formal plan; Holland saw it as an imperative to action. Faced with the competing S.F.A. propaganda, which adapted I.W.W. principles to suit Holland's views, and particular situations, the S.L.P. clung to a literal and moderate interpretation of those principles, and slowly lapsed into insignificance. As an attempt to regain leadership and assert its distinct identity, the S.L.P. formed a Sydney I.W.W. Club in October 1907, which opened a propaganda campaign to bring about "a Congress for the purpose of launching the I.W.W. in Australia."\textsuperscript{78}

The surge of I.W.W. propaganda carried the theories of industrial unionism into the broader field of the labour movement. In addition to I.W.W. propaganda within individual unions,\textsuperscript{79} I.W.W. theories were under discussion in the Sydney Labor Council late in 1907;\textsuperscript{80} and in the Melbourne Trades Hall Council in 1908.\textsuperscript{81} In April 1908, a N.S.W. union congress convened to consider organisation rejected the I.W.W. preamble and constitution as an organisational basis.\textsuperscript{82} Failure in these areas was discounted by militant socialists in view of the progress of I.W.W. theories among Newcastle miners. After intensive I.W.W. propaganda by both S.F.A.\textsuperscript{83} and S.L.P.\textsuperscript{84} in Newcastle, in February 1908 the miners voted on the proposition "Are you in favour of the basic principles of the I.W.W. or the Australian Labor Federation?"\textsuperscript{85} The S.F.A. conference in June 1907 agreed that the most suitable locality for the propagation of I.W.W.

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\item\textsuperscript{76} See People throughout 1907.
\item\textsuperscript{77} I.S.R. 23 Nov. 1907.
\item\textsuperscript{78} Minutes, Management Committee, Sydney I.W.W. Club, 28 Oct. 1907 (Mitchell Library); See also Minutes I.W.W. 22 Oct. 20 Nov., 4 Dec. 1907; Minutes, Management Committee I.W.W. 12,26 Nov., 16 Dec. 1907.
\item\textsuperscript{79} See Minutes, I.W.W. 1907-8; I.W.W. Correspondence A.1333 and Uncatalogued Mss. 262, 1907-8 (Mitchell Library).
\item\textsuperscript{80} Minutes, Sydney Labor Council 31 Oct. 1907; I.S.R. 6 Nov. 1907, 18 Jan. 1908.
\item\textsuperscript{81} M.O'Dowd to I.W.W. Sec. 15 March 1908. (I.W.W. Corresp. A.1333); Socialist; 20 March, 10 April 1908; V.G.Childe How Labour Governs. London 1923, pp.117-118.
\item\textsuperscript{82} Official Report of the Trade Union Congress 21-29 April. Sydney 1908, pp.20-24; D.T. 25, 26 April 1908; I.S.R. 16 May 1908.
\item\textsuperscript{83} 27 July 1907; I.S.R. 17,24 Aug., 21 Sept.1907; Socialist, 5 Oct.1907.
\item\textsuperscript{84} People, 17,24 Aug. 1907.
\item\textsuperscript{85} People, 22 Feb. 1908.
\end{itemize}
theories would be the Newcastle area, where a large, unified and easily roused mining community was dissatisfied with the arbitration system. After the conference, Peter Bowling, president of the Colliery Employees' Federation began I.W.W. propaganda, and his aggressive policy, with the threat of a strike, secured better wages and conditions. Earlier, Bowling, as leader of the Newcastle Miners' Federation, had established contact with the Western Federation of Miners in America, a militant union which had helped to form the I.W.W. in 1905. As well as imbibing the spirit of the Western Federation, the Newcastle Federation copied its organisation, securing in July 1907, the amalgamation of N.S.W. miners in the Colliery Employees' Federation. The C.E.F. rejected the I.W.W. preamble as a basis of federation, but the Newcastle Federation endorsed it, after striking out the reference to political action, holding that if all the workers came together on the industrial field they could control the political situation. Thus political action was virtually repudiated. The split in the American I.W.W. between the De Leon political wing and the Chicago industrial direct actionists did not take place formally until the I.W.W. convention of September 1908. Then the Chicago group, with whom the future of the I.W.W. was to lie, amended the preamble by excluding any reference to political action, while the De Leon wing retained the original preamble. In February 1908 Newcastle miners were considering an I.W.W. preamble identical in spirit with that adopted by the Chicago I.W.W. nine months later. This indicates a close contact with direct actionist elements in the American I.W.W., and a lack of faith, among at least some miners, in the Labor Party. However, as the ballot showed, Newcastle miners favoured the Australian Labor Federation, with its Labor associations, against the I.W.W., by a two to one majority.

The major factors which had enabled militant socialists to make some progress among unionists, were socialist unity and agreement on a common policy, a new doctrine, directed towards unionists, and, most importantly, dissatisfaction with the status quo, and the coincidence of aspects of the socialists' message with unionists' grievances. Discussion among unionists

87. See the writer's "The I.W.W. in the U.S.A." op. cit. pp.31-2; Brissenden, op. cit. pp.219 et seq.
revealed that the two aspects of the I.W.W. which held most appeal were its insistence on a militant undivided unionism and its denunciation of arbitration. Many workers, particularly coal miners whose dissatisfaction with arbitration began the year after the N.S.W. Act was passed, were not satisfied with their gains under arbitration and were coming to question its efficacy as a system. Others who welcomed the I.W.W. were members of small radical unions, like the Coal Lumpers whose tiny membership gave little scope for vested office-holding interests, and to whom the prospect of solidarity within a larger body held most appeal. There was also a feeling among some workers, particularly miners, that the Labor Party, active for over fifteen years, would never produce the tangible results they wanted immediately.

The emergence of I.W.W. propaganda in the trade union movement resulted in a prompt reaction from pro-Labor unionists who were keenly aware that the objective of militant socialists was to gain control of the union movement. In resisting this, Labor supporters could rely on conservatism and apathy, constant problems to I.W.W. propagandists, but apathy worked both ways, and could also lead to militant socialists taking over unions in the absence of other elements. Older unionists who remembered the industrial struggles of the early nineties were convinced that the advance made under arbitration would be placed in hazard by the direct action advocated by the I.W.W. Linked to this fear was that of craft unionists who saw their privileges imperilled by a plan of industrial unionism within which they would lose their identity while officials would lose their jobs. This passive resistance was fostered and supplemented

90. "Royal Commission on Industrial Arbitration in N.S.W." op.cit.
91. By November 1907, the Coal Lumpers' Union had endorsed the I.W.W. preamble, the first Australian union to do so. Socialist, 2 Nov. 1907.
92. Childe, op.cit. p.117.
95. I.S.R. 16 May 1908.
96. Report of Trade Union Congress 1908. pp.21-4; Childe, op.cit. p.117.
by a number of active measures taken by Labor supporters. Where they could, they stifled discussion, but this method could not be used indiscriminately, because the I.W.W. issue related to a fundamental unionist concern, the achievement of greater, more effective unity, and I.W.W. advocates were careful to put it in these terms. The Labor reply to this, successfully used in the Melbourne Trades Hall Council, and in the Sydney trade union congress of April 1903, was to propose federation as a better solution, and to insist on the foreign, untried and revolutionary nature of the new industrial unionism and its association with the doctrine of the general strike. Much was made of predictions of adverse effects on the fortunes of the Labor Party should the I.W.W. be adopted, and it was this, together with the widespread expectation that great things might be expected from Labor Governments, that influenced most unionists to reject the I.W.W.

Organisational and theoretical differences and confusions weakened the militant socialists' efforts. Advocacy of I.W.W. principles did not mean, necessarily, understanding of them, or agreement with their militant interpretation. At the 1909 Sydney union congress, I.W.W. advocates apparently through misconception, not tactical shrewdness, denied the anti-Labor Party aspect of the new unionism. S.L.P. members debated whether the I.W.W. applied to Australian conditions or not, and the relation between industrial and political action was a matter for vigorous controversy. Holland, concerned to develop a vanguard within the union movement, was aware of the weaknesses occasioned by these divisions. In March 1908, the Sydney Tailoresses' Union, cast by Holland in the role of vanguard, made the first unionist protest against the Industrial

100. Ibid. pp.21-24; Socialist, 20 March 1908.
103. People, 6 April, 24 Aug. 1908, 29 Feb. 1908.
104. People, 7 Sept. 1907; 25 April, 23 May, 6 June 1908.
Disputes Bill which Premier Wade introduced to replace the expiring Industrial Arbitration Act. This was an excellent issue for vanguard action, for the whole labour movement shared Holland's distrust of the Bill, construing its exclusion of the trade union from direct representation as the arbitrating unit as an attack on unionism, and criticising the absence of the right of appeal and the ease with which blackleg unions could be formed. Despite militant socialists' organisation of protests, and the resistance of the labour movement, the measure was passed, and, to Holland's disgust, was gradually accepted by the unions. Holland's attempt at vanguard action had failed.

While he thought in terms of an industrial vanguard, Holland saw this in relation to an ultimate political purpose. Early in 1908 he had become, with some reluctance, a member of the S.L.P. sponsored I.W.W. Club. At that time, H.J. Hawkins of the S.F.A. hoped to reconcile S.F.A. and S.L.P. by bringing their members together in the I.W.W. Club. At first Holland opposed this, but when a number of his colleagues joined the Club, he joined also. Uneasy in his association with a Club sponsored by a rival group, and wishing to give formal expression to his belief in the subordinate relation of industrial action to political, Holland supported R.S. Ross's motion at the S.F.A. conference in June 1908, proposing that the I.W.W. preamble should be amended to enable the I.W.W. to form an integral part of the S.F.A. Ross argued that this would comply with the logue of Australian labour development which was towards political power, not as in America, towards industrial organisation. The motion, which was carried, only to be rejected by S.F.A. affiliations, occasioned a dispute between industrial actionists and political actionists. Hawkins

106. I.S.R. 21 March 1908.
109. Minutes, Sydney Labor Council 17 Sept.1908,15,29 April,6,13 May 1909; Worker, 9 July 1908; D.T. 14 May 1909.
111. I.S.R. 27 June 1908.
believed that to attempt to subordinate the industrial to the political was absurd. Holland held that political action was the first necessity, "... is industrial unity anything more than a vexing vision in the absence of political unity?" he asked. His solution to the relation between the political and the industrial was that the I.W.W. should find its reflection in "THE Socialist movement" which was, in Holland's view, the S.F.A.

Holland withdrew from the I.W.W. Club in August 1908. Although the occasion of this was a personal dispute, Holland's increasing advocacy of strike action was repugnant to the I.W.W. Club. Much of the Club's energies in the later months of 1903, and thereafter, were directed towards dissociating itself from the militancy of the S.F.A. and Holland, and the Club declined rapidly in significance. To Holland, the I.W.W. was nothing more than the industrial wing of a political movement. He held that both industrial and political action were necessary, but that it was by political action that the social revolution would be effected. Crucial to any effective action was unity, a lesson impressed on Holland by the stultifying effects of disunity among militant socialists, by strike defeats, by labour's failure to stop the passage of the Industrial Disputes Act, and, predominantly, by hostility between militant socialists and Labor supporters. However, Holland's desire for unity did not imply willingness to compromise in order to achieve it. As he saw it, unity was meaningful only on terms satisfactory to militant socialists.

The activity of militant socialists posed a complex threat to the Labor Party's political ambitions. Not only did their industrial union plans endanger the party's unionist electoral basis, but one aspect of I.W.W. doctrine led to repudiation of political action altogether. In addition to the strictly industrial threat, there was also danger from the political action of militant socialists. This was potentially dangerous in several important ways. It might lead, in conjunction with support for militant socialists from unionists, to a major division in the political

113. I.S.R. 22 Feb.; 23 March; 11 July 1908.
120. I.S.R. 25 July 1908.
allegiance of workers. A more immediate contingency was that vote-splitting might deprive Labor of closely-contested seats. It was also possible that the activity of militant socialists would alienate the conservative margin of Labor support, by associating the labour movement with "extremism." Thus, such activity threatened the Labor Party with defections from both its left and right wings. To meet this, while Labor spokesmen denied any association with class, or extremism, they also supported "socialism," being careful to define it as something which would benefit all and harm no-one. Holman defined it as State Socialism in the interests of all humanity, while Hughes explained that socialism was:

"... the substitution of national co-operation for the present competitive system in the industrial sphere. Under Socialism, the State would own and control the means of production, distribution and exchange. Private property in all other forms of wealth would remain, and other institutions, social and political would not be affected by the change." 125

Industrial disturbances raised acutely the problem of conciliating both moderate and militant wings of Labor, and in July 1908, during the Sydney Tramway strike, Labor parliamentarians introduced the I.W.W. bogey as a solution. On this occasion, and subsequently, an inconvenient strike was attributed to I.W.W. plotting. In fact, the tramway strike was a normal unionist protest associated with discontent with the Industrial Disputes Act and occasioned by what the union believed to be victimisation. After the dispute had begun, militant socialists, particularly Holland, lent it every support, but the strikers were quickly defeated, Labor parliamentarians being prominent in inducing the men to return to work. The strike was an acute embarrassment to the Labor Party. Guarded advocacy of the strikers' cause brought anti-Labor charges of collaboration in an attempt to throw Sydney into chaos, while condemnation of the strike and

attempts to procure a swift settlement provoked a strong reaction from the strikers and their supporters. In this dilemma, Labor parliamentarians vented their displeasure on that conveniently foreign importation, the I.W.W., alleging that the strike was an I.W.W. intrigue. To have denounced Labor's left wing would have been to risk alienating it, and to admit publicly that the party harboured an "extremist" section, but the indiscriminate charge of I.W.W.ism incensed unionists who supported the strike. Then, and later, the influence ascribed to the I.W.W. was greatly exaggerated. In part, this resulted from the Labor Party's use of the I.W.W. as a convenient red herring, a scapegoat to divert attention from discontent on the labour movement's industrial left wing. It was also the result of the habitual support of strikes by small groups of militant socialists. Their association with an industrial conflict in progress was often taken as proof of their conspiracy in fomenting it.

In a situation in which the Sydney Labor Council claimed that the tramway strike's swift collapse was largely due to the intervention, which amounted to "class treachery", of Labor Party members of the strike management committee, Holland's reaction was one of fury. He denounced the "tragic wrecking of so magnificent an opportunity." Opportunity for what? - a strike victory in which militant socialists had played a part, opportunity to win, by demonstrating its success, support for the action advocated by militant socialists. It was after the defeat of this strike, following as it did the passage of the Industrial Disputes Act, for which Holland blamed the Labor Party, that he turned his unrestrained fury on that party, attacking it as treacherous, weak, anti-working class, and essentially capitalist. Before this, Holland had been critical of the
Labor Party, but it was Labor's strenuous efforts in 1908, for political purposes, to keep industrial peace, that occasioned those bitter tirades of denunciation and abuse which became Holland's characteristic reaction to the Labor Party. The party's efforts to maintain industrial peace worked against the implementation of militant socialists' plans. To advocate the strike, and ensure its success was the only way militant socialists could outbid the Labor Party. Only if it was demonstrated that workers could secure more by striking than by arbitration were they likely to turn from the Labor Party to support militant socialists. Labor's efforts hit at the practical foundations of Holland's highest hopes for the success of industrial and political action, and it is this which explains his extraordinarily violent antagonism to the Labor Party after 1908. The frustration of militant socialists' strike ambitions by Labor intervention in a rockchoppers' strike in October 1908, led Holland to describe Holman as a "perfidious Labor rat," and to urge the strikers to continue their fight, even if it brought "the roar of revolution in the streets." At this time, Holman remarked, in reference to Holland and his fellow socialists:

"Well-meaning ignorance and enthusiastic stupidity are infinitely greater factors for evil than actual insincerity; and when these qualities are coupled with gross vanity and a certain amount of envy toward those who have taken up a different course, the combination becomes dangerous indeed."  

This assessment was a more or less polite phrasing of Labor's view, but Holland's rivals of the S.L.P. were less restrained, claiming that Holland's

"... inordinate self-love in conjunction with the sensorial illusion that he is dictator of the universe, had produced 'that curst licentiousness of tongue' which is his chief characteristic."  

These judgements indicate the impression Holland was making on the majority of the labour movement. The impression of vanity was created by the force of his personality, by the unpopularity and, particularly, the

137. L.S.R. 7 Nov. 1908; People, 21 Nov. 1908.
138. S.M.H. 4 Nov. 1908. See also Flame, 8 Aug. 1908.
139. S.M.H. 4 Nov. 1908.
140. People, 6 April 1912.
frequent unintelligibility of his views, and by the close identification Holland made between himself and his beliefs, a confusion to which the dedicated fighter for a cause is prone. Moreover, as an enthusiast, sure of, and enchanted with his own vision, and anxious for others to share it, he dismissed considerations of prudence and trusted to the light within him.

It was in a mood of abusive frustration - fear that the Labor Party would wreck his hopes - a mood his friends described as "defiant boldness",\(^{141}\) that Holland became involved in the Broken Hill strike of 1909. By this time, while declaring that the "anti-working class" attitude of the Labor Party assisted militant socialists by exhibiting that party's true nature,\(^{142}\) he also denounced that party as the greatest bar to militant socialist ambitions.\(^{143}\) This duality was the result of the co-existence of faith in the inevitability of socialism with appreciation of an immediate situation in which the plans of militant socialists were thwarted by the activity of the Labor Party. In all this, Holland misinterpreted the nature of the attention which the industrial union and strike gospel had attracted among workers. He often failed to distinguish between those who listened to his arguments because they wanted what he meant by socialism, and those who listened because they wanted wage increases. Unionists were attracted by the I.W.W. message of stronger unionism but Holland's interest was in its class war aspects. The majority of unionists viewed the strike as a last resort, but to Holland, strike action and industrial unionism were part of his policy of attack on the capitalist system. When supporting an industrial disturbance in progress, Holland never considered the unionists' attitude to the strike, but put forward his own in the most uncompromising terms. In the Broken Hill strike, Holland's class war stand was incomprehensible and repugnant to the majority of strikers. This reaction, and the Labor Party's attempts to cool strike ardour, produced an increasingly bitter and irresponsible strain in Holland's speeches, leading to his imprisonment for sedition.

In August 1908 the Broken Hill Proprietary Company announced that in

\(^{141}\) I.S.R. 24 Oct. 1908.
\(^{142}\) I.S.R. 30 Jan 1909.
\(^{143}\) I.S.R. 26 Dec. 1908.
view of a fall in prices on the metal market, wages would be reduced when
the prevailing agreement expired on 31 December. The Combined Unions
resolved to resist the reduction, and, as only half the mine workers were
unionists, collaborated with the Barrier Socialist Group in securing Tom
Mann as organiser. In contrast to the propaganda efforts of militant
socialists, Mann's campaign was immediately successful and in three
weeks he nearly doubled union membership. On 1 January 1909 the expected
dispute began. Extra police were already in Broken Hill and more were
sent there.

Holland, who had assisted Mann in Broken Hill late in 1908, immediately
became an outspoken supporter of the strike. For almost a year he had
been expecting a great industrial upheaval, and he had been convinced
for several months that this would take place at Broken Hill. In part,
this expectation was a product of revolutionary ideology, predicting
events which would change the course of history, but it was also a
reaction to frustration, an expression of a mentality which yearned for a
crisis, a swift resolution of doubt and difficulty. Holland believed that
a general strike would defeat the B.H.P., but he feared government
intervention, and, in his agitation, threatened violent retaliation:

"If the Wade Government uses FORCE - and it will use force if the
Master Class decide that force is to be used - and if the Fisher
Government carries out its threat to add the force of Federal Militar­
army to Mr. Wade's police army in order that the laws and commands
of the capitalists shall be obeyed - let them remember that the
workers may find themselves compelled to MEET FORCE WITH FORCE.
Let them remember too that the whole of Australia's workers
may yet want to take a hand in the struggle, and in that case,
whether it be a stern battle on the industrial field where men starve
while they fight, or a stern battle where rifles crack and machine

144. R.S. Ross to Tom Mann 13 Aug. 1908 (R.S.Ross Papers C.N.L.); People,
19, 26 Sept. 1908; Flame, 3 Oct. 1908.
146. Combined Unions' Committee: Lock-Out. Balance Sheets and Secretary's
and Auditor's Reports. Epitome of the Struggle. Broken Hill. 1909, p.12;
149. I.S.R. 7 March 1908.
guns rattle and shot screams and red blood flows - the victory
will be with the Working Class, for we have the Right to win and
the numbers to win with - as soon as we know the strength that's
in us." 152

Violence was an obvious possibility. 153 Andrew Fisher, the Federal
Labor Premier agreed to support State police with Federal troops if this
was necessary. The Broken Hill Socialist Group stated "Better a dead
belly than an empty one- better a ruined mine than an idle one," 154 and
ridiculed the "Keep Cool" slogan of the Labor Party as mere cowardice. 155
After a clash with the police on 9 January, Mann and twenty-seven strikers
were arrested, to the indignation of the whole labour movement. 156

Early in February, at the invitation of local socialists, Holland
went to Broken Hill. 157 Mann gave a good description of him, about that time:

"A sturdy well-filled man, who looks about forty years of age,
with an interesting face, clean shaved, a delightful smile which
comes seldom, a voice pitched rather high, his speech tumbling from
him spurred on by the press of matter, impatient of the delay caused
by applause, as full of his subject at the close as at the beginning
of his effort, hammering with relentless force on point after point..." 158

Ben Tillet's impression was similar:

"He is a short, well-set-up man with a keen intelligent face,
quick strong eyes. His addresses are deliberate, methodical, well
thought-out, and delivered with compelling reason and sweetness." 159

In Sydney, Holland had been advocating "drastic and extreme action
by the workers of Australia in aid of the Broken Hill unionists." He
attacked the B.H.P. as the lawbreaker, accused the Government of partiality,
and condemned the attitude of Federal and State Labor Parties. 160 He
preached the gospel of revolutionary socialism and industrial unionism -
direct action militancy garnished with I.W.W. trimmings. "All the Mines
belong to You the Workers - and to you only," wrote Holland in the Flame.
"Get ready to Take the mines and to Hold them." 161 The possibility of
revolutionary violence, latent in industrial action, had been in the

157. F.A.Holland. A Chapter in the Life of H.E.Holland - The Barrier Lockout
background for some time, a last ditch to which militant socialists might, in theory, retire. Its presence had helped to give them confidence and daring. Now it was brought to the forefront by Holland. He viewed violence, for which he claimed the sanction of Marx, as a last resort, and his allusions to it at this time indicate a growing appreciation, of a fact he was aware of, but had never experienced so intensely before, that the forces arrayed against militant socialists were tremendously strong and tenacious.

Holland's views attracted little support in Broken Hill. Some strikers believed that the trouble was merely a temporary misunderstanding which would be solved quickly by arbitration. The majority of unionists were faithful to the Labor Party, which had convinced them that violence was prejudicial to their interests. They believed, correctly, that militant socialists were attempting to create a breach between Labor members and the unions. Holland's arrival was an unwelcome embarrassment to the strike leaders, the Unions' committee refused to recognise him, and at his meetings, hostile unionists accused him of splitting labour ranks and of selfish ambition. Meanwhile the Daily Telegraph enquired, "Where is the Law?"

"Coincidently with the visit of Mr. Holland to Broken Hill, as the apostle of what he calls "revolutionary socialism", there has been a recurrence of dynamite outrages. Whether the two things are directly related, there is nothing to show. This much however is certain: Unless Mr. Holland's mission has stirred up the elements of violence and disorder it has failed in its openly-avowed purpose... If there is such a thing known to the law of this country as incitement to crime, Mr. Holland has been flagrantly guilty of it."

The Telegraph urged the speedy prosecution of agitators and Holland believed that it was this editorial that led to his arrest. On 20

162. I.S.R. 9 May 1908.
165. Worker, (Sydney) 25 Feb. 1909.
February, three days after it appeared, Holland was arrested and charged with seditious utterances. He was reported as having said in a public speech:

"We have read of thousands of you men, who call yourselves Unionists, being there and allowed Tom Mann to be arrested and taken to gaol and not one of you attempted to rescue him and only 300 policemen in Broken Hill. You have the position in your own hands, geographically. Why, how long would it take you to stop supplies to the gaol? Refuse to allow your daughters to wait on the police; stop supplies to the Broken Hill mine, and send Wade's criminals back. If you are going to fight put a little ginger into it. Yes, pepper if you like, or, to be plain-spoken, dynamite. That's the way to win. Do you mean to say that three hundred police are going to frighten you? Why if they hit you with a baton, hit them with a baton; if they hit you with a pick-handle, hit them with a pick; if they shoot at you with a revolver, then shoot at them with a revolver, and if they use a rifle on you - well if you have a Gatling gun, turn it on them." 170

The venue of Holland's trial, and that of Tom Mann, Walter Stokes and William May was changed from Broken Hill to Albury, which many unionists took as evidence of determination by the Government to secure convictions. This indignation was provoked by concern for their hero, Tom Mann. Holland was widely denounced. In May 1909 Holland came before a jury mostly composed of farmers in a trial not without theatrical flavour. Conducting his own defence, Holland raised numerous legal points, exploited a minor indisposition, and, supported by witnesses, maintained that he had been misrepresented. His address to the jury was in the tradition of courtroom melodrama, the impassioned protest of outraged principle, modelled on similar socialist orations, but particularly on the speeches of Irish patriots. Claiming leadership of the Australian socialist movement, he protested his innocence, warned against the dangers of despotism, pleaded for the right of free speech and attacked the capitalist and governmental system. Holland was sentenced to two years' imprisonment. Tom Mann

172. D.T. 4 May 1909; Barrier Miner, 7, 8 May 1909.
was acquitted, but Stokes and May were sent to prison.\textsuperscript{175} Almost the entire labour movement was out of sympathy with Holland, holding that he had precipitated himself into the Broken Hill trouble, with which he had no concern, in an attempt to bolster his reputation and make political capital.\textsuperscript{176} The Sydney Labor Council and the \textit{Worker} were impatient of Holland's "silly vanities", and quickly forgot his imprisonment.\textsuperscript{177} The reason for Holland's unpopularity was his antagonism to the Labor Party. At the time of his arrest he was in the midst of a campaign for the West Sydney Federal seat, held by the darling of the labour movement, W.M. Hughes.\textsuperscript{178}

Superficially, Holland reacted to unpopularity with abuse:

"He knew when he left Sydney that the dirty rotten politicians would be on his track ... and he knew that he would meet with hostility on the part of the vote-catching plutocratic politicians who did not care anything about the movement." 179

At a deeper level, events connected with the Broken Hill strike influenced Holland towards an anarchist position, a tendency towards the rejection of the established canons of law and order. As he admitted at the time, it was resentment which lay behind this attitude and its expression in allusions to violence:

"He felt bitter at times at the state of things prevailing, and if he expressed himself bitterly, it was because he was born of the working class and had tasted all the bitterness in the struggle to exist." 180

Holland believed that the social revolution could be brought about without physical force, but - and the qualification was significant - that depended on the class to be dethroned.\textsuperscript{181} Holland denied that he had ever believed in or advocated violence.\textsuperscript{182} It could be justified only in self-defence, and this is what Holland claimed to advocate, in his allegedly

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\textsuperscript{175} D.T. 4-7 May 1909; Barrier Miner 4-7 May 1909; I.S.R. 15 May 1909.
\textsuperscript{176} Barrier Miner, 4 March 1909; Flame 6 March 1909; Socialist, 23 July 1909; N.S.W.P.D. 1909, V.36, pp.4112-4.
\textsuperscript{177} Worker, 25 Feb. 13 May 1909; Minutes, Sydney Labor Council 20 May 1909; Barrier Miner, 21 May 1909.
\textsuperscript{178} I.S.R. 28 Nov. 1908.
\textsuperscript{179} Barrier Miner, 5 March 1909.
\textsuperscript{180} Barrier Miner, 2 March 1909.
\textsuperscript{181} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{182} Sedition in N.S.W. op.cit.
\end{flushright}
seditious speech and on other occasions. In reply to the claim of the Judge who sentenced him, that the law of sedition was "the foundation of civilisation", Holland claimed to serve a higher moral law. He looked forward to something like an anarchist dream, "... the highest form of Christianity, where men should be so fully developed and live in such a state, it would not be necessary for human laws to rule them." In gaol, Holland construed Biblical incidents to justify deception and sabotage for class purposes. This anarchist tendency was, in part, a reaction to what he saw as Government partiality in administering the law. During his trial, Holland's behaviour was based on his belief that imprisonment was certain, and his desire in these circumstances to make the most of his martyrdom. However, the deepest impulse behind his attitude was desperation, fear, almost despair, that the highest hopes of militant socialists would fail. His tendency was anarchistic because at Broken Hill he saw that a major force making for this failure was government intervention in the name of the status quo. The reaction was short-lived, but Holland reverted to a similar position in 1913, under like circumstances.

Holland was released in October 1909, having served five months of his two year sentence. "Abuse, social ostracism and imprisonment" had intensified his hatreds. He announced "Either I am rightly imprisoned and am now wrongly at liberty, or I was wrongly imprisoned and am now rightly set free." "Let us make Australia ring again with the Song of Hatred - hatred of class rule and diabolical outrage." As soon as he had an opportunity, Holland went to Broken Hill, where he made a bitter attack on the Labor Party. He received a hostile reception, the majority of unionists believing that he had been released because Premier Wade hoped that he would split the labour vote in his contest with Hughes.

183. Ibid.
184. Barrier Miner, 2 March 1909.
186. See annotated copy Speeches from the Dock, op.cit.
188. I.S. 24 June 1911.
The collapse, in May 1909, of the Broken Hill strike, the Arbitration Court having already granted the workers' claims, led militant socialists, not to abandon their industrial mission, but to take it up more energetically. They interpreted the defeat as the outcome of defects in practical organisation. Tom Mann left Broken Hill for Melbourne, which became the new centre of industrial union propaganda. Mann had come to believe that industrial organisation was more important than political, and he advocated district federation of all unions. Under the influence of Mann's theories, the S.F.A. conference at Broken Hill in June 1909 swung around to a similar position:

"We hold that those Socialists of America and Europe are correct who declare that industrial organisation is at present of greater importance than political action, as the workers have no hope of getting ownership and control of industry until they have the sense to demand it and ORGANISE IN THE INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS TO USE IT." 194

Mann failed in his attempt to persuade South Australian, Broken Hill and Victorian unions to adopt his scheme of federation, whose goal was "the Abolition of Poverty by the establishing of a Socialist Commonwealth," 195 Failure, and the departure of Tom Mann for England in December 1909, weakened the Victorian industrial union movement, which was replaced in prominence in the labour movement by the Newcastle coal miners' strike. It is likely that Holland, who was in prison during this period of reaction towards industrial action, would have resisted such implicitly anti-political tendencies. This may have involved a clash with his hero, Mann, but with Mann's departure, the occasion never arose. Holland had been much impressed by Mann, and was prepared, particularly in the context of a bid by militant socialists for union allegiance, to defer to him. Militancy and a socialist objective were their bond, but while Mann was first and foremost a unionist, Holland's interests were basically political. It was a measure of their difference that while Holland was detested in Labor

circles, Mann was applauded, even when he told the Sydney Labor Council
that the unionists of N.S.W. were working under the most humiliating
conditions he had known in fifty years of experience.\footnote{Minutes, Sydney Labor Council, 14 Oct. 1909.}

The aspirations of militant socialists to lead the unionist movement
reached their climax in the Newcastle miners' strike which began in
November 1909. As far as militant socialists were concerned, this strike
differed from previous ones in several important ways. Hitherto, as at
Broken Hill, they had joined industrial disputes in progress and attempted
to dictate their direction. The Newcastle strike was engineered by militant
socialists with their own particular aims in view. Moreover, it involved
that section of unionists which militant socialists judged most favourably
disposed to aggressive action, and to which their most intensive propaganda
campaign had been directed. Again, though union leadership was militant
socialist, the issues at stake were traditionally unionist ones, solidarity
and determination to succeed. What this amounted to was that militant
socialists had chosen their own ground, under the most favourable conditions
they could find, for a blow against capitalism. A failure in these
circumstances would be failure indeed. They had attempted, from 1891 to
1893 to gain control, by infiltration of Labor's political machine. Follow­ing
the failure of this, they had taken independent political action, and
from 1907 had attempted to capture the union movement. The defeat of the
Newcastle strike marked the apparent exhaustion of their tactical
alternatives. Its immediate effect was to disconcert militant socialists,
and force them to review their attitude to the Labor Party. While some
wanted a return to the policy of converting the Labor Party from within,
others, like Holland, fell back on prophecy and the assertion that socialism
was inevitable.

The Colliery Employees' Federation, led by the militant socialist,
Peter Bowling, professed many grievances,\footnote{D.T. 8 Nov. 1909; J.T. Sutcliffe. \textit{A History of Trade Unionism in Australia} Melbourne 1921, p. 179; B. Fitzpatrick. \textit{A Short History of the Australian Labor Movement}. Melbourne, 1944, p. 124.} but the strike, which spread
to involve 12,500 miners,\footnote{D.T. 25 Nov. 1909.} was at least as much an assertion of militancy,
and an expression of dissatisfaction with the arbitration system. Bowling had planned the strike carefully, catching the mine owners unprepared, hoping to raise strike funds by selling union coal, and avoiding pre-strike criticism of his direct action policy by presenting southern and western miners with the fact of the strike and an appeal for solidarity. Initially, Bowling had an I.W.W. end in view, but there was no sign of this in official strike appeals, where strike action was described as a last resort. Such an approach was politic when seeking general support and suggests that militant socialists were willing to shelve principle to ensure a wider appeal. It also reflects the fact that while the Newcastle strike plan was inspired by Bowling's I.W.W. ideology, as soon as it became an accomplished fact it became a simple unionist struggle, deriving sustenance from the basic union sources, solidarity and determination to succeed. Only a few militant socialists, such as Holland, saw the strike as part of a campaign for a new social order.

Holland saw that on this attempt by a powerful union to defy the arbitration system and assert the effectiveness of strike action, depended the future of militant socialists in the labour movement. Success meant that the outlook and methods of militant socialists would be vindicated, failure, that they would be condemned. With a vehemence born of awareness of what was at stake, Holland called for a general strike. Bowling too wanted a general strike and endeavoured to persuade W.M. Hughes to call out the Waterside Workers' Federation. The strike had posed Labor supporters with the choice between support of the miners and the risk of public odium, and non-involvement and the risk of losing miner support. Eventually, embarrassed by attacks on himself and the Labor Party, Hughes declared his resistance to attempts to extend the strike, and a split between moderates and militants became obvious in the Strike Congress. Newspaper opinion held that this was a cleavage between revolutionary I.W.W.

201. Ibid.
204. I.S.R. 27 Nov. 1909.
tendencies represented by Bowling, and anti-I.W.W. elements represented by Hughes. Labor Party leaders declared that while they were working for unionism and justice, they would have nothing to do with I.W.W. and revolutionary socialist elements, a standpoint which made the best of their dilemma. Holland privately expressed anxiety that nothing militant socialists did or said would jeopardise the success of the strike. This unusual turn to caution indicates Holland's awareness of the strike's importance and suggests that he had learnt from his experience at Broken Hill that dissemination of the full truth, as he saw it, might do more harm than good. As it happened, militant socialists had little say in the direction taken by strike events. They called in vain for a retaliatory general strike when Bowling and two other strike leaders were arrested.

When, on 10 December, the Strike Congress endorsed the policy of Hughes, ending any possibility of a general strike, all that militants could do was to denounce Hughes for his "class treachery."

The decisive factor in the strike defeat was government intervention. Legislation was brought to bear on the industrial direct actionists, thwarting the scheme to sell their own coal, and the Industrial Disputes Act was amended. This "Coercion Act", unsuccessfully opposed by the Labor Party, declared unlawful any meeting connected with strike action in essential services. Holland professed to be contemptuous of this measure, but this was merely a show of defiance. As strike enthusiasm began to wane, Holland toured the South Coast coal-fields in an attempt to maintain solidarity. The strain of attempting to resuscitate the dying strike pushed Holland to the verge of hysteria. As usual he

208. Holland to Cocking 21 Nov. 1909 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
dramatised and exaggerated, but never before had he been so afraid of treachery and prosecution.\footnote{Holland to Cocking n.d. (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)} He wrote to Cocking:

"... most of our people are workless & the police are on our track all the time. And the "People" crowd are unfortunately helping them ... It becomes more & more damnable when you find you've got to fight not only the open enemy, but the cloaked enemy - the informer who masquerades as a socialist." \footnote{Holland to Cocking 23 Feb. 1910 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)}

He imagined that the S.L.P. and the I.W.W. Club, who denounced his speeches as inflammatory, were behind "an infamous plot to bring socialist propagandists within the reach of the capitalist law - perhaps to hang them.\footnote{L.S.R. 1,8,15,22 Jan. 1910. Quotation is from 15 Jan.} Extraordinary suspicions and fits of melancholy exhibit Holland's remarkable degree of emotional involvement in the strike situation. His commitment to socialism was total, without restraint or humour, and his vision of a real life for man was conceived in strictly socialist terms. Until those terms could be translated into actuality, man's life was inhuman, enslaved. To that translation, he was dedicated. The claims of wife and family were secondary. His daily existence had become, under a superstructure of unceasing propaganda activity, the continuous postponement of problems, personal and political, until the hoped-for day of resolution.\footnote{Holland to Cocking 7 Nov. 1911 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)} To see, at Newcastle in 1910, the chance of eventual achievement rapidly receding was, for Holland, a matter for anguish.\footnote{Mrs. Ivar to writer 5 April 1953; Holland to Cocking 11 Feb. 1910.}

Bowling and four other strike leaders were imprisoned in February, hastening the strike defeat.\footnote{D.T. 11 Feb. 1910.} The last strikers returned to work early in March, the matters in dispute being referred to an arbitration board.\footnote{D.T. 12 March 1910.} Demonstrating that political action was more effective than industrial, the strike defeat resulted in a weakening of faith in industrial action and a swing towards the Labor Party. To some extent, this was disguised by post-strike disillusionment and apathy,\footnote{Letters to I.W.W. Sec. from J.W.Keegan 2,30 Jan.1910;R.Wright, 6 Feb. 10 April 1910 and J. Charlton 12 Feb. 1910 (I.W.W. Corresp.262)} and only militant socialists had any appreciation of the magnitude of the strike's possible consequences.\footnote{Socialist, 6 May 1910.}
Hughes, for instance, failed to realise the extent of the defeat of militant socialists or of the reaction towards his party. During the strike, Holland had seen what defeat would mean - the end of the pretensions of militant socialists to power in the unions, the discrediting of their theories, and disintegration of their effort to secure control of the labour movement. Post-strike developments confirmed Holland’s worst fears. Those who advocated socialism or any form of industrial action were shouted down by unionists who supported the Labor Party. Perplexed and discouraged, militant socialists had different views of what their next step should be.

A Federal Labor Government, headed by Andrew Fisher, was elected in April 1910. Factors important in this victory were the electorate’s reaction to a liberal-conservative fusion, and the swing towards political action and against non-Labor governments, associated with the events of the Broken Hill and Newcastle strikes. These factors were exploited in Labor propaganda, and pro-Labor tendencies fostered by competent electoral organisation. In view of Labor success in preventing the Newcastle strike from spreading, and persuading strikers to return to work, Holland, with some justification, blamed the Labor Party for strike defeat. With little hope, he began his campaign for West Sydney, where he opposed Hughes (Labor) and S.R. Cole (Fusion). Hughes, impressed by the clamour of militant socialists in the previous three years and by the flooding of his electorate with their propaganda, viewed Holland’s candidature as a very real threat, fearing that he might split the labour vote and

228. Holland to Cocking n.d. (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
229. D.T. 12, 13 April 1910; Barrier Miner, 4 Oct. 1909.
230. 20,000 copies of the International Socialist Review, 15,000 Manifestos, 500 large posters, 25,000 dodgers, 5,000 cartoons, 2,000 how-to-vote pards and 1,000 post-cards. I.S. 30 April 1910.
allow the election of the Fusion candidate. The election result destroyed any illusions either Holland or Hughes had about electors' attitudes to militant socialists. In a poll of 18,000 Holland received 628 votes. Hughes polled 13,000 and the Fusion candidate, 4,985. This result and Labor's election victory, followed by victory in the N.S.W. elections in October, demonstrated that the activity of militant socialists was no longer a serious threat to the Labor Party.

The completeness of their failure, and Labor Party success, forced militant socialists to consider important problems. Was their social analysis a correct one, and if so, what practical methods could they use to achieve their aims in the labour movement? What was to be their attitude to the Labor Government? While moderate socialists sought a solution to these problems in suggesting re-entry into the Labor Party, Holland stood for uncompromising independence and reliance on belief in the historical inevitability of socialism. In 1908 he had been prepared to admit that the Labor Party might govern Australia; for a brief period, but he held that its decay was inevitable. He based this prediction, and the justification for his own position, on the assertion that the International Socialist Party alone was loyal to the world's working-class movement, and that its position, scientific, economic and political, was "absolutely unassailable." Nevertheless, the election of a Labor Government seemed to Holland conclusive evidence that the workers had allowed themselves to be deluded into supporting a middle-class group of treacherous strike breakers. At first, Holland publicly welcomed a Labor Government, maintaining that its inevitable failure would assist militant socialists in their work. Later, realising that Labor's policy did not assist socialists - that palliatives retarded the day of working class victory he turned to demanding that the Labor Party be promptly ejected from office.

231. D.T. 5,6,12,13 April 1910; Barrier Min. 4 Oct. 1909; West Sydney Federal Election op.cit. p.8.
234. I.S. 30 April 1910.
235. I.S. 25 Nov. 1911.
236. I.S. 16 Sept. 1911.
In re-assessing the role of militant socialists, Holland fell back on assertion and prophecy. He proposed that workers, "shall TAKE the land and the machinery and shall HOLD the wealth ..." How would this be done? - "by the workers organising on the industrial field in One Big Union and on the political field in One Big Party." How would this be achieved? Holland did not say, for he did not know. He announced a return to the former propagandising role of militant socialists:

"Many votes or few, what does it matter. The Revolutionary Socialists are not vote-seekers - they are propagandists, they are fighters; they are the advance guard of the working class army." 238

Failure left Holland with two alternatives, consideration of the possibility that he was wrong, or escape into prophecy. Given the nature of his conviction, it is not surprising that he took the latter course. However, less doctrinaire socialists felt that Holland's attitude offered no solution to the basic problem - establishment of contact between vanguard and working class. Members of the Victorian Socialist Party, arguing that labour conditions in Australia were not oppressive enough to engender general dissatisfaction among workers, maintained that socialists should abandon opposition to Labor and attempt to convert that party from within. 239 An attempt was made to bring the S.F.A. conference of July 1910 to this line of thought, but Holland's uncompromising policy triumphed. 240 At the centre of this difference of opinion was the Victorian tradition of moderation and tolerance of the Labor Party, as contrasted with Holland's numerous conflicts with that party and his detestation of it.

Another reaction of militant socialists to their loss of influence in the labour movement was a South Australian movement, part militant industrial, part political, 241 which led to the formation in June 1911 of a

237. I.S. 25 Nov. 1911; also I.S. 4 Nov. 1911; D.T. 4, 7 Nov. 1911.
238. I.S. 25 Nov. 1911.
240. Socialist, 10 June, 1 July, 2 Sept. 1910; People, 16 July 1910.
direct actionist I.W.W. local, adhering to the Chicago preamble, in Adelaide. Contemporary observers connected this local with the activity of former Broken Hill workers, and with the propaganda of Tom Mann in South Australia in 1909. The nature of the Chicago preamble would suggest that the South Australian I.W.W. movement, which soon spread to other states, was anti-political. Actually, its proponents had little understanding of, or real sympathy with the nature of the preamble, or with the Chicago doctrine of sabotage. The S.F.A. gave support to the Chicago I.W.W. partly because it was a brand of the I.W.W. distinct from and opposed to that of the S.L.P.; and partly because, in this period following the Newcastle strike, anything which might impart interest and vigour to the activity of militant socialists was worth investigation.

The effect of the defeat of militant socialists and the Labor Party's election, with the problems these developments posed, was to leave Holland exhausted and despondent. He admitted this to Cocking:

"Sometimes I get awfully tired & worn out & worried & then I wonder whether we ought really to shed tears over those who "fall into the long sweet sleep of death." Rest seems such a blessed thing when one's body and spirit are aching from the blows of the conflict."

He tried to lose himself in his work, a scheme for improving the International Socialist Review and on 30 April 1910, the Review gave way to the larger International Socialist. Holland remained editor, but deterioration in his health kept him in the background of activity. In

242. I.S., 10 Sept., 31 Dec. 1910, 1, 8 July 1911; People 14, 21 Jan. 15, 29 April, 30 May, 10 June, 29 July 1911; D.T. 17 Jan 1911; Minutes, Sydney I.W.W. 3, 31 May, 9 Aug. 1911; Register 17 June 1911.
243. Register 17 June 1911.
244. I.S., 22 July, 16 Sept. 1911.
247. Holland, who was in hospital, made no comment on the appearance of the Chicago I.W.W. He probably shared the attitudes indicated.
248. Holland to Cocking, 19 May 1910 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
249. Ibid; Holland to E.J. Brady, 5 Feb. 1910 (E.J. Brady Letters op.cit.)
H.E. Holland, Mrs. Montefiore and an unidentified socialist. 1911.
May 1911 illness forced him into hospital, suffering from a general constitutional breakdown, and a knee injury. An operation on his knee, injured in a fall, resulted in permanent stiffness. For the rest of his life, Holland walked with a limp. It was a disability he resented, and it further embittered him. In his absence, the International Socialist was edited by Dora B. Montefiore, a leader of the English women's suffrage movement, and a socialist. Having private means, Mrs. Montefiore refused payment, and Holland's salary continued to be paid to him. Holland left hospital in September 1911, lame, and impatient with the slowness of his recovery. He complained to E.J. Brady, "I have had a most awful time of it - nearly eight months now; and sometimes I get damned sick of the monotony of it." In the period of reflection his illness forced on him, Holland wrote some verse. It was strident and assertive, full of violent imagery and vague extravagant hopes:

"Rage of the Storm and roar of the Sea,
The tumult tears Heaven assunder
And all that is red and resurgent in me
Throbs to the call of a fierce ecstacy
Of Freedom's desire
That runs like a fire -
Leaps like the lightning that leaps from the skies:
Blood of my life in rich riot replies
To the Storm's Wild Thunder." 253

"My dream is of Life's greater glory,
The depths of its fathomless deep,
The wind-wafted song of its story
That's crooned for the workers who weep." 254

Holland, overwrought, despondent and ill, came to verse writing in the time of defeat of his highest hopes. It gave him a great sense of release to pour out his hopes, frustrations and protests in this way. On

250. Mrs. Holland to Mr and Mrs Cocking 28 May 1922 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
251. Dora B. Montefiore. From a Victorian to a Modern. London 1927, pp.133-6, 139, 144-5.
252. Holland to Brady. 15 Dec. 1911 (Brady Letters op.cit.)
255. Holland to Cocking, 7 Nov. 1911 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
the one hand, verse writing allowed him to express the violent reactions which defeat and failure had built up within him; on the other, the world of the future he could create for himself, gave that mystic sense of hopeful certainty he needed. It is significant that Holland's verse writing continued from this time of defeat, until 1919, just after his success in the New Zealand Labour Party. At the core of his verse was the claim that man not only had the power, but would in fact, mould his own destiny, create through his own efforts and the processes of history, a life in this world whose dimensions accorded with the large and restless yearnings of his heart. These were the terms of heaven, brought down to earth. Holland's verse, and the circumstances of its writing, throw further light on the relationship militant socialists saw between their fortunes and the progress of socialism. Their success was seen as success for socialism, but their failure was their own. This was an attitude which approached socialism not as the theories of fallible men, but as a glimpse of the reality of some absolute.

In the confusion and discouragement of failure, there was one issue on which militant socialists were unanimous and enthusiastic, anti-militarism. It is suggested here that this became, after war was declared, an avenue for the attempt of militant socialists to solve their constant problem - the establishment of contact between vanguard and working class. Holland, and his associates, were strong opponents of compulsory military training, asserting that militarism was one of the most important bulwarks of the capitalist state. They held that war was a capitalist device to gain or retain markets, and in this capitalists used the workers, making a pretence of national war. To Holland, the only just war was the class war, the only real enemy, the capitalist class, and the working class, being

256. Ibid.
257. See Holland's Poetry Notebook.
259. E.g. see West Sydney Federal Election op.cit. p.8; Holland Red Roses, p.50
260. The scope of this thesis does not allow consideration of this argument. It is mentioned as a possible theory which might be tested in a study of the anti-conscription movement in Australia:
international, should not permit dissension among its members. Militant socialists also feared that the army would be used against strikers. Apart from its place in militant socialist theory, anti-militarism had strong practical attractions. It had value as a rallying cry, and as a simple, well-defined position, it avoided the tortuous paths of doctrinal disputation. In anti-militarism, militant socialists could put forward their creed at its best, capitalism at its worst. More than any other aspect of socialist theory, anti-militarism provided an international context for Holland's belief. As an anti-militarist he could claim affinity with socialists whose doctrinal position he repudiated. It flattered his ego and gave him a sense of world brotherhood and great purpose to make common cause with such prominent socialists as the Frenchman, Gustav Hervé.

All the organisations of militant socialists with which Holland had been associated, Socialist League, Active Service Brigade, and International Socialist Club, took an anti-militarist position. The view of the S.F.A., which was affiliated to the International Socialist Bureau, was that of the Second International, the belief that war could be prevented by a simultaneous strike of the working class in the belligerent countries. The Labor Party took a different view, opposing a standing army, but supporting a citizen soldiery and compulsory military training; a position which incurred constant criticism from militant socialists. In December 1909, a Defence Act, providing for compulsory military training was passed. At the time, this attracted little attention because of the spectacular industrial strife at Newcastle, but afterwards, militant socialists began a vigorous attack on compulsory military training. When the first 'conscripts' began to drill in July 1911, militant socialists sought evidence, in cases of insubordination, that the scheme would be resisted, and fail. Upon the scheme showing every sign of continuing, militant

263. Gustav Herve to Holland, 15 Dec. 1910 (H.P.)  
264. See Appendices 1 and 2, Worker (Sydney) 22 Feb. 1902.  
265. D.T. 10 July 1903.  
266. Minutes, Sydney I.W.W. 9 March, 18 May 1910; People. 15 April, 1911;  
     letters to Sec. I.W.W. from R.Wright (West Wallsend) May, 2 June 1910;  
     from A.L.Hughes (Melbourne) 12 June, 10 Sept. 1910. (I.W.W. Corresp.262)  
socialists used their propaganda forces to such effect\textsuperscript{268} that there was a discussion in the Senate on the subject of treasonable literature. Acting on the supposition that this propaganda was ineffectual, the Government refused to give militant socialists the publicity of prosecution\textsuperscript{269}.

Nevertheless, the first prosecutions under the Defence Act were directed against two militant socialists, Alfred Giles of Broken Hill and H.E. Holland. They, as parents, had failed to register their sons under the Act\textsuperscript{270}. Holland had refused to permit his son Roy to drill, and in March 1912 was fined the maximum penalty of £100\textsuperscript{271}. On appeal, the verdict was upheld, but the fine was reduced to £10. Holland, who left in May 1912 for a lecture tour of New Zealand, never paid it\textsuperscript{272}.

What had militant socialists attempted to do between 1907 and 1910? In an effort to lead the labour movement towards unity on their principles, they had endeavoured to persuade unionists to accept, or at least act on, theories associated with the I.W.W., to organise into industrial unions and to recognise a class war which would lead to socialism. Militant socialists sought to do this through the strike as a means of action, a traditional unionist device which they attempted to adapt to their purpose. Strike action had many advantages from their viewpoint. It was in itself, they believed, a microcosm of the class war, testimony to the spontaneous revolt of the working class\textsuperscript{273}. Practically, the strike was a means whereby militant socialists hoped to outbid and embarrass the Labor Party. The outbreak of any strike placed the Labor Party in a difficult position. Support of the strike would incense a substantial and vociferous section of public opinion, while opposition to it would incur the ire of unionists. Theoretically, it was a dilemma from which it was difficult to escape with

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{268} Minutes, Sydney I.W.W. 9 Aug. 1911; T. Johnson to I.W.W. Sec. 2 Oct. 1911.
\item \textsuperscript{269} Commonwealth P.D. 1911 V.60, pp.1034-7.
\item \textsuperscript{271} D.T. 26 March 1912; Bulletin, 25 April 1912; I.S. 30 March, 6 April 1912; Fletcher and Hills op.cit. p.57.
\item \textsuperscript{272} Bulletin, 30 May 1912; I.S. 1 June 1912; Fletcher and Hills op.cit. p.57 (With a note by Roy Holland at p.60)
\item \textsuperscript{273} I.S. 16 Sept. 1911, 24 Feb. 1912.
\end{itemize}
honour, and militant socialists, anxious to prove the Labor Party essentially capitalist, wished to see the party faced with the problem of decision, as often as possible. However, as events, particularly those associated with the Newcastle strike, proved, the Labor Party stood to gain, rather than lose from the defeat of a strike. If the Labor Party did not support strikes, this conciliated the general public. No prospective government could afford to support a breach of the law. Unionists might be indignant, but from the defeat of industrial action they reacted towards political action, and their outlet was the Labor Party. In practice, then, the problem posed by strike action was resolved to Labor's advantage. Militant socialists, by advocating strike action as a quicker road to greater improvements, hoped to outbid the Labor Party. Asserting that the arbitration system existed to determine the smallness of the workers' share of the wealth they produced, militant socialists maintained that the strike was the way to the workers' possession of all that wealth. This had to be proved, by successful strike action. Strike action failed, mainly because of government intervention and the attitude of the Labor Party. It failed to involve the discrediting of the Labor Party and it failed to succeed.

Militant socialists had strong ideas about what the Labor Party ought to be, and ought to do. This led to a situation in which militant socialists expressed repeated surprise at its "class treachery" when the Labor Party acted to end a strike, a reflection of their hope, not entirely abandoned until 1910, that the Labor Party would be forced, by the existence of a strike, to support it. This hope arose from the rigidity of their ideas on the nature of a workers' party, and from erroneous assumptions about what the workers wanted. To both strikers and militant socialists, a strike was a means to an end. To socialists the end was the world's wealth for the world's workers, to strikers, improvement of their conditions as workers. If a better method of securing improvements offered, then workers would use that, regardless of whether it hastened or retarded the social

275. West Sydney Federal Election op.cit.
revolution as postulated in the theories of militant socialists. The Labor Party promised a better method. To militant socialists, it seemed that the Labor Party's failure to actively champion strikes in progress ought to have alienated workers. In fact, workers were often grateful for Labor intervention to terminate a strike, for gains were often made in the attainment of limited objectives, and many strikers were glad of the opportunity to return to work. The injunctions of militant socialists to fight on, were often not welcomed by strikers who saw, that on every reasonable calculation, this would be pointless and probably disastrous.

From the events of 1907-10, Holland's belief emerged tremendously strengthened, for he had been drawn into it, both mind and heart. Whereas failure had intensified his earlier emotional reaction of resentment, the prospect of success engaged his speculative intellect. The intellectual development of his conviction became strong and singleminded, anchored firmly to an ideal of a real and complete life for mankind. Once established, this ideal, which became for Holland a kind of speculative knowledge of truth, was unaffected by the success or failure of the day-to-day efforts of militant socialists, for it had a firm hold on his mind and heart. It is only in terms of what this ideal meant to him - a speculative knowledge of truth - that the bitterness of his reactions to failures at this time can be understood. Like other visionaries, at other times, enduring similar frustrations, he considered the possibilities of violence. Could men be forced to be free? This dalliance with violence, and the commitment of both mind and heart, resulted in the growth of a remarkable nervous tension within Holland, a tension increased by the intensity and importance of the conflicts in which he was involved between 1907 and 1910. It was this tension - between the ideal he conceived and the reality he experienced - that gave his professions of belief such forceful conviction and such remarkable perseverance.

If Holland considered the possibility of fundamental error, he rejected it. Latent in the events of 1907-10 was the suggestion that militant socialists were unable to enlist widespread support in the labour

276. Holland to Cocking, 7 Nov. 1911 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
movement, a consideration which raised crucial questions of why this was so, and would the situation change. To announce, at the appropriate time, "Another broken strike is now added to the Laborites list!" left the basic problems untouched. In 1902 the practical results of the actions of militant socialists caused him to review, tentatively, their theoretical position, but it is testimony to the complete involvement of his intellect after 1907 that he made no such re-valuation between 1910 and 1912. Then, Holland did not approach the fortunes of militant socialists in a circumstantial, analytic way, for, certain of the correctness of his position and the ultimate realisation of the ideal, he refused to admit the possibility of real failure. This pertinacity led to his discernment of "the growing class consciousness and the increasing solidarity of the working class" where, in fact, it did not exist. Moreover, militant socialists could usually find some support, or, more often, something to support. Any discontent, however originating, among workers, found in them ready champions, anxious to put forward their own interpretation of events and to derive from such discontent some vindication of their own position. Here was refusal to be defeated by difficulty or disaster, but what had been hope now had the marks of presumption, what had been perseverance now had an air of self-deception. The events of 1907-10 had proffered too many lessons, about men and their reactions, about politics and its workings, to be ignored so completely.

The purpose of this thesis is to put forward and discuss the argument, that militant socialists of Holland's type set out to claim the leadership of the labour movement in Australia and New Zealand. It has not been an intention to make a general estimate of the influence of militant socialists on the Australian labour movement, a complex and diffuse problem whose thorough study would require an approach different in nature and far more extensive in scope than that attempted in the two Australian chapters of this thesis. Nevertheless, within the confines of this study and in the light of the main argument, some tentative and limited conclusions can be suggested.

It is obvious that in the period covered in these chapters militant

278. I.S. 24 Feb. 1912.
279. Ibid.
socialists failed to achieve the degree of influence and acceptance they sought within the labour movement. It is evident also, that on particular occasions, such as the 1897 Labor Conference which adopted the nationalisation objective, and in certain areas, such as Newcastle mining centres, militant socialists experienced a degree of success. However, as has been seen, this success was ephemeral, and its initial occurrence was due to particular circumstances which had little to do with conversions to the fullness of militant socialist theory. The influence of militant socialists was greatest when their immediate aims accorded with those of some section of the labour movement which did not share their ultimate aspirations. Militant socialists remained a minority within the labour movement between the early 1890s and 1912, and although their beliefs became firmer and their theories more detailed and definite, they were no closer to permanent control of the general direction of labour movement development at the end of that period, than they were at the beginning. This is not to say that their influence on that movement had not increased. It had increased enormously, but, it is maintained, the outcome in this period was not favourable to them. This argument can be advanced most clearly in relation to the Labor Party victories of 1910. When militant socialists attracted increasing public attention after 1907, the reaction of those outside the labour movement was one of extreme hostility to what were regarded as revolutionary subverters of the social order. Initially, the Labor Party was damned as well in this reaction, but by 1910, after the Newcastle strike, distinctions were beginning to be made. The Labor Party's repeated denunciations of the I.W.W. and revolutionary socialism, and its attempts to end strikes, had led to some non-Labor realisation that if labour had to express itself, its doing so through the Labor Party would create least disturbance. Thus, it seems that militant socialist activity in the period 1907-10 led to a greater public tolerance towards the Labor Party, as the lesser of two evils. Within the labour movement, militant socialist attacks on the Labor Party seem to have encouraged, by way of reaction, a greater devotion to it. As far as the Labor Party itself was concerned,

left wing criticism seems to have resulted in a clarification of the party's own position, it became gradually less radical, and consequently more generally acceptable. Most importantly, strike defeats resulted in a reaction towards the Labor Party which assisted it to power in 1910.

The method by which militant socialists had hoped to break the hold of the Labor Party became the stimulus of a great increase in the party's support. The conclusion to which these arguments point is that the influence of militant socialists in the labour movement at this time was working, despite them, to assist the Labor Party to power.

283. The influence of socialist and industrial union theories within the labour movement is a separate question which cannot be considered here.
OLD THEMES IN A NEW SETTING.

With the movement of Holland from Australia to New Zealand in 1912, the major argument of this thesis - that militant socialists attempted, unsuccessfully, to claim leadership of the labour movement - is taken up in relation to industrial disturbances in New Zealand in 1912-13. Central to this chapter, and the following one, is the argument that the principal feature which distinguished New Zealand from Australia as an environment for the activity of these socialists was the absence of an established and successful political labour party. This argument is examined in the light of the themes of this chapter, the failure of industrial action, and the turning of militant socialists towards political action and the securing of unity with moderates in the labour movement. It has been argued previously that the failure of industrial action in Australia resulted in a swing to political action. The Labor Party benefited from this, but in New Zealand no such party existed and militant socialists were able to take advantage of the political reaction as it occurred. Unity with the moderate section of the labour movement gave militant socialists a far greater basis of support than they could have created independently, if their fortunes in Australia up to 1912 be taken as indication, and it is obvious that this unity, as expressed in the New Zealand Labour Party in 1916, was the first step on the road to political power. This unity would not have come about had moderates been absorbed previously in an equivalent of the Australian Labor Party. It is then, the absence of that equivalent which explains why militant socialists played a far more important role in the New Zealand labour movement than they did, up to 1912, in the Australian.

Connected with this is the fact that in 1913, with the election of P.C. Webb to parliament, socialists, such as Holland, had their first
taste of real success. Hitherto, their outlook and attitudes had been adjusted to failure and the hope of success, but, it is argued, this actual success, and its circumstances, forced them to acknowledge, to some degree, the demands of the political environment in which they found themselves. The result was a slowly increasing involvement in the exigencies of that environment, a process which is studied throughout the remainder of the thesis.

After the election of the Labor Party in 1910, a militant socialist remarked, "Labor conditions are not oppressive enough in Australia to engender a general dissatisfaction among the workers." Even the policy of non-Labor governments took a state socialist and humanitarian direction, but following the Marxian analysis, militant socialists assumed that there was class war and an intolerable degree of capitalist exploitation. This situation made the question of palliatives, reforms of the capitalist system, a difficult one for them. The nature of the problem is illustrated clearly by Holland's repudiation, in 1911, of palliatives dispensed by the Labor Government, as retarding the day of working class victory. Practically, this placed him in the position of opposing the bettering of social and economic conditions, because this betterment would seduce the workers from pursuit of the social revolution. It was difficult to harmonise this position with such postulates as immiserisation and growing class-consciousness, and while, theoretically, it was possible to reject lesser goods in the name of a greater good, in practice absurdity was reached when a workers' party refused to seek immediate "concessions", offering instead something which few understood or wanted. Holland realised this early in his New Zealand career. His answers to this problem lay in emphasising the transformative power of education, and later, in visualising immediate reforms as being steps towards the attainment of socialism.

The initial development of organisations of militant socialists in New Zealand was markedly different from that in Australia. In Australia, militant socialists at first entered politics, later turning to industrial

1. Socialist 19 Aug. 1910 (J. Curtin)
3. I.S. 25 Nov. 1911.
action. This sequence was reversed in New Zealand where the first significant movement of militant socialists was industrial. With the resounding and salutary defeat of industrial action, militants in New Zealand turned to politics as an avenue virtually unexplored, not as in Australia, virtually exhausted. The major problem facing the political action of militant socialists in Australia was their inability to compete with the Labor Party. The problem of an established, specifically workers' party was absent from New Zealand, where the Liberal Party, although accorded the support of most workers, lacked a worker character in control and composition. Militant socialists were aware of the advantages of having no "political monstrosity in the shape of a Labor Party such as operates in Australia"\(^5\), to obstruct their efforts to assert their vanguard role.

When Holland arrived in New Zealand in 1912, the industrial activity of militant socialists was approaching its height. Until 1907 their activity had been political and moderate and of little consequence. The first organisations of militant socialists, in the late nineties\(^6\), were absorbed in the New Zealand Socialist Party, formed in July 1901.\(^7\) This party had an English tone, both in membership and theory, which endured, although obscured by later, and especially Australian influences. The insignificance of militant socialist activity before 1907 is directly attributable to the influence of Richard John Seddon, who, as Liberal Premier from 1893 until his death in 1906, enjoyed to a remarkable degree, the confidence, or at least the sufferance of working men. Seddon succeeded John Ballance who had won the election of 1890 with a programme of social legislation. Under Seddon, although radical objectives became mainly matters of profession only, the Liberal Party retained the support of trade

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unionists, as well as farmers and shopkeepers, and Seddon himself became, in popular conception, the personification of welfare laws. It was not until the Trades and Labour Council's conference of 1904 that a labour party was formed. Organised in the face of Seddon's hostility and patterned on N.S.W. Labor Party organisation, the Independent Political Labour League was weak, and little more than the idea survived long. For militant socialists, Seddon's death in May 1906 was a liberation. There was a marked increase in their activity following Seddon's death, activity closely associated with the arrival of new men and new doctrines, mostly from Australia.

Towards the end of 1907, there was an eruption of propaganda and an organising campaign by militant socialists in the coal mining districts of the West Coast of the South Island. This, based on I.W.W. theories of class war and industrial unionism, soon gained strength and public attention, and the result was to divide the labour movement into militant and moderate sections. While the typical unionist, supporting Trades and Labour Councils, could not conceive of unionism without arbitration, the essence of the new unionism was freedom from arbitration and liberty to strike. Passed in 1894, the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act kept New Zealand strike free until late in 1906, but from 1901 it became obvious that an increasingly conservative court would concede no further increase in real wages. This situation paralleled that in Australia, and early in 1908, militant socialists at the Blackball coal mine, successfully demonstrated the strike method. They followed this with the formation of a Miners' Federation, to be the first step in organising labour throughout New Zealand. The architects of this attempt to build an industrial vanguard were a small group led by P.H. Hickey, who had had I.W.W. associat-

10. There are two biographies, James Drummond. Richard John Seddon. (Christchurch 1906) and R.M. Burdon King Dick. (Christchurch 1955).
ions in America, and R. Semple and P.C. Webb, militant Australian unionists. Mostly Australian and coal miners, the members of this group were young, devoted to socialist theories, and, arriving in New Zealand when Seddon's magic waswaning, innocent of any devotion to Liberalism. Seddon's death, and the gradual decline in real wages which had begun about 1900, favoured them. In a closely knit mining community they were able to disseminate their views rapidly, industrial unionism and attacks on arbitration appealing, as in Australia, to miners dissatisfied with the status quo.

The division in the labour movement between militants and moderates, took organisational form in 1910 with the formation of a Trades and Labour Council Federation of Labour and an associated New Zealand Labour Party. This Labour Party proposed to maintain existing "Progressive Legislation", nationalise monopolies and work towards gradual public ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange.\(^\text{15}\) Because of their industrial bias, militant socialists virtually ignored the formation of the party, but attacked the Federation,\(^\text{16}\) and in August 1910, broadened the basis of the Miners' Federation and changed its name to Federation of Labor.\(^\text{17}\) However, in 1911, the political activity of the Labour Party and its attempts to secure labour unity, seemed to militant socialists a threat to their plan to assume the leadership of the labour movement. Stimulated by the election of Australian Labor governments in 1910, the Labour Party appointed as organiser, early in 1911, "Professor" W.T. Mills, an American labour lecturer then in Australia.\(^\text{18}\) Mills toured New Zealand with a scheme for a United Labour Party, an industrial and political organisation to include all who rendered service, including professional groups and reformist associations which the socialists regarded as capitalistic. Its programme was based on that of the Labour Party.\(^\text{19}\) This initiative, the prospect of consolidation among the moderates, and the nature of the scheme,

alarmed militant socialists and the Socialist Party engaged E.R. Hartley, an English socialist, to refute Mills. Similarly, Labour Party preparations, particularly in the Grey district of the West Coast, to put forward candidates at the 1911 elections, aroused the Federation of Labor which promptly put aside its previous contempt for political action, nominating P.C. Webb for Grey, and later, Hickey for Ohinemuri. The Federation justified its action by asserting that industrial solidarity had been achieved in the Grey district, and therefore the time was opportune for political action. Militant socialists had entered politics lest they be out-maneuvered by not doing so.

In the 1911 elections, militant socialist and Labour Party candidates opposed and denounced each other. Four labour representatives were elected, A.H. Hindmarsh and W.A. Veitch of the Labour Party, J. Robertson of the N.Z.S.P. and an independent, J. Payne. The 1911 elections resulted in the termination of the Liberal ascendency. In effect, the Reform Party, led by William Massey, had turned 'Liberal' promising to extend Liberal measures, and winning the votes of former Liberal supporters, particularly by the adoption of the Farmers' Union programme and freehold land tenure to replace the Liberal leasehold. The Reform Government took office in June 1912.

The United Labour Party was formed in 1912, the Federation of Labor and N.Z.S.P. refusing to co-operate on the ground that unity could be effective only if based on the revolutionary Marxian conception of the

20. Maoriland Worker 1 Sept. 3 Nov. 1911.
class struggle, and the socialisation objective. Nevertheless, the socialists learnt something from Mills's campaign. He had said:

"An organisation that depends on winning victories by means of the strike ... is only half organized. It must have power to enact law ... These things can be secured only by a Parliamentary programme ..." 27

The truth of this was dawning slowly on champions of industrial action. The election of a N.Z.S.P. member to parliament, and the substantial votes polled by Webb and Hickey, together with the possibility of a struggle with the U.L.P. for support within the labour movement, pointed to a political conclusion. Militants of the Federation of Labor were usually members of the N.Z.S.P., but they took little interest in it. In 1911, none of the fifteen delegates to the N.Z.S.P. conference was a prominent member of the Federation, but at the 1912 conference there were six such delegates among the eighteen present.28 This signified the determination of industrial militants to take political action. The immediate effect was to widen the breach between Socialist and Labour Parties, for the 1912 N.Z.S.P. conference replaced the reformist platform, so akin to that of the Labour Party, adopted by the 1911 conference,29 with a socialisation objective and an injunction to industrial unionism.30 Though, believing that industrial action was far more important, militant socialists were unwilling to allow moderates to dictate the terms on which political action would be taken.

When he was invited to lecture in 1912, Holland was well known by repute to socialists in New Zealand. There had been close personal links between N.Z.S.P. and S.F.A. since 1908,31 and in 1909 the N.Z.S.P. affiliated

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to the S.F.A.\textsuperscript{32} In September 1910, R.S. Ross, then editor of the Melbourne Socialist, accepted the Federation of Labor's offer of the editorship of its projected newspaper, the \textit{Maoriland Worker}.\textsuperscript{33} Holland was envious of Ross's financial security in this position,\textsuperscript{34} and from the hospital bed where he spent most of 1911, the New Zealand socialist movement must have seemed, from published reports,\textsuperscript{35} a vigorous and promising growth. In December 1911, Holland told a New Zealand socialist visiting Sydney, of his wish for a brief holiday in New Zealand, declaring that "Six weeks at the Baths at Rotorua would make a new man of me."\textsuperscript{36} Early in 1912, the Waihi branch of the N.Z.S.P. invited Holland to succeed E.R. Hartley as organiser, and offered to pay expenses of hot spring treatment to Holland's injured knee. Holland accepted the invitation by return mail.\textsuperscript{37}

A few months in New Zealand promised Holland a welcome holiday and the prospect of a cure to his injury. Still unwell, and complaining of the strain of editing the \textit{International Socialist},\textsuperscript{38} his state of mind is reflected in verse he wrote just before leaving for New Zealand:

"Art thou grown faint and weary
Who fought so well for Right?
Dost feel the day is dreary,
And long for Rest - and Night? ...
Take heart, O Man of Sorrow!
The Coming Day is bright!
The Sun shall rise To-morrow
And flood the world with Light."	extsuperscript{39}

The apparent vigour of the activity of militant socialists in New Zealand attracted Holland, particularly when contrasted with the position in Australia. Moreover this activity was developing along industrial lines, in a way which soon convinced Holland that what had failed in Australia would succeed in New Zealand.\textsuperscript{40} His initial experience in New

\textsuperscript{32} Commonweal, 1 May 1909.
\textsuperscript{33} Hickey to Ross 12 Sept. 1910, Mann to Ross 30 Oct. 1910 (Ross Papers C.N.1)
\textsuperscript{34} I.S. 6 Jan. 1911.
\textsuperscript{35} E.g. I.S. 29 July 1911.
\textsuperscript{36} M.W. 29 March 1912.
\textsuperscript{37} I.S. 3 Feb. 1912; M.W. 12 April 1912; New Zealand Worker, H.E. Holland Memorial Issue, 8 Nov. 1933.
\textsuperscript{38} I.S. 6 Jan. 17 Feb. 1912.
\textsuperscript{39} From "Take Heart," Holland's Poetry Notebook (H.P.) Reprinted in Holland, Red Roses, p.31.
Zealand, particularly the Waihi strike, brought about his return to his former industrialist attitude, the position he had taken up in 1907, a reversion so complete and so confident as to suggest that he had learnt nothing, not even caution, from events in Australia.

Holland had arranged to leave Sydney on 14 May 1912, but on 12 May, a strike began at Waihi. The Waihi Socialist Party cabled Holland, asking him to postpone his departure, but he replied that he was prepared to re-arrange his programme to meet the emergency, and left for New Zealand. He was caught up immediately in the intensely emotional strike atmosphere. Led by militant socialists, the strike developed into a bitter conflict, in which government intervention and the killing of a striker appeared to socialists to foreshadow class war. Following the Waihi strike, there was, in 1913, the achievement of unity in the labour movement and another industrial upheaval. This unique succession of exciting events, coming as an initial impression, misled Holland into presuming that the New Zealand labour movement offered far greater opportunities for the success of militant socialists than it actually did. The essentially conservative nature of the majority of workers was obscured by the spectacular industrial eruptions of 1912 and 1913. The over-estimation of New Zealand's possibilities as a seeding ground, which Holland shared with other militants, was both a strength and a weakness. Confidence and optimism gave them a remarkable elan, but they were slow to recognise signs that their theories were not generally acceptable.

The Miners' Union at Waihi, a gold-quartz mining centre, cancelled its Arbitration Act registration in 1911. In May 1912 a Waihi Engine Drivers' Union was formed, apparently at the mining company's instigation, and registered under the Arbitration Act, which required a membership of only fifteen for registration of a union. The Miners' Union struck in protest against this "scab" union, and passed direction of the strike to the Federation of Labor. Convinced that an attempt to get a general strike would fail, because Arbitration unions would remain at work, the Federation

41. L.S. 22 June 1912; N.Z.W. 8 Nov. 1933.
Some socialist humour at Waihi. Labour harnessed, pulls Capital, enthroned.
discouraged sympathetic strikes and solicited financial support.\(^44\) There is some evidence that the Federation anticipated a speedy victory,\(^45\) for it did not appeal for Australian financial assistance until six weeks after the strike began.\(^46\)

At Waihi, which he found quiet and orderly, Holland spoke mainly against arbitration.\(^47\) He attended the hot baths at Te Aroho, and wrote some optimistic verse. Much improved in health, he left Waihi early in July to lecture in Christchurch.\(^48\) Soon after this, the Minister of Justice, upon receiving a petition from persons who professed to fear violence, sent a contingent of police to the scene of the protracted strike. After clashes with the police in September, about seventy strikers were bound over to keep the peace, but most elected to go to gaol. Attempts by the Federation of Labor to organise nation-wide demonstrations and protest strikes met with a poor response owing to the hostility of arbitrationist and U.L.P. sentiment.\(^49\) The Waihi mines were opened with non-union labour at the beginning of October. On 12 November, strike-breakers stormed the Miners' Hall, and in the melee several shots were fired. A policeman was wounded and F.G. Evans, a striker, died from baton injuries. In the following weeks many strikers and their families left Waihi, during what militant socialists described as "a reign of terror."\(^50\)

Since he had left Australia, Holland had been worried by a dispute

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\(^{47}\) I.S. 29 June 1912; M.W. 14 June 1912.


\(^{50}\) Holland op.cit. pp.106-113,203; Irvine "Militant Unions" pp.127-8; Hickey op.cit. p.56.
with the Australian Socialist Party, formerly the S.F.A.\(^{51}\) over the party's decision to stop a payment which it had agreed to make to his wife, in his absence in New Zealand. He had also been informed that when he returned, his editorial salary of £3 a week would be halved. Holland replied with a circular to A.S.P. branches charging the A.S.P. Council with attempting to supplant him. Revealing wounded pride and self pity, he told A.S.P. members of the embarrassment and mental anguish the Council's action had caused him, and referred to the sacrifice of his health in the service of the \textit{International Socialist}.\(^{52}\) The thought of returning to Australia under these circumstances depressed him, and when he was offered employment in New Zealand, he decided to postpone that return indefinitely. New Zealand offered far better prospects, not only for the hopes of militant socialists, but materially, Holland told his daughter-in-law:

"... over here all danger of hardship vanishes: if my health keeps good I can always make a good living lecturing; and in time I hope to settle down to regular newspaper work." \(^{53}\)

He accepted an invitation to report inquest proceedings on the death of Evans,\(^{54}\) and in December agreed to co-operate with R.S. Ross and F. O'Flynn in writing a Waihi strike history for the Federation of Labor. The publication of \textit{The Tragic Story of the Waihi Strike} added immensely to Holland's prestige in the New Zealand labour movement. Clearly written and argued with passionate conviction, this booklet ran to two editions, both of 5,000 copies. Its thesis was that:

"The outburst of outrage and lawlessness at Waihi was undeniably planned by the mine-owners, with the Government for aiders and abettors, the police for organisers and the law courts for instruments of oppression." \(^{55}\)

At first, it seemed that the Waihi strike had taught militant socialists nothing. There was some questioning of the efficacy of the strike method,\(^{56}\)

\(\text{Note: Numbers in superscript refer to footnotes.}\)

\(^{51}\) The name had been changed in May 1912.

\(^{52}\) H.L. Denford to Comrades of the Australian Socialist Party, Sydney 21 Sept. 1912 Leaflet (H.P.); Mrs. Holland to J. Cocking 11 Sept. 1912; F. Allman to J. Cocking 3 July 1913 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.); O.W. Jorgenson to Comrades of the Socialist Party, Sydney 17 Aug. 1912, Leaflet; Holland to the Members of the A.S.P. Blackball, 15 Oct. 1912, Leaflet (H.P.)

\(^{53}\) Holland to Stella Holland 23 Dec. 1912, 19 Sept. 1913 (H.P.)

\(^{54}\) M.W. 29 Nov. 1912.

\(^{55}\) Holland, \textit{Waihi Strike} p. 204.

\(^{56}\) M.W. 20 Sept. 1912; L.S. 28 Sept. 1912.
but when opinions were aired in a Wellington debate, "Direct Action -v- Revolutionary Politics," direct action was vindicated. R.S. Ross declared in a Maoriland Worker editorial:

"After all the Waihi strike was a superb effort. Few upheavals are more dramatic. It was brimful of incident, of sensation ... Breathe awhile and then do it again..."

This attitude was shared by I.W.W. enthusiasts, and by the authors of The Tragic Story of the Waihi Strike, though there Holland's influence is discernible in a reference to the necessity of political unity and action as well. It was an attitude, in the face of strike defeat, which is explicable not only as ideological obstinacy, but in relation to the profound effect strike events had had in the labour movement generally. The events of November in Waihi thoroughly alarmed moderate trade unionists. It had been demonstrated to the whole labour movement that the Arbitration Act provision that fifteen persons could register a union in an industry where a union already existed, hit at the basis of unionism. The Federation of Labor skilfully exploited this reaction, so that the defeat, and its circumstances assisted, rather than retarded, the ambitions of militant socialists. As their refusal, after consideration, to attempt a "general" strike shows, the leaders of the Federation were aware that lack of unity was a major obstacle to the success of their strike action policy. The anxiety created throughout the labour movement by the circumstances of the strike and its defeat, seemed to militant Federationists, an excellent opportunity to attempt to secure the re-organisation and unity of the labour movement under their leadership. They invited all unions to a conference in Wellington in January 1913 to consider a basis of unity with the immediate purpose of forcing the Government to amend the Arbitration Act. In view of events at Waihi, this purpose was not unattractive to moderate trade unionists, who, lacking a voice such as the

57. M.W. 1 Nov. 1912.
61. See Irvine "Militant Unions" p.133.
Labor Party provided in Australia, were prepared to at least consider any method of increasing unionist influence. Moreover, the leaders of the Federation, wishing to secure unity, were remarkably conciliatory, R. Semple going so far as to deny that the Federation had ever opposed arbitration. In the interests of unity, militants did not air their theories, and a united conference decided to press for amendment of the Arbitration Act.  

The impingement of conference deliberations on politics led to a suggestion that the United Labour Party be represented, but the leaders of the Federation, Hickey, Semple, P. Fraser, and W.E. Parry, opposed this, for they disliked and distrusted W.T. Mills, as well as having doctrinal reservations about political involvements. However, a motion to invite the U.L.P. was carried by fifty votes to forty, an expression of a desire for effective unity, and of the moderate leanings of the conference majority. Militant industrialists countered this by ensuring that the Socialist Party and the I.W.W. were invited also. The circumstances point to the conclusion that the carrying of unity negotiations into the political field was not intentional. It arose out of the progression of events. The primary aim of militant industrialists was to secure trade union unity. To do this they were prepared to accept, at least initially, the terms of the moderates. Because moderates repudiated strike action, the only course open was some sort of political action and thus unity discussions among unionists came to political conclusions. The attitude of the Federation of Labor to political action was less theory-ridden than its ideas about industrial action, in which it believed that "a revolutionary position has been well reconciled with a workable tactic." The reasons were that the Federation believed industrial action much more important, took little interest in politics, and saw that political action was potentially divisive. In 1911, the Federation's first political action had been taken less from a wish to do so, than from awareness that although political action had its dangers, it was more dangerous when used by labour's enemies. At the same time, Federation leaders saw that liaison

with the Socialist Party would alienate moderate unionists and destroy any hope of industrial unity. 66 Thus, as early as 1912, the most militant socialists in New Zealand, those associated with the Federation of Labor, had shown what appears to be a keen appreciation of the position. It was necessary to have political action, but it must not be too militantly socialist if it was to succeed. J. Robertson, the Socialist Party M.P. expressed a similar opinion when he remarked that what was wanted in politics was:

"... something which will fight with the abandon which characterises the Federation on the industrial field, and at the same time ... with cautious weighing up of possibilities." 67

However, it must be remembered that the Federation's views, apparently so moderate, on political action, were adjusted to facilitate industrial objectives which were expected to lead to the realisation of socialism. When industrial action failed and the militants turned to politics, the situation was transformed for them, for it was now by political means that they hoped to achieve socialism. Nevertheless, their earlier attitude, formed when industrial action was their first consideration, had a profound effect in determining the nature of political action when it was taken. In 1912-13 these socialists were prepared to play down their political opinions and principles, awaiting the day when these would not have divisive effects. Willingness to compromise politically, in view of the greater industrial good, led the socialists to accept initially a much more moderate formal position in politics than their convictions directed. Once accepted, this position proved impossible to renounce. Their first formal acceptance of this position was made at the Unity Congress of July 1913. Augmented by the political organisations, the January 1912 union conference decided on the necessity for one industrial and one political organisation, and conference committees presented constitutions for a United Federation of Labor and a Social Democratic Party to be considered by a further unity conference in July.

Holland had taken up a position equivalent to his 1907 belief, industrial and political action, with emphasis on the industrial. At the

Irvine "Militant Unions" pp.141-142.
67. M.W. 4 April 1912.
January 1913 conference he spoke as one of the N.Z.S.P. delegates. Realising that political allegiance was an issue which would divide the industrial movement, he opposed the single organisation, with industrial and political aspects, suggested by W.T. Mills, and advocated an industrial solidarity so great that a national strike to achieve socialism would be unnecessary. He told delegates:

"Never before in the history of a single country have the working class organisations come together and unitedly agreed upon an industrial course of action ... it represents the greatest advance that has ever been recorded in any country of the world." 69

In contrast, he expressed opposition to the political proposals as a "platform of palliatives", but implied that militant socialists would accept it, in the interests of unity. Holland was convinced that there was no country in the world where the working class could secure control, both of industrial and political affairs, as easily as in New Zealand.70

Holland, and those of a similar cast of mind, were not enthusiastic about the prospect of political action. It was the possibilities of industrial unity that excited them.71 Apart from their distrust of the terms of political unity, they believed it their duty to "defend the tactic and school of 'Extremism' whose soul is Daring and whose slogan is 'Socialism in Our Time.'"72 Such a belief did not fit so readily into a political context.

The Unity Congress which established the United Federation of Labor and the Social Democratic Party opened in Wellington on 1 July 1913. In an early speech to the Congress, the largest held in Australasia up to that time,73 W.T. Mills set the keynote of compromise and determination to achieve unity.74 Moderates secured the rejection of the I.W.W.-inspired U.F.L. preamble, but the section giving the U.F.L. power to call a strike "whenever circumstances demand" was passed.75 Thereupon, a minority who

70. Ibid. pp.50-51; M.W. 14 Feb. 1913.
72. M.W. 4 April 1913.
73. 391 delegates represented 61,000 workers. Report of the Unity Congress Wellington July 1st to 10th 1913, Wellington 1913, p.11; Hickey, Memoirs, p.70.
75. Ibid. pp.55-60.
abhorred the I.W.W., strikes, and national union direction withdrew from the Congress. As adopted, the U.F.L. constitution differed little from that of the Federation of Labor. Moderates un成功地 attempted to delete the socialisation objective of the S.D.P., and to qualify it with the word "gradual." On the other hand, although militant socialists regarded the S.D.P. platform as palliative, and no doubt, noted its close similarity to that of the U.L.P., it was passed virtually unamended. At the time, the Unity Congress was both hailed and denounced as a victory for the "Red" Federation of Labor. In so far as the Federation had attained its primary objective, unity with moderates, this view was correct, but what actually emerged from the conference was a tacit division of the profits of unity, between moderates and militants, based on the understanding that the average worker would tolerate a greater degree of militancy in his unionism than he would in his politics. The militants retained the essence of the Federation of Labor, the strike weapon, but sacrificed the I.W.W. preamble to moderate scruples. Believing themselves secure in, and pre-occupied with what they considered most important, they made the necessary concessions in politics. Although there was a socialisation objective and a statement of principles, the crucial platform was reformist, similar to that of the U.L.P. The achievement of unity on this basis was of paramount importance, for when industrial action had failed, militant socialists were driven back to a political position whose terms were essentially those of the moderates. The significance of the absence of a labour party has been discussed already. In Australia the position of militant socialists had been much influenced by their reaction to the Labor Party. In New Zealand there was no Labor Party to react against, and the continual pressures towards following majority opinion, which occur in

77. See Appendix 5 for the Objects of the U.F.L. Officers elected were, President W.T.Young, Vice-Pres. J.Dowgray, Organiser, R.Semple, Sec.-Treas. P.H.Hickey.
any political context, were not obstructed or distorted by the presence of such a party. Even in regard to industrial action, the achievement of the militants at the 1913 Congress was limited and insecure. The unity obtained did not embrace the many unorganised workers, and it did not transform opponents of strike action into upholders of it.

The first acknowledgement by militant socialists of the demands of the political environment was made during the Grey by-election campaign, which opened in June 1913 with P.C. Webb as S.D.P. candidate. In April, Holland had taken up the editorship of the Maoriland Worker, which Ross had relinquished. He held this position, which afforded considerable influence in the labour movement, and gave him more satisfaction and enjoyment than any other work he had undertaken previously, until he was elected to parliament in 1918. P.C. Webb was opposed by both a Liberal and a Reform candidate, but the Liberal candidate was eliminated in the first ballot. S.D.P. and Liberal votes together far outnumbered those for Reform, but Holland, holding that S.D.P. first ballot votes were "the true reflex of Labor's class conscious strength", argued against seeking Liberal support in the second ballot campaign, on the ground that such votes would be of doubtful value. Holland's argument was a logical development of the purist position he occupied, but in the peculiar circumstances of the Grey campaign, it amounted to a suggestion that militant socialists ignore an unprecedented chance of success. Had it not been for the second ballot provision, the question of the requisites for political success probably would not have come up at this time, certainly not so acutely. As it was, Holland's cautions were disregarded, the first significant practical deviation by those who shared Holland's beliefs from a rigidly "class" position. Harrassed by Reform propaganda against "The Red Terror", Webb appealed to all "Democratic Forces" and "the progressive movement" to oppose the "Tory

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82. Mrs. Ivar to writer, 12 Nov. 1958.
83. Michel (Reform) 2,189; Webb (S.D.P.) 2,091; Hannan (Liberal) 2,039. According to the Second Ballot Act of 1908 the leading candidate in an election where there were more than two candidates must secure more than half the valid votes recorded, or a second ballot between the two top candidates must be held. The act was repealed in 1913.
84. M.W. 25 July 1913.
landlord Party.\textsuperscript{85} The Liberal candidate announced his support of Webb, who was elected with Liberal backing.\textsuperscript{86} Conciliated by Webb's assurance that "There was no compromise, no political bargaining with the Liberal Party for its support", Holland decided to make the best of the fait accompli and claimed Webb's win as one for "Socialism", the portent of further victories.\textsuperscript{87} Given Webb's success, Holland could do little else than accept it, but to claim it as a victory for socialism did not alter the fact that Webb had won with Liberal support, as an anti-Reform candidate. Such acceptance, however unavoidable, of the existing terms of political conflict, was odious to Holland, who believed that militant socialists ought to dictate these terms by drawing attention to what they saw as the real elements of conflict. Their entry into politics should clarify the class position and make the class war obvious in that field. In relation to this object, Holland stated a theme and a plan which long remained a central idea of militant socialists acting in politics:

"... the effect of our united working class advent upon the field of political battle will be to drive both parties into one anti-Labor camp where they rightly belong." \textsuperscript{88}

The object of the socialists, as Holland saw it, was to bring about a merger of the Reform and Liberal parties, as essentially capitalist, for only then could the lists be cleared for the class conflict which would lead to social revolution.

On 18 October 1913, there began a minor dispute between the Wellington Shipwrights' Union and the Union Steam Ship Company which quickly led to a trial of strength between the United Federation of Labor, and an alliance of Employers' Federation and farmers, supported by government power.\textsuperscript{89} The defeat of the strike discredited industrial action, demonstrated the power of government intervention and resulted in a swing to political action. Apparently there was an impression among employers that an early date in

\textsuperscript{85} Greymouth Evening Star, 19 July 1913.
\textsuperscript{86} Webb. 3,477, Michel 2,811.
\textsuperscript{87} M.W. 1 Aug. 1913.
\textsuperscript{88} Ibid.
1914 had been selected by the U.F.L. for a trial of strength. January and February were months in which exports reached a peak, and in February 1914, the watersider workers' and seamen's agreements were due to expire. In 1911 the secretary of the Wellington Watersiders' Union had declared that the strike weapon would be used prior to the 1914 elections, to "galvanise a sleeping democracy into activity." Nevertheless, it seems that the 1913 upheaval was precipitated by accident, and not design, though this suggestion does not preclude the possibility that the U.F.L. hoped to stage a strike early in 1914 and employers took advantage of the October 1913 dispute to force an issue before the Federation was prepared. The time of the strike was disadvantageous to labour. It being early in summer a coal famine was not feared, and the major export season had not yet begun. The obscurity and complexity of the initial dispute also operated to labour's disadvantage, for there was no clear cut issue of wages or conditions which might call forth the understanding and sympathy of the general public. The absence of such grievances forced the U.F.L. to accept conflict on the employers' terms, a struggle between unions and the forces of law and order for supremacy in the State. On this issue public opinion was decidedly against the U.F.L., which was also handicapped by sharp divisions among unionists, and the fact that unionists numbered only a quarter of the Dominion's labour force. That union leaders were unwilling or unprepared to enter an industrial conflict is indicated by their attempts to prevent the initial strike, and the U.F.L's efforts to secure a compromise in early negotiations. Employers, knowing the advantage to be theirs, were unwilling to accept anything but unconditional surrender.

Early events of the watersiders' strike showed that ship-owners were not disposed to be conciliatory. When the U.F.L. accepted a strike penalty on workers, the owners further insisted that the union must register under the

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91. I.S. 4 Nov. 1911; see also I.S. 29 July 1911.
92. June Y. Hunt in "The Development of the Labour Party in New Zealand as a Political Organisation from 1913 to 1919" M.A. Thesis, Auckland 1947, p.34 suggests that employers forced the strike. It seems more likely, in the absence of positive evidence, that they merely took advantage of it once it had begun.
95. Pettit op.cit. pp.75-77.
Arbitration Act. As this went contrary to a basic principle, the U.F.L. refused. Before this impasse had been reached, an attempt on 24 October by unionists to exclude free labour from the wharves had led to a police appeal for volunteers to act as special constables. Meanwhile the strike had spread to other ports and to coal mining areas. Holland, Fraser and Semple were prominent in the strike agitation. As in Broken Hill in 1908, Holland announced that the attitude of "the exploiting class" might compel the workers to use physical force. His impulse was the same as in 1908, fear that the hopes and efforts of militant socialists might be frustrated. This time the greatest danger came from an unexpected quarter. Holland had dismissed as absurd a farmers' proposal that they should work the wharves, but threatened with losses if produce exports were delayed, and convinced that unionist tyranny was imminent, hundreds of farmers, many of whom were Reform Party supporters, came to the ports as special constables and volunteer wharf labourers. In the face of this, Holland called for solidarity and a general strike, and, in a torrent of extravagant denunciation protested:

"... the Massey Government has chosen to flood Wellington with some of the very worst elements from the country centres - with sweating farmers who bitterly hate unionism, with boys not yet out of their teens, with men whose jail records will not bear looking into, and with the usual aggregation of hired thugs and toughs who are ever at the call of the master class for vile work in the dark days and nights of industrial conflict."

When special constables took over the Auckland wharves on 8 November, a general strike was called in that city. Its initial success led the U.F.L. to call for a national general strike, as a last resort. In Wellington streets, frequent clashes took place between "Massey's Cossacks", as Holland dubbed the special constables, armed with revolvers and batons, and strikers and citizens armed with whatever missiles and weapons were to hand. Crowds were dispersed by baton charges in which many were injured. On crutches

96. The mining disputes originated separately from a dispute at Huntly over alleged victimisation of union officials.
100. The violence associated with the strike is described and illustrated in Maritime Strike 1913, Souvenir of the 1938 Reunion Silver Jubilee, Wellington 1938, pp.13-28.
since an accident to his knee, Holland spoke at street meetings and, doing his own reporting, filled the Worker with stories of the brutality and depravity of special constables and strike breakers, among whom he was hated:

"Passing a small group of 'specials' - several of whom were mere lads - I was assailed with grossly insulting epithets and threats. 'The b---- ought to have his guts kicked out' was one elegant suggestion. 'If I had my way I'd bash his b----y head in!' said another." 102

In his writing and speeches, Holland attacked strike breakers and the Government. Although not as openly as at Broken Hill, his speeches came close to advocating violence. Together with Semple, Fraser and W.T. Young, G. Bailey, Tom Barker and other strike leaders, he was arrested on 11 November, and charged with having used seditious language and incited persons to commit a breach of the peace and to resist the police in the execution of their duty. He was reported as having said at the Basin Reserve on 26 October 1913:

"The waterside agreement was broken when the men were obliged to take a day off; When Mr. Liverpool - Lord Liverpool - the gilded popinjay, the figure-head of capitalism in New Zealand landed here; and the same thing occurred when Sir Joseph Ward's Dreadnought called. I remind them (meaning the police) of words used by me at Broken Hill, in Australia, the occasion when I was sentenced to two years' imprisonment on a charge of sedition. I told the miners 'If they hit you with a baton, hit them with a pick-handle, and have something at the end of it.' Here is your opportunity, you John Hops (meaning the police). They (the employers) want to give you a miserable eight bob a day, and the soul and clothes of a slave, and want you to scab on Labour."

He was reported as having said at Newtown Park on 2nd November:

"You have a Gatling gun on the wharf today, and there is one on the turret of the Post Office, they tell us. When Massey's Cossacks come down upon us - I was going to say "men" but I don't want to be guilty of libel. The 2,000 men offering in the Waikato are heroes, because they will come fully armed, provided Massey gives them full protection. If free labourers are put on, they will work with a revolver in their belts and a bludgeon beside them. I urge the naval present (meaning sailors from H.M.S. Psyche, then lying in Wellington Harbour), when they are ordered to shoot, to remember where their class interests lie, and point their guns accordingly. The railwaymen should not carry free labourers. Let the trains rot and rust. The strike was not made by the working classes, but by the

102. Ibid.
103. M.W. 10 Dec. 1913 (Fraser) 30 Sept. 1914. (Holland)
No. 104 LOOKING UP THE VALLEY, BROOKLYN, WELLINGTON, N. Z.

The locality in which the Hollands lived in Wellington in 1913. Two crosses indicate the Holland's home.
master classes, who are pouring their armed hundreds into Wellington, not by daylight, but like thieves in the night, coming utterly ashamed of the work they are undertaking. They sneak in in the midnight hours, but grey-headed women come out on the balconies to jeer them as they pass. The railwaymen have said that they are prepared to stop the trains. The drivers can stop the carts and the seamen the ships. The uniformed police can deal a staggering blow by tearing off their uniforms and standing by the watersiders. We are going to win, and by God, we are going to do it, no matter what means we are going to use."

All the accused faced two charges, one serious, on which bail must be allowed, the other a minor offence on which the magistrate could exercise discretion. The strikers thought this a government stratagem to keep the strike leaders in gaol until the strike was defeated, and the arrests exacerbated their hostility towards the government and Massey in particular. Holland's arrest greatly distressed his wife who believed that he would receive a five year sentence at least, but Holland was not unduly worried and settled down to prepare his own defence. At the Terrace gaol, the guard was doubled and carried rifles loaded with ball cartridges. Fearing bloodshed, Holland requested the strikers not to make any demonstration in the neighbourhood of the gaol.

Meanwhile the press, with charges of sabotage and I.W.W. plots, fostered public hostility towards the strikers. These charges seem to be baseless, but they were coupled with the irrefutable statement, put forward as sinister in implication, that most of the strike leaders were not New Zealand born. Citizens who accepted without question the existing social and economic order, thought in terms of necessary government action "to maintain the law and to protect the lives and property of the citizens of the state" in the face of "sedition, anarchy and murder preached by the strike leaders." The U.F.L. call for a general strike met with little

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105. Allan Holland to Stella Holland 12 Nov. 1913 (H.P.); Twelve Months for Sedition p.7.; E.P. 19 Nov. 1933.
107. Allan Holland to Stella Holland 12, 13 Nov. 1913; Holland to Allan Holland, 13 Nov. 1913 (H.P.)
108. E.P. 13 Nov. 1913; M.W. 19 Nov. 1913.
110. Light and Liberty 8 Nov. 1913.
response. The Federation still hoped for compromise, but the employers insisted on registration of unions under the Arbitration Act. Defeated, the U.F.L. called off the strike in December and workers flocked back to enroll in Arbitration unions. On 15 December, parliament passed a Labour Disputes Investigation Bill, applying to unions not registered under the Arbitration Act, and limiting, by compulsory notification, conciliation and secret ballot, the right to strike. Not only had the general strike failed miserably, but the central principle of the U.F.L., that of keeping outside the Arbitration Act so as to be at liberty to strike without penalty, had suffered complete defeat.

The major causes of strike defeat were government intervention and the role played by farmers. Strike breaking by farmers worsened traditional town-country distrust and antagonism, which complicated relations between farmers and the labour movement for many years afterwards. The defeat showed that industrial direct action could be defeated by political action. The U.F.L. had been routed and had lost its power. Arbitration, the industrial alternative to direct action, was under the close control of employers and the government. Although some unionists had opposed the strike, they were frightened by the manner in which it had been crushed. Both avenues of industrial agitation having been closed, the alternative was obviously political action. While in prison, the strike leaders discussed political action, and only Tom Barker of the I.W.W. was dubious of its efficacy. A popular labour reaction towards political action was encouraged by the spectacular victory of the N.S.W. Labor Party at the December 1913 elections. As the strike collapsed, the defeated turned with hope to the Lyttelton by-election campaign in which the S.D.P. candidate, J. McCombs, contested a sea-port electorate as virtually a strikers'

representative. His success elated militants, who swore further vengeance against the government at the 1914 elections. Before 1913 ended the S.D.P. had greatly increased its membership, and organisers had been appointed to take advantage of the wave of enthusiasm for the party.

The reaction towards political action was spontaneous and natural, but after the first impulse, the militant socialist champions of industrial action showed great reluctance to relinquish their theories. Holland contended that the strike had in fact vindicated the U.F.L., but his insistence that political action must be backed by sound industrial organisation was an admission that the future lay with political action, and a plea for safeguards to ensure its efficacy in the plans of militants. Refusal to admit candidly that the U.F.L. and its methods had failed was compounded of many factors - invincible ideological pride, reluctance to accept the fact that extreme class antagonism was alien to New Zealand economic and social conditions, unwillingness to abandon, with unseemly haste, a previous position, determination not to lose control of the trade union movement, and awareness of the difficulties of working in a political context. But Holland and his like, however they might prefer industrial action ideally, for it gave them greater scope than politics, could not but bow to circumstances.

The 1913 strike defeat was the second time Holland's high hopes for the success of industrial action had been dashed. Despite its failure in Australia, Holland had been certain of its success in New Zealand. The lessons of this second failure, in the country where Holland believed working class control would be achieved more easily than anywhere else, could not be ignored. Although he still claimed to adhere to his old formula of industrial and political action, the balance of this combination was altering in Holland's mind. After Webb's success and the failure of the

117. Ibid; Minutes, National Executive, Social Democratic Party, 7 Jan. 11 March 1914.
strike he came to believe that militant socialists must actively pursue political success. He believed that palliative legislation was essential if revolutionary direct action was to be avoided, but at the same time he was anxious that the socialists maintain their beliefs undefiled, actively propagandist, in touch with international developments, and politically independent, particularly from any Liberal alliance. Essentially, this was the problem of extorting concessions from capitalism without losing sight of the ultimate objective and while still building a class conscious workers' party, a problem of securing workers' support for something few of them understood or wanted. The only practical solution was to enter politics with a reformist programme, and, after securing support for that, more gradually towards the social revolution, a process to be accomplished by education. This solution was not intended as a deception. Militant socialists made no secret of their ultimate objective, which they were sure the workers would come to understand, and want. All depended on the transformative power of education. Before 1913, the mission of militant socialists to the workers was conducted on propagandist lines, basically, blunt assertion of the truth and inevitably of socialism, with little or any effort to make this message palatable or understandable to those who did not accept it. However, after the success of Webb, Holland adopted the position that the social revolution would be, ideally, an intellectual revolution, depending on widespread intellectual conviction. He hoped for "a greater intellectuality than the world has hitherto known," although New Zealand showed no sign of this development. This was an important change in emphasis from a position of testifying to the truth, to an endeavour to make that truth understandable and acceptable. In 1908 it had been Holland's complaint that the workers were "stupidly blind"; in 1913 he concluded that militant socialists must do more to make them see. The

121. E.g. L.S. 25 Nov. 1911.
122. These views are put forward in his reviews of Syndicalism and the Cooperative Commonwealth: How we shall bring about the Revolution by Emile Pataud and Emile Pouget. (M.W. 22 Aug. 1913) and of Phillip Snowden's Socialism and Syndicalism (M.W. 19 Sept. 1913).
124. I.S.R. 7 March 1908.
emphasis on education, connected with Webb's success and militant socialists' commitment to reformist political platforms, was Holland's answer to the problem of how a party with a reformist platform could achieve the social revolution. However, although a theory of transformation by education made a militant socialist party theoretically possible in the realm of practical politics, it remained to be seen if it was possible in practice. Besides, in his theory of education, Holland made the same assumption as he had done before in propaganda. He assumed that it was necessary only to place the facts before the public to ensure their understanding. Even if this were so, it was a theory which assumed that there was only one way of interpreting the facts. Holland did not consider the problems associated with his theory. What would happen if the educational process postulated did not take place? If it did not occur soon, were the socialists still to attempt to bring about the social revolution, and educate afterwards? Would the militant socialists' fight, in politics, for mere reforms, bring workers to an understanding of and desire for the social revolution? There can be little doubt that Holland's theory of intellectual revolution, however sincerely held, was adopted to fit circumstances. With Webb's election and reformist trends, the postulation of a process of widespread intellectual conversion supplied a link which made it unnecessary to question fundamentally either the ideal, or the reality, which it connected. Yet a certain duality remained. Holland was uncomfortable in the domain of practical politics and on questions of detail his views in 1913 were confused and often contradictory. Because of the vexing necessity to consider what were to them matters pertaining more to a capitalist society than the one they aspired to, those who thought like Holland, entered politics with reluctance and moved in two worlds, the ideal and the real.

Holland's thinking in 1913 was complicated by a strand of anarchism. While the trend towards political action was to be the way of the future, the

125. N.Z.W. 8 Nov. 1933.
failure of the strike and his trial for sedition elicited from Holland a reaction which belonged to his past. During the 1913 strike he claimed, as he had done at Broken Hill, that the attitude of "the exploiting class" might compel the workers to use physical force, and his declarations reflected the anarchist judgement of the rule of democracy, "the bludgeoning by those unspeakable governors whom majorities, drunk with power, impose on vanquished minorities." 128 Hollands reluctance to abandon industrial action for political, even after the 1913 strike defeat, was probably influenced by the anarchist preference for the economic field, and attacks in anarchist propaganda on socialist political action.129 His theory of education parallels the anarchist ideal:

"... the full expansion of man's faculties, the superior development of what is original in him, the greatest fruitfulness of intelligence, feeling and will." 130

Holland, too, shared something of the anarchist impulse, described by Emma Goldman:

"High strung, like a violin string; they weep and moan for life, so relentless, so cruel, so terribly inhuman. In a desperate moment the string breaks. Untuned ears hear nothing but discord. But those who feel the agonised cry understand its harmony; they hear in it the fulfilment of the most compelling moment of human nature." 131

Holland's refusal to accept what he saw as the dictates of capitalist society blazed out in a speech he delivered from the dock, before the Chief Justice, Sir Robert Stout, passed sentence on him for sedition in April 1914. Holland maintained that the reports on which the indictments were based were distorted and inaccurate.132 Explaining his reference to the threat of violence by police and military, he claimed that they had been instructed to shoot to kill, if called upon to fire on the strikers:

"It seemed to me that the Government in power had lost all control of its own passions and that in its bitter hatred of the workers it

would even order the bluejackets and soldiers to fire on the people ... the question then arises as to what extent a man must pay the penalty to class rule for the crime of possessing a conscience which impels him in such matters to the observance of what Thoreau calls the 'duty of civil disobedience.'" 133

Holland insisted that his advice to the military not to fire on strikers had not meant, as the prosecution had maintained, that they should not fire on someone else, but that they should not shoot at all. He went on to an indictment of the Massey Government and the economic system, declaring that the Government was the creature of the employers, and that strikes were inevitable under existing economic conditions. 134 He then attacked the law of sedition: 135

"In its orthodox interpretation sedition embraces all those practices, whether by word, deed, or writing which ... 'directly tend to excite discontent or dissatisfaction.' And the fact remains that no great change is possible until the people have become discontented." 136

Throughout his speech, Holland claimed that no sentence should be pronounced. He believed that he had been singled out for persecution, and ended on a defiant note:

"... I repeat that I have no apology to utter, no plea for mercy to make. I bow to the inevitable, conscious of the righteousness and strength of my own position; and

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever Gods there be
For my unconquerable soul." 137

In delivering sentence, Sir Robert Stout, a champion of labour claims in the 1870s, matched Holland's speech with a statement of his views on social order. He told Holland that he had failed to appreciate the virtues of peace and order, that he was an enemy of the people:

"The brotherhood of man does not mean a brotherhood of waterside workers only, but a brotherhood that includes all classes of the community, rich as well as poor ... Violence and disorder have come

133. Ibid. p.9.
134. Ibid. p.12. He quoted the annual production per worker at £564, the wages per worker at £99.
137. Ibid. p.14. The quotation is from W.E. Henley's Invictus.
in every case not from the rich classes, but from the working classes ... A man has the undisputed right to labour, not only the right but the duty to labour - the foundation of social life." 138

Holland was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment. Attempts were made by his associates to use this, with agitation for his release, to revive the labour movement, exhausted after strike defeat. 139 He was publicised as "Harry Holland, Martyr" 140 and his statement from the dock of principle and protest was lauded as heroic. But, apart from the influence of moderates who criticised Holland for "impossibilism and mock heroics," 141 defeat had been too profound for the old ferment to re-appear immediately.

Holland's initial experience in New Zealand was that of high hopes followed by crushing defeat. As in Australia, militant socialists had failed in an attempt to provide the labour movement with leadership towards socialist objectives, through industrial action. However, the context was a very different one, for there was no equivalent of the Australian Labor Party, and the result was the introduction of something new in the experience of militant socialists, a fruitful interaction with a moderate section of the labour movement. The outlook of this section was generally similar to that expressed in the Australian Labor Party, reformist, cautious, non-doctrinaire, its differences with militants centering on the issue of arbitration. It was this interaction, directed towards the attainment of a mutually beneficial unity, that exposed militant socialists to the influence of the play of circumstances, so that they were no longer able to stand apart from the political environment, but were slowly drawn into it. The circumstances of unity negotiations in 1913 led to the initial involvement of militant socialists in politics on the basis of a reformist platform. The circumstances of Webb's election in 1913 led to a further involvement which produced the first declaration that the socialists would work in politics to ensure the merger of Liberal and Reform parties, and led to Holland's enunciation of the theory of intellectual revolution, which provided an elastic link between reformist platform and the ideal of social revolution. The major lines of future development had been marked out

138. Ibid. p.16.
139. M.W. 29 April, 6, 27 May 1914.
140. M.W. 10 June 1914.
before the defeat of the 1913 strike. Failure at that time was not complete, for when the militants turned to politics they had already had some success on which to build.

Holland had remained in New Zealand because it seemed to offer better prospects both for himself and for the achievement of the social revolution. The defeat of industrial action produced in him a stock reaction of denunciation, protest and declaration of principles. On the other hand, his developing attitude to political success shows both ingenuity and adaptability in the face of a new situation. Both reactions, different as they were, sprang from the same hope for social revolution, both were founded, in his mind, on the same basic assumptions. As far as the prospect of a political future was concerned, success was a prime necessity, but could it be achieved on the terms on which militant socialists insisted?
Chapter 4.

WAR - CRISIS FOR CAPITALISM?

The reaction towards political action, which followed the industrial disturbances of 1913, took place during the 1914-18 war, in a situation which seemed to militant socialists to make their attainment of the leadership of the labour movement an urgent necessity. It is the argument of this chapter that the political activity of militant socialists was profoundly influenced by their appraisal of the war situation, which led them to believe that the collapse of capitalism, or at least, the electoral repudiation of capitalist political parties, was imminent. Believing that their chance would come soon, they were anxious, and prepared to compromise, to be in a position to take advantage of it. Thus their willingness to come to terms with the moderate section of the labour movement, in the 1914 elections, in the parliamentary alliance of 1915, and finally in the formation of the N.Z.L.P. in 1916, is explained as another device to secure labour movement unity, under militant socialist leadership, during what they believed was a situation of crisis for capitalism. The immediate stimulus to the formation of the N.Z.L.P. was, it is argued, the passage of a conscription measure which appeared to militant socialists to be a threat to their hopes, requiring prompt counter-organisation and consolidation of labour's forces. More generally, it is concluded that unity between moderates and militants was, due to the circumstances mentioned, achieved formally on moderate terms. As in 1913, the revolutionary hopes of militants were disappointed, and they were left to make the best of what remained, unity with the moderates.

Upon the outbreak of war, Holland, and those who shared his outlook, took up the position that the war would disintegrate capitalism, and that from the chaos militant socialists would build anew. ¹ This was a particular

Four of the Holland children, Harry, Leila, Cedric and Agnes in the backyard of their home in Brooklyn, Wellington, about 1915.
application of their belief that the social revolution was an inevitable historical development, but under war conditions, that revolution seemed so imminent as to make urgent the need for preparedness among the socialists. As well as the inevitability theory, militants had other grounds for expecting a crisis for capitalism. They held that the capitalist system engendered war, and that war revealed, for all to see, the "madness" of capitalism. When this was seen clearly, social revolution must ensue. Although militant socialists held that the basic cause of the war was economic, the struggle for markets; they also believed that the war was being used by capitalists as a device to suppress, and render powerless, the forces of international socialism. Holland concluded that the war occurred when it did because Germany was on the verge of social revolution, and to forestall this the German ruling classes had precipitated war. The belief that, according to Marxian predictions, Germany was on the verge of revolution, the prelude to world revolution, made militant socialists in New Zealand promptly turn to study their own position. In August 1914 they expected socialist revolution in Germany if the war did not stop, and they continued to believe this, throughout the war. Holland predicted, in October 1914, the "collapse of civilisation" due to war, and a "glorious opportunity" for militant socialists, when this occurred. Late in 1915, Fraser was still emphasising that the principal task for the socialist was to ensure that "our movement emerges from the present crisis as strong as possible." The practical lessons were obvious. When capitalism disintegrated, the workers, as a class, must be ready to take power. To do this, they must be organised, and before they could act internationally, Holland argued, they would have to

Mrs. Holland reading a book in the backyard of the Holland's home in Brooklyn, Wellington. A photograph taken about 1915 when Mrs. Holland was forty-seven.
link up nationally. This was the reasoning which led Holland and his like to make further moves towards developing an alliance with the moderate section of the labour movement. It was a matter for their initiative, and they were willing to temporise on doctrinal matters so that working class unity could be achieved, under their leadership, before capitalism collapsed. When this international collapse did not take place immediately, there were, as well, strong and related national reasons for continuing this policy. Holland claimed that the Reform Government's war-time policy would so incense the public that the next election would result in Reform's utter defeat. A labour group would become the government when this inevitable reaction occurred. Thus it was imperative that the workers be organised politically so that this reaction could take its logical course. It was a corollary of Holland's argument, that socialists' efforts should be directed towards encouraging an anti-labour coalition, to "drive the enemies of labour into one camp." This would clarify the class position, so that when the political reaction against Reform, as a capitalist party, took place, there would be no confusion, caused by the Liberal Party, as to which was the working class party and which the capitalist. If there was no coalition, the Liberals might benefit from the reaction to Reform, whereas in a coalition both parties would share the odium of capitalism's failure, and labour would benefit. It was for these reasons, and to preserve the working class party untainted, that militant socialists were insistent, after a brief and unprofitable dalliance with the Liberals in the 1914 election campaign, that the labour group remain independent.

In a war amnesty, Holland was released on 15 August after serving three months of his sentence. He was not happy with the circumstances of his liberation, associated in his mind with militarism, but he was satisfied that there had been no concession of principle. His imprisonment had

depressed him, and he poured out his feelings in lurid verse:

"... I have fainted on roads of disaster, and have watered their ways with my tears, and the rule of the robber, my master, has trampled and tortured my years. I have laboured in chains and languished in prisons for love of the Right; I have counted the years that I've anguished in gloom that was born of the Night ..." 17

Upon his release, the S.D.P. asked Holland to stand in the December general elections. At first he was undecided. "I don't know," he wrote to his friend Cocking. "I am not much enamoured of Parliamentary work & still I recognise the opportunity if one could speak from the floor of the House on straight Socialist lines." 18 In September he opened his campaign in Wellington North, held by the Attorney-General, A.L. Herdman. 19 Holland's decision to enter politics was the culmination of a gradual change that had been taking place in his mind since the 1913 industrial failure. It was, in effect, his practical acknowledgement that, in the circumstances, political action had greater possibilities than industrial. He entered a situation where, as the election of Webb and McCombs had shown, the possibility of election was not remote. Holland's previous political campaigns had taken place in situations where the prospect of success was much less real than it was in New Zealand in 1914. His awareness of this, and his hesitancy, indicate that despite industrial defeat he still viewed political action, as organised in the S.D.P., with misgivings. Important in influencing his decision was his desire, in expectation of capitalist collapse, to claim all possible positions of advantage for militant socialists, and his belief that a parliamentary position would give him a unique opportunity for declamation. It is interesting to note that Holland's 1914 campaign evidences a swift transition from his view of parliament as a "mighty platform", to whole-hearted political involvement.

The S.D.P. election campaign of 1914 was conducted under two major influences, the desire of men such as Holland to be prepared for the pacification of social unrest. Holland was not blind to the need for political action and was concerned with the possibility of revolution. He believed that the S.D.P. must be prepared for such an eventuality, and that parliamentary action could provide a basis for a more effective response. His decision to enter politics was therefore not only a personal choice, but also a strategic decision for the party. Holland's campaign was designed to increase the party's chances of success, and to demonstrate the party's ability to win elections. The campaign was successful, and Holland was elected to Parliament. He served as a Member of Parliament for the Wellington North electorate for the next six years.
collapse of capitalism, and a more widespread determination, among the labour movement, to oust the government which had crushed the 1913 strike. Early in 1914 the S.D.P. had declared its policy to be one of complete independence from any other political party or group. As the election campaign began, this was reversed, the S.D.P. pursuing an active policy of seeking co-operation with moderate labour organisations, and coming to a limited understanding with the Liberal Party. This reversal of policy may be ascribed directly to militant socialists' interpretation of the war. Co-operation with the moderates was, as far as the militants were concerned, the product of a belief in the imperative need for unity in the face of the impending collapse of capitalism. Co-operation may be interpreted also as prompted by convenience, particularly in view of the wish to defeat Reform, and there can be no doubt that this consideration was an important factor. It is seen more clearly in relation to the understanding with the Liberal Party, an arrangement in which the S.D.P. impulse seems to have been determination to wreak vengeance on the government which had crushed the 1913 strike. This non-doctrinaire conclusion is supported by the fact of Holland's forthright opposition to any arrangement with the Liberals, but it is also true that while an S.D.P. majority was strongly in favour of an arrangement, they were equally insistent that it should be for once only, a position which may indicate either a determination to defeat Reform, or a willingness to waive principle, in a war crisis situation, to advance the militant socialist cause.

The S.D.P. nominated nine candidates. Non-militant socialist Labour Representation Committees, particularly in Wellington and Dunedin, nominated six candidates, and two others claimed to represent labour. Although some of the L.R.C. candidates had been prominent critics of the activities of the militants, Holland insisted in the Worker that the S.D.P. must co-operate

VOTE FOR
HOLLAND AND LABOUR
THE PEOPLE'S FOOD

"Reform" Speeding to Save the People from the Food Rings.

THE TORY METHOD
AND THE
LABOUR METHOD

How the Tories Made the Workers PAY PAY PAY PAY

No sooner were the first rumours of war heard in August last than the Merchants' Ring started to raise the cost of the people's food. It is, unfortunately, terribly true that we have in our country people who, instead of sharing the burden with the rest of

An example of Holland's S.D.P. leaflet propaganda in the 1914 election campaign.
with L.R.Gs. His suggestion that differences could be ironed out after
labour's success, emphasises the militant socialists' belief that labour
unity and success was an urgent need in a crisis situation, and that they
viewed co-operation as an expedient, dictated by circumstances. Co-operation
was achieved in some areas; and not in others, but militant socialists and
moderate labour candidates nowhere opposed each other as they had in 1911.
Holland's own campaign, directed largely against war profiteering, was
remarkable for its moderation, which reached the stage of abandonment of
his former canons when he announced that the N.S.W. Labor Government "stood
for the people." Despite his contempt for Liberal votes in 1913, when
Webb contested Grey, Holland's own propaganda sought to attract such votes; and he even implied that his ideal was a revived Liberalism. Similar
tendencies were a feature of the whole S.D.P. campaign which was denunciatory
in a general, rather than a strictly socialist manner, with little exposition
of positive policy. This showed the preference of militant socialists for
destructive attack and their awareness that if they urgently wanted co-
operation with non-socialist labour, it was prudent to neglect divisive
theoretical issues and emphasise common grievances.

The temporary and partial revival of the Liberal-Labour alliance which
occurred during the campaign, was based on a common hostility to Reform. A degree of rapprochement was justified by mild Liberal criticism of the
Government's actions during the 1913 strike, but the decisive factors
were labour's determination to revenge the 1913 defeat, and a particular
desire, among the militants to do as well as possible in the elections and

27. M.W. 4 Nov. 1911.
29. Vote for Holland and Labour. The People's Food. Wellington 1914. (Leaflets
1914 Election N.Z.L.P.)
30. Ibid.
32. See, for example Do You Know? Leaflet issued by P.Fraser Wellington,1914.
and Election leaflet, Wellington North, 1914. (Leaflets 1914 Election)
33. Paddock."Labour as a Force" op.cit. p.38; Shannon. "The Decline and Fall
of the Liberal Government" pp.192-240.
(Reform Party Leaflet)Wellington 1914(Leaflets 1914); N.Z.P.D. 1914, V.171,
pp.742-7 (Webb) 753-4 (Payne) 758-763(Wilford).
to avoid S.D.P. losses through vote-splitting. Sir Joseph Ward, who led the Liberal Party, was also most anxious that "the progressive vote" be not split. In return for similar concessions, the S.D.P. agreed not to contest Wellington Central or Buller, but Holland refused to leave Wellington North to the Liberals. The Reform Party made special propaganda efforts to combat the "Wardite-Red. Fed. Alliance." The Reform policy promised "common-sense government," and the Liberal policy, something similar. Reform, by allegations that the S.D.P. and U.F.L. were controlled from Germany, attempted to turn patriotic sentiment against labour and by association, against the Liberals.

Immediately after the general election in December, it appeared that the Government, and the Liberal-Labour opposition, had won an equal number of seats. Although later returns changed the position in favour of Reform, Reform supporters, expecting a sweeping victory, were dismayed with what they took to be a set-back for the Government. They overlooked the fact that the electoral system had disguised an increase of a third in the total Reform vote. This substantial increase was largely due to a sharp decrease in the number of independent candidates, and the transference of independent support to Reform, as well as to substantial increases in Reform majorities.

Much of Reform's increased support may be ascribed to the 1913 strike as an

38. Safety and Progress. The Reform Policy. Manifesto by the Prime Minister Reprinted from The Dominion, 7 Nov. 1914 (Leaflets 1914); Reform and Liberal platforms are reviewed in detail in Round Table Vol.V, No.18, March 1915, pp.497-505.
40. Final party strengths were Reform 41, Liberal 32, and Labour 6.
42. From 35% of the total vote in 1911, to 47% in 1914. Leslie Lipson. The Politics of Equality. Chicago 1948, Table 14, p.206.
election issue. Right-wing Liberals, distrusting their party's association with the "Red Feds", turned to Reform, but the Liberal-Labour understanding which forced radical Liberals to stay where they were, prevented the defection of the left wing of Liberal support to Labour until after the war.

Reform supporters were under the impression that Labour had achieved considerable success. As the Labour vote had remained almost static, and Labour had merely maintained its previous parliamentary strength of six, this appears to be the reaction of those who expected Labour to be utterly vanquished. However, the character of the Labour vote had changed. In 1911 18% of Labour votes cast, were for declared socialists, but in 1914 such candidates polled 43% of the Labour vote. Although this has to be considered in the light of co-operation between moderates and militants, and may be connected with accidental factors such as personal following and selection of electorates, nevertheless it appears that, far from discrediting the S.D.P.'s association with the 1913 strike and "revolutionary syndicalism" recommended that party to Labour voters.

Holland, who finished at the bottom of the poll in Wellington North, welcomed the election result, maintaining that if there had been proportional representation, the government would have been defeated. The lessons he took from the election were that the unity of Labour was essential and that its object must be to bring about a Liberal-Reform coalition. The immediate

47. Labour vote 1911, 48,671, 1912, 49,5777. J.T. Paul Humanism in Politics Appendix E. p.177. The 1911 representatives were Veitch, Payne, Hindmarsh and Robertson. Webb and McCombs were elected in 1913. All these, except Robertson, were returned in 1914, and A.Walker was elected also.
48. Seven of the 24 Labour candidates in 1911 stood as socialists, polling 9,002 (first ballot) votes of the 48,671 votes cast for Labour candidates. Nine of the 18 Labour candidates in 1914 were socialists and they polled 21,329 of the 47,577 votes. Though the socialism of 1914 was perhaps milder in approach to that of 1911, having affiliations with both moderate Labour and the Liberals, it had accumulated revolutionary connotations in 1913 so its relative appeal to the average Labour voter in 1911 and in 1914 may be roughly compared.
49. This has been maintained by B.M.Brown "The New Zealand Labour Party 1916-1935" M.A. Thesis Wellington 1955, p.28 and Hunt "Labour Party 1913 to 1919" p.36.
post-election action of labour representatives was to support Ward. Holland professed to see the virtue of this, arguing that if Ward came to power, as was then conceivable, if most improbable, he would be at the mercy of labour.\textsuperscript{52} As soon as this possibility vanished, Holland turned promptly to advocating labour independence. While he was not adverse to exploiting the Liberal Party for militant socialist purposes, if this could be done, he saw clearly that if labour was unable to force a coalition, the Liberals would probably reap the benefit of any reaction against Reform.\textsuperscript{53}

Experience of co-operation in the 1914 elections reduced the constraint between militant socialist and non-socialist sections of the labour movement as the local body elections in May 1915 showed.\textsuperscript{54} A similar rapprochement was occurring in the trade union sphere, where the U.F.L. sought a policy acceptable to the majority of the workers, a change of heart welcomed by moderate unions, disturbed by labour's post-strike disunity.\textsuperscript{55} However, the industrial movement was still weak, and most interest was centered on labour's political representatives. Early in July 1915, just after the new parliament met, the S.D.P. and L.R.C. members agreed to act in unison, in matters of working class importance, under the chairmanship of A.H. Hindmarsh, forming a parliamentary labour group or party. To Holland this step seemed long overdue, and he advocated complete independence as a group policy.\textsuperscript{56}

No detailed evidence is available on what discussions immediately preceded this development, but it is certain that it was prior knowledge of an impending Reform-Liberal coalition which led to the meeting at which united action was agreed on.\textsuperscript{57} This reaction suggests at least tacit acceptance by the labour group of the political lines of class division which militant socialists advocated. Agreement to act in unison was rooted in a developing alliance since the 1913 Unity Congress, and especially in the appearance, in 1915, of economic grievances, the rising cost of living.

\textsuperscript{52} M.W. 23 Dec. 1914.
\textsuperscript{53} M.W. 4 Aug. 1915.
\textsuperscript{54} \textit{Otago Daily Times}, 1, 8 May 1915 (J.T.Paul); M.W. 5 May 1915.
\textsuperscript{55} Stone "Trade Unionism" pp.21-22; Hunt "Labour Party 1913-1919" pp.41-42.
\textsuperscript{56} M.W. 14, 21 July 1915.
\textsuperscript{57} \textit{Otago Witness} 7 July 1915.
and profiteering, on which the labour movement was united in protest. Perhaps to some extent as a deliberate policy, the major concern of militant socialists in 1915 was the rising cost of living and the appearance of profiteering, and in this they were acting as a vanguard for the rest of the labour movement. As well as this influence towards unity, the fact that both S.D.P. and L.R.C. politicians were not extremists in their own camps was a personal factor which no doubt made for harmony. The immediate stimulus to the agreement was the prospect of coalition, making it obvious that the basic wish of both moderates and militants was to retain independence and grow in strength. From a moderate non-socialist viewpoint it was hoped that by becoming virtually the opposition, the labour group would become a political force, preserving a nucleus for a party, and it would demonstrate by its trenchant criticism the value of labour representation in parliament. Men such as Holland viewed the development as a clarification of the political terms of the class struggle.

However, the National Cabinet formed on 4 August was far from the merger of capitalist political forces which Holland desired. Ward made it clear that the parties would retain their independence outside the passage of war measures. The labour group refused a seat in the cabinet, a decision which confirms the argument that the basic impulse behind the agreement on unity was the desire for independence. The refusal aroused considerable controversy. While labour's critics maintained that it was a shirking of responsibility and tainted with disloyalty, labour opinion was uncertain or divided. Holland debated the matter with John Payne, an independent labour parliamentarian. The debate attracted widespread interest in labour circles.

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59. The first debate in 1915 in which the labour group participated was on food prices and profiteering N.Z.P.D. 1915, V.172,pp.138-141 (Hindmarsh) 151-5 (Webb) 162-6 (McCombs).
64. Payne did not join the labour group in the House.
for as Payne remarked, the question went "right to the root of the question of a Labour Party." Payne argued that labour must convince "the whole mass of the people", seeking practical benefits, and co-operating with the next most progressive party. Acceptance of a portfolio would show labour's concern for national well-being. Payne declared:

"I want to see the Labour Party in power, and we will have to make use of all the same political trickery and treachery to get Massey and Co. down as they have used to keep us down ... let us drop talking big about the purity of our motives etc." 67

This remark alarmed Holland, for it aroused his fear that the contagion of capitalist politics might destroy his cherished ideals. He retorted:

"... if I thought that, when Labour achieved political power it would resort to trickery and corruption of the old political parties, then I would not hesitate to say it would be better for Labour to commit suicide ... Labour fights for something grander and higher and better than anything the Massey-Ward Party can ever fight for." 68

It is indicative of a significant difference in cast of mind that whereas Payne spoke about the methods by which Labour might attain power, Holland's reply referred to Labour in power. Convinced that, through capitalism's failure, Labour would have its opportunity soon, Holland's major concern was that it should be prepared to exercise that power properly, to bring about the social revolution. Holland denounced the National Cabinet and "class rule", and argued that now Liberals and Reform were in one camp, Labour's task was to keep them there. By this time he had confirmed his faith in education to bring about Social Democracy, the next stage in human history. Early in 1915, when Australian organisers of the Workers Educational Association formed classes in New Zealand, Holland and other Labour leaders, such as Fraser and W. Nash, became enthusiastic members of W.E.A. economics classes. Holland believed that the social revolution would be

66. Ibid. pp.3-4.
67. Ibid. p.3.
68. Ibid. p.6.
69. Ibid. p.10.
72. M.W. 24 Feb. 1915; Holland kept cuttings from the Worker of reports of lectures from May to September 1915 in two exercise books. Workers Education Association. Lectures 1 and 2. (H.P.)
achieved "by means of education and greater working-class knowledge, leading to completer industrial and political organisation." 73

No sooner had common parliamentary action been agreed on by Labour members than the issue of conscription became a dominant one in politics. As in Australia, militant socialists in New Zealand had been actively anti-militarist since the enactment in 1909 and 1910 of a training scheme similar to the Australian 74; and Holland had become involved in this agitation upon his arrival in 1912. 75 The outbreak of war found workers divided into a great majority who accepted the war as righteous, and a dissident minority of militant socialists. 76 Initially, this minority, expecting capitalist collapse, and wishing to make political progress, tended to keep its views to itself. Not until the government introduced the National Registration Bill in August 1915 did it begin intensive propaganda against the generally accepted attitude to the war. This Bill, which enforced a manpower census, convinced Holland, and other militant socialists, that conscription was imminent. 77 To their former reasons for hostility to conscription, belief in imminent capitalist collapse added another. They believed that organised socialism must emerge strong from the war. Conscription would hinder this, so it must be fought. 78 A large section of the labour movement felt that conscription of men without conscription of wealth imposed the burden of the war on labour. It was in these non-doctrinaire terms, plus the arguments that military conscription was a prelude to industrial conscription and that better wages and pensions would make the voluntary system successful, that militant socialists took vanguard action, in parliament, 79 in the Worker through Holland, 80 and in the calling, by the U.F.L. of a no-conscription

73. Labour and the Fusion, p.10.
75. I.S. 10 Aug. 1912.
76. M.W. 5, 19 Aug. 1914; Allan Holland to Stella Holland 9 Aug. 1914 (H.P.)
union conference. Secure in public support, the Government introduced a Military Service Bill in May 1916, which, after spirited opposition by militant socialists, was passed in August.

The failure of the labour movement's attempt, prompted and led by militant socialists, to prevent the enactment of conscription, was the immediate stimulus to the formation of the New Zealand Labour Party. Immediately following the passage of the Military Service Bill by the House of Representatives, a joint conference of delegates representing the United Federation of Labor, Social Democratic Party and Labour Representation Committees, together with J.T. Paul M.L.C. and the parliamentarians McCombs, Hindmarsh, Webb and Walker, met in Wellington on July 7 and 8 to discuss the political situation. They agreed that the time was opportune for consolidating the political forces of labour into a New Zealand Labour Party, a constitution and platform were adopted, and officers and committee elected.

Holland's first reaction, on seeing the approach of conscription in August 1915, was to call on the labour movement for industrial and political action against it. As conscription came nearer to becoming an established fact, this attitude was intensified. Holland opposed conscription for many reasons, but the basic one was that he believed it induced workers to class treachery and maintained capitalist supremacy. Holding that "New Zealand stands confronted with a more terrible danger than has ever previously menaced its culture and its civilisation", Holland announced that if "the evil is forced on us, the fact will help to link up our organisations, stiffen our moral fibre, set our collective teeth." The N.Z.L.P. was formed with Holland believing that its essence was opposition to conscription

85. See Appendix 7.
89. M.W. 7 June 1916.
and that its first task was to secure the repeal of the Military Service Bill. In view of their belief in an impending crisis for capitalism, those who shared Holland's convictions, saw the role of the N.Z.L.P. as being "to organise the Workers politically and be prepared for any emergency that may arise." Complementing this argument that militant socialists sought the formation of the N.Z.L.P. for an essentially social revolutionary and class war purpose, is evidence that the S.D.P. had thoroughly planned that formation. What is known of the conference proceedings suggests that agreement on the platform and constitution had been achieved beforehand. The initial move towards Labour Party formation came from the S.D.P. Advisory Committee, of which Holland was a member. In May 1916, this committee recommended that the S.D.P. change its name to the New Zealand Labour Party, in order to attract wider support. Later in the same month, it was resolved to approach the Labour Representation Committees, asking them to combine into a New Zealand Labour Party to which unions might affiliate. The day before the joint conference, the S.D.P. executive resolved that a copy of the N.Z.L.P. platform be forwarded to branches with a letter recommending them to affiliate to that party, an action which indicates that the S.D.P. possessed copies of the platform and was confident that the conference of the following day would adopt it. Another factor, which harmonises with the theory of planning by the S.D.P. was the decline in power and popular appeal of militant socialist organisations. Industrially, this decline reached its nadir in November 1915, when the miners' unions, the backbone of militancy, withdrew from the U.F.L. As an instrument for expressing the initiative of the

92. Brown "Labour Party 1916-1935" op.cit. p.23 suggests that the joint conference "... simply registered the fact that a situation now existed in the labour movement when no barrier to political unity existed and unity was desirable." This estimate neglects the probability of positive S.D.P. planning.
militants in the labour movement, the U.F.L. was no longer effective. Similarly the S.D.P. was weak and disorganised and remote from the main body of the labour movement. In this situation, militant socialists turned to co-operation with the moderates, the effectiveness of which had been demonstrated already by the parliamentary labour group.

The N.Z.L.P. constitution and platform summed up the previous political endeavours of the labour movement. The platform was an amalgam of those of the S.D.P. and U.L.P. which were markedly similar. The S.D.P. carried over its socialisation objective, but the moderates secured recognition of arbitration. The constitution based on the existing L.R.Cs, envisaged them on lines similar to those of S.D.P. district councils. While the Labour Party represented common agreement, differences, and fundamental divergencies, of opinion and emphasis remained, but were now contained within the party. Although the militants had conceded the arbitration issue, which they had held formerly as all-important, they retained the socialisation objective, and even, as an alter ego, the S.D.P. which retained its existence until 1922. They also controlled the new party, for of the thirteen members of the first executive, eleven professed socialist convictions. They were, therefore, in a strong position to attempt to determine the direction which the new party would take,

Holland had been a strong advocate of united action against conscription and was one of those instrumental in bringing about the formation of the N.Z.L.P. With its formation, he claimed for political action just those virtues which he had formerly attributed to industrial action:

"The political movement must always be the more revolutionary wing of the labor movement. For the reason that the industrial movement is more often than not wholly (and unavoidably) engaged in fighting for palliatives. It is more easily possible for the political movement

96. It may be significant that the chairman of the Joint Conference which set up the N.Z.L.P. was J.Dowgray, President of the U.F.L.
98. Previous writers (Brown "Labour Party 1916-1935" p.30 and Hunt "Labour Party 1913-1919" have emphasised the similarity of the N.Z.L.P. platform to that of the S.D.P. but do not seem to have appreciated its close similarity to that of the U.L.P. also.
99. Holland to Cocking, 18 June 1918 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
100. Minutes, Wellington Branch, Social Democratic Party. 1 June 1922 (N.Z.L.P.)
to fight for complete emancipation." 101

Thus theory was adjusted to conform with practice, and Holland reversed the position he had espoused in 1913. However, the formation of the N.Z.L.P. did not assist militant socialists in their immediate object, to bring about the repeal of conscription. Late in 1916, under the stimulus of the Australian referendum, the anti-conscription movement took a new lease of life, with Holland prominent in the revival.102 The majority of the labour movement had come to accept conscription as established, and protest came, almost exclusively, from the militant minority. The imprisonment for sedition of R.Semple, P.Fraser, T.Brindle, J.Thorn and F.R.Cooke,103 deprived the anti-conscription agitation of its leadership.

The N.Z.L.P. opened its activity inauspiciously with a poor showing in the Pahiatua by-election of August 1916,104 and a similar performance in the 1917 municipal elections. These elections took place in a hostile atmosphere generated by anti-conscription agitation expressed in a "go-slow" policy on the wharves and a coal miners' strike.105 The charges of disloyalty levelled at the Labour Party at this time reflect that aspect of the party's origin which was openly anti-conscriptionist and anti-war, for as Holland had said, "Every Socialist is a disloyalist."107 However, the July 1917 N.Z.L.P. conference seems to have been conducted by the moderates, with little interference from the socialists. The conference adopted measures to improve party organisation and propaganda, so as to secure unity of "the democratic forces." To prevent wastage of energy and resources, the executive had drawn up a list of electorates which offered prospects of party success. The conference also adopted peace proposals endorsing the Peace Statement of the 1917 conference of the N.S.W. Labor Party.108 The proceedings of the conference

106. Foul Work. A Conspiracy to Brand New Zealand with Dishonour. (Anonymous
and undated. prob.1917); 'Go-Slow' Policy in Mines. Wellington 1917
(published according to Holland, by the Employers' Federation - see
annotation on Holland Collection copy).
give the impression that militant socialists, so as not to disturb the basis of unity, refrained from pressing for anything which the moderates might resist, and intervened only on such occasions as when the moderates attempted to delete the anti-conscription plank.

The conference also considered the controversial liquor question. Because of the National Efficiency Board's recommendation that parliament abolish the liquor trade, this was a live issue in 1917. Most labour leaders, like Holland, favoured prohibition, believing that workers put up with a lot under the influence of beer, but they appreciated the divisive nature of the question and sought to eschew it. Besides, from the militant socialist viewpoint, it was marginal to class issues. At the 1917 N.Z.L.P. conference the question was introduced in a measure for state ownership, and after much debate, Holland secured the acceptance of a compromise standpoint, "That the question of State control be placed on the ballot paper when the referendum is taken on the liquor question." This preserved the referenda machinery, in which the Labour Party had great faith, as well as recognising the view of those who did not want prohibition, but thought the brewing industry capitalistic. The plank was deleted in 1920. Its adoption was interpreted by McCombs, a prominent prohibitionist, as implicit support for the liquor trade, and he resigned from the party, an action which led to a tart exchange between Holland and McCombs on the question of whether or not any other consideration could override "class" allegiance. Holland's reaction on this occasion reveals that he considered the Labour Party to be above all else a "class" party, with all that implied. The bitterness of his attack on McCombs suggests that he believed that this "class" essence was being neglected. Unwilling to concede that McCombs could place prohibition above "class", Holland asserted that McCombs had made a "stereotyped, bourgeoistic sneer at the ideals of labour and socialism." After-

109. For treatment of this as a public issue see Edith Mary Thornton "A History of the Prohibition Movement in New Zealand" M.A. Thesis Canterbury 1936.
Holland, about the time of the Wellington North by-election in 1913, in the backyard of his home in Brooklyn. He is wearing the life membership medal of the Sydney Coal Lumpers' Union.
wards, personal relations between Holland and McCombs remained strained, though McCombs rejoined the party in 1918.

The N.Z.L.P. executive warned the 1917 conference against "a disposition to be impatient that immediate results are not greater," pointing out that success was the outcome of systematic work.\(^{115}\) Holland and his like waited impatiently for signs of the collapse of capitalism, or for a public reaction against its political representatives, at the same time finding irksome the restraints which unity with the moderates forced on them. In Holland's case this impatience was evidenced in growing restlessness in the later months of 1917. Australia attracted him continually. There he could be rid of the constant problems occasioned for him as a militant socialist, by unity with the moderates and increasing involvement in the political environment. He failed to persuade R.S. Ross to take the editorship of the Worker while he went on a lecture tour of Australia and New Zealand. Nevertheless, he planned to return to Sydney permanently, in a couple of years.\(^{116}\) It was in this unsettled mood that Holland accepted, in December 1917, the N.Z.L.P. candidature for Wellington North,\(^{117}\) "stronghold of Reaction and Respectability." The spectacular campaign which followed, satisfied Holland's urge to express his opinions vehemently, and to experience the, to him, invigorating clash of "class" antagonisms. The Wellington North election and the Grey campaign that followed it showed clearly that Holland was not interested, at that time, in the detailed positive policy of the N.Z.L.P., but saw these contests as opportunities for the expression of "class" conflict, tests of strength, encouraged by impassioned denunciatory orations by Holland. His strident attacks on the Government were also prompted by what he took to be signs of the approaching disintegration of capitalism, revolution in Russia and a strike wave in Germany. Holland's expression of protest, much of it on grievances such as war profiteering, the cost of living, and taxation, shared by the whole labour movement, was greatly magnified in public importance by the extraordinarily violent reaction to his attack from the Government and its supporters. This confirmed Holland in his class war analysis, as well

\(^{115}\) N.Z.L.P. Conf. 1917, p.3.
\(^{116}\) Holland to Ross, 16 Sept. 16 Oct. 1917; Ross to Holland 26 Sept. 1917 (Ross Papers).
\(^{117}\) M.W. 12 Dec. 1917.
\(^{118}\) M.W. 27 Feb. 1918.
as making him a symbol of labour protest, praised and execrated throughout the land.

When the Reform member for Wellington North, A.L. Herdman, retired, Massey and Ward put forward J.P. Luke, then Mayor of Wellington, as their by-election candidate. A group of electors, resenting the dictation of the party leaders, produced another "government" candidate, A. deB. Brandon. Alarmed by the prospect of a split vote, Government supporters made unsuccessful attempts to induce Brandon to withdraw. Their main efforts were directed against Holland, who opened his campaign in February 1918 in the reflected atmosphere of European uncertainty - Russian revolution, strikes in Germany, and in March, a new German offensive. Giving the Labour Party platform cursory treatment, Holland chose to fight his campaign on criticism of the Government's war-time policy, particularly conscription. In reply to Holland's attack on that policy - on conscription, war-time regulations, soldiers' pay, treatment of conscientious objectors, failure to keep down the cost of living, tolerance of profiteering, financing the war with loans - Massey asserted that support of Holland would be treachery to soldiers at the front, and attempted to frighten electors:

"We have the same influences at work in New Zealand, though of course in a much smaller way, which led up to the present deplorable state of things in Russia; the same influences which induced the electors in Australia to turn down the recent conscription proposals; the same influences which encouraged disaffection in Ireland and sedition in India and which even in Wellington North have given indication of their presence at this election - influences which, if they were sufficiently powerful would wreck the Empire." 123

At Holland's meetings questioners attempted to force him into admitting disloyalty. The Dominion described him as:

"a fluent speaker with every trick of the experienced platform advocate ... astute enough to serve up the extreme and often extravagant doctrines of the Socialist fraternity in the form least likely to shock the susceptibilities of the electors whose support he is seeking." 125

119. Dominion 5, 6 Feb. 1918.
120. Ibid. 19 Feb. 1918; M.W. 27 Feb. 1918.
121. M.W. 13 Feb. 1918; One Reason Why You should Vote Labour, N.Z.L.P. Leaflet No. 6 1918; Rent and Housing, N.Z.L.P. Leaflet No. 9 1918; Remember, N.Z.L.P. Leaflet 1918 (N.Z.I.P.)
125. Dom. 23 Feb. 1918.
A vote for **HOLLAND** (the Labor Candidate) is a vote for Political Freedom.

A vote for either of the Government Candidates is a vote for **autocracy** and **crushing taxation**, —a vote for **secret diplomacy**.

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REMEMBER! The Polling Day is Thursday, February 28

The Winning Candidate is the Labor Candidate: **H. E. HOLLAND**

One of the leaflets distributed by the N.Z.L.P. during Holland's Wellington North by-election campaign.
Such was the insistence of the attack, that Holland was forced to deny that he was pro-German, and to assert that the Wellington North by-election had no bearing on the outcome of the war. As polling day approached, invective against Holland became more lurid and bitter. In the Dominion, he was made the butt of a tirade in doggerel, couched in the appearance of working class illiteracy:

"This Mister 'Arry 'Olland - 'e -
Some 'ow 'e don't appeal to me
'E's 'ighly intellectual - but -
Seems there is maggots in 'is nut.
'E slings 'is talk tremendous slick -
But then its all pure Bolshevik." 127

Massey predicted that the Empire would suffer the fate of Russia, if Holland was elected. With this absurdity uttered by the Prime Minister, the villification of Holland reached its fantastic height. He was a Bolshevik revolution in himself.

The extraordinary outburst of anti-Holland propaganda, associated with the Wellington North campaign and the Grey campaign which followed it, is attributable to apprehension engendered by revolution in Russia. This was greeted in England and America with horror and apprehension, a reaction faithfully mirrored in New Zealand. Accepting the existing social and economic order as the only possible, Massey was gravely disquieted at any attempt to alter it radically, and saw it as his personal duty to oppose Holland. In Wellington North, the Government candidate, Luke, faded into relative insignificance, and the contest became one between Massey and Holland, a spectacle which aroused interest throughout the country, giving Holland an unique advertisement. The Prime Ministers' failure to convince electors of the reality of the revolutionary menace is indicated by the sharp drop in Reform support, and by the fact that over a thousand fewer electors than in 1914, bothered to vote. This, and the increase in Labour support seemed to indicate that the Government was unpopular and that an increasing number of voters saw some truth and justice in Labour's attack.

Holland increased his 1914 vote by nearly a thousand, but J.P.Luke

The Prime Minister, W.F. Massey thumbs his nose at the Wellington North election night crowd. This cartoon first appeared in the Maoriland Worker 6 March 1913, and was used as Labour propaganda in the 1919 election campaign.
won the seat with a majority of over four hundred. The scene at the declaration of the poll on 28 February was a remarkable one. A huge crowd which gathered in front of the voting result board on the Evening Post building, refused to hear Luke, and when the Prime Minister appeared, there was even greater uproar. Massey thumbed his nose at the crowd, to their astonishment and indignation, and withdrew. Holland was heard quietly, and as the Dominion put it, with "smug egoism characteristic of demagogues of his type, boasted of lifting the fight to an intellectual plane." Luke's narrow victory dismayed Reform supporters. The Dominion attributed it to the unpopularity of all war-time governments. The Otago Daily Times analysed Holland's vote as made up of 1,500 socialists, several hundred supporters of the liquor trade, several hundred men crowded into boarding houses to comply with the one month's residence voting qualification, and a few cowards. Testing the truth of the boarding house vote allegation is beyond the scope of this study, and the effect of the liquor issue does not appear to have benefited any one candidate. Another incalculable is the civil service vote, which Holland wooed with promises of salary increases. The Worker, assuming that this approach had failed, ascribed its failure to the innate snobbery of civil servants, and the Government's declaration of a civil service bonus.

From a Labour Party viewpoint the campaign was an outstanding success. Holland was elated, re-capturing some of his former buoyant confidence. With some justification, he believed that the vote he had polled had alarmed the Government. Interpreting the election campaign from the viewpoint of a militant socialist, he held that it had shown and fostered labour solidarity, and that, being a straight-out contest against the combined capitalist parties, it was "undoubtedly the greatest battle fought by Labour in New

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130. N.Z. Times 1 March 1918; Dom. 1 March 1918.
131. M.W. 6 March 1918.
132. Dom. 1 March 1918.
133. O.D.T. 1 March 1918.
134. It would require a study of electoral registrations and the rolls used.
135. M.W. 6 March 1918.
137. M.W. 6 March 1918.
138. M.W. 6, 13 March 1918.
139. M.W. 6 March 1913; Holland to Cooking 18 June 1918 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
Holland claimed that "All the logic, all the facts, all the ethics were on our side", and that education was all that was needed to win the seat. With this in mind he had set out to make his campaign speeches carefully prepared lectures. The Wellington North campaign created wide interest in labour circles and beyond. J.T. Paul reported from Dunedin that many people were interested, for the first time in labour politics, and that the party had gained new adherents from "unexpected quarters" simply because it had put up a constructive policy and conducted a clean fight. The campaign was still being discussed when P.C. Webb, Labour member for Grey, was imprisoned for refusing to render military service. Webb's seat was declared vacant and Holland was selected as candidate on the understanding that he would resign the seat when Webb was eligible for re-election. Holland was delighted with this, for Grey was a fairly safe Labour seat. He believed that "there was a unanimous demand that I should accept the candidature", but there had been a suggestion that Mark Fagan, a miner as was Webb, should be the candidate. Peter Fraser was appointed campaign organiser in what was to be a national Labour effort.

In view of what had happened in Wellington North, the Government reversed its tactics and avoided public involvement in the campaign. T.E. Coates was persuaded to stand as a non-party candidate, but Labour supporters had no doubts that the Government was actively aiding him. Holland opened his campaign in May, endeavouring to capitalise on the strong pro-Webb sentiment in the electorate. As in Wellington North he attacked conscription, wartime regulations and rising prices, and again he was subjected to a torrent of criticism and abuse. He was denounced in newspapers by editors, correspondents and an anonymous advertiser as an irresponsible fanatic, a flagrant

140. Holland to Cocking op.cit. ; Also M.W. 13 March 1918.
141. M.W. 13 March 1918.
142. O.D.T. 16 March 1918 (Paul); M.W. 20 March 1918.
143. M.W. 17 April 1918.
144. Holland to Cocking op.cit.
145. This suggestion was not made public. Fagan was president of the Reefton Miners' Union. Minutes, Grey L.R.C. (Westland L.R.C. Greymouth).
146. M.W. 24 April 1918; Minutes, Greymouth L.P. 19 April 1918; Minutes, Grey L.R.C. 27, 29 April 1918.
147. Grey River Argus 4, 13 May 1918; Greymouth Evening Star 27 May 1918.
disloyalist, a political reject, barren of constructive ideas, not a West Coaster, one of a band of place hunters, and as sympathetic to Bolshevism. Attempts to discredit Holland came to a head at a meeting Holland addressed at Reefton, where he found that Government supporters were offering wagers that he would be arrested before polling day. A questioner asked:

"Will the candidate frankly state his attitude towards, and personal opinion of the present war? Does the candidate desire a victory for the Allies and the breaking of the military power of Germany? If he does not desire the victory of the Allies, will he discuss the alternatives thereto, and indicate what course he would recommend to be pursued? Does the candidate believe that the Allies could abandon conscription at this time and defeat a conscripted Germany? Will the candidate affirm it as his opinion that the recent upheaval in Russia has been substantially successful in bringing people in that country nearer to an era of brotherhood."  

Believing that he was being trapped into a breach of the War Regulations, Holland refused to answer. His refusal, together with an uncomplimentary account of the Reefton meeting, was publicised as evidence of his treachery and cowardice, to the discomfort of the Labour Party.

In the last week of his campaign, Holland had the assistance of the Hon. J.T. Paul, A.Walker M.P. and E.J.Howard, as well as Peter Fraser, the campaign organiser. Perhaps the austere Holland was not completely in harmony with his West Coast audiences, nurtured on bluff geniality, for his pleasantries were less happy than usual. Excellent platform speaker though he was, he would click his fingers nervously behind his back as he wanted to begin his address, and he was easily distracted and annoyed by interruptions during his speeches. Holland's election eve address was devoted in great part to contrasting the Ballance-Seddon policy with that of the Massey-Ward government. His anonymous opponents relied on scurrilous doggerel:

"Then to Hell with Mr. Holland and all his tainted crew. Are we white-livered traitors or are we living men That we tolerate such creatures loathsome? No! put them in the pen Cleanse New Zealand's scutcheon from all such dirty blots.

150. G.E.S. 6,8,13,15,16,21,28 May 1913; G.R.A. 8,13,15,16,17 May 1918.
152. N.Z.P.D. op.cit.
156. G.R.A. 28 May 1918.
'Cough up' such filthy nostrums - eject the bloody clots.  
Mr. Holland wants to be your "member"  
At Three Hundred Pounds a year  
Parents your boys remember!  
And take this intruder by the ear  
And Put Him In The Mud."  

In 1914 Webb had retained his seat by a majority of nearly a thousand votes. The fact that Coates was a local candidate, whereas Webb's opponent in 1914 was not, led the editor of the Grey River Argus to predict that the election would be a much closer contest than had been anticipated, and Fraser warned labour supporters against overconfidence. When the poll was declared, Holland's majority was only 143. The poll was marked by, not only by the sharp fall in the Labour majority, but by the fact that over a third of the electors on the roll did not vote. Though light polling is a usual feature of by-elections, it is likely that a large number of the abstainers were voters of Liberal sympathy who had previously supported Webb against Reform, but who were unable to accept Holland for reasons connected with his reputation for revolutionary socialist militancy, his austere personality, and the fact that he was not a local candidate. On the other hand, Coates had been identified with the cause and tactics of Reform, which made him equally unacceptable. The theory of a significant Liberal abstention is supported by the fact that the anti-Labour vote in 1918 was almost the same as that of 1914. The abstention of Liberal electors rather than support either of what they regarded as two extremes, indicates the strength of Liberal sentiment, a continuing problem to the Labour Party. That this abstention should have been occasioned by Holland's candidature points to a problem which is discussed in the later chapters of the thesis - did Holland, or his reputation, alienate moderate votes from the Labour Party? The result of the Grey election of 1913 suggests that this did happen.

To his Australian friend, Cocking, Holland expounded his view of the Grey campaign:

157. Ibid.  
158. G.R.A. 27 May 1918.  
159. M.W. 22 May 1918.  
161. Of 9,249 voters, only 5,582 cast valid votes.  
162. 1914, 2,861, 1918, 2,717.
"... the fight was straight out on 3 issues: Socialism v Capitalism; Anti-Conscription v Conscription; Peace & Negotiation v War to the bitter end ... the enemies of Labor ... poured out lies and slanders might and day & left no effort unmade to involve me under the War Regulations. The campaign ... was far more bitter & strenuous than was Wellington North & the whole Labor movement is agreed that the victory was the greatest ever won by Labor in New Zealand - because it was the first time that Labor had ever succeeded in defeating the Tories and Liberals in a straight out fight." 163

Holland's judgement, was seasoned by his predilection for the dramatic and purely class war interpretation of events. He chose to ignore his own laudatory remarks about the Ballance-Seddon administration, apparently made in an attempt to woo the Liberal vote. Except for Holland, nobody was pleased by the Grey result. While the Worker made excuses for the decline of the Labour vote,164 the press of New Zealand remained as hostile as before the election to that "extremist" and "political adventurer" who added to neither the reputation nor dignity of the New Zealand legislature. The press agreed that Grey was the only electorate that would have elected Holland, that the disloyal miners had been responsible for his election and that the election result in fact showed that socialism was on the wane.165

The chief development within the labour movement in the period 1914-18, was consolidation and broadening of the alliance between militant socialists and moderates. In this, militant socialists took the initiative, prompted by their belief that the war would bring about the downfall of capitalism and that when this occurred, the workers must be prepared to bring about the social revolution. In these circumstances militant socialists held that their leadership must take the immediate form of encouraging, and working towards, unity in the labour movement. Holland was insistent, throughout the war period, on unity and solidarity as essential, before the social revolution could take place.166 Every effort must be made towards,

"... so consolidating our political strength that immediately the opportunity presents itself we shall be in a position to demand from the Supreme Court of Public Opinion a sentence of political death against the

163. Holland to Cocking op.cit.
164. M.W. 5, 12 June 1918.
165. Editorials from Christchurch Sun, Auckland Herald, Manawatu Times and Dunedin Star are republished in Greymouth Evening Star 6 June 1918. See also O.D.T. 30 May 1918.
166. Holland to Cocking op.cit.
It is this emphasis on unity as a consideration above all others that explains the actions of militant socialists throughout the war. It explains why they were prepared to compromise to secure an integral relationship with moderates, and positions of influence, and why, although the socialists were in a strong position to attempt to direct the development of the N.Z.L.P., they did not attempt to do so. Theirs was a policy of preparedness, of waiting for their opportunity, and of building up a workers' organisation which could handle the situation when that opportunity came. Until then, they must not prejudice unity. The necessity to wait, and remain quiescent while doing so, held no attractions for Holland, habitually accustomed to action and to speaking his mind. In part, his vehemence during his 1918 campaigns was a rejection of these restrictions. In part, it was prompted by his discernment of signs of capitalism's collapse. The success of these campaigns strengthened Holland's feeling that while one was waiting, one must also act, and the antagonism they aroused confirmed his class war interpretation of political action. Moderates in the N.Z.L.P. were not alienated, for Holland's campaigns were successful, and he conducted them, to a large extent, on the basis of grievances common to the whole labour movement.

The militant socialists' policy of making unity a first consideration was based on their belief that the collapse of capitalism and the workers' opportunity was imminent. As a policy, it was a means towards an end— the social revolution. What would happen if that opportunity never came, or came in a manner different from what the militant socialists had anticipated? They would be left with an alliance with the moderates, the gradualists, the reformers. The leadership of men like Holland towards unity could result in their leadership of the labour movement only if that opportunity came. Then, as the most advanced and resolute section of the working class, they would push forward all others. If capitalism did not collapse, what then? If the collapse did not come this year, would it come the next? Were the militants to continue their relationship with the moderates in this expectation? If in this waiting period, moderates wished to depart further from

"class" principles, in order to succeed in a capitalist environment, would militant socialists take a similar view, or make concessions to retain unity? A host of problems awaited militant socialists if capitalism did not collapse soon, and eventually these problems had to be faced. The situation in which Holland, and those who thought like him, were placed resulted from their major and continuing difficulty, inability to secure substantial support among workers for their ultimate objective - the social revolution. Such was their belief in the urgency of the need, that they were prepared to temporise to secure that support, a position which Holland was often able, with considerable ingenuity, to reconcile with principle.

Militant socialists sought unity with moderates. Why did those in the labour movement whose aims were adjusted to gradual action to secure better wages and conditions join those who wanted a social revolution? There are two basic reasons. Due to continuing loyalty to the Liberal Party, the competition of militant socialist organisations, and the fact that many moderate labour men had accepted unity with militants in 1913, moderates found themselves unable to build a strong organisation of their own. Moreover, the terms of unity, ending with those of the N.Z.L.P. in 1916, appeared to them a reasonable compromise. Both groups wanted independent labour action, militant socialists because of their class war theories, moderates because they believed that workers had a better chance of greater improvements in wages and conditions by using this method. The socialists took vanguard action in non-doctrinaire terms. While acting on what were to them class principles, they were often able to express this in terms of grievances felt by the whole labour movement, a process clearly illustrated in their arguments against conscription, and indeed against the war-time policy of the Government generally.

Unity with the moderates and political involvements wrought changes in Holland's political attitudes. Although he still spoke in terms of class war and capitalist exploitation, his attacks were becoming less general arraignments of the capitalist system, than detailed criticism, backed by statistics, of the government's policies and their operation. He was now relating his general principles to the particular political situation. This was an important development for it allowed the possibility of interaction between the two, a possibility which had not existed when his militant soc-
ialist scheme had had few points of contact with the political situation as
it was. Nevertheless, relying on capitalism's collapse, he was still not
at grips with the practical problem of how Labour would achieve power.
Holland's role was one of protest, and in this he excelled, for "he could
embitter workers against injustice in a way that is hard to believe." It was in this role that Holland, in the spectacular campaigns of 1918,
first drew widespread public attention to the Labour Party and its demands.
This initial impression remained a long time in the public mind. The
N.Z.L.P. had been formed in a war situation, in part by those who opposed
the war. Its anti-war origins, and its spectacular public appearance at a
time when Bolshevik revolution had just occurred, created an impression in
non-Labour circles, of a disloyal and socially disruptive group. So far
as Holland's ideas were concerned, those who feared social revolution and
denounced the Labour Party had good cause for alarm.

Chapter 5.

SOCIALISM AND RELIGION.

This chapter, in which Holland's beliefs are discussed in relation to the theme of religion and socialism, marks a significant point in the development of the thesis. Previous chapters have been concerned with the activity of militant socialists in fields other than parliamentary, and in a context of failure. The following chapters deal with militant socialists in a parliamentary environment after Holland's election in 1913, and with a situation in which the demands of success raised fundamental questions relating to their aims and ideals. The purpose of this chapter is to examine those philosophic and religious attitudes of Holland which impinged most directly on his development as a militant socialist. Analysis is confined here to his pre-parliamentary career, the aim being to advance, at this stage, certain arguments which, it is maintained, are important to an understanding of his development as traced in later chapters. The central argument is that there were fundamental weaknesses and confusions at the basis of Holland's belief as a militant socialist and that he did not find militant and materialist socialism alone a satisfactory personal belief. The real cohesive force, in an outlook which was essentially religious in impulse, was Holland's intense and consistent moralist standpoint. Further, there was often a degree of difference between his public utterances and his private beliefs, discrepancies arising from his need, in terms of his militant socialist theories, to take up, in public, positions which, privately, he did not completely accept. Up to his election to parliament, while his public moral judgements and criteria were rigidly socialist and essentially Marxist, his private reactions were sometimes less decisive, particularly in relation to acceptance of complete materialism. This indecision is revealed in the fact that Holland's ideological explorations took him not towards, but away from the materialist core of Marxist philosophy, towards what may be called 'bourgeois humanism.' At a metaphysical level, Holland's search for man's meaning and expression took him to the creeds of 'bourgeois'
idealists and rationalists, rather than to the materialist leaders of socialist thought, indicating an obvious weakness and uncertainty at the very centre of his belief. Holland's belief is also examined, in this chapter, in relation to the operation of some religious factors in politics in New Zealand. It is maintained that Holland saw religious issues as of secondary importance, and appreciating their divisive effects in the labour movement, sought to avoid them. His involvement in the antagonism which existed between extreme Protestantism, and Catholicism was on political, not religious grounds, and did not affect his basic uncertainty.

It is maintained that the roots of Holland's fundamental uncertainty lay in his inability to decide what relevance religion ought to have in the framework of his belief as a militant socialist. Several lines of argument lead to this conclusion. As had been argued in the first chapter, Holland retained, in his militant socialism, an outlook which belongs to the order of religion. What was the social revolution, in which he put his hope, but an apocalyptic vision, a version of the Day of the Lord in which the rich and powerful of the earth should be cast down, and the poor and disinherited should reign in a regenerated universe? Initially, Holland was unwilling to abandon Christianity, even while holding a militant socialist position. One of his main concerns, at least until 1895, was an attempt to reconcile Christian belief and socialism. Furthermore, he is distinguished from many of his militant socialist associates by the fact that he did not attack religion, as such, confining his criticisms to the church as a human organisation which failed to live up to its spiritual principles. Also suggestive of basic uncertainty was his touchiness with regard to his past religious professions, and the fact that he never became an atheist. Although abandoning Christian practice, he retained belief in a supreme being, and even, as at his son's death in 1904, a minor degree of religious conformity. These facts point to the lingering of vestiges of religious faith which were not integrated with Holland's militant socialism. Could one logically accept

3. Mrs. Forman to writer 27 Oct. 1957; Scott Bennett to writer 8 April 1957; See Holland Red Roses throughout.
economic determinism, the materialist conception of history, as well as believe
in the existence of a supreme being? How might these two ideas be reconciled? This, and other similar fundamental questions, Holland put aside. The
reasons for this neglect may be suggested briefly. Holland felt that pure
materialism was a comfortless, inhuman doctrine, yet the basis of his
militant socialist belief was dialectic materialism as an analysis of history
and society. He found it necessary to avoid too close a scrutiny of this
dual position, unless one or other aspect of it proved logically untenable.
The theory of economic determinism provided a convenient means to avoid the
problem, for it enabled Holland to maintain that religion would be seen in
its true light only under a socialist economic system and that it was point­
less considering the matter until then. Plausible though this argument
appeared, it offered no real solution to the immediate and fundamental
question at the basis of Holland's uncertainty - did the non-material exist,
and, if so, in what way did it affect the life of man? Given his refusal
to face squarely the problem of the relevance of religious belief, his
attitude to organised religion came to be governed less by theory or intell­
lectual conviction than by practical considerations. This argument is put
forward in relation to the attitude of militant socialists towards religion,
and particularly Catholicism, in New Zealand.

From about 1895, Holland underwent a gradual conversion to the 'religion
of science', which combined Darwinian evolutionary theory and German
materialism into an explanation of man and the universe which ran counter to
the then accepted religious views. The spell this cast over Holland is
revealed in his report of an interview with the rationalist ex-priest,
Joseph McCabe in Sydney in 1910:

"It was with thought streaming backward through 'millions of aeons',
endeavouring to measure the immeasurable, to comprehend the incomprehen­
sible that I sought out Mr. Joseph McCabe at the Hotel Metropole on
king's birthday."
Holland saw McCabe's abandonment of the church as a liberation. "And so the day came when Science triumphed... 'It was a Soul lost to the Church and a Brain gained to Humanity.'"#9 Holland had also adopted the dialectic materialism of Marx, enshrined in the materialist conception of history. This theory, together with the theories of surplus value and of the class struggle, formed the basis of Holland's socialist philosophy. The essence of the materialist conception of history, as defined in a pamphlet which Holland possessed, was that:

"The laws, customs, education, religion, public opinion and morals are controlled and shaped by economic conditions, or in other words by the dominant ruling class which the economic system of any given period forces to the front." 10

Thus, religion was the reflection of class society. What, then, was to be the militant socialist attitude towards religion? Under both socialist and rationalist influences, the English socialist Robert Blatchford approached the question in God and My Neighbour, written in 1903, and closely studied by Holland. 11 Blatchford attacked religion as a hinderance to human progress:

"Briefly my religion is to do the best I can for humanity. I am a Socialist, a Determinist and a Rationalist... I oppose the Christian religion because I do not think the Christian religion is beneficial to mankind and because I think, it is an obstacle in the way of Humanism... Christianity concerns itself with God and Man, putting God first and Man last. Humanism concerns itself solely with Man, so that man is its first and last care... The Christian remedy is to punish crime and to preach repentance and salvation to "sinners"... The greatest curse of humanity is ignorance. The only remedy is knowledge. Religion, being based on fixed authority, is naturally opposed to knowledge... There is no such thing as sin. Man is innately more prone to good than to evil, and the path of his destiny is upward." 12

With these assertions Holland agreed, but with substantial reservations. His religious experience, his theism and his fundamental uncertainty would not allow him to take the offensive against religion with such vehemence. He avoided, as much as he could, committing himself on the conflict between

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9. Ibid.
10. Local Puyallup S.P. of Washington. Scientific Socialism Study Course. Chicago 1913, pp.4-5. All the pre-1919 publications, excluding newspapers, cited in the footnotes of this chapter are Holland's personal copies which have been marked and annotated extensively and are now held in the Holland Collection.
11. Holland's private copy was the 1910 edition but it is most probable that he read the work shortly after its publication.
religion and socialism, and when forced to deal with the issue, by way of counter-attack, his remarks were in criticism, not of religion, as such, but of the failure of the church to implement the teachings of Christ. In reply to the Dean of Newcastle in June 1910, he argued, in answer to the Dean's objection to extreme socialism, that extremism was a virtue, as in one who was extremely Christian. The church, a bulwark of capitalism, had beguiled the workers with fair words for too long. The workers must set up a higher standard of ethics and rise to a higher conception of morality than any class - circumscribed church could afford to hold or dare to proclaim. According to Holland, neither the church nor any other organisation could emancipate the workers as a class. Marx had laid down that this must be the task of the workers themselves.\(^\text{13}\) As well as indicating the strongly moral nature of Holland's belief, this criticism reveals a dogmatism and devotion to authority no less intense than that of the church itself.

Holland did not follow the example of his colleagues, who took the offensive against religion and its central tenets.\(^\text{14}\) While he accepted the materialist conception of history, held by Engels to preclude religious belief,\(^\text{15}\) he retained belief in a supreme being and the possibility of an after life. In 1910 he told Cocking:

"I know ... that when the shadow of Death falls across a home, cold Materialism is comfortless; but does the acceptance of the materialist theory of history necessarily involve a disbelief in an after life? I think not. At the most we can only say, 'I don't know.' And it is not for us to quarrel with those who say 'We do know there is another life.'"\(^\text{16}\)

These remarks reveal the terms of Holland's fundamental problem and his attitude towards it. His central postulate was the truth of the materialist theory of history and it was to this that other beliefs had to be adjusted. At the same time, recognising a human need for consolation and comfort, he admitted the possibility of an after life, something conceived in non-material terms. That is, he accepted materialism as an explanation of human history, yet admitted, on essentially emotional grounds, the possibility of the existence of the non-material. This situation suggests that the integration between

\(^{13}\) I.S. 4 June 1910.
\(^{14}\) I.S. 27 April, 15 June 1912.
\(^{15}\) Frederick Engels, *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific* (translated by Edward Aveling), London 1941.
\(^{16}\) Holland to Cocking op.cit.
intellect and emotions, which Holland achieved after 1907, was far from complete, for his intellectual and emotional positions were here at variance. As Marx and Engels saw, dialectic materialism did involve a fundamental quarrel with those who believed in another life, and it was nothing less than evasion of the issue for Holland to state, without argument, that it did not. For one who rested his explanations of human conduct on material causes, the admission of the possible existence of the non-material involved, logically, a searching examination of his materialist premises. Holland never attempted such an examination, apparently being content with what others had viewed as an unresolved conflict. This was a partial scepticism, relating to Holland's emotional tendency towards the recognition of religion as a fundamental human habit, but not affecting the essence of Holland's conviction as a militant socialist. It was this scepticism, more as a means of justifying uncertainty than as the expression of doubt, constructive rather than destructive, and Holland's moralist position, that disposed him to be attracted by the moral viewpoints of J.S. Mill and Auguste Comte. Holland believed that theology was an obsolete way of explaining the universe, but he accepted, not Engels' thorough-going materialism, but Mill's view that neither atheism nor Christian belief, but scepticism was the rational attitude to adopt. Holland's belief in the primacy of moral duty made him a devotee of the theories of Comte. In a pamphlet published in 1905, the Italian socialist, Enrico Ferri, outlined the essentials of this composite belief - faith in science, socialism and the inevitability of progress - which Holland held between 1907 and 1918, his time of greatest intellectual certainty:

"It is the powerful systematization of positive knowledge, begun by Augustus Comte, that will collect the diverse currents of scientific research and discovery into the majestic stream of evolutionary philosophy ... The positive method substitutes for the pretended and pretentious verities of a mystical philosophy, - quite inaccessible to the average mind - a simple and lucid exposition of facts and their connections which have been painfully drawn by observation and experiment from eternal nature ... Parallel to the positive philosophy of Comte, to the science of biologic transformation of Darwin and universal transformation of Spencer, developed the scientific socialism of Marx and Engels, which is the positive doctrine of economic and social transformation. Thus the two currents of evolutionary philosophy and scientific socialism were approaching nearer and nearer to mingle and reanimate their energies in the eternal ocean of life and positive verities ... And whilst Comte saw the motive and directing force of social evolution in the intelligence, and Spencer, approaching reality more closely, saw it in the sentiments, Marx saw it in the necessity
which prompts man to transform force and material with his work, varying from epoch to epoch, and from place to place. This is the principle which we call "materialistic conception of history"...
And this religion gives us that firm faith that ... social evolution develops with a constantly accelerating progression." 17

This passage sets out clearly the components of Holland's faith in evolutionary progress, the belief, which he so often expressed, that the essential feature of life was development and change, that mankind must go forward, that to stay still was to perish. 18

In addition to its theoretical involvements, the conflict between socialism and religion had a political importance in relation to the efforts of militant socialists to win support. Anti-religious propaganda was politically divisive and alienated potential support, and for these reasons, was abandoned by militant socialists in New Zealand. Holland paid no overt attention to the practical consequences of the conflict between materialist socialism and religion until his arrival in New Zealand, and then it was mainly the reaction of the Catholics which indicated that this conflict could become a hindrance to the achievement of the aims of militant socialists.

In Australia, most of the attacks of militant socialists on religion were directed against Catholicism, socialism's most formidable enemy, according to W.R. Winspear who succeeded Holland as the editor of the International Socialist. 19 Hostility towards Catholicism sprang from that church's repudiation of the theories of scientific modernists, 20 and its proposals, in the Rerum Novarum of Pope Leo XIII, of Christian social reform, in which collectivist socialism and class war were denounced. 21

17. Enrico Ferri Science and Life (translated by Odon Por) Chicago 1905, pp.3-5, 13-14. (Holland's copy).
inction was made by the Catholic hierarchy and clergy between the atheistic socialism denounced by Leo XIII and the state socialism of the A.L.P.\textsuperscript{22} From the time of the 1890 strike Cardinal Moran expressed his sympathy with the aims of the labour movement. However, the alignment of Catholics with the A.L.P. merely increased the hostility of militant socialists to both party and church, for they held that the "socialism" of the A.L.P. was not real socialism, and that Catholic support for the A.L.P. further confirmed this. While there was some interaction between Catholic social views and those of the A.L.P., Catholicism and militant socialism in Australia faced each other with unyielding hostility.\textsuperscript{23}

Similar tensions developed in New Zealand. The atheistic nature of the New Zealand Socialist Party\textsuperscript{24} was attacked by the Catholic Archbishop of Wellington in a Pastoral Letter of February 1906,\textsuperscript{25} and the N.Z.S.P. in a series of pamphlets in 1907 made no secret of its antagonism to Christianity.\textsuperscript{26} Rabid attacks on Christianity and Catholic beliefs by E.R. Hartley, N.Z.S.P. organiser, and the anti-religious tone of the \textit{Maoriland Worker} edited by the atheist R.S. Ross, offended those of religious belief, particularly Catholic unionists, and provoked strong Catholic criticism.\textsuperscript{27} Just after Holland arrived in New Zealand, the question of propaganda against religion was brought before the 1912 conference of the Federation of Labor which decided to exclude the discussion of religion from the \textit{Worker}, except in defence of the philosophy of the movement or in connection with book reviews.\textsuperscript{28} This took much of the sting out of aggressive socialist atheism. When Holland took up the editorship of the \textit{Worker} in 1913, he defined his own attitude:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{23} Rev. Michael Phelan, S.J., \textit{The Pillars of Socialism}, Australian Catholic Truth Society, Melbourne n.d.
  \item \textsuperscript{24} "Labour as a Force", p.12. Paddock.
  \item \textsuperscript{25} Archbishop of Wellington, \textit{Pastoral Letter on Socialism}, Dunedin 1906, p.3.
  \item \textsuperscript{27} I.S. 15 June 1912; J.A. Scott \textit{The Church and Socialism}. Australian Catholic Truth Society. Melbourne 1912, p.14; E.R. Hartley \textit{A Catholic Pastoral on Socialism}. An Open Letter to Archbishop Redwood. Wellington 1912.
  \item \textsuperscript{28} Report. 1912 Federation of Labor Conference, pp.80-83.
\end{itemize}
"So far as this paper is concerned, religion is a matter for the private conscience. Let the workers acquire economic knowledge and the question of religion and many other questions besides will right themselves." 29

This apparently non-committal attitude was deceptive, for what Holland was saying, in effect, was that religion was not a matter for the private conscience, but for determination by a socialist economic system.

At the same time, Holland continued to be attracted by 'scientific' philosophic schemes. In 1913, he was interested in a variant of Haeckel's Monism, put forward by a German chemist, Wilhelm Ostwald. This 'Monism' emphatically supported the theory of progress, exalted evolutionary science, and claimed that religion was becoming less indispensable. It professed to offer "all-embracing unity" and to have an ethic higher than that of Christianity. It had a millenial flavour and a dash of the energetic imperative. "Waste no energy; turn it all to account." 30 The emotional appeal of this theory harmonised with Holland's idea of religion, which he accepted from rationalist sources:

"Religion is the state of the heart and feelings, a state of reverence, awe, love, or dependence, according to the character of the divine object presented to the mind. Religion is the feeling, theology is the attempted explanation of that feeling; hence religion must precede theology and they may exist independently of each other... The end of religious teaching should be the development and direction of the moral and spiritual feelings and instruction in the morals of daily life, leading to the victory over Self." 31

According to this definition, religion was an emotional state which could exist independently of an intellectual position. Here was the type of reasoning which could embrace, it would seem, intellectual materialism and emotional spirituality, and it was this position which Holland had adopted. Concentration on emotional expression, this definition limited religion to a moral code, and this appealed to Holland's strong sense of moral duty. The theory of progress had given rise to the Comtian principle of duty to posterity. "No churches for propitiating imaginary deities will be built, but we shall propitiate our conscience by the fulfilment of duty." 32 Holland felt this

32. Ibid. p.20.
obligation keenly, particularly during the widespread examination of fundamental belief occasioned by the Great War. In 1916 when F.J. Gould attempted to revive, under the auspices of the London Positivist Society, the Comtian Religion of Humanity, Holland gave Gould's pamphlet propaganda his earnest attention. This doctrine centered on Comte's motto, "Man's only right is to do his duty", and like Ostwald's 'Monism' and the rationalist view of religion, its balance was anti-intellectual. Comtian and rationalist influences were marked also in the Socialist Sunday school movement, which originated in England in the late 1890s and appeared in Melbourne in 1906 under the auspices of Tom Mann. The movement spread to New Zealand about 1912 and two schools were still operating in the early 1920s. In both Australia and New Zealand, Holland sent his own children to these schools, whose object was to "imbue the young with the sentiment and imagery of a Kingdom of Love and Happiness to be set up here on this earth based on just or righteous social and economic conditions." Though belonging to the same 'scientific', empiricist genre as Marxian socialism, the Comtian and rationalist doctrines which influenced Holland were inspired by 'bourgeois' attitudes and moral values; they were doctrines bearing on the essence of liberalism, the conviction that human relations are amenable to intelligent or rational understanding and control, not theories governed by concepts of economic determinatism or class war, but theories of harmony and sentiment. Holland's drift towards a nonsocialist 'spiritual' sentiment or metaphysic is revealed in the fact that when he sought to explain his conception of the highest ideals of militant socialism he turned to 'bourgeois' aestheticism. In putting forward in 1924, a "spiritual interpretation of Labour's political economic objective," he quoted from Ruskin:

36. Mrs. Ivar to writer, 12 Nov. 1958.
"If you can fix some conception of a true human state of life to be striven for - life for all men as for yourselves - if you can determine some honest and simple order of existence; following these trodden ways of wisdom, which are pleasantness, and seeking her quiet and withdrawn paths, which are peace; then, and so sanctifying wealth into "commonwealth", all your art, your literature, your daily labours, your domestic affection and citizens' duty, will join and increase into one magnificent harmony. You will know then how to build well enough; you will build with stone well, but with flesh better; temples not made with hands but rivetted of hearts; and that kind of marble, crimson veined, is indeed eternal." 38

It must be concluded that Holland found militant and materialist socialism alone an unsatisfactory personal belief. In order to overcome its shortcomings he took from those other currents of European thought, rationalist liberalism and transcendental idealism, elements which, though non-socialist, seemed to satisfy his habit of mind, a condition which was fundamentally religious.

While many of the leaders of the militant socialist movement in New Zealand lacked what is usually understood by religious belief,39 and a few, such as F.R. Cooke, bitterly denounced religion,40 others such as the Rev. Moses Ayrton, professed Christian socialism.41 The Worker was crudely politic:

"... when people tell us that a Christian cannot be a Socialist, we have an unanswerable reply. It is the reply of the passenger on board the ship who was told he couldn't be sick in the saloon. "Can't I?"" 42

The majority of militant socialist intellectuals were steeped in a literature sceptical of, or hostile to, the Christian religion, but there were many, particularly among the rank and file of the labour movement, who held strong Christian views. Christian socialism was particularly strong in Christchurch, where, in the 1917 municipal election campaign, the Rev. J.H.G. Chappie, a Unitarian, wrote, "A vote for Labour is a co-operation with the same spirit that impassioned the Nazarene. Truly a vote is a sacred thing."43 In October 1918, the Rev. J.K. Archer44 told the New Zealand Baptist Union:

40. M.W. 30 May 1913.
42. M.W. 30 May 1913.
43. The Elector, 20 April 1917.
44. He was national president of the N.Z.L.P. 1928-9.
"We must take the machinery of government out of the hands of the robbers ... We must transfer from private to public hands the business of producing and distributing the necessities of life... Prayer will not produce the change... It is up to Christians in general and Baptists in particular to lead a movement for the consecration of the ballot box to Christ and humanity." 45

Supporters of those organisations in which militant socialists aspired to leadership, were of all faiths, and a proportion were Catholics.46 This proportion was initially very small, but as the Liberal Party declined in the workers' estimation and the socialists abandoned their attacks on religion, the proportion increased. The necessity of attracting and retaining Christian support forced those militant socialists who were materialists, rationalists or sceptics, to remain silent, so as to avoid impairing working class unity. Nevertheless, soon after its formation, the N.Z.L.P. had religious issues forced upon it. The circumstances of an attack by militant Protestantism, fostered an alignment between Catholics and the Labour Party, a development in which Holland played an important part.

Late in 1916, the Orange Lodge, pledged to the maintenance of Protestantism,47 began fostering and organising anti-Catholic feeling in New Zealand. A Committee of Vigilance, whose public spokesman was a Baptist minister, the Rev. Howard Elliott, was formed to watch and fight "Romanism", and a list of "pro-Romanist" politicians was compiled for use at the next election.48 New Zealand anti-Catholicism was organised on American models,49 but the influence of Australian developments was more important in determining practical policy. Irish opinion in Australia was alienated from Britain by that country's repressive policy in Ireland immediately following the Easter Week disturbances in 1916, and in the conscription referendum campaign later in the year, Irish-Catholics and anti-conscriptionist Labor Party supporters made common cause. The unexpected "No" victory over-emphasised the Irish-Catholic

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46. This judgement is based on a comment on Auckland S.D.P. membership, (M.W. 25 March 1914) and on the writer's conclusions.
49. Ibid. pp.13,48.
agitation as a contributing factor, and sectarianism was aroused by conscript-ionists, together with Protestants, who feared what they saw as a new threat. Anti-Catholic Protestant Political Leagues were formed in every Australian State in the early months of 1916. The New Zealand Committee of Vigilance, constituted as the Protestant Political Association in July 1917, must be seen in the context of imported acrimony. Rev. Howard Elliott was an Australian who had spent his early ministry in Queensland, and the P.P.A. seems to have been closely patterned on a Queensland Protestant League formed in January 1917.

The P.P.A. expressed its grievances in terms of the New Zealand situation as it saw it - the exemption from conscription of Catholic clergy in response to the demand of the hierarchy, the Catholic attitude on the education question, the "scoffing of politicians at Protestants and their truckling to Rome", and the alleged domination of the civil service by Catholics. In addition, the papacy was alleged to be pro-German and to be aiming at restoring its temporal power. P.P.A. propaganda and Elliott's lecturing aroused a good deal of bitterness, and newspaper editorials condemned Elliott's bigotry and intolerance, suggesting action under War Regulations to prevent stirring up strife which was prejudicial to a united war effort.

Both Holland and P.C. Webb complained that Elliott, a disturber of the peace, went free while labour supporters were gaoled, and Holland gave Elliott unfavourable publicity in the Worker. Observing the Australian situation, Elliott noted that Catholics were moving into an alignment with the A.L.P. on general social policy, as well as on the conscription issue. He then, assumed, without justification, that a similar Irish-Catholic-Labour alliance

50. For details of this aspect of the conscription campaigns see Hamilton "Irish-Australian Catholics and the Labour Party" pp.237-245 and Jauncey The Story of Conscription. pp.204-7.
52. Hamilton op.cit. pp.224.
54. Ibid. pp.35, 47.
existed in New Zealand, an assumption which suited his personal anti-Labour bias. His first chance to speak his mind on this supposed alliance occurred during the Wellington North by-election of 1918, when Holland was N.Z.L.P. candidate, and Elliott stated publicly that the Labour Party was controlled by the Catholic Church.\(^59\) Challenged to prove this, Elliott claimed that the rebel flag of Ireland had been displayed during the 1913 strike and during the Grey by-election of that year. He declared that his statement on Catholic domination of the Labour Party was based on "the testimony of men whose knowledge and characters were unimpeachable", but the detail of the information was, he said, confidential.\(^60\)

At the same time, Holland, though he had no liking for Catholicism, was tending towards what was in effect an alignment with Catholics, through his ready sympathy for the cause of Irish nationalism. The proportion of Irish born in the New Zealand population had never been high,\(^61\) but this element tended to be grouped in certain localities, such as the West Coast of the South Island, and to retain, even in second generations, a strong sense of Irish nationality.\(^62\) For some time before 1913, a liaison had been developing between Irish nationalists and the N.Z.L.P. This was to some extent a consequence of the largely working class composition of the Irish population, but Holland played an important part in fostering that alliance, for he came to be regarded by the Irish as their champion.\(^63\) In the \textit{Worker}, Holland took up the cause of Irish unionists during industrial disturbances in Dublin in 1913.\(^64\) In 1916 he wrote a series of articles on the historical foundations of the Easter rebellion,\(^65\) which the \textit{Green Ray}, organ of the Maoriland Irish Society, found "singularly instructive";\(^66\) and in 1917 he toured New Zealand with lectures on Irish topics.\(^67\) His championship of Ireland reflected Holland's distaste for imperialism and oppression of minorities, but he had no patience with violence and made it quite clear, in reference to the Irish situation,

\(^{59}\) M.W. 9 Jan. 1918.  
\(^{60}\) Dominion 4 Feb. 1918.  
\(^{61}\) Declining from 6.2\% (46,037) in 1896 to 3.2\% (37,380) in 1916.  
\(^{62}\) See O'Farrell "Grey District Politics" pp. 56-57.  
\(^{63}\) Interview with G.J. Griffin.  
\(^{64}\) M.W. 12 Sept., 5, 22 Oct. 1913.  
\(^{65}\) M.W. 17, 24 May, 7, 14 June 1916.  
\(^{66}\) Green Ray, 1 April 1917.  
\(^{67}\) M.W. 31, Jan., 14, 21 Feb., 24 Oct. 1917.
that it was far better to seek freedom through the ballot box than from behind the barricades. Gradually, Irish nationalists began to make common cause with the Labour Party. The Green Ray began a regular labour column. Irish nationalists supported the anti-conscription campaign and some were gaoled for conscientious objection. Holland's protests on their behalf, ensured the gratitude of Irishmen. After the Wellington North by-election of 1918, Holland continued his lecturing on Irish topics and the Worker began printing reports of meetings of the Maoriland Irish Society.

Before the Grey by-election campaign of 1918, the Maoriland Irish Society had not declared its political sympathies, though there was no doubt where these lay. However, the postulation by Howard Elliott of an Irish-Catholic-Labour alliance as the object of his attack, and the fact that his remarks were calculated to undermine Holland's election chances, stung the Green Ray into declaring its support for Labour. Prior to the Grey campaign, Elliott reiterated his charge that the Labour Party was in league with Rome. The Worker replied that there were no Catholics on the N.Z.L.P. executive or on the staff of the Worker. The Green Ray denounced Elliott, and stated:

"We sincerely hope that every man and woman of Irish blood, irrespective of class or creed, shall unite in returning the labour candidate for Grey ... give the militarist, capitalist and shoneen cliques a smashing defeat."

After the Grey election it was asserted that Labour propagandists had falsified T.E. Coates's remarks to make it appear that he was in favour of conscription in Ireland. Whatever the truth of this, Irish voters did support Holland. A Mrs. O'Donnell wrote from Runanga to the Green Ray:

"The way the Irish rallied round our Labour candidate was grand. We certainly are 'children of a fighting race' especially when the fight is for liberty and freedom as was Mr. Holland's policy."

This comment reveals an important fact about the Irish-Catholic-Labour

68. M.W. 7 Nov. 1917.
69. Green Ray, 1 May, 1 June 1917.
70. Of 285 conscientious objectors named by Holland in Armageddon or Calvary (Wellington 1919) 194 specified the ground of their objection. 20 of these were Irish objectors, and of these 4 claimed to be also socialists. Ibid. pp.105-6.
71. Green Ray, 1 Aug. 1917.
72. Ibid. 1 April 1918; M.W. 24 April, 8 May 1918.
73. M.W. 1 May 1918.
74. Green Ray, 1 May 1918.
75. N.Z.P.D. 1918, V.183, p.333.
76. Green Ray, 1 June 1918.
alignment, that Irish-Catholic support was given not to a militant socialist creed, but to the spirit of protest which was common to both Irish and Labour attitudes. Irish-Catholic sentiment had nothing in common with the materialist convictions of such socialists as Holland, and Mrs. O'Donnell, and others like her, took an intensely Christian view of political action. Of the cheer for Labour that greeted the announcement of Holland's victory she wrote:

"Aye, I believe it ascended right to Heaven itself, and Christ, with His eyes full of love and tenderness looked down and said, 'Well done, workers of Grey.'" 77

Claiming in 1917, 10,000 members in the North Island alone,78 the P.P.A. was to remain a thorn in the side of the Labour Party for a decade. Its effect in alienating votes from a party it asserted to be in Catholic control cannot be calculated exactly, but it is certain that reaction from Elliott's attacks tended to bring about a new grouping similar in kind, but not in degree, to that which Elliott claimed already existed. Nothing similar to the Catholic role in the A.L.P. was ever to exist in New Zealand. The Catholic proportion of the population was much smaller than in Australia, loyalty to the Liberal Party militated against it, and the history of the two labour movements had taken very different courses. Nevertheless, some Irish Catholics in New Zealand came to identify themselves with the Labour Party, an alignment which the personal role of Holland and the attacks of Howard Elliott helped to foster. How much Holland consciously cultivated the Irish vote is not known. His championship of the Irish was in keeping with his principles and character, and it is possible that he did not think, initially at least, of its electoral effects.

Holland's early experience in New Zealand did not alter his theoretical standpoint on the relation between socialism and religion. In 1923 he was still confident, as he had been ten years earlier, that the dawning of economic knowledge among the workers, and that alone, would reveal the true nature of religion.79 What that nature would be, he did not claim to know, nor did he consider the question as of cardinal importance. Practically,

77. Ibid.
79. Holland to Cocking, 27 Jan. 1923 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
his New Zealand experience convinced him that an anti-religious campaign by militant socialists split the ranks of labour. He concluded that the duty of the labour movement was not to interfere with any man's religious belief, but to provide utmost freedom of conscience. This was not mere expediency, adjusted to the need for unity. To Holland, the placing of unity, as a means of achieving the social revolution, before all other considerations, was to see things in their logical relation. Neutralism in religion was also consistent with Holland's basic uncertainty. A socialist economic system alone could show these matters in a true light, and until then, while confusion remained, to allow freedom of conscience was the only reasonable course.

The purpose of this chapter has been to attempt to explain those philosophic and religious attitudes of Holland, which affected most importantly his development as a militant socialist. These attitudes were often confused, uncertain, or in conflict, and that Holland made no real effort to resolve this position. This raises, not so much the question of whether or not he was intellectually capable of dealing with these problems, for there is no evidence of his attempting to do so and failing, but the problem of why he did not choose to face them. It has been suggested earlier that the fundamental reason was that he would have found it uncomfortable to do so, but his declared position was the Marxian one, that these conflicts and confusions were not 'real.' With regard to the central problem of the conflict between materialist socialism and religion, when Holland claimed that religion's true nature would appear only under a socialist economic system, he was implying that then no such conflict would exist. This claim rested on the truth of the theory of economic determinism. Yet Holland introduced into his own belief, elements at variance with this theory - admission of the possibility of the existence of the non-material, acceptance of quasi-religious abstractions and 'bourgeois' moral verities, such as duty. In the light of economic determinism this placed Holland in a curious position, that of a militant socialist who accepted part of the ideological superstructure of the capitalist system. His idea of a true life for man partook of both Marxian socialist, and non-socialist, values and teachings. The later chapters of the thesis must be understood in the light of these two strands within Holland's awareness intellectual belief in the Marxian materialist analysis of society, and

80. Ibid.
emotional adherence to spiritual objectives. Following the development of Comte, whose teachings were so attractive to him, Holland's rejection of metaphysical or theological conceptions, instead of leading to materialism, brought him to seek man's realisation in a religious system in which the temporal order would be subordinated to spiritual power expressed in the pursuit of progress and the interests of humanity. For Holland, militant socialism was an intellectual conviction, religion was the state of his heart and feelings, the acceptance of the need for moral behaviour, duty, love, not only in relation to some futurity after the social revolution, but of immediate importance. The doubts which troubled Holland in his later life are explicable in terms of this duality, the weakness, uncertainty and conflict at the very centre of his personal convictions.

31. R.J. Tizard overestimates the importance of the coincidence of aspects of Holland's belief with Christianity when he states, "His sincere and unshakeable Christianity immediately place Holland in closer affinity to Bellamy and George than to Marx and Engels." R.J. Tizard "Mr. H.E. Holland's Blueprint for New Zealand and the World; its inspiration and Influence." M.A. Thesis. Auckland 1949, p.1.
Chapter 6.

IDEOLOGY - V - PRACTICAL POLITICS.

Aroused by the outbreak of war in 1914, the hopes held by militant socialists for the impending collapse of capitalism and world revolution slowly waned as the war situation became relatively static, but with revolution in Russia in 1917 and turmoil in Germany in 1918, these hopes returned. This chapter sets out to examine the clash between these hopes and the demands of political life at the time of Holland's entry into parliament. It is argued that, associated with this clash, was the division of the labour movement into three currents, not two as before. In addition to the militant-moderate division, there appeared a new left wing, which, though professing similar theoretical aims to Holland and his fellow militants, differed from them in two important ways. While Holland insisted that New Zealand must progress towards socialism in its own way, constitutionally, this new group looked to Russia for practical guidance, and advocated revolutionary and forceful action. While militant socialists like Holland, within the Labour Party, were becoming increasingly devoted to reform, "so radical as to be revolutionary in its effects," the new left wing, repudiating reform, declared for swift and uncompromising revolution. The appearance of this "revolutionary" group was associated, not only with the Russian revolution, but with an important reversion among some unionists, towards a strictly industrial action viewpoint, an expression not only of increasing dissatisfaction with gains from arbitration, but of impatience and disappointment with the Labour Party's failure to achieve immediate power for workers.

It is argued that the result of the appearance of this element was to place Holland and his associates in a position somewhere between extremists and moderates, a position in which increasing criticism from both left and right increased their tendency to drift towards a less militant position.

Generally, it is argued, the Russian revolution had the effect of reviving the socialist movement when it was in decline. Many socialists interpreted the Russian revolution as demonstrating the strength of organised socialism, as a practical step towards realisation of their ideals, and as promising world-wide revolution to come. On the level of action, its influence was towards increasing the bitterness of the terms of class conflict, for as an actual revolution, brought about and maintained by violence, it seemed to some socialists, a striking demonstration of the effectiveness of force as the means of realising socialist aims. These effects, in their most extreme New Zealand form, can be discerned in the standpoint of left wing critics of the Labour Party, but militant socialists within the party were influenced also. It is this reversion, within the party, towards a doctrinaire position, which is the subject of analysis here. The central argument is that the Russian revolution heartened militant socialists at a time when their confidence in the prospect of immediate social revolution was waning. Up to 1921, a revival of hope in imminent world revolution inspired them and assisted their claim to a dominant role in the Labour Party, a position illustrated by Holland's election as party chairman in 1919. In these developments, two conflicting elements can be discerned in the actions of militant socialists, adherence to hopes grounded in the Marxian analysis of history, and, at the same time, the consideration of the demands of a practicable policy in existing circumstances. There were several important reasons for this duality. The context of the action of these socialists, in 1913-20, was substantially different from that of 1914. Since the outbreak of the war, and their associated hopes for a prompt end to the capitalist system, the militants, acting on the basis of those hopes, had sought unity with moderates and had become involved in politics. This involvement meant that they could no longer act with their former degree of independence, a position illustrated in this and later chapters, by the argument that Holland's liberty of action and expression was considerably constricted by the pressure of party discipline and opinion. The terms of unity with the moderates, and
the exigencies of political success militated against a complete reversion by militant socialists to the rigid theory associated with their former hopes for world revolution. This situation is illustrated here with reference to the N.Z.L.P. land policy of 1919, which, it is maintained, was from one viewpoint a doctrinaire reversion, yet from another, a movement towards the formulation of an attractive practical policy. It is apparent too, that militant socialist leaders within the Labour Party did not draw the same lessons from the Russian revolution as did communists and others of "revolutionary" conviction outside the party. The socialist leaders within the party had, in practice, adopted the course of working to achieve their ends by constitutional action within the accepted political framework, rather than by waiting for world revolution. Their reaction to the Russian revolution was an attempt to make the best of both possibilities, revolutionary and constitutional. They would welcome world revolution, but, cautiously, lest it not eventuate, they were not prepared to abandon the standards of constitutionalism. This situation was, essentially, the result of the gradual breaking down of the intellectual isolation of militant socialists. With reference to Holland, it is argued that this process was, in the main, the product of parliamentary influences. The demands of parliament were very different from those to which an agitator was accustomed. An agitator could usually choose his own ground and ask his own questions, but in parliament, both the ground and the questions were dictated to him, and these were non-socialist. The other agencies in this breakdown of isolation were alliance with the moderates, and electoral considerations, the effects of which may be seen in the fact that within the party Holland was committed to a policy less radical than his own belief. In this period, Leninist theory and practice, together with external pressures, led to the acceptance by the militants in the N.Z.L.P. of some modifications, but they believed that their basic position was confirmed by the Labour Party's success in the 1919 election.

In relation to the general thesis, the claim by militant socialists to leadership in the labour movement, the argument of this chapter is that the period 1913-21 reveals a fundamental change in the nature of that claim. The actual basis of the militants' position within the N.Z.L.P. was unity with the moderates, on moderate terms. This was justified, theoretically, as necessary to a policy of preparedness for the social revolution. As had been
pointed out in an earlier chapter, unless social revolution occurred immediately this policy must lead to some thorny problems for militant socialists, and the most fundamental of these were raised by the occurrence of the Russian revolution. It was of crucial importance to militant socialists to decide, not only whether or not revolution in Russia was the beginning of world revolution, but, if it was, whether they should support it if that support alienated moderates and prejudiced Labour Party unity. The fact that socialist revolution took root in Russia, and not in Germany where they had expected it, perplexed men like Holland, and lent to their attitude a considerable degree of caution. They could not resist supporting what seemed to them a revolution which might have tremendous repercussions, but their succumbing to the temptation was only partial. On the question of world revolution they remained hopeful but uncertain, and while they viewed Bolshevik policy with great interest, they held that New Zealand conditions required a very different approach. At a fundamental, and perhaps scarcely conscious level, the Russian revolution forced militant socialists within the N.Z.L.P. to abandon their dual position developed during the war, to choose in their minds and hearts between reliance on hopes of world revolution and revolutionary methods, and reliance on methods which not only moderates, but a majority of the electorate would accept and support, a choice between the theoretical and the actual, the ideal and the real. They chose the terms of the moderates. To explain this as a continuance of the policy of the war period, of the retention of unity as a first consideration in a policy of preparedness, would be to greatly over-simplify the position. What had begun as a matter of expediency had taken on other aspects. What had formerly been a static policy of preparedness for a postulated capitalist collapse, was gradually becoming an active method of working towards social transformation. The effect of the Russian revolution on the attitudes of militant socialists was therefore, two-fold. While it renewed their hopes and strengthened their confidence at the same time it forced them to make a fundamental choice, not realised at the time, between adherence to concepts of doctrinaire, militant and revolutionary socialism, and what was essentially reformism. In terms of their aspirations to leadership in the labour movement, this was a profound change, for it was, though not recognised at the time, a re-definition of the aims towards which that leadership was directed.
Holland, exhausted by his election campaign, began his parliamentary career inauspiciously, in the face of determined and persistent attempts to discredit him. A petition to unseat him was lodged in the Grey electorate, the petitioners claiming that about three hundred of Holland's supporters had not been qualified to vote, and Holland spent much time in collecting evidence to ensure the failure of the petition. In parliament he was subjected to continual attack. Opponents thought him a fool, an extremist and disloyal. In his first speech in parliament on 30 October 1913, during the Address in Reply debate, Holland affirmed Labour's socialist objective and made a detailed indictment of National Government policy. "We of the Labour Party have come to lift political fighting to an intellectual plane," declared Holland, to the amusement of members. In a manoeuvre which became common ministerial practice, the Minister of Internal Affairs sidestepped Holland's charges and attacked Labour members as being of doubtful loyalty and not representative of labour. Parliamentary observers noted, knowingly, that Holland's speeches were "delivered in tones more dulcet than we are accustomed to hear when he speaks outside Parliament." Throughout the 1913 session, Holland's views, particularly on war issues – that sacrifices made in the war would be in vain if capitalism was not destroyed, and that "something more is required than merely grandiloquent language woven around our own doings" – aroused much hostility. L.M. Isitt declared that Holland was

3. Holland to Cocking 18 June 1913 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
5. Scott to Fagan, 7 July 1913; Scott to C. Topp, 7 July 1913; Scott to Roa Miners' Union 27 July 1913; Scott to Sec. Wellington S.D.P. 26 Aug. 1913; Scott to J. Glover 8 June (July) 27 Aug. 11 Sept. 1913; Grey L.R.C. Letter Book; Minutes, Grey L.R.C. 31 Aug. 1913; M.W. 4 Sept. 1918; Minutes Grey L.P. 18 July, 16, 31 Aug. 1913.
6. This speech was reprinted in pamphlet form. H.E. Holland, Labor's Challenge to the National Government. Wellington 1919. The major themes which Holland expounded in Parliament from 1913 to 1933 are given in detail by R.J. Tizard in "Mr. H.E. Holland's Blueprint for New Zealand and the World" op.cit. This thesis, however, makes insufficient distinction between Holland's own ideas and general N.Z.L.P. policy, and there is little attempt to indicate the development of such ideas and policy.
8. Ibid. p.97.
10. Otago Witness, 6 Nov. 1918.
associated with I.W.Wism, R.A. Wright inferred that he was pro-German, and T.A. Field alleged that his election was the result of lies and subterfuge. Stung by such attacks, easily flustered and often rash, Holland took some time to adjust his approach to his new and largely hostile parliamentary audience, and often presented his opponents with political ammunition. He told the House:

"I do not pose as a pacifist, but I am prepared to carry the brand of 'Revolutionary Socialist' and a revolutionary socialist does not take up the attitude that he will never fight."

His acceptance of this description was used in anti-Labour propaganda for many years. At the time, his inveterate critic T.A. Field sought to prove that he was pro-German, and in the ensuing debate Holland was badly worsted in argument. Awareness of Holland's faults as a parliamentarian, and of differences in the outlook of party members are evident in the comment of the Worker's parliamentary observer:

"He speaks well, is exceedingly clear, and does not waste words. In interjection he is not too fortunate, being too acidy as a rule and too doctrinaire ... When he declared that he does not object to being called a Bolshevik, he should bear in mind that some of his followers might."

Holland was impervious to such hints that other N.Z.L.P. members did not share his opinions, and his initial parliamentary experience filled him with confidence and enthusiasm. In a mood of elation he wrote to Cocking:

"Well, as far as the Labor & Socialistic movement is concerned, we are sweeping along ... Peter Fraser & I put on record matter that had never previously been read in Hansard. On some occasions there was intense bitterness displayed by our opponents. They were almost flabbergasted when we told them we cheerfully accepted the brand of revolutionary socialist."

This brand had been accepted by Holland alone. His use of the plural, evidences that identification of the party with his own ideas which Holland made, to the embarrassment and annoyance of his colleagues. Revealing too,

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15. Ibid. p.874.
was Holland's coupling of Fraser's name with his own. Holland saw Fraser, elected for Wellington Central in October 1918, and himself, as the militant socialist vanguard within the N.Z.L.P. Holland's equation of the progress of the "Labor & Socialistic movement" with the mere enunciation of his theories in parliament, indicates his continuing interpretation of parliamentary action in terms of class conflict, and makes evident his naive faith in education and the inherent attractiveness of his own theories.

Important divergences of view within the Labour Party were remarked on when A.H. Hindmarsh, leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party died in November 1918. An anti-Labour member told the Legislative Council that Hindmarsh was often at odds with his own party, "because, wild as his own views appeared to the ordinary citizen, the views of the extremists of his party appeared wild to him." Holland did not disguise the fact that Hindmarsh and he belonged to different schools of labour thought.

For several years following 1917, hopes of world revolution exercised a strong influence on the attitudes of militant socialists in the N.Z.L.P. This influence was evidenced not only in a particular concern, such as Holland's belief that in other countries labour was moving towards "the New Day" and "New Zealand cannot afford to lag behind," but in a general emphasis on the international nature of the labour movement. This broadened international outlook and awareness was expressed in the addition in 1920 to the N.Z.L.P. platform of a section entitled "International Peace and Fraternity," and by Walter Nash's attendance as watching delegate for the N.Z.L.P. at the 1920 conference in Geneva, of the Second International. The internal reflection of hopes for world revolution was a surge of militant socialist confidence and dogmatism, which affected in particular the formulation of the

20. Hindmarsh was an Australian, a lawyer and solicitor, who had become associated with the labour movement in Wellington not long after the 1890 strike. He had been in Parliament since 1911, as member for Wellington South. N.Z.P.D. 1918, V.183, pp.343-344.
22. Ibid, p.357.
1919 N.Z.L.P. land policy, the party's attitude to the 1919 election, the
question of party leadership, and the general issue of the party's position
in relation to Marxist socialist theory.

The leaders in this reassertion of militant socialist confidence in the
truth of their theoretical analysis were Holland, Fraser and Semple. After
the March 1917 Russian revolution, Holland held that the revolution had only
begun, and that the Russian upheaval might change the whole trend of world
politics, but he was more concerned with its possible effect on Germany than
with developments in Russia. Fraser was less cautious, and in June 1918
praised:

"... the honest effort of the Bolsheviks to translate their life
principles into a permanent action ... To arise in the midst of a
world war, to overthrow the bloodiest autocracy the world has ever
known and to start to build from the ruins of that autocracy the founda­tions
of a superstructure of civilisation and social justice such as
the world has hitherto only known in the dreamings of its thinkers, is
surely a marvellous achievement."

At that time Holland was still uncertain whether the outcome would be
success or disaster. Until this question was resolved, he suspended final
judgement of the Bolshevik regime, though he was convinced that its outcome
would have a deeper influence on the world's future history that the outcome
of the world war, and he described it as labour's vanguard challenge to world
capitalism. Holland's uncertainty sprang from his long-held orthodox
Marxist belief that world revolution would emanate from Germany. Revolution
in Russia was outside his calculations. In October 1918 he predicted, as
"a psychological response" to the Russian revolution, the revolt of German
workers, followed by world revolution. "Every hour makes such a revolt a
propability," wrote Holland. This view of imminent world revolution accorded
with that of Lenin and most revolutionary socialists at this time. When
revolution occurred in Germany in November, these hopes seemed about to be
realised. The Worker announced, "The hoped for, but almost despaired of, has

27. M.W. 13 June 1917.
30. Ibid.
happened." Speaking in parliament, Holland had predicted this revolution a few days before it occurred, stating that once the minds of the people were diverted from war, world-wide working class revolution was bound to occur. At a Greymouth Anzac Day gathering he predicted European revolution and the doom of capitalism. When Germany's revolution failed, a failure apparent in the early months of 1919, Holland's disappointment was acute. He turned from a revolution that might have been to one that was, and by the end of 1919 was a champion of Soviet Russia. Significantly, he kept his praise until the general election was over, and he looked on Russian development as an inspiration, rather than an example.

Hopes for world revolution led to a resurgence of dogmatism within the N.Z.L.P. Holland, who had retained his membership of the Wellington S.D.P., which he saw as the propaganda party of socialism, bluntly stated that the Labour Party's platform merely indicated stepping stones to the objective of complete socialisation. Although the party was pledged to secure every possible immediate improvement, no one was to forget that the party's ultimate aim was social transformation. This was to be achieved without violence. As the Worker put it, Labour's policy was to be "one so radical as to be revolutionary in its effects, while the methods adopted are constitutional." Holland postulated a process of education leading to an intellectual revolution which would give the material revolution - a change of the governing class - a sure foundation, and make it a revolution without violence. He rejected the idea of an intellectual minority imposing its will on an unthinking majority.

In the immediate post-war period, Labour Party leaders, with the long-postponed general election in mind, turned with enthusiasm to organisation and propaganda. Both militant socialists and moderates hoped that the 1919
elections would be the occasion of the release of a long pent-up reaction against the government. According to Holland, voters would declare:

"... for Social Justice, for National Righteousness — and for a crushing defeat of the most dangerous Absolutism that has ever dared to raise in autocratic insolence a hydra-head on Australasian soil, and which has not hesitated to raise its head with the lie of a claim to be regarded as 'democratic' leaking desperately through its brazen lips." 41

So confident was he of electoral success that he warned the labour movement against opportunist politicians who might endeavour to cash in on labour victories.42 There were good grounds for optimism. The 1919 N.Z.L.P. conference in July terminated a year of remarkable progress. The stimulus of three by-election successes, those of Holland, Fraser and Semple, dissatisfaction with the government and rising prices, Labour's attractive policy and energetic organising campaign were cited as the reasons for the fact that membership had increased from 11,000 in 1918 to 21,000 in 1919.43 To facilitate organisation, a head office was established and M.J. Savage engaged as full time national secretary.44

The 1919 conference also considered a matter which revealed the beginnings of a rift between industrial and political labour movements, a division which Holland came to believe was the major source of labour weakness. Prior to a special licensing poll in April 1919, the Worker declared itself prohibitionist.45 At a public meeting Holland expressed disapproval of the Worker's attitude, explaining that the Labour Party was neutral on the liquor issue, though he personally favoured prohibition.46 The Worker editor, J.Kraig, who represented a new anti-political trend among unionists,47 replied that the Worker was not bound to N.Z.L.P. policy, and implied that Holland's attitude,

42. M.W. 8 Jan. 1919.
46. M.W. 9 April 1919.
47. He had been appointed early in 1919, not without some Labour Party protest. History of the Maoriland Worker. p.10; Minutes, Grey L.R.C. 31 Jan. 1919.
in asserting that it was the duty of unions to join the N.Z.L.P., was dictatorial. In fact, the Worker Company was pledged to support the principles and policy of the N.Z.L.P., and Holland brought the matter up at conference. Not satisfied with the assurance of the Worker board that support would be given in future, Holland moved that the N.Z.L.P. take steps to obtain representation on the Worker board, but this action was not taken, and party relations with the Worker and the industrial union interests that controlled it, continued to deteriorate. This incident revealed not only an incipient breach between political and industrial labour movements, but the matter at issue, the refusal of union leaders to accept Labour Party 'dictation.'

The peculiar nature of the reversion towards militancy and devotion to socialist theory associated with renewed hopes for world revolution, is clearly reflected in the attitude of militant socialists towards a land policy, the most important practical question the N.Z.L.P. faced in 1919. Holland, on the conference committee which drew up the land policy, pronounced this policy, advocating a tenure based on occupancy and use, a sound one. By this, Holland meant that he believed the policy to be both in harmony with principle, and attractive to electors, particularly, one would suppose, farmers. From this viewpoint it was a movement towards the formulation of an attractive practical policy. On the other hand, Holland still thought of farmers as capitalist exploiters, though not as bad as other elements, and in terms of previous labour policy in New Zealand, the 1919 land policy was the expression of a doctrinaire position, with emphasis on community, rather than farmer benefit. Holland and others of similar belief were, then, attempting in the land policy to reconcile two opposing tendencies, the doctrinaire and the practical. The policy was adopted without much comment, and remained to plague the party with problems of practical application and to alienate farmer support, for many years.

In Australia, Holland had taken little interest in the land question,
assuming that socialisation embraced land nationalisation, the holding of all land as common property, private ownership being abolished.\textsuperscript{53} Holland's world was urban and industrial, and it is significant that when he adopted an American socialist pamphlet for use as propaganda, about 1910, he deleted a section which dealt with the farmer.\textsuperscript{54} A modification by German theorists of the 1890s of Marx's doctrine of land nationalisation was receiving increasing attention among American socialists\textsuperscript{55} Kautsky had protested that no socialist had ever demanded that peasants should be expropriated, and that while large estates would be socialised, small farms would remain private property.\textsuperscript{56} The American argument, based on this revision, was that while a multitude of farmers were technically capitalists, they were actually "laborious toilers of the working class", and their logical position was membership of the working class party.\textsuperscript{57} Holland paid no heed to this contention.

Freehold had been the dominant form of land tenure in New Zealand,\textsuperscript{58} but in 1892 the Liberal Government, to assist small farmers, introduced lease-in-perpetuity and a graduated land tax. However, with the rise in small farmer prosperity in the late 1890s, agitation for the option of freehold increased. As represented by the Trades and Labour Councils and Independent Political Labour League of 1904, the labour movement opposed freehold and wanted retention of remaining Crown lands, and leasehold with periodic revaluation. They assumed that freehold favoured monopolists and brought poverty, that the land was the family estate of all, the Crown being trustee, and that large increases in land values increased the cost of living. Within the Councils there was a strong feeling in favour of land nationalisation and State absorption of unearned increment, views adopted from English land reformers. The New Zealand Socialist Party held similar views, Robert Hogg declaring

\textsuperscript{53} Radical 21 May, 24 Sept. 29 Oct. 1887; Australian Radical 24 March 1888, Our Commonwealth, Dec. 1887.
\textsuperscript{54} George R. Kirkpatrick. Mental Dynamite or Little Lessons to Learn. New York 1906, pp. 6-7 (Holland's marked copy).
\textsuperscript{57} Kirkpatrick op. cit. pp. 6-7.
\textsuperscript{58} For a brief history of land legislation see J. D. N. McDonald "New Zealand Land Legislation" Historical Studies. Vol. 5, No. 19, Nov. 1952, pp. 195-211.
that a man who held land must work it.\textsuperscript{59}

The land policies of the 1910 Labour Party, the N.Z.S.P. in 1911 and the U.L.P. in 1912, were centered around the general themes of leasehold, land values taxation and increased State intervention in land utilisation.\textsuperscript{60} The policy of the S.D.P. followed in this tradition, adding, not socialisation measures, but an item implying individual ownership, "improved farms as going concerns to be within the reach of all workers."\textsuperscript{61} Apparently the state was to act merely as pioneer. As well, the S.D.P. statement of principles included, "The working farmers are plundered as ruthlessly as are other workers,"\textsuperscript{62} a bow to revisionist theory. Over-riding all this was the socialisation objective with its implications of land nationalisation. Without the challenge of rural problems or farmer membership, the thinking of militant socialists on land policy in 1913 was superficial and confused.

Holland played no constructive role in the labour movement's realisation of its rural involvements. Soon after he arrived in New Zealand he ridiculed the suggestion put forward by J. Robertson, a N.Z.S.P. member of parliament, and secretary of the Wellington Dairy Workers' Union, that small farmers, in common with farm labourers, must be found a place in the labour movement.\textsuperscript{63} After the 1913 strike urban workers and farmers viewed each other with a hostility which was exacerbated by the existence of high war profits on primary products and the conscription issue. Nevertheless, there were a few farmer members of the political labour movement, who urged the mutual interests of farmers and labour,\textsuperscript{64} and as early as 1915 leaders of the United Federation of Labor were beginning to see that New Zealand, with its primary producing economy, had rural as well as urban problems in working class organisation.\textsuperscript{65} By 1919, Holland's hostility towards the farmer as a capitalist exploiter was fast becoming an anachronism within the N.Z.I.P.

\textsuperscript{59} "Report of Royal Commission on Land Tenure" A. to J. 1905; Vol. II, C-4, pp. 304, 308, 518, 524, 1282, 1283, 1289.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., p. 17.
\textsuperscript{63} Irvine "Militant Unions" p. 218.
\textsuperscript{64} M.W. 10 Dec. 1913, 6 Nov. 1913.
The land policy of the N.Z.L.P. at its formation in 1916 added nothing novel to labour land policy as set out in platforms since 1910, a situation which reflected the passivity of militant socialists. However, at the 1917 conference a successful attempt was made to bring the platform into greater harmony with the socialisation objective. A new clause was added to the platform:

"The extension of public ownership of national utilities and the speedy national control of the food supplies of the people where national ownership of an industry is affected ..." 67

The 1918 conference went further, adding "Establishment of State farms for the purpose of producing the peoples' foodstuffs". At the 1919 conference a new and detailed policy was adopted. Its most important provisions were:

" (2) The recognition of the interests of the whole community in land by - (a) A land tenure based on occupancy and use, which shall secure to the working farmer the full fruits of his labour and exertions. (b) The securing to the community of all values created by the community. (c) The elimination of exploitation - (1) of the working farmer by the institution of a State bank; (2) of the community by securing for it the rent of the land, now absorbed principally by the money-lending institutions ... (3) (a) A state valuation of all privately-owned land, such valuation to remain on record as the measure of present land-owners interest in land. (b) Land shall not be sold or transferred except to or from the State ..." 69

This policy was apparently formulated under the influence of American socialist land programmes. Although these programmes emphasised collective or co-operative land ownership and use, it being assumed that the economic tendency was towards elimination of small producers, the small farmer was to be allowed, under socialism, to continue to cultivate his land, as long as he exploited no one. The 1912 American Socialist Party programme stated that production was to be socialised, and occupancy and use would be the only title to land. This policy was a theoretical retreat from the Marxist position,

66. See Appendix 1.
68. 1918 Conferences, N.Z.L.P. Conf. p.29.
but in the context of the New Zealand labour movement it was a doctrinaire step, particularly when accompanied by the section stating that "Land shall not be sold or transferred except to or from the State", which was open to interpretation as a gradual socialisation measure. Again the dual nature of the policy is emphasised. In the realm of theory it was a device used by militant socialists to recognise the demands of a system of individual small land owners, but in fact it set out a far more militant socialist position than had ever been expounded in detail in New Zealand before.

Holland appears to have neither welcomed nor resisted the 1919 policy. His attitude was the result of a conflict between his conviction that as complete socialisation was the party's objective, a separate and detailed land policy was not of much importance, and his acceptance of the need, in order to make electoral progress, for some practical, attractive policy. Thus he accepted the land policy as sound, though disagreeing with its basic implication, that the farmer was a worker. From Holland's standpoint, this was an attitude akin to his acceptance of restraints on the expression of militant socialist opinion in order to secure unity with moderates, the acceptance of the means to achieve the end. Besides, Holland's was not the only opinion that mattered within the Labour Party, a situation which will be discussed in later chapters, and the initiative in policy alterations was not usually his. In 1917, holding that land socialisation was implied by the party's objective, Holland opposed overloading the platform with specific references to State farms and the like. He gave the organisation of agriculture little thought, assuming that the Labour Party would adopt some policy of State farming. Land, he assumed, would be acquired either by dispossessing landowners by legislation, or by purchase, after the unearned increment had been taxed away. Holland's announcement in parliament of these uncompromising plans for land acquisition, far more detailed and radical than those set out in the platform, emphasised, in the eyes of other party members, the necessity for detailed clarification of the party's attitude to land questions, and prompted the deliberations which led to the 1919 policy. There were other factors, a wish to crystallise hitherto vague thinking and to bring

75. N.Z.P.D. 1918, V.183, p.327.
the platform into alignment with the socialisation objective, the fact that returned soldier land settlement had raised the land question acutely, and the general consideration that the labour movement's leaders were becoming increasingly conscious that they must have rural support to attain their objects.

In its dual nature, its endeavour to embrace both socialisation and the recognition of individual holdings, the 1919 land policy indicates the basic quandry of militant socialists within the N.Z.L.P. - how could socialisation be combined with attractive practical policy? Holland did not see the problem in these terms, for it was his conviction that socialisation itself was, or ought to be, an attractive practical policy. Nevertheless he was aware that given the attitude of the electorate, it would have to be brought gradually, by education, and practical concessions towards its ignorance, to a position in which it would accept the fullness of socialisation. Although the 1919 land policy, reflecting the doctrinaire reaction which followed the Russian revolution, was the most radical detailed land policy ever expounded in New Zealand, Holland who had always assumed the implementation of complete socialisation, believed that the policy represented a minimum of doctrinal application. Its proponents, including Holland, thought it both attractive and practical. It proved to be neither, but the party's leaders were slow to admit this, and the land policy continued, throughout the 1920s, to confront the party with major and perplexing problems.

In August 1919, shortly before the N.Z.L.P's first general election, Holland became chairman, or leader, of the Parliamentary Labour Party. Holland and McCombs were nominated for the office, and in the ballot each received an equal number of votes. Lots were drawn and Holland was successful, a success in which chance and circumstances, as well as Holland's personal qualities, played an important part. It so happened that in 1919 the P.L.P. had three militant socialist members, Holland, Fraser and Semple, and three moderates, McCombs, Walker and Paul. This did not reflect a similar balance of opinion among Labour supporters, for militant socialists were a minority.

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76. M.W. 29 May, 13 Nov. 1918.
77. It seems probable that Fraser and Semple voted for Holland, while Paul and Walker voted for McCombs.
78. Paul. Humanism in Politics, p.70 says that lots were drawn, as did T.A. Field in Parliament. N.Z.P.D. 1919, V.184,p.1154. Another story was that a coin had been tossed. M.W. 10 Sept. 1919.
in the labour movement generally. The fact that three militants held Labour seats attested to their personal prominence within the Labour Party; and to special circumstances in their electorates, not to a large body of militant socialist voters. However, when it came to the question of leadership, decided by P.L.P. members among themselves, militant socialists held half the votes and had strong reasons for nominating a leader. Their confidence in 1919 was high, buoyed up by electoral success and hopes for world revolution. When the labour parliamentary group had been formed in 1915, no militant had questioned publicly the leadership of the moderate Hindmarsh. It was not until April 1918 that Holland made guarded public criticisms of Hindmarsh. Militant socialists had been content to defer to moderate leadership while the weakness of their position and the demands of unity required it. However, three electoral successes in 1918 and the prospect of world revolution gave them a sense of growing strength. Leadership in the labour movement was their objective and they could not neglect the opportunity to claim it, particularly when the pattern of events, national and international, seemed to be pointing to the realisation of their ambitions. Nevertheless, militant socialists were not anxious to alienate moderates, and it is significant that from 1917 to 1920, the period of re-assertion of the views of militant socialists, the national presidency of the N.Z.L.P. was held by moderates Walker and Paul. This sharing of authority within the party avoided the estrangement of moderates. Some moderates did not appreciate the real radicalism of Holland's convictions, others, who found his views distasteful, accepted his leadership in the interests of unity, with the knowledge that the office of chairman was subject to sessional elections and his power limited by, and activities subject to, majority vote in caucus, the national executive and annual conference. At the same time there can be no question that Holland's gifts as a speaker, his energy, confidence and force of character gave him a natural pre-eminence. Moreover, though its extent is impossible to gauge, there was a strong feeling, which will be analysed in a later chapter, among at least a section of the rank and file, in favour of Holland's leadership of the party, even before Hindmarsh's death.

79. For instance, Semple was defeated in the 1919 elections.
80. M.W. 24 April 1918.
In its first session under Holland's leadership, the main concern of the Labour Party was to denounce Liberalism, claiming that it was identical with Reform, criticise Reform, and take every opportunity to expound the Labour programme in an effort to gain pre-election publicity. The Dominion conceded that much of what Labour said about the Government was true, but maintained that it had all been said before and was now tiresome. In keeping with Labour's equalitarian ideals, speaking time was divided evenly among party members, each dealing with subjects in which he was particularly competent. Holland's particular interests were international questions, raised by the Versailles Treaty whose ratification Labour opposed, and education. Holland thought education of utmost importance, holding that everything depended on knowledge and that a higher degree of knowledge would make tyranny and slavery impossible. He assumed that education, together with electoral reform, particularly proportional representation, could transform the nature of political man, and lead to intelligent popular control of legislation.

Initially, in 1919, Holland's leadership of the Labour Party was, in a sense, more formal than real. From the viewpoint of his colleagues, he was chairman of the party, a role much less influential than that of leader, and a parliamentary observer noted, after the 1919 elections, that Holland was obviously not recognised by new Labour members as leader in the accepted sense. The press, particularly the Dominion which took the attitude that the Labour Party had been captured by its revolutionary wing, did not treat Holland as leader of a party, but as one of an insignificant band of extremists. However, in the House, Holland, through the force of his remarks, and personality, was achieving a leadership in Labour protest, a leadership whose reality may be gauged from the increasing personal hostility of opponents.

82. N.Z.P.D. 1919, V.184, pp.242-249,274 (Holland), 259-263 (McCombs) 268 (Fraser.)
83. Dom. 8 Sept. 1919.
86. Ibid. p.322.
87. O.W. 20 July 1920.
88. Dom. 4, 14 July 1919.
A parliamentary observer noted in 1920 Holland's tendency to work himself up to a fever of indignation and his penchant for arousing antagonism. He stung Massey into declaring that he thought no one cared two pins for anything Holland said or did. The Otago Witness referred to Holland's habit of delivering set orations against capitalism and its associated evils, speeches which were repetitious, pointless and tedious. At first, those who had never heard him speak before were startled by his vehemence, but his outlook was so different from their own that he made little impression except to antagonise. H. Atmore summed up this situation when he remarked, at Holland's death, "One did not see, as one sees today, that he spoke so strongly because he felt so strongly." Although bringing him a prominence which among his opponents amounted to notoriety, his dogmatism and quickness to anger, together with his political inexperience soon proved themselves liabilities. Throughout the 1919 session the Labour Party was frequently accused of disloyalty, extremism and revolutionary plotting to dispossess property owners. Holland was tired of the Bolshevik bogey, and said so, and he also declared that he did not object to being termed a Bolshevist, for all it meant was support for majority rule. To his opponents it meant anarchy, expropriation and murder and his declaration was used to discredit him. Within the party the term was resented also, J.K. Archer going so far as to state that Labour "was not defending such men as Semple, Webb and Holland." In parliament, Holland was easily goaded into making heated or rash remarks and into departing from the point of debate. His tart and penetrating remarks, his blunt demands for better wages and conditions, his willingness to believe the worst of the "exploiters" and the relentless severity of his cast of mind, did not endear him to political opponents. L.M. Isitt, declared, "There was never the ring of humane interest in what he uttered, but always the cold, callous, calculating political agitator." The day before the session concluded,
Holland spoke on his favourite subject, militarism. He made charges relating to a court martial of a Lieutenant Crampton, whom Holland maintained was guilty of maltreatment of conscientious objectors. He then referred to the activities of Miss Ettie Rout, who had opened premises in Paris to make "safe and suitable provision for the sexual needs of the troops." Earlier, Massey had denied that Miss Rout had acted with the Government's consent, but Holland, presumable in a pre-election attempt to discredit the Government, raised the matter again and accused the Government of complicity. Sir James Allen turned on Holland:

"The honourable gentleman has exhibited tonight, by his speech and by his attitude before this country, three characteristics - first the spirit of vindictiveness, and that spirit of vindictiveness he has displayed with regard to Lieutenant Crampton; another thing that the honourable gentleman has exhibited right throughout the war is a spirit of disloyalty to his King and disloyalty to his country, and disloyalty to the men who went from this country to fight for freedom; lastly - and I am sorry to have to say this - I am bound to characterize him, from what he has done tonight, as a reveller in filth - vindictive, disloyal and a reveller in filth."  

Allen's remarks hurt Holland deeply. Even in his later years he found it difficult to endure criticism in parliament, wincing visible at every thrust. In this case, he had paid the price of his folly in making accusations without proof. Holland's first session as P.L.P. chairman taught him much. He was seldom again so rash or dogmatic in the House. Furthermore, debate on practical political questions had disturbed his belief in the simplicity of the process of reform. He had begun to see that reform involved complex and subtle problems, both within and outside the party. Yet it was typical of Holland, that he was proud of his efforts, and boasted that Labour's performance in the 1919 session was "the best ever recorded in a British Parliament by a handful of men."  

100. In 1919 he wrote Armageddon or Calvary op.cit. and Boy Conscriptio and Camp Morality, Greymouth 1919.  
103. Ibid. p.1429.  
104. O.W. 11 Nov. 1919.  
After the session ended, the election campaign began in earnest. Ward's withdrawal from the National Government made the contest a three-cornered one, the Liberal Party producing a programme which included nationalisation measures, in the hope of capturing the worker vote. The Labour Party nominated fifty-three candidates, and Holland predicted that it would emerge from the elections as either the dominant party, or holding the balance of power. Labour contested the election on the basis of its declared objective and platform, paying particular attention to criticism of the Liberal Party, which, it was feared, would take Labour votes. This attitude followed the lines of Holland's assessment in 1915 of the political effects of the war. On class grounds, he had predicted a widespread reaction against Reform at the next election, a reaction which would benefit Labour, if not confused by the presence of the Liberal Party. Labour's attitude in 1919 reflects the continued acceptance within the party of this militant socialist prediction of electoral trends. In fact, this prediction proved incorrect. The Reform Party, whose campaign centered on assertions that the Labour Party was disloyal, and akin to Bolshevism, contrasting this with the Empire-loving virtues of Massey, strengthened its position at the election, winning 46 seats at the expense of the Liberal Party which was reduced to 20. Labour also gained at the expense of the Liberals, increasing its representation from five to eight. Although Semple and Walker lost their seats, M.J. Savage, D.G. Sullivan, E.J. Howard, W.E. Parry and F.N. Bartram were elected. Electoral boundary alterations and the sudden death of the Liberal member for Buller, allowed Holland to retain a section of the old Grey electorate in his new Buller electorate centering on the town of Westport. Holland won Buller, despite the efforts of the Rev. Howard Elliott of the P.P.A. who came to Westport in an endeavour to secure Holland's defeat. Maintaining that

109. Labour's Chief Planks Explained op.cit.
110. O.D.T. 8 Sept. 1919.
in Buller the question of loyalty transcended that of religion, Elliott supported Holland's Liberal opponent, a Catholic.\textsuperscript{114} Holland's majority in Buller came mainly from mining areas, those which had formerly supported the Liberal member, and those, previously in the Grey electorate which had supported Holland before.\textsuperscript{115} Holland was pleased with his new electorate. It showed every prospect of being a safe seat, and Holland was an admirer of the spectacular scenery of the West Coast, in praise of which he wrote many of his verses. He moved his home from Wellington to Westport in 1920.

The trend towards defections from Liberal right and left wings which had been obvious in the 1914 election was exhibited clearly in the Liberal decline of 1919 in which Ward himself was defeated. Most Liberal defections were to Labour, a tendency which had been obscured in 1914 by the Liberal-Labour understanding. In 1919 Labour almost trebled its total 1914 votes, receiving 130,000 votes, 24\% of the Dominion total. A Labour advance had been expected by political observers, but nothing of such magnitude.\textsuperscript{116} The main reasons for Labour's spectacular increase in voting support were that for the first time Labour was fully independent from any Liberal alliance, that its large number of candidates allowed Labour support widespread expression, and that Labour's protests struck responsive chords in those who were dissatisfied with the Government.

So far as militant socialists were concerned, the election led to two opposed conclusions which illustrate an aspect of the conflict between the wish to adhere to theory and the need to recognise the immediate demands and lessons of a particular political environment. It is obvious, pursuing one line of analysis, that militant socialists interpreted the 1919 election result as confirming their theoretical position. They had seen the election as a straight-out fight between labour and capitalism,\textsuperscript{117} and Holland had welcomed the result with apparent delight, describing it as a great Labour triumph against misrepresentation.\textsuperscript{118} Holland and Fraser drew from the result the conclusion that it was possible for Labour to succeed politically, without

\textsuperscript{114} \textit{M.W.} 14 Jan. 1920; Mr. Howard Elliott's Attack on the King. \textit{op.cit.} p.7.
\textsuperscript{115} "General Election 1919. Return showing Votes... at each Polling place..." \textit{A.to J.} 1921-22, Vol.III, H-33A, p.18.
\textsuperscript{117} \textit{M.W.} 3 Dec. 1919.
\textsuperscript{118} \textit{M.W.} 7,14,28 Jan. 1920; \textit{N.Z.P.D.} 1920, V.186, p.99.
sacrificing any militant socialist principles. Yet, while these affirmations were being made, the election result was also the cause of disquiet. Although Labour's total vote was greatly increased, the party won only three more seats, and over-optimistic supporters, judging by this criteria, were despondent, for they had expected many more electoral victories. Dispersion of effort over fifty-three candidates had taxed severely financial resources, enthusiasm and energy. Supporters who had cherished hopes of quick success lost interest, and inertia spread among the rank and file.

The optimism, and hopes of quick success, which the election result dispelled, were, it is argued, the outcome of the widespread acceptance in Labour circles of at least the conclusions of that militant socialist interpretation of political trends which was voiced by Holland in 1915 and clearly revealed in Labour's pre-election attitude. The assumption that electors, at last aware, through the horrors of war, and the Government's war-time policy, of the truth of the socialist arraignment of capitalism, would repudiate the Reform Party - in militant socialist eyes the agent of capitalist political control - proved false. Instead of being consigned to political oblivion, the 'agents of capitalism' were strengthened. It is argued that the effects of this situation on the position of militant socialists within the N.Z.L.P. were of profound importance. Despite Labour's successes, the predictions of these socialists, summed up in the election eve announcement, "Capitalism's historic mission is accomplished," were flatly contradicted by the facts. To militant socialists, this occurrence offered several lessons. It meant that, adhering to a system of preconceptions, they had seriously misjudged public reactions during the war. More importantly, in formulating a policy, particularly with regard to unity with the moderates, from 1914 onward, militant socialists had been deeply influenced by their assumption of an imminent electoral rejection of the 'parties of capitalism.' In suggesting if not proving that this assumption was false, the 1919 election result hit at the very basis of the militant socialist conception of the Labour Party as an emergency arrangement to ensure preparedness for capitalism's final crisis. The continued and strengthened existence of the Reform Government must have

120. For details of this in the Westland electorate see Anderson to M.J. Savage 19 Feb. 1920; Grey L.P. Letters; Minutes, Westland L.R.C. 6 Nov. 1920. The meetings of the Westland L.R.C. on 17 July 14 August 9 Oct. and 4 Dec. 1920 lapsed for want of a quorum.
121. M.W. 26 Nov. 1919.
been a bitter blow to those who held such a conception. Holland avoided the issue by emphasising the undoubted success of Labour, and by claiming that this indicated that success could be achieved on militant socialist terms. As well as indicating the adaptability and strength of Holland's faith, this reaction was associated with the prevailing atmosphere of hopes for world revolution. It also reveals the extent of Holland's commitment, both in terms of loyalty and intellectual standpoint, to the N.Z.L.P. as a unity, that is, a compromise between militants and moderates. His reaction amounts to an implied acceptance of a gradualist rather than a revolutionary position, an acknowledgement, conscious or not, that the electorates' failure to reject capitalism had not only removed the major justification for the policy of militant socialists after 1914, but had seriously questioned a basic assumption of militant socialist action. The 1919 result shook, not only the confidence of militant socialists in themselves, but also the confidence of others in the N.Z.L.P. in their judgement and leadership. The prominence of these socialists in the N.Z.L.P. had been associated with their claim to know the line of march ahead, their personal confidence and strength in their faith and their ability to communicate to others, if not the detail of their beliefs, their conviction in imminent success. This position was adversely affected by the 1919 election result and, despite the resurgence of socialist theorising which took place up to 1921, it is from this election that the gradual waning of the prestige and influence of the analysis, attitudes and opinions of militant socialists within the N.Z.L.P. may be traced.

Despite the lessons proffered by the 1919 election result, and implicit acceptance of gradualism, men such as Holland, were absorbed between 1919 and 1921 in clarifying their intentions on assuming office, neglecting the necessity of attracting votes which were needed before their plans could be implemented. This development was remote from the concerns of the majority of workers and from the political exigencies of which members of the N.Z.L.P., including militant socialists, were becoming increasingly aware. The main factors which led militant socialists to re-examine and clarify both their theoretical position and plans for its practical application were the hopes of world revolution associated with revolution in Russia, the anti-political attitude of industrial militants, deterioration in New Zealand's economic position in 1921-22, and criticism from a revolutionary, communist left-wing. In particu-
ular, it was the militant socialists' concern to conciliate an increasingly intransigent and militant industrial unionist movement which led to this revival of emphasis on socialist theory, an endeavour to clarify the meaning and application of socialist theory so as to support a political conclusion and to justify the position of the N.Z.L.P. To the extent that its object was to prevent militant unionist defections, the revival of theorising had a very practical aspect. Nevertheless, "divisions upon philosophic aspects of the Socialist movement" were a constant annoyance to those N.Z.L.P. members who had no great interest in theory and saw no need for the "actual work" of the party to be hindered by such divisions. 122 Although the growth of this attitude was slowly pushing theoretical considerations towards the periphery of party concern, it did not solve the immediate problem of disagreements within the labour movement.

An important influence on the 1919 election result was Reform's use of the Bolshevik bogey. Fear of this overcame farmers' annoyance with a government which appeared to favour urban interests. 123 It brought businessmen into closer alliance with Reform and hastened the conversion of right-wing Liberals. Late in 1918 the Round Table observer reported that, "The coalition of Reform and Liberal having failed to rise to the great occasion, people are beginning to say that it is time to give Labour a trial," 124 but just prior to the election he remarked that the community viewed Labour with distrust. 125 This change in public opinion was associated with concerted anti-Labour propaganda from Reform sources, which utilised industrial unrest and the statements of Labour leaders, to alarm electors. Much was made of a post-war strike wave, the "go-slow" and a new unionist trend expressed in the formation of the Alliance of Labour in January 1919. The Alliance, influenced by English syndicalism, emphasised industrial unionism and direct action as a means of achieving working class emancipation. By mid-1919 organised industrial militants had adopted the view that capitalism must be abolished by union agency, not reformed by political action. 126 This attitude hindered

126. Stone "Trade Unionism" pp.43-52.
N.Z.L.P. growth and activity in the 1920s, not only by depriving the party of much unionist support, but by associating in the public mind, the labour movement and the threat of revolutionary extremism. Accusations that a Labour government would act as the Bolsheviks had done, were strongly denied by the party's moderates during the 1919 campaign, but these charges were supported with quotations from Holland, Semple and Fraser. After the election, the sympathetic interest of militant socialists in Russian development became even more apparent. In February 1920 Holland delivered a lecture on the achievements of Bolshevism, concluding his address with a lavish tribute:

"Through the blood-red way of revolution, rendered inevitable by the policies of the enemies of the people and the historic processes which belong to exploitation, oppression and absolutism, Russia had attained to the highest altitude in the records of human progress (as her economic achievements showed), and the light of these achievements was destined to illumine the world and to leave Russia flaming like a star of the first magnitude in the constellation of nations."  

Holland also noted the practical application of Marxist theory as described by Lenin. He was impressed by Lenin's dictum that compulsion was necessary in the transition period between capitalism and socialism. More important was his acknowledgement of Lenin's advice regarding revolution, so slow in coming in Western countries. Lenin's advice, justifying his own policy, was to proceed cautiously, and if necessary, at times retreat. Holland, forced by political circumstances to temporise regarding the achievement of the social revolution, was justified in terms of Leninist expediency, but this temporising incurred severe criticism from communist and industrial-unionist elements in the labour movement.

Even before the Bolshevik revolution, there were those who thought the

129. Annotated report of Holland's lecture. "The Russian Revolution" (H.P.)
131. Ibid. pp.28-29.
militant socialist leaders of the N.Z.L.P. insufficiently revolutionary in outlook.\textsuperscript{132} Formed in December 1918 to encourage a sympathetic attitude towards the Russian revolution, the New Zealand Marxian Association,\textsuperscript{133} forerunner of the Communist Party, soon clashed with the Labour Party and particularly Holland. Moses Baritz, a lecturer brought by the Association late in 1919 from Australia, attacked the N.Z.L.P. as not class conscious and unworthy of working class support. Aspersions were cast on Holland's integrity as a militant socialist, it being claimed that he had abandoned his former professions, to which Holland replied with a declaration of unchanged faith. The Marxian Association claimed that the leaders of the Labour Party were "the Kerenskys and Scheidermanns of New Zealand", who, in the 1919 election campaign had stated that the N.Z.L.P. was neither a class nor a revolutionary party, and who could not define what they meant by 'socialism'. The Association asserted that when it achieved power the N.Z.L.P. would become merely a committee for managing the affairs of the bourgeoisie, and maintained, in opposition to Holland's view, that Marx had predicted a violent rather than a peaceful revolution.\textsuperscript{134}

Peter Fraser's reply, on behalf of the Labour Party, to these charges, summed up what militant socialists in the N.Z.L.P. took to be their position. Fraser claimed that the N.Z.L.P. was just as extreme as any socialist party, but that it had to consider practicable reforms in existing circumstances. He pointed out to the Marxian Association that Marx, Engels and Lenin had indicated that their theories were not rigid dogmas, but lines of action. Unity was the first essential.\textsuperscript{135} The declarations of both Fraser and Holland, in the face of Marxian Association criticism reveal with striking clarity the terms of the reconciliation militant socialists within the N.Z.L.P. had attempted to make between the application of theory and the dictates of the immediately practicable. The fact that it was being subjected to left wing

\textsuperscript{132} Powell "Working Class Party" op.cit. p.2.
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid. pp.3-4.
\textsuperscript{134} Moses Baritz versus H.E. Holland. op.cit. pp.4-7,11,13-14; O.D.T. 17 Jan. 1920; M.W. 14,28 Jan. 24 March 14,28 July 1920; Minutes, Wellington S.D.P. 8 Jan. 1920; Communist (Sydney) 1 July 1921.
\textsuperscript{135} M.W. 11 Aug. 1920.
revolutionary criticism suggests that the N.Z.L.P. was not, as Fraser claimed, as extreme, in its theoretical position, as any socialist party. In effect what Fraser was claiming was that from his viewpoint, the N.Z.L.P. was holding as extreme position as was consistent with a realistic estimate of the situation in New Zealand, a situation which required generally acceptable legislative proposals and the retention of unity with the moderates. In essence, the militant socialist leaders of the N.Z.L.P. were following Lenin, while the Marxian Association was the New Zealand counterpart of left-wing "super-revolutionists" whose criticism Lenin condemned.\(^\text{136}\) Lenin's practical approach to Soviet problems was not without influence on the N.Z.L.P., for his post-revolutionary theory contained elements, relating to the principle of expediency,\(^\text{137}\) which harmonised with trends within the N.Z.L.P. Lenin's advocacy of participation in bourgeois parliaments, and of tacking, manoeuvring and compromise, if interpreted broadly enough, and indeed outside a communist context, could allow such sensitive doctrinaires as Holland to claim orthodoxy while hastening, as Lenin advised "to adapt our tactics to every change that is called forth by something other than our class, or our efforts."\(^\text{138}\)

Adherence to theory and pursuit of the practical demands of adaptation to circumstances could not be reconciled in this manner for long, for they were rapidly drawing apart. From the time of Holland's entry into parliament, he was both militant socialist and reformer, at one moment postulating a social revolution, at another accepting in practice the capitalist framework, in order to press for improvements within it. This was not a surprising duality, but it led to a great deal of confusion, which Holland never resolved completely.

The major factor causing anxiety among N.Z.L.P. leaders between 1919 and 1922, was an anti-political ferment and a revival of socialist theorising in the industrial union movement. Industrial unrest and criticism of political

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136. Lenin *Soviets at Work*. pp.28-29. He made a detailed denunciation of these elements in *'Left-Wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, published 1920.
action were occasioned by dissatisfaction with gains secured under the arbitration system, and by the failure of the Labour Party, particularly in relation to militant socialist predictions, to grasp power for the workers. Important too, was the effect of the labour shortage, occasioned by the war, in restoring the bargaining strength and confidence of unions. The Alliance of Labour and the N.Z. Workers' Union demanded, often in militant socialist terms, a greater share for workers in the national wealth. To achieve this, they placed their faith in industrial unionism and collective bargaining backed by the threat of direct action.\footnote{139} Moreover, they planned to convert the Labour Party to their way of thinking, maintaining that it had forgotten that its duty was to work for the abolition of party politics. In June 1920, the Worker called for a thorough recasting of the party's "ridiculously amateurish and inadequate" platform, to conform with the views of "militant industrial organisations",\footnote{140} and at the N.Z.L.P. conference in July, representatives of these organisations attempted to secure this aim. In an attempt to gain control of the executive, industrial malcontents stressed a proposal that no member of parliament should hold an official position on the national executive. Holland argued that this proposal infringed membership rights, and that there was little danger of Labour parliamentarians forgetting their class mission, because the enemies of the working class would not let them.\footnote{141} The excluding remit was passed, but Holland secured its committal to a party ballot, probably aware that this would favour the status quo, and party branch, rather than affiliated union, opinion.\footnote{142} Because of the strong feeling against members of parliament holding executive positions, Fraser tendered to the conference his resignation as president. This appears to have been a shrewd gamble by Fraser on his prestige, calculated to turn the tables on the industrialists by making a personal issue of what had been put forward in the abstract, and it proved successful. He was persuaded to withdraw his resignation,\footnote{143} and the party ballot decided the question in favour of members' executive participation.\footnote{144} Thus, by skilful manoeuvring, Fraser

\footnote{139. Stone "Trade Unionism" pp.53-56; M.W. 8 Sept. 20 Oct. 1920.} 
\footnote{140. M.W. 16 June, 7,14 July 1920.} 
\footnote{141. M.W. 11 Aug. 1920.} 
\footnote{142. For comment on party ballots see Overacker op.cit. p.719.} 
\footnote{143. M.W. 11,18 Aug. 1920.} 
\footnote{144. M.W. 8 Dec. 1920, 16 March 1921.}
and Holland, had retrieved a situation in which the industrialists first move for control of the party had actually succeeded.

Though resisting unionist domination, N.Z.L.P. leaders were fully aware of the need for unionist support and they took immediate steps to conciliate militant industrialists. A statement that the party stood for "superseding capitalism by an industrial democracy" was added to the platform, and in parliament attempts were made to take action which would please industrial malcontents. Holland, and other party members, made occasional remarks which apparently condoned direct action, and, in 1920, the party attempted to amend an arbitration measure so as to secure recognition of national union organisations. Failure in this, provoked Labour members into an apparent extremism, whose impulse was one of annoyance with the frustration of their designs to win the approval of industrial unionists.

Since 1907, Holland had been a champion of industrial and political unity, and his main concern in 1920 and 1921 was to convince unionists of the need for political action through the Labour Party. He maintained that labour's enemies were working to prevent industrial organisations participating in the political struggle to end class rule, and that there was no excuse for disunity in the face of inevitable and imminent world crisis. However, neither Holland's arguments nor the Labour Party's performance impressed militant industrial unionists, whose anti-political declarations continued. On the theoretical level this went against Holland's view of the prerequisites for the achievement of the social revolution, one big party and one big union, with unity between them. Particularly after the harmony which had existed between industrial and political movements in 1918, division was retrogressive. The attitude of militant unionists also hampered the growth of the Labour Party. While a growing number of unionists were voting Labour, Holland and other party leaders were aware that the attitude of the Alliance of Labour and N.Z. Workers' Union militated against this trend. Moreover these unions' refusal to co-operate deprived the Labour Party of substantial financial

147. Ibid., V.186, pp.439-442, 445.
support from affiliation fees, and occasioned considerable embarrassment and perplexity, for, seeking to prove in parliament its practical value to unionists, the party could obtain no single directive from the unionist movement. This industrial-political breach, based on the profession of differing interpretations of how the social revolution might be achieved, was not without undertones of a unionist claim for the control of the labour movement, as the proponents of militant industrial unionism, "Big Jim" Roberts and Arthur Cooke, worked to construct an industrial world of their own. They had determined ambition, and Roberts' powerful personality was such as to make him and Holland natural antagonists. If Holland's was the finer temper, Roberts possessed the cruder strength.

Holland's answer to the problem of unionist intransigence was to insist that all unions should affiliate to the Alliance of Labour and the Labour Party, but he made no public suggestion as to how the obstacles to this ideal might be overcome. Privately, he hoped that economic circumstances would teach a lesson he had failed to instil by precept. He believed that unions would prove powerless in the face of depression, and wage cuts, firstly because "all the economic inevitabilities" were against them, and secondly because of their poor organisation. Holland hoped that the recession obvious from mid-1921 would force unionists to realise unity among themselves and work in collaboration with the political movement. The depression of 1921-22 did tend to encourage these developments, but it did not prove to be the economic catalycism Holland had expected. His reasoning, however, was valid, for when unprecedented depression occurred in the 1930s, it issued in a unified New Zealand Federation of Labour and in a Labour Government.

Attention was drawn again to the question of relations between industrial and political movements by the announcement in January 1921 by the Australian Labor Party executive, that an Australasian Trade Union Congress would be held in Melbourne, to unify party and unions, and decide on the immediate steps Labour would take on coming to power. The Worker was enthusiastic.

150. M.W. 23 Nov. 1921.
153. Holland to Cocking 29 Dec. 1921 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
and N.Z.L.P. leaders, interested in the problems to be discussed, and anxious to co-operate with the industrialists, supported participation.\textsuperscript{156} Holland, who looked forward to Australasian labour unity, attended as New Zealand representative.\textsuperscript{157} At the congress, Holland was a member of a committee appointed to devise ways and means to bring about socialisation of industry. When this committee presented its report, emphasising parliamentary means, left-wing delegates protested that, as a platform, it retained the capitalist political state and provided only in words for worker control of industry. They moved an addendum stating that the parliamentary system was to be used as a temporary propaganda weapon only. Holland defended the report as being in harmony with revolutionary, socialist, and Marxian principles, and described the suggested addendum as a pious resolution, again indicating the terms of his reconciliation between theory and practical politics. Predicting the most crucial period in world history, Holland placed unity above all other considerations. He claimed that labour would soon get the opportunity of taking control of production, distribution and exchange, but feared that this opportunity might find labour unprepared.\textsuperscript{158}

In lectures in Australia, Holland expounded his view of the course working class political development would take. He believed that the Australasian working class movement had to pass through a dictatorship of the proletariat phase, based on the workers' own political organisation, before it could have industrial democracy. He declared that it was far better for a labour party to remain a fighting minority and keep its socialisation objective than to become a government and do nothing. To Holland, taking over the capitalist state, meant to turn over all its institutions to workers. This could not be done unless a Labour government was backed by the power of the organised working class which could enforce its decisions. He also believed that unless a political party was prepared to implement "socialism" on becoming the government, it could not claim to stand in the interests of the workers.\textsuperscript{159}

\textsuperscript{156} M.W. 9 Feb. 1921.
\textsuperscript{157} M.W. 30 March, 18 May 1921.
\textsuperscript{159} Socialist, 17 June 1921; Communist 3 June 1921.
Holland's declarations in Australia in 1921 seem to indicate a standpoint very little different from his 1914-15 belief. The essence of his 1921 remarks was that unity was a first essential, so that, in a situation of imminent world crisis, a labour party could be prepared to act on the workers' behalf in administering the dictatorship of the proletariat. From one viewpoint, it is obvious that this position took no account of the blow struck by the 1919 election result at Holland's conception of the Labour Party, and at his theoretical assumptions. At the same time, his emphasis on world crisis as a solvent may indicate that the 1919 result had demonstrated to him that an electoral 'revolution' would be intolerably slow in coming, although, publicly, he had welcomed the 1919 result as a triumph, and as proof that electoral success could be achieved on militant socialist terms. Holland was aware that the social revolution must be based on widespread conviction, and his 1921 declarations reveal the nature of his dilemma. He saw that the Labour Party could not implement socialisation unless supported by the workers, but he held also that a party could not claim to stand in the interests of the workers unless it was prepared to implement socialisation immediately. This theorising ignored the terms of compromise on which Labour Party unity was retained, and left unsolved the basic problem of how militant socialists could act in a situation in which support for their views was very limited. It may be significant that Holland's theoretical excursion took place in the congenial atmosphere of militant socialist organisations in Australia, where Holland was remote from the pressure of practical problems and from the risk of alienating moderates. As it was, it was Australian communist critics he incensed. They claimed that N.Z.L.P. tactics and declarations did not accord with Holland's professions, a contention which was, in fact, an unintentional comment on Holland's influence within the N.Z.L.P., as much as a criticism. Condemning him as a Menshevik counter-revolutionary, they pointed out that the Communist Party of New Zealand was formed at Easter 1921 to fight Holland's opportunist tactics. In fact, Holland had adopted a Leninist attitude, retaining his militant socialist theory, but prepared to concede in practice that politics was the art of the possible. This was either 'expediency' or 'opportunism', good or bad, according to one's point of view.

The problem of conciliating industrial militants remained. As depression

160. *International Communist* 11, 25 June 1921; *Communist* 1 July 1921.
PATEA ELECTION
THE REAL SHAM FIGHT!

"Two against One" A Three-sided Contest—We don't think

BILL MASSEY TO HARRY HOLLAND: "You keep going, Harry, you are my greatest asset."
HARRY HOLLAND TO BILL MASSEY: "Right-o, Bill, we'll see you through."

Vote for MORRISON and Liberalism

A Liberal cartoon comment on Holland's intervention in the Patea by-election campaign in April 1921.
worsened in 1921, the Labour Party became increasingly concerned to find a solution to economic problems. During the 1921 session, Holland emphasised the nationalisation of industries,\(^{161}\) no doubt with an eye to the support of estranged industrial unionists. He held that nationalisation - national ownership - was not socialisation - use by the people for the benefit of the people. Citing Marx and Engels, and Russian practice, Holland maintained that nationalisation was the road to socialism, inevitable in the transition period from capitalism to social democracy.\(^{162}\) However as depression deepened in 1922, Labour's attention swung from theoretical concerns to immediate practical problems, protest against salary reductions and inadequate provision for the unemployed,\(^{163}\) a development whose nature will be examined later in relation to the depression of the 1930s. Despite P.L.P. efforts, militant industrialists were still antagonistic. The politicians had a stronger hold on the 1921 conference than on that of 1920. In 1921 they were prepared for conflict with industrialists, Holland's attendance at the Australian union congress had created a favourable impression among unionists, and economic stringency made moderate unionist delegates less willing to accept the arguments of direct actionists. Nevertheless, industrial unionist and revolutionary socialist elements made several bids to alter the platform at the 1921 conference. They proposed to curb the influence of members of parliament, declare that economic power preceded political power, bind candidates to affirm their belief in the class struggle, and proclaim N.Z.L.P. allegiance to the principles and programme of the revolutionary working class.\(^{164}\) Although he agreed in principle with the latter two propositions, Holland was too much aware of their divisive possibilities to support them as N.Z.L.P. declarations. Further evidence of 'revolutionary' socialist pressure within the party was the raising of the question of force at both 1921 and 1922 conferences. In 1921, some unionists wanted a declaration in favour of direct action, but the majority of the conference agreed with Holland and Fraser

\(^{161}\) *M.Z.P.D.* 1921, V.192, pp.634,637-644.
\(^{162}\) Ibid p.634; H.E.Holland *Imported Coal: And Why?* Wellington 1921, pp.3-4.
\(^{164}\) *M.W.* 10 Aug. 1921; Minutes, Greymouth L.P. 26 April 1921.
that the Labour Party should oppose force as a method.\footnote{165} In 1922 a remit from the industrial unionists who looked forward to the destruction of parliament and the organisation of workers' councils proposed that the party commit itself not merely to seize power but to "break and shatter the available ready machinery of State." Holland, who deprecated this as "entirely foreign to the spirit of the Labour movement" was perturbed by the remit,\footnote{166} for he saw its possibilities for 'misrepresentation', later exploited by Massey.\footnote{167}

When compared with some of his pre-parliamentary utterances, Holland's reaction reveals the extent to which he had absorbed the constitutionalist atmosphere of his parliamentary environment, and as such, is a significant landmark in his political development. However, it is clear that his departure from previous professions was not, in fact, as definite as his reaction would suggest. If destruction of the machinery of state was entirely foreign to the spirit of the labour movement, how did Holland propose to implement 'socialism', the class-less society, which was to follow the dictatorship of the proletariat? Obviously, this would entail abolition of the state as previously known, but, to Holland, this was not destruction, but the end point of a creative evolution. His objection to the 1922 remit was that it was foreign to the spirit of the labour movement, that is, he was merely claiming that Labour's aims were constructive, not destructive, and this does not preclude his sharing, in a general way, the ultimate aims of those who proposed the remit. What he was criticising was the attitude he had taken himself in the 1890s, that is, emphasis on the destruction of the old society, rather than on the building of a new.

Early in 1922, the P.L.P. made a formal bid to ensure co-operation with industrialists. Taking advantage of greater unionist interest in the party, occasioned by economic pressures, the P.L.P. arranged, early in 1922 for an unprecedented joint meeting between the P.L.P. and representatives of industrial organisations. The immediate aim was to secure agreement on opposition to an Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Bill, and on this,

\footnote{165} M.W. 20, 27 July, 10 Aug. 1921.  
\footnote{166} M.W. 3 Aug. 1922.  
close co-operation was achieved. However, the general problem remained, and Holland, seeing that, depression was not producing the degree of industrial and political unity he had hoped for, was losing patience with union intransigence. For unionists to fail to support the party which fought their battles seemed to him irresponsible and perverse.

The theme of this chapter has been the clash between the militant socialists' devotion to theory and their increasing realisation of the practical exigencies of political life. Two parallel developments have been examined. One is the reassertion, in the N.Z.L.P., after a period of relative quiescence, of the theoretical analyses of militant socialists, a development obvious in recurring predictions of world crisis and revolution. The other is their refusal, under the influence of practical political considerations, to carry this reassertion to extreme conclusions, a situation illustrated by militant socialist attitudes both to the Russian revolution and to militant industrial unionists. The evidence put forward leads to the conclusion, that in the period 1918-21, while the problem of conflict remained formally unsolved, and there was a great deal of contradiction and confusion, militant socialists were aware of the problem, and as well as attempting to find a solution in theory, the adoption of a position roughly equivalent to Leninism, they were also adopting, to some extent in spite of themselves, another sort of resolution in practice. The very fact that militant socialists such as Holland were aware that a conflict existed between theory and practical application, was an important development. When faced with the problems associated with the Russian revolution, a new revolutionary left-wing sentiment, the 1919 elections and anti-political militant industrial unionism, they were in effect forced to choose between adherence to a doctrinaire position and acceptance of what experience had taught them to be the minimum requisites for success in existing political circumstances. In practice, they chose - or rather, found themselves committed to - the latter course, although this was obscured by their attempt to act as though the need to choose did not exist and by their continued claims that they were acting in conformity with militant socialist theory. Left-wing tendencies associated

with the Russian revolution and industrial unionism had two effects on militant socialists within the N.Z.L.P., one immediate and apparent, the other of long-term importance and not immediately evident. It is obvious that these left-wing tendencies caused among militant socialists an immediate though partial reversion to their past active professions of veneration for socialist theory. What was not realised at the time was that militant socialists had also made their choice for the future. Circumstances had been placed before theory as the decisive factor, although Holland was never reconciled fully to this position and it was the subject of continued dispute. So far as militant socialist attempts to control the development of the labour movement were concerned, the new position as it slowly became evident, was of profound importance. To put adjustment to circumstances before conformity to theory was to remove the efforts of militant socialists from the realm of certainty to that of the contingent. It is therefore from this 1913-21 period that the decline of militant socialist leadership and influence can be traced, for they were gradually moving into an area of political action where the accepted values were those of the politician, not those of the theorist.

In view of this argument, it is obvious that for the rest of the thesis the term 'militant socialist' is in a constant process of redefinition as militant socialists modify their views. Its essential, relative, connotation remains, but while in this chapter Holland, Fraser and Semple have been cited as the foremost exponents of militant socialist views, in the last chapters of the thesis it becomes Holland alone who merits the description of militant socialist. Again with regard to the remainder of the thesis, it has been pointed out that the effective choice, between adherence to theory and acceptance of practical considerations, made by militant socialists in the N.Z.L.P. between 1913 and 1921, was not recognised or accepted by them. Holland, in particular, continued to attempt to retain his integrity in both worlds, theoretical and practical. In this the crucial problem was, as it had ever been, how were militant socialists to secure their aims? Were they to lead, or were they to await the directive of the majority of the workers? And what if that directive did not come, or was towards aims which militant socialists regarded as unsatisfactory?
Chapter 7.

LEADERSHIP.

The remained of this thesis is concerned with the role of Holland, and his militant socialist convictions, within the N.Z.L.P. The purpose of this chapter is to set out some preliminary arguments which will be developed in later chapters, and to examine in particular Holland's position as chairman of the P.L.P., up to 1925. In relation to the central argument of the thesis, that militant socialists of Holland's type set out to claim the leadership of the labour movement, it is argued that between 1922 and 1925 the role of these socialists as exemplified by Holland, was transformed, and, in relation to their aims, virtually reversed. While exercising parliamentary leadership, Holland, instead of providing initiative and inspiration towards the social revolution, acted more as a curb, at times passively resisting, at times reluctantly following the gradual retreat of the N.Z.L.P. from militancy and socialist theory. The party continued to be led by Holland, and by men who had been militant socialists, but this leadership was slowly coming to mean, in practice, the pursuit of aims far less racidal than the social revolution. Yet, in those with militant socialist convictions, loyalty to the traditional ideals remained, though growing steadily more and more remote from the actual trends of party development. To Holland, this divergence became a continual and insoluble problem.

Relevant to this chapter, and to the remainder of the thesis, is the argument that, particularly from 1926, there was a growing feeling within the party that its platform was too remote from the electorates' understanding of its own wants, and that this gap must be bridged, not as militant socialists would have it, by educating the people up to the platform, but by bringing the platform down to the peoples' level. Particular emphasis is placed on

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1. In this, and following chapters, information obtained in interviews with several close political associates of Holland on the understanding that it should not be attributed to its individual source, is ascribed in footnotes to 'Colleague of Holland' (A, B or C.)
in this chapter on the argument that Holland's leadership and influence were greatly limited by the structure and organisation of the Labour Party. Particularly after 1922, Holland's influence was no longer so dominant in Labour Party counsels. It is further maintained that, on his own principles, Holland did not seek personal power and leadership in the labour movement, though he accepted it as a temporary necessity. He believed that a successful social revolution must be based on the informed wishes of the rank and file, not on the leadership of an intellectual minority, and that the ideal labour movement would be one in which the official was the willing servant of the movement. These beliefs were based on Holland's postulation of a majority trend towards an increasing demand for the social revolution, but in fact, within the Labour Party, it was the influence of the majority which was drawing the party away from the aims of militant socialists. As Holland saw, this situation involved conflict between his belief in the social revolution and his belief in majority control, and between his repudiation of the principle of leadership and his realisation that it was necessary to keep workers on the path to socialism. He also recognised that it was one thing to win office and another to achieve the power for the economic transformation he sought.

The numerical growth of the P.L.P. also brought a development away from the militant socialist standpoint of Holland and he was gradually brought to a position in which his fundamental outlook, though not necessarily his attitude to immediate concerns, was at variance with that of the majority of the party he led. His own outlook underwent important modifications also, a situation which developed gradually out of the decisions militant socialists had taken from 1914 onwards. The very gradualness of this development was one of the reasons why Holland did not resist it actively, for there was no major issue on which he could take a militant socialist stand, as one uncompromised.

Given the limitations placed on him, wherein did Holland's real influence and leadership lie? Essentially, his leadership and influence stemmed from the force of his personality, his stature and quality as a man, and the fact that he seemed to embody the sufferings and ideals of labour's past struggles. Even while his opinions might be voted down, his cast of mind exercised a strong influence. There can be little doubt that the party's swing to reformism would have been more swift had it not been for the mere presence of
Holland, a constant reminder of the ideals of the past. No one forgot Holland's past, for he did not let them.

Holland's visit to Australia in 1921 confirmed his adherence to theory, though, in fact, his Australian theorising was irrelevant to the actual situation in New Zealand. The communist criticism that he was an opportunist, that is, willing to sacrifice principle in order to achieve political advancement, was not merited, for although he accepted the necessity of shelving principle temporarily, under certain circumstances, he did abandon it. That he was still thinking primarily in terms of socialist theory is indicated by his declarations in Australia, and by the way in which he approached the prospect of Labour's electoral success. In December 1921, Holland expounded to Cocking his views on the requisites for the ideal development of the labour movement:

"When we do achieve power - and I recognise it is one thing to win office and another thing to achieve power - our work will be that of economic transformation. A conscious working class cannot tolerate the idea of merely administering the class State. But to what extent that work of transformation can succeed will depend absolutely upon the measure of knowledge which marks the rank and file of the Labour movement. I do not accept the idea of an intellectual minority leading the uninformed majority. I remember that Moses could lead the Jews into the wilderness, but he died before they got out. As long as ever the workers have to depend upon leaders they will fail in the effort toward the supreme objective of Labour. Our success will come when the rank and file are capable of giving their instructions, and not while they are content to be led. The ideal Labour movement will be that in which the official will be the willing servant of the movement - not its boss." 2

This statement sums up Holland's position in 1921, and supports the main arguments put forward in relation to his development at this time. Distinguishing between the winning of office and the achieving of power, he was primarily concerned, in his theorising, with the successful exercising of power. This emphasis leads to the conclusion that Holland was coming to view the winning of office, as, not a matter for theoretical application, but for practical political action, a conclusion towards which the argument of the preceding chapter was directed. Despite this growing dichotomy, there was still an important inter-action between practice and theory, but, significantly

2. Holland to Cocking 29 Dec. 1921 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
practice was affecting theory to an increasing extent. Although based on the traditional assumption that labour would achieve power, Holland's statement reveals the recognition of a problem to which he had not adverted before. The achievement of power by the working class vanguard would not necessarily mean immediate social revolution. He fully accepted, for the first time, a socialist version of the fact that an administration could make only those changes which were acceptable to the majority. Holland's statement of this position in 1921 was testimony to the gulf which existed between the real and the ideal, but it was the way in which he acknowledged this situation, as a personal problem, which was of significance for the future. Hitherto, Holland's theorising on this matter had been mainly in terms of the progress of some process, that of history, or of education and knowledge. His view had been that those men who comprised the working class vanguard had their importance in co-operation with and encouragement of these processes, a view which minimised the personal, and indeed the human element. In contrast, and in spite of the generality of its expression, Holland's introduction of the leadership problem was a statement of a personal difficulty and a recognition of the importance of the human determinant. It was a problem which arose from his position as P.L.P. leader, and his perception of the absence of 'knowledge', as he understood it, among the rank and file. He saw that, in his own terms, he and other militant socialists were the intellectual minority, leading the uninformed majority. Holland was their Moses, destined, as it happened, never to see the promised land. But Holland visualised his own role as, ideally, not that of leader, but of educator and guide, believing that "The real revolutionist is the man who thinks." He believed that men were enslaved to the extent that they submitted to leadership, a belief akin to philosophic anarchism. To be the instrument of such an enslavement was repugnant to him, and a continual reminder of the distance men had yet to travel to attain true knowledge. He desired that all men might have knowledge equal to his own, for he believed that when all were liberated from ignorance and prejudice, mankind would progress to true freedom and harmony.

Holland's attitude to the question of leadership, in 1921, is of fundamental importance to the understanding of his later development, and to the assessment of his character. The leadership question arose from his awareness of the gulf which separated militant socialists from the mass of the workers, and of the necessity for mass support to effect the social revolution. It raised an aspect of that problem endemic to minorities which claim to possess the sole solution to human problems - can men be forced to be free. Holland was convinced that the social revolution, and that alone would bring mankind the fullness of happiness, but he did not believe that this could be forced on men. This conclusion was, in part, the product of his assessment of political circumstances and possibilities in New Zealand, in part it reflected his growing adherence to constitutionalism, but, basically, it sprang from his increasing admission that human beings and human values, particularly individual freedom, must be considered as of more importance than rigid conformity to a theory. As Holland stated it, the leadership problem involved a distinction between the letter and the spirit of his theory, if the letter be taken as the attainment of the social revolution, and the spirit as service of the workers. Although Holland's statement of the position was directed towards achievement of the social revolution, the fact that he took human factors and the principle of service into account was itself a significant modification of his rigour as a militant socialist. At the same time, his appraisal of the situation led to the conclusion that leadership, however repugnant in theory, was necessary in practice. To achieve his ideal society he relied, in theory, on the efficacy of education, but after years of teaching what he saw as self-evident truths, he knew in his heart, though his mind rebelled against it, that precept was not enough. He retained his belief in the transformatory power of education, but in his early parliamentary years he came to the conclusion that this revolution in the minds and hearts of men could take place only in the congenial atmosphere of the dictatorship of the proletariat, perhaps only under socialism itself. Given that many were unable to see where their true interests lay, Holland approached the conclusion that leadership of the ignorant by the enlightened, was necessary. Yet, the ideal of willing service to the labour movement attracted and influenced him greatly. As in other situations where he failed to resolve confusion, Holland never clarified for himself the implications of the leadership problem
or resolved the conflicting claims of ideal behaviour and the actual situation. The demand for action was always insistent and it was easy to forget complex and disturbing problems in some whirl of activity. Nevertheless, perplexities and unresolved questions wrought subtle changes. The candid admission of the human factor as of profound and decisive importance in the achievement of the social revolution was an important departure from the uncomplicated assumptions, based on faith in the outcome of inexorable processes, Holland had made before. On the other hand, for Holland to recognise the need for leadership meant acceptance of a heavy responsibility. If a few were to lead they must lead aright, for on their decisions depended the destinies and happiness of the many, from whom they could expect no guidance. There were policy implications. Holland's acknowledgement that precept was not enough sprang from a serious doubt that the workers' support could be won by expounding the doctrine of social revolution. Given the pressure of the political environment and of reformist elements within the N.Z.L.P., it was no great step for the party's leaders, including Holland, to conclude that the workers' support must be won by promises of betterment within the social order as they knew it. Previously, militant socialists had accepted a reformist platform for the sake of unity. Now they came to interpret it as a path to the social revolution, each plank an education towards it, an attitude expressed in the party's campaign manifesto in 1922.

In practice, Holland's role in the N.Z.L.P. reveals both his idealistic rejection of leadership in favour of rank and file control, and his acceptance of a degree of leadership as a necessary temporary expedient. His attitudes show that the real force of his leadership lay in his single-minded and unselfish devotion to his ideals and his stern determination to declare the truth as he saw it. To labour activity in politics he brought an intensity and strength of purpose which none of his colleagues could match. In a movement which prided itself on its lofty ideals, Holland's was the highest development of idealism. Holland's interior strength - and weakness - lay in a combination of simplicity and psychic tension. He was not naturally complex, but direct, an enthusiast. At the same time he experienced, as has been argued in earlier chapters, an increasing degree of interior tension, between his idealism and reality, and between his intellectual allegiance, and the inclination of his emotions.
It is testimony to his intense awareness of a personal possession of the true solution to social problems that nothing aroused his ire more than the refusal of many unionists to support the Labour Party, and he treated this recalcitrance with a harshness which tended to nullify the party's simultaneous efforts at conciliation. When unionists and public servants protested against wage cuts in 1922, Holland told them that they had got what they had voted for. Those who favoured strikes met his cold prediction of failure in the face of falling wages and unemployment. This apparent arrogance infuriated some unionists, and there were even those who, accepting the anti-Labour propaganda of the press, believed Holland to be the embodiment of evil. It was a widely held unionist view that however admirable a person Holland might be, he was too dogmatic. Yet with this rigour, Holland possessed a deep sympathy for suffering, but this he could seldom communicate convincingly. During the winter of 1922 when the destitute queued for food in the main cities, Holland and his wife were saddened. The sight of poverty and hunger evoked their own past. Both saw Holland's mission as "to make life brighter for the toilers"; but Holland's genius was not for the expression of sympathy, but for protest, and it was sympathy which won the hearts of those who suffered. Sensitive and aloof, Holland carried his protest in his bearing. No longer able to bend his injured knee, he often stood to avoid obstructing others when travelling in crowded trains and trams, a discomfort which he bore with less than equanimity, for he was never reconciled to his injury. His impatience with his disability was an ever present concern to his wife, who so admired him. To be an inconvenience, and limited physically, hurt Holland's pride.

Within the Parliamentary Labour Party, Holland had no intimate friends,

7. Interview with L.C. Hair.
8. Mrs. Holland to Mr. and Mrs. Cocking 28 May 1922 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid; Holland to Nat. Sec. 11 Dec. 1924 (Maori Papers N.Z.L.P.)
preserving that slight distance which his greater age and experience, his intense conviction and dedication, and his natural reserve gave him. This situation owed as much to circumstances and to the attitude of his associates as to Holland, and was a not unimportant fact in the development of the party. Holland's apartness became greater as time went on, at basis a personal rather than a political development, increased rather than minimised by Holland's candour, a quality inextricably bound up with his convictions and his habit of personal accentuation, a habit which was as much the outcome of the circumstances of his life, as of pride. At the beginning of his parliamentary career, Fraser was his closest associate. Semple disliked Holland, while Holland found Semple's exhibitionist proclivities objectionable, and in 1913-19 Holland thought of Fraser and himself as the militant socialist vanguard in parliament. This association was formalised in 1920 when Fraser was elected P.L.P. secretary, but although in Walter Nash's opinion "Holland and Fraser together provided the party with leadership" at this time, the association never developed into close friendship. The two men were of different temperaments, Holland's direct, Fraser more devious. Fraser's very great ability was obvious in both parliament and party, and the importance of his influence in the early years of the party may be judged from Nash's comment. While Fraser's loyalty to Holland as leader is unquestioned, some of their colleagues attributed ulterior motives to Fraser. According to their view, Fraser was ambitious and deceitful, loyal to Holland because that was the orthodox way to power. Fraser's policy, to their eyes, was always to side with the majority as the safest way to personal advancement, a view summed up in J.A. Lee's quip, "Fraser's policy is Fraser." This interpretation of Fraser's attitude to Holland must be considered in the light of the hostility aroused by Fraser in the inner circles of the N.Z.L.P. during his Prime Ministership. No definite evidence can be found, in the period covered by Holland's life, either to support or disprove this interpretation, a fact

11. H.E. Holland Diary 21 Feb. 1922 (H.P.); Mrs. Ivar to writer 6 Jan. 1959.
12. Holland to Cocking 7 Jan. 1919 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
14. Information supplied in interviews with two parliamentary colleagues of Holland and Fraser, and by a prominent party member.
which itself may be significant.  

In the early years of Holland's parliamentary career the greatest threat to his leadership of the P.L.P. was the open opposition of J. McCombs. After losing the leadership in the drawing of lots in 1919, McCombs continued to challenge Holland, securing three votes to Holland's five in 1920, two to five in 1921 and three to six in 1922. Although this voting shows Holland's position to have been safe, McCombs's candidature did constitute an element of uncertainty, and pointed, discomfortingly, to opposition, within the P.L.P., to Holland's leadership. To some extent, the voting reflected a militant-moderate division of opinion for the views of Holland and McCombs on the objects of the labour movement were very different, McCombs being a progressive reformer. More particularly, support for McCombs reflected that cohesion which became characteristic of the Christchurch Labour members, while support for Holland, was to some extent also support for the status quo, a realisation that a change of leader would disorganise the party and damage its parliamentary and electoral standing. McCombs's annual challenges to Holland's leadership were not without an element of personal hostility, for since they had clashed in 1917 over McCombs's resignation on the liquor issue, their relations had been those of restrained antagonism. On that occasion Holland had been both intolerant and insulting. At a meeting at which McCombs' resignation had been considered, Holland remarked, "The least McCombs must do is to come back and apologise." "And kiss the Pope's toe," added J.T. Paul, to Holland's intense annoyance. McCombs's actions continued to raise disciplinary problems for Holland. In the 1922 session, McCombs introduced an electoral Bill which he later replaced with another. This raised a disciplinary question, for McCombs had made the replacement without consulting the party and the new bill did not embody the full electoral policy. McCombs was willing to accept Labour amendments, and all members, except Holland, were prepared to be conciliatory. It was moved that the party support the Bill and move amendments. Holland, adamant in insisting that McCombs be disciplined

15. J.A. Lee maintains that Fraser destroyed any written material likely to reflect on him unfavourably. Lee to writer 13 Jan. 1960.
17. See Chapter 4.
18. Interview with J.T. Paul.
asked for his dissenting vote to be recorded.\textsuperscript{19} Holland's attitude to McCombs was based on what Holland interpreted as McCombs's infringement of principle, and in these matters Holland refused to consider the effect of his attitude on the personal feelings of others.\textsuperscript{20} McCombs was a particular problem in this regard, for not only did his views on labour's aims not accord with Holland's, but he was the senior labour parliamentarian, having had five years more parliamentary experience than Holland, and at times, particularly when his opinions on parliamentary tactics and those of Holland clashed,\textsuperscript{21} he acted with more independence than Holland considered proper.

Insisting that they must accept full responsibility as servants of the labour movement, Holland expected Labour members to be present in parliament at all times. In this he set a strict example. As well, he prided himself in devoting considerable attention to his own electorate's affairs\textsuperscript{22}, though he claimed that the Government would not spend money on Buller while he represented that electorate.\textsuperscript{23} This diligence, for which he was much praised, also aroused some resentment among those of his colleagues who had a less punctilious attitude towards their parliamentary duties.\textsuperscript{24} Members of other parties were also annoyed by Holland's frequent reminders to the House of its responsibilities. One of his constant complaints was of the late hours at which parliament conducted important business.\textsuperscript{25} Early in the 1920 session he protested against an adjournment of parliament to enable members to attend an All Black Rugby match.\textsuperscript{26} When stubborn Labour opposition prolonged the 1920 session, other members, impatient to return home or to attend the Christchurch races, expressed their displeasure.\textsuperscript{27} "If there had been no Labour eight on these benches, the Government would not have had a real opposition to fight against during the session," Holland claimed. "We might have been away three weeks ago," snapped a member.\textsuperscript{28} Holland's claim was justified, and, as parliamentary observers conceded,\textsuperscript{29} he had made the Labour Party the

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
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\bibitem{19} Minutes, P.L.P. 11 Oct. 1922.
\bibitem{20} Interview J.T. Paul.
\bibitem{21} Minutes, P.L.P. 29 June 1920.
\bibitem{23} Ibid V.196, pp. 1109.
\bibitem{24} Colleague of Holland B.
\bibitem{25} N.Z.P.D. 1919, V.184, pp.163,463, 576,896.
\bibitem{26} N.Z.P.D. 1920, V.187, p.208.
\bibitem{27} Ibid. V.189, pp.967,1005; Round Table Vol.XI, March 1921, p.450.
\bibitem{28} N.Z.P.D. 1920, V.189, p.1007 (Lysnar)
\bibitem{29} Q.W. 16 Nov. 1920.
\end{thebibliography}
real opposition in the 1920 session. Holland expected much of his colleagues, and was furious with anyone he suspected of slacking. Occasionally his colleagues failed him. \(^{30}\) When D.G. Sullivan absented himself from the House to attend a football match, Holland demanded upon Sullivan's return, "Where have you been?" "Where have you been?" retorted Sullivan. \(^{31}\) This joking reply, which bewildered Holland, reflects the annoyance which Holland's stringent demands sometimes provoked. As E.J. Howard put it:

"You grumbled and growled but you followed and did your job as he wanted you to do it ... Of course you hated to feel that you were being managed, but you knew the management was right." \(^{32}\)

It was an anti-Labour contention that Holland was not the real leader of the party, for the party president and secretary took precedence over him and he merely carried out the direction of these and other men. \(^{33}\) Despite the reality of Holland's personal leadership of the P.L.P., there was an element of truth in this contention, for the scope of his leadership was limited, and subject to majority decisions both of P.L.P. and party executive, as well as to the decisions of the party's annual national conference. On important matters he was subject to P.L.P. direction, as when he was instructed to make a statement regarding the possibility of New Zealand involvement in the Turkish-Greek crisis of September 1922. \(^{34}\) On that occasion a joint meeting of the P.L.P., resident members of the national executive, labour candidates for Wellington electorates, and the president and secretary of the Wellington L.R.C. met to approve Holland's motion on the matter in parliament. \(^{35}\) The national executive spoke of "authorising" P.L.P. action, at this joint meeting. \(^{36}\) While this machinery greatly limited the area of Holland's independence of action as parliamentary leader, it worked with a remarkable absence of friction, mainly because of the substantial general agreement which existed on the attitude the party should take to particular political problems, and even more importantly, because of willingness to conform to majority decisions. Holland's prestige was gradually increasing in parliament as his ability was grudgingly recognised. Those out of sympathy with his views conceded that he

\(^{30}\) Minutes P.L.P. 8 March 1921.  
^{31}\ Anecdote told writer by Mr F. Jones, New Zealand High Commissioner in Aust.  
^{32}\ N.Z.W. 8 Nov. 1933.  
^{33}\ Sentinel 2 Nov. 1925.  
^{34}\ Minutes, P.L.P. 19 Sept. 1922.  
^{35}\ Ibid. 21 Sept. 1922.  
always presented carefully prepared speeches and that his reading was wider than that of most members. Holland had arrived at the position of virtually apologising for his occasional vehement outbursts. He told the House in 1922;

"There are heated moments when we say things which in our calmer moments we would prefer not to have said. That happens occasionally in the case of every man who makes a strong fight." 38

The most important internal developments affecting Holland's position in the N.Z.L.P. from 1922 onwards were the growth of the power and influence of those members of the national executive who resided in Wellington, the appointment of Walter Nash as N.Z.L.P. national secretary by the 1922 conference, and Nash's energetic direction of the newly formed national office in Wellington. These developments resulted in several important changes within the Labour Party. The party was revived, its confused doctrinal introspection put aside, and the balance of the sources of power and influence within the party altered. The national office had been set up to prepare and distribute propaganda and act as a co-ordinating centre. His duties gave the national secretary unique influence, and under Nash's capable and enthusiastic direction, the national office became a medium for disseminating, not only propaganda and advice, but confidence and the will to succeed. With the national secretary as the central figure in the party's organisational - and inspirational - structure, Holland's functions within the party were further limited. He was in Wellington only during the parliamentary session. Otherwise he was either on speaking tours or at his home in Westport, remote from the centre of party affairs. Holland's role tended to be confined increasingly to parliamentary matters and to acting as public spokesman for party decisions in which the initiative was not his. Furthermore, the tone of the party's electoral appeal soon came to be set by Nash, rather than Holland. Increasingly burdened by parliamentary concerns, and believing in the widest possible dispersion of power, Holland accepted the new developments without question, although he occasionally exhibited annoyance when his opinions on matters of policy and tactics were rejected. Relations between Holland and Nash were extremely cordial, both men possessing a similar intensity of enthusiasm. However, in 1927 an incident

37. O.W. 26 Sept. 1922.
39. Nat. Sec. to Dear Sir, 31 Aug. 1922, Circ. N.Z.L.P. ; Minutes, Resident Executive N.Z.L.P. 20 Dec. 1922. (N.Z.L.P.) The resident executive were the Wellington members of the national executive, and were also referred to as the central executive.
occurred which involved these two men in an apparent conflict of opinion. At the conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations in Honolulu, Nash remarked that majority opinion in New Zealand would probably support the construction of the Singapore naval base. This remark, skilfully introduced by a Government member in the House, so incensed Holland that he interjected to assert that the New Zealand labour movement would "utterly repudiate" Nash's statement. More calmly, Holland claimed later that Nash was opposed to the Singapore base, and had commented merely on what he believed would be the opinion of most New Zealanders, but it was obvious that Holland considered Nash's comment to be ill-judged.

With his election to the national secretaryship, effective initiative within the general body of the party quickly passed to Nash. His efforts were the foremost factor in liberating the party from the doctrinal complexities in which it had been involved since 1919. The endeavour to avoid rather than attempt to solve the less immediate of these theoretical problems, reflects the waning influence of doctrinaire views as represented by Holland. This change in the source of Labour initiative was demonstrated in the 1922 election campaign. It was Nash, rather than Holland who infused Labour's efforts with a dedicated optimism. Financial help was urgently required, and help with election organising, but Nash told supporters that:

"... above all we require your spiritual help. We ask each and every one to nourish the spirit of Justice to All which rises within them, and then New Zealand shall be a country where, Service being the fundamental, the children shall have all facilities to bring their bodies and minds to the highest stage. Fathers and Mothers shall be rid of the spectre of Unemployment. Each shall work for all and all for each."

Echoes of Nash's appeal for a purifying of hearts were heard throughout Labour's campaign. With the sense of quasi-religious mission went a mounting optimism, expressed at its height in the slogan "Labour's going to win!!!" In September, Nash announced that the Labour Party would fight the election on one fundamental:

"That a first charge on all wealth created shall be the care of the aged, the young, the ailing and all those engaged in the production..."

41. Nat. Sec. to Dear Comrade, 30 Aug. 1922. Circ. N.Z.L.P.
43. Nat. Sec. to Dear Sir or Madam, 8 Sept. 1922. Circ. N.Z.L.P.
of essential utilities." 44

This became a theme of Labour's campaign, going together with a faith in progress through knowledge. According to Holland:

"Labour's message is the message of knowledge. Knowledge is the life-giving fruit of the Tree of Life. Given Knowledge, Unity will result. Given Unity, greater knowledge will be made possible. With Unity plus Knowledge we may write Victory on every red banner of Labour in December."

To impart this knowledge to adults was a difficult task, and the drafters of the party's manifesto, signed by Holland, Nash and Brindle, were determined that under a Labour education system, correct principles would be instilled into the young. The school curriculum would include economic history, lessons on human brotherhood and love, the history of the fight for freedom, biographies of useful people, and the general principle, that an injury to one is an injury to all. 47 Complete faith in the righteousness of Labour's cause is patent in this curriculum. Party spokesmen claimed that Labour trusted the people, relying on their intelligence to judge Labour correctly, but as it was only in an educated and understanding democracy that progress could be made, Nash was worried that only about twenty per cent of electors could be reached from the platform, while all were reached by the misrepresentations of the capitalist press. 49 Seeing its main problem as one of reaching the people, the party circulated much printed propaganda, mostly attacks on Reform policy. 50 Positive policy was put forward in detail in the manifesto, an expanded version of the platform. The manifesto did not refer to the party's objective as socialisation, but as an economic system having social service as its foundation. This was not an attempt to shun the socialisation objective, but an endeavour to gild the pill, an attempt to explain, in terms attractive and understandable to voters, what the party really meant by its objective. Although it was asserted that the party was moderating its approach for election purposes, the socialisation objective

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44. M.W. 20 Sept. 1922.
47. 1922 Manifesto p.10.
49. Nat. Sec. to Dear Sir or Madam, 8 Sept. 1922. Circ. N.Z.L.P.
50. See 1922 Propaganda (N.Z.L.P.)
51. O.W. 5 Sept. 1922.
was displayed prominently on copies of the platform which were widely distributed as election propaganda. Nevertheless, the fact that it was considered necessary to explain the objective in such terms is the first direct indication of that process of re-definition which was to result in the explaining away of the socialisation objective. The 1922 manifesto points to the progress of a trend away from strict adherence to the letter of socialist theory. The manifesto also declared that the planks of the party's platform were steps to reach its objective, a position formally adopted by the 1925 party conference, marking the acceptance by militant socialists of the reformist platform, not as they had thought of it before, as a necessary means to secure unity with moderates, but in itself, as a means towards the achievement of the social revolution. The effect of this was to commit militant socialists to the platform in a way which they had not entertained before.

The Liberal Party, which contested the 1922 election under the title of "Liberal-Labour" and the leadership of T.M. Wilford, was virtually ignored by Labour campaigners, who held that the Liberals were a dying political force and the real contest was between Labour and Reform. The 1922 N.Z.L.P. conference discussed a proposal that the party enter an electoral arrangement with the Liberal Party to avoid vote splitting. Reform would be defeated and an alliance of Liberal and Labour parties would enact proportional representation and hold an immediate general election under that system. This scheme, suggested by the non-party but Liberal sympathising Proportional Representation League, was supported initially not only by Liberals, but by Holland, who believed that it would not infringe Labour's principles, and would assist Labour to power. His attitude changed when he found that Wilford proposed to hold office for a full term before a proportional representation election was held, and he was repelled by the fact that while making private advances, Liberals continued to denounce Labour publicly. The N.Z.L.P. executive rejected the scheme and so did the 1922 conference, together with other similar suggestions from affiliations. The conference discussions demonstrated the direct influence of economic conditions on unionist attitudes, for most of

53. Manifesto p.4. (1922)
the support for an arrangement with the Liberals came from unionists who feared continued depression and wage cuts under Reform. Abandoning his previous non-political direct actionist attitude, P.H. Hickey argued for cooperation with the Liberals, contending that the Labour Party's main object was to preserve the existing standard of living and conditions of employment against government attack. The opponents of collaboration, led by politicians, expressed the industrial militants' former arguments when they emphasised the preservation of class and militant-socialist integrity, the Liberal Party's decadent and treacherous nature, and the danger of such an arrangement to Labour's unity and independence. By election-time Liberals were expressing similar hostility, Wilford remarking that he would not support a Labour no-confidence motion if it meant helping Holland to power.

Reform propaganda was directed mainly towards discrediting Labour, and replying to charges that it favoured Bolshevism and violent revolution absorbed much Labour energy. A remark by Holland that the capitalist class might resort to violence once the workers had won power, caused the party much embarrassment, McCombs and Sullivan being particularly sensitive to charges of extremism. Complicating the political conflict were the liquor issue, and the activity of the P.P.A. which, alleging an alliance between the Labour Party and the Catholic Church, endorsed thirteen candidates, eleven of whom were members of the Reform Party.

Forty-one Labour candidates went before the electors on 7 December. Holland thought that more electorates should have been contested, but his opinion was not accepted by the party executive, probably the first time that this had happened on an important matter. The bases of disagreement may be inferred - differing estimates of the party's electoral prospects, and the executive's conviction that Labour must not repeat its 1919 mistake of dispersing its efforts over too many electorates where there was no hope of success, as opposed to Holland's conception of the party as an educational

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56. M.W. 12, 19 July 1922.
57. E.P. 6 Dec. 1922.
59. M.W. 22 Nov. 1922; Dom. 7, 30 Nov. 1922 Corresp.; E.P. 6 Dec. 1922; National Record Nov. 1922.
60. Dom. 30 Nov. 1922 Corresp.; M.W. 6 Dec. 1922.
61. National Record Nov. 1922.
64. N.Z.P.D. 9123, V.199, p.105.
and propaganda medium with a message to be disseminated as widely as possible. The executive's refusal to accept Holland's opinion reveals two important developments, generally, the growing power of the executive in the direction of the party's affairs, and, particularly, an increasing emphasis on the necessity for the party's conformity to the practical directions of conventional political judgement, rather than on theoretical conceptions of the party's role. From 1922, when it was formed, the resident executive, Wellington members of the national executive, became the effective governing body of the party, between annual conferences. In 1922 its members were Fraser, Nash, T. Brindle, F. Cornwell and Mrs. Forde, with Fraser and Nash the key figures in matters of internal policy and tactics. This pattern persisted throughout Holland's career. His absence from Wellington during parliamentary recess prevented his attendance at executive meetings, but even during session he seldom took an active interest in what became the nucleus of party development. It was Fraser who represented the P.L.P. on the resident executive. Holland's absence from the counsels of the resident executive reflects, not only his preoccupation with parliamentary affairs, but his confidence in his associates and in the party mechanism.

The 1922 election resulted in a heavy Reform loss, the Government being reduced by ten to a strength of thirty-eight, and an impressive Labour gain of eight seats, which brought the party's strength to seventeen. Labour members re-elected were Parry, Savage, Bartram, Fraser, Howard, Sullivan, McCombs, Munro and Holland. The new members were J. A. Lee, L. McIlvride, F. Langstone, A. L. Monteith, R. McKeen, J. O'Brien, H. T. Armstrong and W. J. Jordan. There were twenty-four Liberals. Holland hailed Labour's success as a magnificent advance. Labour would hold the balance of power, and Holland believed that Labour's foes would have to combine. Labour would become the official opposition, a great advance in prestige and a clarification of the class position. In the heady atmosphere of success, Labour leaders assumed

66. E.g. in 1927-8 there were 17 executive meetings, Holland attended 1, Fraser 13; in 1928-9, 16 meetings, Holland attending 2, Fraser 12, Nat. Exec. Reports to 1928 and 1929 N.Z.L.P. Conferences.
67. Including the Independent Labour candidate W. J. Jordan who joined the party in 1923.
that the increase in representation vindicated their trust in intelligence and education. They presumed a widespread intellectual conversion to Labour's ideals, a conversion effected by propaganda, and believed that the election result indicated the winning of industrial unionists to political action.\footnote{69}

The fact overlooked by Labour commentators, and by all others, was that Labour's proportion of the Dominion vote had remained the same as that of 1919.\footnote{70} Reform, which had lost ten seats, had increased its proportion of the Dominion vote from 36% in 1919 to 40% in 1922.\footnote{71} The explanation of Labour's success and Reform's reverse lay, in the main, in the mechanics of the electoral system, not in any widespread change in public opinion. The \textit{Dominion and Evening Post} asserted that Labour's success was due to vote splitting,\footnote{72} a claim not without partial truth. Of the sitting Labour members, only Sullivan retained his seat on a minority vote, but of the eight new members, four, Monteith, McIlvride, Langstone and O'Brien were elected by minority votes.

With the Reform Party holding less than a majority of seats, the political future seemed bright for Labour. Nash and the party executive began thinking in terms of victory within a year or two, and organising work, particularly the formation of branches in all electorates, was made a matter of urgency.\footnote{73} Holland shared the remarkable optimism which followed the 1922 election, but for him it was clouded by a continual anxiety arising from his theorising regarding the social revolution. He feared that the Labour Party would not be ready to take charge of New Zealand as soon as the opportunity occurred.\footnote{74} "What is really wrong is lack of knowledge on the part of the mass of the workers and a consequent dependence on leaders,"\footnote{75} he again told Cocking.

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\item \textbf{70.} It had, in fact, fallen from 24.4% in 1919 to 23.3% in 1922. Paul, \textit{Humanism in Politics}, pp.179-180.
\item \textbf{71.} Lipson' \textit{op.cit.} pp.206-7.
\item \textbf{72.} \textit{Dom.} 8 Dec. 1922; \textit{E.P.} 8 Dec. 1922.
\item \textbf{74.} M.W. 11 April 1923.
\item \textbf{75.} Holland to Cocking 27 Jan. 1923 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
\end{itemize}
}
While demanding the government's resignation, he feared a situation in which Labour would find itself in office, unprepared and lacking the support it needed to effect the social revolution. Any possibility of this occurring early in 1923 vanished, when, upon parliament meeting, Liberal members either voted with Reform on no-confidence motions or left the chamber, a development which Holland had expected, and, given his fear that Labour was unprepared, probably saw with relief. As it was obvious that a combination of Labour and Liberal parties could have defeated the Government, the position of the Liberals and their relation to Labour was a matter of constant interest, but not in regard to any prospect of alliance. One of Holland's main contentions in 1923 and 1924 was that the Liberal Party was no real opposition. He held that the real opposition was Labour and that the lesson of Liberal support of Reform was for Labour to stand candidates in all electorates. Holland claimed that twelve Liberals would not have been elected if Labour candidates had opposed them, though he apparently did not advert to the possibility of Reform candidates being returned by vote-splitting in such circumstances. Holland's remarks to the 1923 conference regarding the standing of candidates in all electorates, seem to have been a tilt at the executive's pre-election decision. Another disagreement between Holland and the executive over an electoral matter occurred upon the announcement of Sir Joseph Ward's decision to seek re-entry into parliament at the Tauranga by-election in March 1923. Some Labour supporters feared that that "fatuous politician" might delay Reform-Liberal fusion by reviving the Liberals. Anxious that the Labour Party should enter as many contests as possible, and perhaps because he hoped to keep Ward out by splitting the Liberal vote, Holland was strongly in favour of contesting Tauranga. The executive considered the constituency, a purely farming one, with no party branch, offered no possibility of Labour success, and that a small vote would damage the party's

77. Holland to Cocking op.cit.
prestige. Holland remained insistent that the by-election should be contested regardless of consequences, but was over-ruled by the executive.\(^{31}\) Ward was defeated decisively.

Besides the rebuffs he had received from the executive, developments within the P.L.P. worried Holland. He was by no means happy with the quality of his augmented parliamentary party. When he appraised his colleagues, their faults were obvious to him, and it was a further anxiety that these were also the faults of the rank and file. He wrote candidly to Cocking:

"The members are apathetic because the workers are apathetic. The Labour movement will never get members who will, in the mass, rise very much higher than the intellectual level of the mass of workers." \(^{32}\)

Holland was dismayed with the increasingly non-militant composition of the P.L.P. Few of the newcomers appeared determined to push on to a socialist goal, and few of them had knowledge or capacity above the ordinary. To Holland, apathy meant the absence of enthusiasm for the social revolution, and it was a fact that the new P.L.P. members were mostly men who thought in terms of abolishing poverty, rather than capitalism, though usually they had read some of the literature of socialism.\(^{33}\) After 1921 the Communist Party provided an outlet for 'revolutionary' elements. Holland saw too, the personal implications of that 'apathy', his increasing intellectual isolation and the growing difficulty of securing party acceptance of his views. But he was resolved that he would do all in his power to ensure that members performed what he considered their duty. He told Cocking, "In my opinion, every member of Parliament should be an active propagandist." Then, with a characteristic shift to the plural pronoun, he added:

"We expect every one of our 17 members to do his share of the work outside Parliament & I have no fear whatever that they will not do it." \(^{34}\)

Gradually, with the trend of party development, Holland's leadership and influence were being restricted to matters of behaviour, and he was losing slowly that authority which his enthusiasm and experience had given him formerly among men who had shared his outlook. The democratic control and widening of the party's basis which was Holland's ideal was in fact resulting in a trend away

\(^{31}\) Nat. Sec. to J.Collings, 10 Sept. 1923 (Aust.File)
\(^{32}\) Holland to Cocking 17 Jan. 1923 (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
\(^{33}\) Colleague of Holland B.
\(^{34}\) Holland to Cocking op.cit.
from the pursuit of the social revolution as Labour's goal.

The question of party leadership arose acutely in 1923 because, in the optimism of that time, Labour seemed close to power. McCombs and Sullivan co-operated to challenge Holland. At a P.L.P. meeting in February 1923, McCombs moved, and Sullivan seconded, "That offices in the P.L.P. be held for one session only and that no office be held by the same member for more than one session successively." This motion, aimed against Holland, and apparently calculated to appeal to 'democratic' opinion was lost on the voices. Sullivan, a leading champion of the 'democratic' nature of the Labour Party and caucus control, who emphasised that Holland was merely chairman, not leader of the party, \(^{35}\) secured three votes to Holland's fourteen, in a contest for the chairmanship. Sullivan then contested the deputy-chairmanship, but was defeated by Savage, eleven votes to six.\(^ {36}\) The election of Savage as the P.L.P's first deputy-chairman consolidated Holland's leadership, and was in fact a device designed to show the Christchurch members their place, and end their ambitions by removing them from even the prospect of the succession.\(^ {37}\) Savage who had been N.Z.L.P. national secretary in 1919, had been a militant socialist for many years, possessing in the eyes of his parliamentary opponents "a fine contempt for any school of thought but his own."\(^ {38}\) A fortnight after the chairmanship elections, the supporters of Holland pressed home their victory, Fraser moving at a P.L.P. meeting a motion of confidence in and appreciation of Holland's leadership. Although the motion was itself indication that the leadership was being questioned, opposition to it would have been tantamount to rebellion, and it was carried unanimously. At the same meeting, Savage and Bartram expressed the view that the position of chairman should be "placed on a more satisfactory basis,"\(^ {39}\) and in June, after long discussion, annual election of P.L.P. officers was discarded in favour of election for the life of each parliament. Ten voted in favour, five, Sullivan, Howard, Armstrong, Munro and O'Brien voted against.\(^ {40}\)

\(^{35}\) National Record. Nov. 1922.
\(^{36}\) Minutes P.L.P. 6 Feb. 1923.
\(^{37}\) Colleague of Holland B.
\(^{38}\) O.W. 13 July 1920.
\(^{39}\) Minutes P.L.P. 19 Feb. 1923.
\(^{40}\) Minutes, P.L.P. 19 June 1923. McCombs was probably absent.
This division indicates, generally, where the lines of internal differences lay, and divisions on tactics often took, roughly these lines. It was the feeling of moderate, reformist members, expressed most consistently in the attitudes of the Christchurch members, McCombs, Sullivan, Howard and Armstrong, that Holland was too much of an extremist to attract public confidence. In this regard, it is significant that while Holland and his associates were attacked, Howard and Sullivan were particularly well received by the non-Labour press when they entered parliament in 1920. According to one parliamentary reporter, Howard was promptly "marked off by members as the first leader of a live and effective Labour party ... scolding no one, and marshalling his facts in a way that arrested the attention of the House." While this sort of reaction may have confirmed the Christchurch members in their determination to attempt to oust Holland, it could scarcely have endeared them to supporters of Holland, who were, in the main North Island members of some experience in militant socialist organisations. However, opposition to the attempts of the Christchurch members to get control of the P.L.P., and determination to end such attempts were impelled by more than loyalty to Holland and to the socialist outlook. There were, by 1923, strong political reasons of a conventional kind, considerations of parliamentary and public prestige, and of party unity, for resisting changes and admitting that the party was committed to Holland's leadership.

Something of the disagreements within the party was revealed publicly in January 1924 when McCombs dissociated himself from a cable of condolence to Russia on the death of Lenin, sent by Nash under instructions from the executive. McCombs, disagreeing with the view that Lenin had contributed much to the well-being of the workers of Russia and of the world, claimed that the cable was equivalent to compromise with barbaric Bolshevik methods.

92. Colleague of Holland A.
94. O.W. 27 July 1920.
95. Lyttelton Times, 16 Feb. 1924.
97. McCombs to Nat. Sec. 7 Feb. 1924; Nat. Sec. to McCombs 9, 19 Feb. 1924; Minutes, Res. Exec. 30 Jan. 1924; M.W. 30 Jan. 1924.
Nash was furious with McCombs's attitude, and particularly with his making it public, but in the interests of party harmony he was restrained in his rejoinder to McCombs. It is a significant comment on Holland's remoteness from the centre of party affairs that, at home in Westport, he took no part in this incident. Although feeling ran high, the executive did not in practice treat McCombs's action as a serious internal matter, probably because it did not wish to alienate McCombs or prejudice party unity. It is interesting to note that by securing the endorsement of the cable by the 1923 conference, the executive protected its position and effectively frustrated any hopes McCombs might have had of pursuing the matter. Soon after this incident, some hint of the division within the party became known to the press, when, during the 1924 Railwaymen's strike, the four Canterbury members, McCombs, Sullivan, Howard and Armstrong, acting as a body and without consulting Holland or the party executive, attempted to negotiate with Massey on the strikers' behalf. It was reported that the Canterbury members were dissatisfied with Holland's leadership and would probably stand as independents at the next election. Holland was reported to have humiliated himself in an effort to induce the four members to remain in the party. The Christchurch members promptly denied this, McCombs declaring:

"There is a very wide range of opinion within the party, but it would not be correct to say that there was serious conflict of ideas... The diversity of personality only add strength and interest to the movement, and at the same time ensure growth and development." 100

As far as it went, this comment summed up the position neatly, while avoiding, it would seem deliberately, any reference to the real issue, Holland's leadership. The evidence that can be found on these particular incidents is slight, but it leaves no doubt that the Christchurch members did constitute a group possessing cohesion of outlook and a tendency towards independent initiative, within the party. Nash expressed misgivings about the wisdom of the independent issuing of propaganda, however excellent, by the Christchurch members, but no action was taken to prevent this. In all, what is known of the relations between the Christchurch members and party leaders over the question of Holland's leadership and policy matters in 1923

98. See note added to McCombs to Nat. Sec. 7 Feb. 1924 and Nat. Sec. to McCombs, 19 Feb. 1924 (Marked "Not Sent")
100. N.Z.W. 21 May 1924;
101. Nat. Sec. to Fraser, 9 May 1924 (Fraser Papers)
Holland in 1924, at the age of fifty-six.
and 1924, leads to the conclusion that while the Christchurch members were prepared to challenge Holland's leadership and assert their independence as far as they could, they were careful to stop short of actual rebellion, seeing no future for themselves outside the N.Z.L.P. At the same time, party leaders, anxious to conciliate these members and avoid any split, were prepared to overlook almost any action short of outright rebellion.

These tensions were not decreased by Holland's tendency to act impulsively and on his own initiative, and by his occasional failure to consult his colleagues. Within parliament, new problems of organisation and discipline arose with the doubling of the party's parliamentary strength, and in the solution of these problems, Holland's influence was restricted further. The precedent established in 1922 when other than members took part in a P.L.P. meeting was confirmed by the 1923 conference. The party president and secretary were given the right to attend P.L.P. meetings, while the P.L.P. chairman and secretary had similar rights on the national executive. The effect of this was to allow the executive, through Brindle and Nash, to increase its influence on the P.L.P., and to add another limitation to Holland's freedom of action.

In the disciplinary troubles associated with the larger party, it was Fraser, a member both of the P.L.P. and the executive who instigated the imposing of regulations. Some members could not be found when divisions were called and it was decided, on Fraser's initiative, that those wishing to leave Parliament Buildings during a sitting must obtain the permission of the chairman and both whips. The action of W.J. Jordan in voting for a Bill which all other members opposed, led to a decision, again on Fraser's initiative, that if the party could not meet to discuss any Bill, a majority opinion of members, taken in the House, was binding on all. New members were dissatisfied with their opportunities for speaking. Limited debating time often meant that only senior members spoke, and Holland, in particular, acquired a reputation for being over talkative at the expense of his colleagues. To overcome this, J.A. Lee moved that order of preced-

102. D.S. Papworth to Fraser 5 Feb. 1924; Fraser to Papworth 11 Feb. 1924 (Fraser Papers)
104. Ibid. 19 June 1923.
105. Ibid. 2 July 1923.
106. Colleague of Holland B.
ence in debate be determined by ballot. As a result of this, and the increased parliamentary membership, Holland's speeches were less frequent and shorter than before. Instead of Holland moving, as in previous years, a detailed no-confidence motion, and speaking to it at length, the Labour no-confidence motion in 1923 was moved in sections by Fraser, Howard and Lee. These encroachments on Holland's domain as P.L.P. leader were not viewed as such by him. He made no effort to resist these developments, believing them to be in harmony with the ideal of dispersion of control and initiative. Whatever it cost him personally, Holland acted consistently as an unflinching upholder of caucus rule, holding that the Labour Party could function healthfully only with team work based on majority decision. At the same time, within the sphere of authority which remained to him, his demands were stern and exacting. His prestige and strength of personality ensured him the dominant position in the party, a unique pre-eminence which might be qualified in detail, but not altered in substance.

From 1922 to 1925 the most important factor affecting the outlook of Labour Party members was optimism, the conviction that Labour would govern soon, and this factor is reflected in attitudes towards questions of leadership, and of party tactics. Under the influence of the circumstances of Labour's success in Britain, the possibility of an arrangement with the Liberals for the purpose of securing an election on a proportional representation system, received renewed attention in the Labour Party. Holland spoke strongly in favour of such a scheme, provided the first move came from the Liberal Party, whereupon a party member wrote to the Worker in protest, on behalf of "many of the rank and file." Not Holland, but Fraser replied, stating that Holland had not endeavoured to influence the executive in favour of an arrangement with the Liberals, but had given merely his own viewpoint, which did not convince the executive. This incident, and Fraser's remarks reveal several significant aspects of the party's internal power structure at this time. They show clearly that the resident executive, with Fraser,

110. E.P. 24 Jan. 1924.
111. M.W. 12 March, 9 April 1924.
Nash and Brindle its leading figures at this time, was the determining body in party policy between conferences. If Fraser's statement was accurate, Holland's willingness to put forward his opinion as personal, and the executive's willingness to accept it as such, not that of the leader of the P.L.P., point to a situation in which the balance of party authority was altering, with Holland's consent and the executive's contrivance. After his repeated denunciations of the Liberals, Holland's advocacy of an arrangement with them seems extraordinary. However, he believed that the British Labour success was a striking proof of the practical advantages of such collaboration, which did not infringe principle. Moreover, after a New Zealand tour he was convinced that "a wonderful change" was taking place. He predicted a clear Labour majority at the next British elections, and it may be inferred that he believed that, once Labour was the government in New Zealand, the same thing would occur, and Liberal support would be necessary no longer. Holland's difference from his colleagues was not one of principle, but of tactics, for they were claiming also that a "changed psychology" was obvious throughout the Dominion, and that the "day of responsibility" and "the freedom and joy of Socialism" were at hand.

The conviction that Labour was to govern soon, wrought a significant change in the parliamentary party's attitude to its political environment, a change noticeable in Labour members' statements during the 1924 session. Overtaken by the prospect of imminent responsibility, members were much less inclined to be intransigent and uncompromising, more willing to accept, if grudgingly, limited objectives. This change is apparent in Holland's comment on a Pensions Amendment Bill which the party supported:

"... the Labour Party's difficulty was that any determined attempt to amend the Bill while it was in committee might have resulted in the whole measure being dropped and rather than risk this, they had concluded that it would be better to take what was there, and endeavour in the

112. The other members were F. Cornwall, H. E. Combs, J. Glover, Mrs Semple and Mrs Forde.
following session to secure the amendments they desired — when there would be no danger of losing the little that was already conceded." 116

Savage went much further when he claimed that much of what Labour wanted was enacted already. Commenting on State Advances for farmers, he said, "We have laws enough on the statute-book today to almost revolutionize production in this country. It is only a question of administration of those laws." 117 These two comments, apparently similar in impulse, in fact reveal a significant difference in outlook between Holland and Savage. Holland's acceptance of limitation related to a particular case, but Savage's was a general comment, which, in tendency at least, conflicted with Holland's conviction that "A conscious working class cannot tolerate the idea of merely administering the class State." 118 It was Savage's view which represented the gradual tendency of party development.

Holland was becoming increasingly impatient with the activities of the P.P.A. as an obstacle to Labour success. In July 1924 he remarked in parliament that the Rev. Howard Elliott had published a disloyal attack on the King. 119 In a public speech which attracted widespread interest, Holland took up Elliott's challenge to prove this statement. 120 While some militant socialists criticised Holland's implicit defence of the King, to them a capitalist pawn, party leaders were more concerned with the political aspect of their being drawn into the dispute. There was a strong feeling in the P.L.P. that Elliott was not worth the party's attention and that Holland should have kept quiet. Undoubtedly Holland's action was prompted, in part, by an intense personal dislike for Elliott and his methods. At a special P.L.P. meeting it was decided, on the casting vote of Savage, who acted as chairman, that party members make no further public statements on Holland's attack. 122 When he took a libel action against the Worker for its report of Holland's speech, Elliott was awarded £10 damages, but Holland, as a witness, was afforded

118. Holland to Cocking 21 Dec. 1921 (Holland File)
122. Minutes, P.L.P. n.d. (Between 24 & 30 July 1924.)
an opportunity to make a damaging resume of some of Elliott's activities. The clash with Holland increased Elliott's animosity, and the anti-Labour campaign of the P.P.A. in 1925 was more vehement than ever before.

Labour Party optimism reached a new height in 1925. The executive told the 1925 conference:

"The Labour Movement grows by the force of its inherent righteousness. Its progress is determined by the number of changed minds, but periods arrive in the history of all progressive movements when extra labour, extra sacrifice and extra enthusiasm may change the whole thought of a nation within a comparatively short space of time." 124

The executive believed that 1925 was such a time. With Labour on the threshold, as it seemed, of office, the conference decided several important matters. A committee, including Holland, Fraser and Nash, drafted a declaration of principles which outlined the methods by which the party proposed to attain its objective:

"The steps toward the attainment of the Objective are contained in the Planks of the Party's programme. The method which the Party adopts is the conquest of political power, local and national, by constitutional means; the extension of the organisation of the workers in industry, together with the co-operation of all who render social service, to the end that society may be controlled in the interests of all the people." 125

These clauses, adopted unanimously, integrated the objective and platform and affirmed the constitutional nature of the party's endeavour. Although in the context of the time, this may be interpreted as an answer to left-wing critics who alleged that there was a contradiction between the socialist objective and the actual platform, it was in fact a considerable modification of the traditional, uncompromising militant socialist position, which would allow no gloss on the objective, the doctrinaires' refuge from the reformist platform. The new declaration was, at this stage, merely a formal adoption of the standpoint and tenor of the 1922 manifesto, but what had been the particular approach put forward by Brindle, Nash and Holland as the signatories of the 1922 manifesto, had now become binding on all party members and a matter of discipline. The adoption of the declaration of principles is an instance of the party's response to what was seen as in 1925 as a chance...

123. Howard Elliott -v- The New Zealand Worker.
of power, but it also illustrates the process whereby the changing outlook of a few key-men, and their practical adjustments in approach, slowly became embodied in the party platform. It may be inferred that the prime movers in the adoption of the declaration of principles in 1925 were Fraser, Nash and Brindle, while Holland acquiesced.

The principles committee also recommended that "no member of any other political party" should be admitted to N.Z.L.P. membership, and that all delegates to L.R.Cs and conference must sign a pledge of loyalty to the party. These recommendations, adopted by 103 votes to 9 were designed to exclude communists. After the formation of the Communist Party in 1921, it had most influence among West Coast mining unions where its policy was to induce those unions to disaffiliate from the Labour Party. In an endeavour to win these unions away from communist influence, Holland and other party leaders were conciliatory at first, but after communist attempts to infiltrate into N.Z.L.P. branches in 1924, the Labour attitude hardened. At the 1925 conference Holland stated the Labour position when he pointed to method as the basis of the party's differences with communists, and said that the Labour Party would not countenance physical force or insurrection by a minority. The exclusion of communists prompted a few protests from unions, and the matter of communist membership of the N.Z.L.P. was brought up at succeeding conferences until 1929, as an attempt to prove that the division of working class forces was not the fault of communists.

The death of W.F. Massey in May 1925 confirmed Holland's optimism, for he believed that it created a new situation in politics which made the fusion of Reform and Liberal parties certain.\textsuperscript{133} Holland must also have expected a decline in Reform power consequent on the death of such a formidable leader, with no heir apparent. In all his hopes - for an immediate election, for fusion, for Reform's enfeeblement - Holland was to be disappointed. The Reform caucus chose Gordon Coates as Prime Minister.\textsuperscript{134} Coates was to sweep the polls for Reform, after a spectacular campaign built around his personality. The pattern was made clear. J.A. Lee remarked:

"I know that the Press think that this is a jazz age. That a people which enjoys a great deal of Tom Mix at the movies, and take their jazz literature from crossword puzzles are so imbued with jazz mania that the time has come when we should have a jazz Premier." \textsuperscript{135}

To a party which had a firm faith in the intelligence of electors and in its own destiny, such glamourising of one man was indicative of the puerile depths to which Reform had sunk. That such a "jazz" tactic might succeed was out of the question.

By 1925, and particularly after 1922, the major elements and tendencies which were to affect Holland's leadership in the N.Z.L.P. until his death had begun to operate. By this time, Holland's influence on party development was waning, circumscribed and qualified, not only by party structure and organisation, and the attitude of his colleagues, but by his own beliefs. Yet while within the party initiative on policy matters moved to others, Holland retained a unique position of influence as a conservative factor, a force making for the retention of a militant socialist position. The vanguard had become the rearguard, seeking to hold the positions from which others were anxious to flee. One of the themes of this, and the previous chapter had been the slowly increasing acceptance by the N.Z.L.P. of the demands of practical politics and a gradual retreat from militancy and socialist theory. This theme has been interpreted in several ways, as a trend away from the observation of the strict letter of militant socialist theory,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{133} M.N.Z.W. 13, 27 May, 17 June, 1 July 1925.
\item \textsuperscript{134} A.K. Brady "Gordon Coates, Prime Minister of New Zealand, 1925-1928" M.A. Thesis. Auckland 1947, pp.37-44.
\item \textsuperscript{135} N.Z.P.D. 1925, V.206, p.278.
\end{itemize}
towards the application of its spirit, and in the light of the growth of the conception of the N.Z.L.P. as, not — or not only — an educational and propaganda medium for militant socialism, but as an organisation which must pursue success by obeying the rules of conventional political behaviour.

In view of the emergence of this changing outlook within the party, the pace at which relevant modifications were made is a question of some importance. What is remarkable, as the evidence of this and later chapters indicates, is not the rapidity of this process, but its protraction and gradualism.

It is suggested here that Holland's influence in the party was an important, although not the only retarding factor. This influence was largely intangible — a force which mitigated against the growth of a climate of opinion in which changes could take place, a deterrent whose effects were both pervasive and powerful. Of course, this tendency was bound up with the very real support for the militant socialist ideals among those such as Nash and Fraser, with whom initiative in policy matters had come to rest. Reluctance to depart from those ideals was not a characteristic of Holland alone, but the abounding strength of his belief seems to have been an important factor in sustaining others. Outside the circle of party leadership, Holland's outlook, his leadership in protest and idealism had deep roots among the core of the rank and file of the labour movement. Among his supporters, those who shared and understood his attitudes, Holland was not merely popular, he was revered with an intensity of devotion which partook of the impulses of Holland's own enthusiasm:

"We cheered not because he was Harry Holland, but because we realised that we had sat at the feet of a great prophet of a great cause." 136

Holland was able to arouse what Nash described as "the latent idealism that is in so many of our people." 137 He could also evoke that spirit of protest which was at the centre of the labour movement, traditionally the source of vitality and determination. In 1926, a Labour supporter recalled the extraordinary impact Holland had made in 1913:

"As he flung the burning sentences out at the crowd I seemed to
sense many things ... the root causes of all strikes, all rebellions,
all revolutions. Life as it might be, as it was meant to be - splendid
visions; the cold chill of thwarted achievement; more than a hint of
resentment at the cruel injustice of it all; a fixed and unwavering
determination to fight to the last ditch that all this might be altered."

Holland's real leadership in the labour movement was rooted in the
arousing and sharing of these sentiments, from which the labour movement
itself had traditionally drawn sustenance. While these feelings moved a
substantial section of the labour movement, Holland's position was secure,
for the spell he had cast in 1913 still held firm. Such support as this
drew on a dedication and enthusiasm which was of the essence of the labour
movement. Holland's appeal to these sentiments is revealed in its most
emotively extravagant form in his book of verse published in 1924. Of
"Freedom's Pioneer" Holland wrote:

"Bloodhounds of Wrong bay on his track,
Gaunt wolves of Want glide through the gloom,
The traitor's dagger seeks his back,
Behind is Death, in front the Tomb." 139

But the joy of freedom was to come:

"When we've broken the chains that have bound us
Triumphant we'll march Freedom's way.
And the world shall grow radiant around us
In the joy that is born of the day." 140

In his collection of verse, social protest and prediction went together
with praise of nature, a "surrendering to that psychological influence which
seems to flow like a river of life from every environment of Nature's Beauty,"
another facet of that intense emotional involvement which was Holland's
strongest link with the rank and file of the labour movement. To those in
whom Holland's attitudes found a sympathetic response, he remained:

" ... a leader of men, brave, able, sincere, a fighter to the death,
a man who would not 'suffer fools gladly' yet who for the sake of help­
ing them had acquired a marvellous power of control over his natural

140. Ibid. p.22.
141. Ibid. p.4.
imperiousness and impatience - that rare combination of 'seeing' and 'doing' - 'the dreamer' and 'the man of action.'" 142

In the words of H.G.R. Mason, "Holland as a doctrinaire made a strong appeal to those who thought as he did," and he "had the confidence of those prejudiced in favour of him." 143 However, in explaining the basis of Holland's position in the N.Z.L.P., this assessment neglects the impact made on the rest of the party by the qualities which Holland embodied and represented. Given the nature of the labour movement, intensity of enthusiasm and dedication carried unique force and authority, even among those whose commitment was less complete. But these sources of Holland's pre-eminence were steadily diminishing, for their strength was of the past. Those who had been nurtured in the same environment as Holland, and who appreciated his standpoint, were ageing and dying, and the new generation was of a different mould. The expansion of the party also brought about a gradual decline in the influence of those whose views accorded with Holland's, as they became, in relative numbers, a dwindling section of a growing party. In 1925, when he was fifty-seven, Holland was one of an ageing generation, and his declining influence is, at least in part, another instance of the eclipse of an old generation by a new.

It has been maintained that the most constant external limitations on Holland's leadership were, after 1922, the power and influence of Nash and the resident executive. Attention has been drawn to differences of opinion and the existence of tensions between Holland and the rest of the parliamentary party and executive. From this evidence, it has been concluded that the appearance of these external factors before 1925 had resulted in a marked curtailment of Holland's leadership. At the same time it has been argued that Holland did not resist these developments, because of his theoretical standpoint. It is the implications of this argument which offer the point of deepest penetration into the nature of Holland's leadership as it developed between 1922 and 1925. Holland repudiated leadership in theory, and the

power relationship which existed within the N.Z.L.P. was a complex one. Despite this, Holland's position as chairman of the P.L.P., and his parliamentary activity, gave him a public prominence and responsibility usually associated with the exercise of political leadership. In this sense, Holland's leadership was something which existed virtually in spite of himself. At the fundamental level of his belief in the social revolution, Holland did not accept himself as a leader. Furthermore, he doubted if the N.Z.L.P., as it then was, was capable of fulfilling its historic role, that of effecting a social transformation. From 1923 Holland occupied a position fraught with unique personal difficulties. He was leader of a party which he believed was, perhaps not ready for the duties of office as he understood them. The extraordinarily involved conflicts which had arisen between his ideals and the aim of social revolution, and the tendencies of the development of the Labour Party's practical policies, were leading Holland to a situation of immanent psychic paralysis, so that his wife could write of him as "crippled up, body & soul." 144 While external forces were making for the limitation of Holland's leadership, Holland, caught in an entanglement of theory and practice, was ceasing to assert actively that authority which, in no small measure, he still possessed.

144. Mrs. Holland to Mr. and Mrs. Cocking, 28 May 1922. (Holland File N.Z.L.P.)
Chapter 3.

LAND.

In this chapter, the general argument of a growing realisation within the N.Z.L.P. of the need to resolve the conflict between abstract theory and the politically practicable is taken up in the particular context of the development of the land policy between 1919 and 1928. It is in relation to the land policy that the party's difficulties, occasioned by that conflict, the lines of attempts at solution, and Holland's attitude, are most clearly discernible. The policy changes examined in this chapter were, it is maintained, the first major explicit departure from the party's aim of socialisation, and, besides being a concession to the demands of electoral success, illustrate the process whereby the real emphasis of party concern was shifting from what would happen under socialism, to what would happen under a Labour Government. Thinking in general terms of government by the Labour Party rather than in strict terms of the implementation of socialism, offered a solution to Holland's personal problems, but although influenced by this tendency, Holland did not succumb to it. The evidence of this chapter, leads to the conclusion that Holland did not lead policy changes, but fell in with them as they were brought about by others. His unsressing acceptance of the land policy changes has been interpreted as the outcome of both elements of the conflict within Holland. In common with other party leaders, he accepted, to a degree, the need for concessions and practical modifications and assessed the changes from this viewpoint. At the same time, his fundamental loyalty to the objective of social revolution remained, and his judgement by this criteria was satisfied by the retention, despite the land policy changes, of the all-embracing socialisation objective. The circumstances of the land policy changes throw further light on several of those aspects of Holland's role within the party which have been discussed in the previous chapter. However, in relation to land policy alterations, he also
appears in a new role, the public promulgator of policy changes. Holland
led, as a spokesman, Labour's appeal for rural support, being the initial
exponent and advocate, among farmers, of land policy changes after their
adoption. To interpret this as merely the natural duty of a parliamentary
leader, is to miss its fuller significance. After major land policy changes,
Holland, at the request of the executive, toured rural areas, disseminating
the party's modified message. These tours were obviously designed by the
executive in an attempt to show farmers that, in common with the rest of the
party, Holland, long distrusted and feared as a proponent of revolutionary
socialism and expropriation, was in reality the farmers' friend.

Immediately after the adoption of the 1919 land policy, divisions of
opinion on the matter became apparent within the party. Dissatisfaction with
the policy was so marked that the 1920 conference decided that the executive
should consult representative farmers who were members of the Labour Party,
with a view to reconsidering the policy.¹ A brief report of this meeting,
in March 1921, indicates only the main divisions of opinion, between the
party's farmer members and a majority of militant socialist members of the
national executive. The farmers argued that small scale farming would
attract men to the land and claimed for co-operative farming the virtues
of economy and efficiency.² This reasoning, was, in view of militant
socialist attitudes, an attempt to make the best of what the farmers saw as
an inescapable political fact, that small farmer ownership must be recognised
if the Labour Party was to have rural appeal. This notion was unacceptable
to militant socialists.³ The majority of the national executive wanted
large State farms, claiming that experience had shown that small-scale farm­
ing was not only uneconomical, but reactionary in tendency, producing
conservative peasant proprietors. Farmers and executive agreed that no
country, not even Russia, had evolved one effective method of unravelling
the land tangle,⁴ and at this inconclusive point, with no generally acceptable
modification of the 1919 policy offering, matters stood until the 1921
conference. About the time of that conference, press reports stated that

¹. M.W. 1 Sept. 1920.
². M.W. 16 March, 13 April 1921.
³. M.W. 20 April, 4, 18 May 1921.
⁴. M.W. 16 March, 13 April 1921.
Bolshevism was collapsing because of the failure of its land policy.\(^5\) This did not deter militant socialists from amending the land policy by the deletion of "or from" from the clause governing transfer of land to or from the State, an amendment which resolved that clause into a measure for gradual nationalisation.\(^6\) Tantamount to a re-affirmation of faith in militant socialist theory, and a rejection of the arguments of those within the party who advocated concessions to the capitalist framework, this decision illustrates the doctrinaire reversion which occurred in 1920-21. Together with the discussions of 1920 it also indicates that the leaders of the party, those whose opinions determined policy, were, in the main, men of militant socialist conviction whose views accorded with those of Holland.

However, as the 1922 election approached, the land policy came under intensive non-Labour criticism. Farmers were reported to believe Labour's policy impracticable, if not amounting to confiscation.\(^7\) In parliament the policy was subjected to attacks which seized on the policy's weakness and inconsistencies, and which troubled Labour members.\(^8\) C.J. Parr observed that Labour proposed to confiscate the freeholds of its city home-owning, friends, and asked what would happen if the Crown was unable or unwilling to buy land offered to it. Wiping out mortgages he saw as confiscation.\(^9\) F.F. Hockley maintained that, as many improvements were invisible, land owners would not receive full value upon sale to the State,\(^10\) to which Savage replied that sale to the State was the only way to prevent speculation.\(^11\) During the 1922 election campaign, the policy was criticised widely by non-Labour speakers.\(^12\) Labour propagandists attempted to rid the policy of the taint of extremism, denying that it meant dispossession of farmers and emphasising the State Bank to provide rural credit.\(^13\) Some Labour candidates did not relish dealing

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10. Ibid. V.195, pp.522-3.
11. Ibid. V.196, pp.656-60.
12. Ibid. 1923, V.200, p.423 (Savage)
with the land policy, others, believing its truth to be self-evident, trusted the electors to see this. It was obvious that a considerable number of candidates did not understand the practical implications of the policy, and that some actively disliked it. The election results indicated that the policy had not been attractive, for although there had been a swing away from Reform in some rural areas, it was towards the Liberal Party. Disturbed by the party's unsavoury rural reputation, and the weakness of its appeal to farmers, the national executive asked prominent party members for suggestions to improve the land policy.

In these discussions of the 1919 policy, Holland appears to have played no part. This reflected, not only his prolonged absences in Westport, but his lack of real interest in the subject, springing from his belief that it had been settled satisfactorily in 1919. When the policy was attacked in parliament it was Savage, not Holland, who rose to its defence. Holland's satisfaction was connected not only with his theoretical standpoint, but with the fact that the land policy did not obtrude as a political issue in his own electorate. He declared that his exposition of it in Buller farming centres aroused no hostility, nor any reaction to induce him to re-examine his position. In view of the small number of farmers in the electorate, their intense provincialism, and the possibility that those who disliked the land policy did not attend Holland's meetings, Buller was a most inappropriate place in which to form a general judgement about the land policy. Holland won about half the farming centre vote, but a good deal of this was probably due to his efforts to secure grants for local works, and to the close personal contacts he was able to establish in his electorate. Formidable and remote on the platform, Holland often warmed to people when he

14. C.M.Moss (candidate for Dunedin West) to Nat.Sec. n.d. (Jan. or Feb. 1923) (J.A. Lee File N.Z.L.P.)
15. T.Spurr (Hutt L.R.C.) to Nat.Sec. 29 Jan. 1923. (Lee File)
16. The Liberal Party increased its percentage of the entirely rural vote from 34% in 1919 to 43% in 1922 (Lipson pp.204-5) and gained nine seats, all rural or semi-rural, from Reform.
met them informally, and many were attracted by his patent sincerity and lack of pretension, as well as by the fact that he was a good local member. How much of Holland's support was personal, rather than party, is difficult to estimate, but it may be suggested that this factor operated among Buller farmers. Holland's willingness to generalise from Buller experience illustrates his predilection to grasp at evidence favourable to preconceived notions and to ignore or dismiss unfavourable indications. His view that the matter was settled contrasted markedly with the executive's opinion that it was not.

Replies to the executive's enquiries regarding the land policy revealed that many party members relied heavily on the platform for guidance and had few constructive ideas of their own. Obvious too was strong faith in the rectitude of the party's declared position, and in education. It was a widespread view that "it is a question of education among the farmers, and they should be made to understand." Penetrating criticism came from J.A.Lee alone. Referring to State valuation and nationalisation, he insisted, "It isn't practical politics and has no right to be littering up the platform." He held that the first step towards socialism was to break down individualism and make production social and co-operative. To socialise land while production was still anarchic was to reverse the correct process. Despite the lessons offered by Lenin's New Economic Policy, Lee's criticism went unheeded by the Land Policy committee which reported to the 1923 conference. The committee, after pronouncing the fundamental principles of the policy sound, recommended that discussion be deferred for a year, because of more pressing matters. However, the Parliamentary Labour Party, under circumstances in which the land policy was continually assailed in parliament, and particularly in view of rumours of the formation of a Country Party, was not disposed to postpone an attempt to reach some understanding of farmers' viewpoints. The P.L.P. took the unprecedented step of asking representatives of farmers' organisations to address it on farming matters, a move which, however sound the 1919 policy might be proclaimed, marked the beginnings of

a significant change in Labour's attitude to the problem of attracting farmer support. Holland's attitude was changing also, and in the 1923 parliamentary session he began to take a live interest in rural problems. He modified his views on nationalisation, declaring that the party's policy was to keep working farmers on their own land, and that the State would purchase the land of those unwilling or unable to remain. Several influences contributed to this awakening of Holland and his party, in 1923, to the demands of the problem of rural support. Criticism of the land policy had been acute and penetrating, and re-inforced by the Liberals' rural success in 1922. Above all, Labour politicians feared that if they failed to come to an understanding with farmers, a Country Party would be formed. Thus, when the Country Party formally appeared in June 1924, the Worker chose to view it as a conservative attempt to divert small farmers from support of the Labour Party. A month prior to the appearance of the Country Party, Holland, emphasising the need for party branches in rural centres, visited the Wairarapa in an attempt to convince farmers that wage cuts for urban workers adversely affected farmers by restricting purchasing power. In this, his first direct mission to farmers, Holland emphasised the negative rather than the positive aspects of Labour policy, attacking large estates, speculation and mortgage burdens. Meanwhile the problem of the search for a better land policy remained unsolved, and Nash, to whom complaints and objections were directed, became increasingly irritated by this criticism, which, he thought, was based mostly on inadequate understanding. He held that vague dissatisfaction was no help, and that no critic had advanced any concrete suggestion to improve the policy. Like Holland, Nash found himself in the position of being, initially, personally satisfied with the land policy, while others, and particularly those it was supposed to attract, were not.

It was indicative of the new importance given by the party's leaders to the problem of enlisting farmer support, and of Holland's particular role

27. Ibid. V.200, pp.447-9.
28. W.E.Parry to Nat. Sec. 18 Oct. 1923; Nat. Sec. to Parry 23 Oct. 1923.
29. N.Z.W. 4 June 1924.
31. Wairarapa Daily Times. 9 May 1924.
32. Nat. Sec. to Dukes, 26 May 1924. (Parry File)
in relation to this problem, that Labour's 1925 election campaign opened in February with a tour of rural centres by Holland, who spoke on land and finance policies. This tour was organised thoroughly by Nash, on behalf of the executive, with the declared primary object of introducing the future Prime Minister to electors, an aim which phrased elegantly the executive's wish that Holland should dispel, in person, the impression of revolutionary extremism associated with his name by anti-Labour propaganda. In his speeches, Holland insisted that farmers did not have the freehold, but the "mortgage-hold", and outlined the party's policy of breaking up large estates and securing closer settlement by a steeply graduated land tax. The party's first land legislation was to be a reduction of the mortgage interest rate. Overvaluations would be written down and a real valuation made. Then a Labour Government would decree that privately owned land should not be sold or transferred except to the State, thus ending speculation. Holland, after fulminating against the tyranny of financial institutions, explained that the party proposed to set up a State bank to control finance and credit. He told farmers that there could be no economic transformation until the farmer realised that his position was identical with that of the town wage earner, but he also claimed that Labour's case on land problems was practically the same as that of Sédion in 1899. This policy was a modification of Holland's earlier position. He implied that transfer to the State meant, not nationalisation, but that the State would be the sole land agent. He spoke of the reduction, not the abolition of mortgages. Although advertised to farmers as "An ardent Socialist", Holland presented a very mild interpretation of the socialisation objective, describing it as meaning "social service", a term coined by Nash. Only occasionally did his intransigence flare out, in his pleas for electoral intelligence:

34. Taumarumui Press 6 Feb. 1925; Evening Star (Thames) 19 Feb. 1925; Whakatane Press 21 Feb. 1925; Matamata Record 26 Feb. 1925; Putaruru Press 5 March 1925; Examiner (Woodville) 6 March 1925; Labour's Policy. Mr. Holland in Hastings 1925; Labour's Platform (Holland at Retaihi) (Clippings H.P.)
35. Whakatane Press, 14 Feb. 1925 (Clipping H.P.)
36. Labour's Policy. Mr. Holland in Hastings. (Clipping H.P.)
"The Labour Party stood for men and women of brains. They did not crawl for votes, but demanded them." 37

"If the fight was made on intellectual grounds, the majority of the electors would give an intellectual decision and then the Labour Party would come into power." 38

Holland, who claimed that at the worst, Labour would be the official opposition after the 1925 elections, also outlined to his audiences the procedure Labour would adopt on gaining office. The Legislative Council was to be abolished immediately for it was intolerable that forty nominees might veto legislation by the representatives of the people. A statutes revision committee of twenty members of the House of Representatives would be established in its stead. Holland also promised proportional representation, and indicated that a Labour government, having made legislative proposals, would trust the people with the final decision. If ten per cent of electors petitioned against any legislation, a referendum would be held. If the legislation was rejected the government would accept the decision - temporarily. It would use educational methods to convince the people that they were wrong and the legislation right. 40 This was equivalent to asserting that only the electors could act in error and ignorance, and that a labour government must always be acting in the true interests of the community, whether electors realised this or not, a standpoint not unlike the practical application of Rousseau's concept of the general will. Holland's exposition of a Labour government's attitude to widespread opposition on particular issues, reveals several important aspects of his political outlook. Basic to his explanation, was a complete faith in education, on the success of which the success of Labour legislation depended. This situation shows the real weakness of Holland's theories of social revolution, essentially a reliance on education. It was a total dependence which left no room for failure, or adjustment to failure. The failure of a Labour education programme was a situation which Holland did not consider, and thus his theorising had no relation to any concept of forcing men to be free, the ultimate in idealist revolutionary

37. Northern Advocate, 19 Feb. 1925 (Clipping H.P.)
38. Evening Star (T'James) 19 Feb. 1925 (Clipping H.P.)
39. Political Address Mr. Holland at the Junction 1925 (Clipping H.P.)
40. Bay of Islands Luminary - Feb.1925; Whakatane Press 21 Feb.1925; Hunterville Express 6 March 1925; Matamata Record 26 Feb.1925; Putaruru Press 5 March 1925; Examiner (Wodsville) 6 March 1925. Labour's Policy. Mr. Holland in Hastings 1925 (Clippings H.P.)
realism. When contrasted with his expressed doubts in 1923 that the party was not ready to govern, his 1925 position that Labour could triumph over all obstacles, once in office, shows how readily Holland moved from a realistic estimate of an existing political situation, to the postulation of an ideal one. This movement, at times a constant and bewildering vacillation, is obvious in Holland's exposition of land policy in 1925, an exposition which dealt at one moment with improvements under capitalism, at another with situations which presumed the implementation of socialisation. Above all, Holland's remarks in 1925 indicate that his attitude towards the Labour Party, or rather, towards what he thought the party should be, had something in common with Robespierre's claim that "Our will is the general will," a claim to represent the true interests of the community, even if the community failed to recognise this.

Holland's tour, from 2 February to 8 April, in which he had addressed fifty-five meetings, was considered by the executive to have been remarkably successful, particularly in removing "misconceptions" about the land and finance policy. The relative moderation of the party's proposals, as set out by Holland, attracted a good deal of newspaper comment, and was usually construed as an election subterfuge. South Island editorial opinion ranged through several degrees of hostility, from claims that Labour policy was aimed at the destruction of the foundations of society, to objections that it involved higher taxation and was unrealistic. North Island country town editors were more sympathetic, particularly the editor of the North Auckland Times who declared, without perturbation, that he would not be surprised if Labour was the official opposition in 1926. In party circles, the personal aspect of the tour was also deemed to be successful. According to the Worker, Holland's tour had replaced the image of a "wild-eyed, wire-whiskered, raving, foaming bandit" with the reality of "a mild-mannered,

43. O.D.T. 19 March 1925; Timaru Herald 12 March 1925; Mataura Ensign, 17,18 March 1925; Evening Star (Dunedin) 21 March 1925. (Clippings H.P.)
44. North Auckland Times. 28 March 1925 (Clipping H.P.)
quietly-dressed, efficient-looking gentleman." Holland himself was astonished by the enthusiasm of his reception, and took it as conclusive evidence of a remarkable swing to Labour which heralded the election of a Labour government in 1925. At another level however, the tour had shown a Holland divided within himself. He had done his best to put forward the party's modified approach, but his doctrinaire notions kept breaking through, together with impatience with the perverse stupidity of an ignorant electorate.

It was in the light of Holland's apparently favourable reception in rural areas that a land policy committee which reported to the 1925 conference described the existing policy as "unassailable." This committee provided explanatory matter which made a variety of concessions to criticism, concessions which increased rather than reduced the confusion and dissatisfaction the policy had already occasioned within the party. The crucial question of tenure was further complicated. The permanent private tenure of land was explicitly recognised on the basis of an equivalent of lease-in-perpetuity with regular revaluation. In this "explanation," the occupier was postulated as a State tenant. However, this was not to be the usual type of occupancy, for, in relation to criticism on financial grounds, of the proposal that the State would buy land from the present occupiers, the land policy committee explained that occupancy would, in the main, remain on its present basis:

"The object of the policy being specifically to aid the man who works the land, the urge to sell would not apply, but where occupiers desired to transfer to the State, they would be entitled to do so at the valuations set out under the valuation proposals, the State reserving the right to pay with National Bonds bearing interest." 48

Furthermore, in relation to the controversial clause 3 (b), "Privately owned land shall not be sold or transferred except to the State", the committee explained that this could operate only when the Labour government controlled all national finance, and initially it would act only as land agent. From

these commentaries, it might be thought that the committee envisaged a gradual growth in State tenancy, but other sections of the explanatory material conflict with that conclusion. The committee firmly repudiated the possibility of nationalisation occurring by reversion when it stated baldly that the party's proposals did not in any way interfere with the right of inheritance. Further concessions to the status quo were the adoption of a scheme based on interest bearing bonds, and a provision for allowing a land-owner who was not satisfied with State valuation to fix his own valuation. The government had the right to purchase at the owner's valuation, but if it did not exercise this right, the owner could sell through the State Land Transfer Department, presumably to some private buyer. This arrangement effectively circumvented the State valuation clauses of the policy, and together with the recognition of the right of inheritance, made virtual nonsense of the socialisation machinery. As defined by the committee, State valuation would be effective only if the owner wished it, and State purchase would be, essentially, a matter of mutual consent. The land policy committee had explained the policy out of logical existence. This situation was the outcome of the committee's awareness of the need for an immediately acceptable policy, and its wish, at the same time, to retain some grip on the ultimate objective of socialisation. The land policy, formulated in a period of dogmatism, did not lend itself to adaptation to practical demands, and the result was a confused tangle of contradictions and inconsistencies which exhibits to the full, the difficulties of the party's dual role. Some party members, particularly Lee, were keenly aware of the unsatisfactory nature of the policy but it required an unmistakable practical demonstration of the policy's weakness to bring the majority of influential opinion within the party to a similar awareness.

At the Franklin by-election of June 1925, occasioned by Massey's death, Labour's land policy was on trial. At first the executive felt that it would be unwise to contest such a solidly Reform seat at short notice, but Savage, visiting the electorate, advised the executive that the anti-Labour vote would probably be split, and that in view of local Labour enthusiasm, it

49. Ibid.
would be "disastrous" not to contest the seat.\textsuperscript{50} It is interesting to note that the executive accepted Savage's judgement on a candidature matter, while on previous occasions it had refused to accept Holland's. A candidate was chosen, J.S. Montgomerie, "a grizzled old honest cocky."\textsuperscript{51} The question of whether Montgomerie fully understood the party's socialist objectives had been raised privately by Nash and Jordan in January,\textsuperscript{52} but this did not affect his selection. Initially, Lee had opposed Labour's participation in the campaign, but agreed on its wisdom when he found, on arrival in Franklin, that Montgomerie had a considerable personal following. Soon, Lee, assessing feeling in Franklin, was complaining to Nash about the land policy. "My God, that land programme is a hell of a grill to toast a candidate on when the audience is hostile."\textsuperscript{53} Lee believed that the "average candidate" was overwhelmed by the complexity of the policy and difficulty of answering questions about it. Lee remarked that "what may be just in the abstract sense is not always practicable in the political sense,\textsuperscript{54} a standpoint which was to become increasingly important in Labour's policy decisions. Pointing out that the natural deduction from the valuation clause was that home and section owners would have to submit to a State valuation which would deprive them of what they viewed as rightful profit from an investment, Lee held that if the party bluntly advocated this in city electorates, it would not win a single suburb. The solution was, as Nash had suggested previously to Lee, that homes should be exempted from the land policy. Lee also believed the external market fluctuations, reacting on internal prices would make the State valuation policy unworkable. It was his experience that Labour speakers avoided expounding the detail of the policy, preferring to dwell on general aims, and he suggested that in order to assess what was practicable, a Land Bill be drafted. What the farmer wanted, Lee correctly believed, was cheap money, and his farm on terms that would not tie up available

\textsuperscript{50} Savage to Head Office 21 May 1925; Fraser to Savage 23 May 1925. Telegrams (Nat. Sec. Corresp.)
\textsuperscript{51} Lee to Nat. Sec. 4 June 1925.
\textsuperscript{52} Nat. Sec. to W.J. Jordan, 24 Jan. 1925.
\textsuperscript{53} Lee to Nat. Sec., 4 June 1925.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.
"'Usehold's Jockey Comes a Cropper. The Horse. 'Those Liberal clothes you pinched didn't make this jump any easier for me.'"

A cartoon comment on the result of the Franklin by-election shows Holland in the ill-fitting garb of R.J. Seddon, taking a heavy fall.

*New Zealand Free Lance*, 24 June 1925.
A sweeping Reform victory in Franklin confirmed Lee's fears regarding the land policy. He told Nash, "We have seen a winning chance gradually disappear as our land programme became known." The land policy became the major item for party discussion. It was rumoured, and officially denied, that as a result of the Franklin contest, the party would drop its land policy. The rumour originated from Jordan's comment, "The Labour Party has asked a question, had received a reply and would bow to the decision of the overwhelming majority", although Jordan declared that he had not intended to suggest that the party would repudiate its land policy. During the campaign, Holland had appeared at his best. He radiated goodwill, his presence with his silvered hair was gracious, and his voice was pleasant, but at Pukekohe, Lee had seen an audience which was warmly responding to a speech by Holland "become chilled to a remarkable silence" when he spoke on the valuation proposals. Montgomerie had declared that Labour's policy applied to all land, workers' section and farm, and this, thought Lee, had led to small Labour votes in suburban areas. Lee told Nash:

"What we have to realise is that one of the ideas behind the purchase was not merely to farm, but to have as well an appreciating asset, and of course if we can immediately get rid of this idea, all is well, but we have got to deal with human beings as they are, not as we would like them to be." 61

Lee believed that the selling to advantage by holders of sections and small farms did not constitute a great exploitation of the community when compared with the depredations of large capitalists, and in order to combat the capitalists, Labour must enlist small holder support. He thought the policy an unnecessary burden, for a Labour government would not dare to apply its programme to all land. To his mind it seemed that the party's real task was to break large estates by graduated taxation, and to eradicate speculation, in effect, adopt the Liberal land policy of the nineties. "In this way our proposals would get at the criminals, and not as at present threaten to penalise the victims." 62 Lee was apprehensive for the future,

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55. Ibid.
56. E.D. McLennan 6,056, J.S. Montgomerie 2,245.
57. Lee to Nat. Sec. 18 June 1925.
60. N.Z.W. 8 Nov. 1925.
61. Lee to Nat. Sec. 18 June 1925.
62. Ibid.
not only because of the details of the land policy, but because of the attitude it reflected:

"For the first time the vagueness and the revolutionary nature of our programme has been appreciated and I make no apologies for saying we are on the verge of disaster unless something is done immediately ... if labour imagines it can thrust something sown people's throats that no one wants, it is acting the fool ... Our programme as at present is socialism in five minutes. We have been busy chopping chairs about the organisation of heaven when in our possession, but have forgot first about getting there." 63

In Franklin, Lee had put his views before Savage, Parry and Landstone, who agreed with him whole-heartedly. He did not take his complaints to Holland, informing Nash that Holland had left Franklin before he could so so. This has the appearance of an excuse, for Lee no doubt knew that Holland had no wish to review the land policy, and would have little patience with Lee's approach to Labour's problems. Holland would not admit that the Franklin result could be attributed mainly to hostility to the land policy. Dismayed and surprised by Labour's poor showing, he fixed on corrupting and misleading press propaganda as the cause of Labour's defeat, and maintained that education would overcome hostility to the party's platform. He announced that "Labour can afford to rely on methods of intellectual appeal, because from every viewpoint Labour has the best case." 64

Lee's failure to consult Holland is an instance of the distance which separated Holland from his colleagues, and of the formidable strength of Holland's adhesion to a militant socialist position. Holland's reaction to the Franklin result shows the subjective nature of his analysis and suggested that his emphasis on education had become a retreat from unpalatable conclusions. Lee's opinions and arguments have been cited at length because they present a clear illustration of the nature of the trend away from Holland's standpoint, a trend exhibited on another level in Lee's remark to Nash that the burdens of the Franklin campaign rested on Savage and himself, 65 a judgement which ignored Holland's participation. Lee's incessant appeals to Nash and through him to the executive, his canvassing among his colleagues, exhibited as well as increased Holland's

63. Ibid.
64. N.Z.W. 24 June 1925.
65. Lee to Nash, 4 June 1925.
isolation from the forces within the party which were making for policy adjustment. Although Holland admired Lee as one of the keenest students and most brilliant speakers in parliament, the differences in their outlook were fundamental. The essence of these differences, and of the trend away from Holland's standpoint, may be seen in Lee's comment, "to quote M.J. Savage, we are candidates for the treasury benches and not for Avondale," that is, that the Labour Party must have general appeal, not merely to urban industrial areas. This contention had very different implications from the full ticket which Holland had been championing for some time. Holland believed that a Labour candidate in every electorate was necessary to an educational process, Lee and Savage viewed it, together with the requisite policy adjustments, as necessary for the gaining of office. In practical terms this reduced itself to a question of which was to be the determinant in the political situation, the party or the electorate, although Holland, of course, believed that the party represented the true interests of the electorate. According to Lee, his associates in Franklin were agreed that "on the exposition of our land programme as made here, labour will not reach the treasury in the lifetime of any of our local M.Ps." They feared that "by adherence to the eccentric" they would "crucify ourselves at the coming election and indefinitely wander, a minority, in the wilderness." The Franklin by-election and Lee's criticisms came after the 1925 conference, and it was not until 1927 that their influence may be seen in the formal alteration of the party's land policy. However, the acceptance of Lee's opinions may be detected before this. When, during the 1925 parliamentary session which opened in June, a succession of Reform and Liberal members rose to attack the "loosehold," Savage opposed them with an exposition of unaltered policy, although he emphasised the right of inheritance and the gradual nature of the policy. In view of Savage's personal views on the policy, his attitude is explicable in terms of the party structure. The policy

67. Lee to Nash 18 June 1925.
68. Lee to Nash 13 June 1925.
69. Ibid.
71. Ibid.V.207, pp.70-77.
must stand until it was amended by conference. But despite this, an amend-
ment was made, by the executive, under the stress of 1925 election campaign
conditions. In that campaign, Labour's opponents were quick to exploit
the land policy, claiming that it would interfere with the worker's right
to own his home. The national office replied with a leaflet, probably
prepared by Nash, but issued with executive authority, which announced:

- "You can sell your Home to whom you like, when you like, at what
  price you like; and the Labour Party will provide the means of Transfer -
  and save Land Agents and Lawyers' Commission." 72

Thus an awkward aspect of the policy was abandoned in circumstances
which demonstrate the importance of executive opinion in the determination
of policy matters. The worker was to be free to sell as he wished, without
State interference. However, this explanation was qualified in the N.Z.L.P.
Information Bureau's statement on land policy, prepared for candidates by
Nash. Those who received State advances were obliged to sell to the State.
Although the Bureau's statement further confused the issue and opened new
questions, its emphasis was clearly directed against large estates which
would be brought into closer settlement and increased production by steeply
graduated taxation. 73

Labour's land policy was one of the issues at the 1925 election, but
it was the personality of the party leaders which provided the crucial issue.
The election was fought on the personality of Coates, paraded in slogans
and lavish advertisements as "The Man Who Gets Things Done." The Round Table
commentator remarked on the personality differences as he saw them:

"Mr. Coates's only rival was the Labour leader, Mr. Holland. The
contrast between the two men was worthy to adorn a tale. The farmer,
the soldier, the administrator, the man slow of speech and quick of
action, on the one side; the eloquent champion of class consciousness,
the bold maker of promises, the ready and resourceful debater and declamer
on the other. It was the man of action against the man of words as
clearly as Plutarch himself could have depicted it." 74

This was a crude estimate, based on the Coates created by propaganda,
and on those virtues of eloquence Holland's enemies conceded he possessed,

Papers N.Z.L.P.)
73. New Zealand Labour Party Information Bureau, Main Provisions of Land
Policy (1925 Election Papers N.Z.L.P.)
74. Round Table No.62, March 1926, p.432.
but, as such, it is indicative of the type of judgement made by some electors. That this sort of contrast was being made to Holland's disadvantage was apparent to Labour observers, some of whom, particularly the Christchurch moderates, were quite sure that Holland did not present the best public front to the party. This impression was strengthened by the fact that an intensive campaign to discredit Labour, conducted by the P.P.A., the Orange Lodge, and anti-Labour propaganda organisations such as the Welfare League and Loyalty League, singled out Holland for particular attack as the incarnation of extremism, revolutionary plotting and irreligion.\textsuperscript{75}

The Labour Party nominated fifty-six candidates, more than at any previous election. It had prepared its tactics well, and had more money at its command than ever before.\textsuperscript{76} The party's propaganda output was considerable, and it placed large advertisements, featuring the Seddon legend, in daily newspapers.\textsuperscript{77} Except for Nash's advocacy of a State bank, the emphasis of this propaganda was mainly denunciatory, reflecting the party's traditional approach to capitalism.\textsuperscript{78} The main campaign dangers were foreseen and efforts made to avoid them. So as to confine Coates as much as possible to his own electorate and hinder his national campaign, the executive decided to contest the Kaipara seat. A particular effort was made to prevent Sir Joseph Ward from re-entering the House, an event which might lead to a Liberal revival. Special attention was given to those centres of conservatism, Otago and Southland.\textsuperscript{79} However, Labour's "intellectual" appeal could not match the novel and spectacular campaign woven around the personality of Coates, and the election resulted in a Reform landslide. The Government increased its

\textsuperscript{75} Grand Sec. Grand Orange Lodge of New Zealand to Dear Sister or Brother, 14 Oct. 1925; H.S. Gunter, Sec. Loyalty League to Dear Sir or Madam, 1 Oct. 1925; What Labour Says; The Red Menace is Here in New Zealand; New Zealand Socialist Sunday Schools: To the Ladies and Gentlemen of Dunedin North Constituency. (1925 Election Papers) Loyalty League. What is the Red Menace. Wellington n.d. (1925)

\textsuperscript{76} £9000 was subscribed, mostly by unions, particularly those of seamen and watersiders. New Zealand Labour Party Campaign Fighting Fund. Financial Report from Nat. Sec. to Exec. Meeting 22 Dec. 1925 (1925 Election Papers)

\textsuperscript{77} E.P. 3 Nov. 1925.

\textsuperscript{78} The Basic Wage; What the Farmer Got; Happy Homes; The House Problem; You Pay as You Smoke; Another Wage Cut; Hoodwinking the Farmer; Flouting the Arbitration Court; 6d for 3d; Who Gets the Spoils; Big Business Speaks; N.Z.L.P. Leaflets. Wellington 1925. (1925 Election Papers). W. Nash, Financial Power in New Zealand. The case for a State bank. Wellington 1925.

\textsuperscript{79} Minutes, Res. Exec. 14 June, 27 July, 1925, 3 Feb. 1926; Nat. Sec. to Dear Comrade 11 July 1925. Circ. N.Z.L.P.
representation from thirty-eight to fifty-six. Labour lost five seats, reducing its strength to twelve. The old Liberal, Nationalist Party was reduced from twenty to nine. The spectacular success of Reform exaggerated by the electoral system, disguised the considerable swing from Liberal to Labour, as well as from Liberal to Reform. The Liberal vote was gravely eroded, declining from 30.4% to 20.4% of the Dominion total. Reform gained 4.4% of the total vote, bringing its percentage to 47.1%, but Labour was almost as successful in its gain of 4.3% increasing its proportion of the Dominion total from 23.3% in 1922 to 27.6% in 1925.30

Labour's increase in voting support, closely related to the fact that it had contested fifteen more seats than in 1922, failed to affect the party reaction. While Reform supporters rejoiced, Labour supporters were thrown into despondency, as much by the failure to gain seats, as by the loss of McIlvride, Langstone, Monteith, O'Brien and Munro. Most Labour supporters accepted the press version of the election as a smashing defeat for Labour. The Worker's claim that the disappointment was a reaction to the illusory hopes raised by the success of 1922, and that Labour's vote had increased, was no consolation. Labour's reverse was the subject of prolonged party discussion, and numerous explanations were put forward. Many insisted that the most urgent need of the labour movement was an effective press. Others blamed the land policy, or the distortion of it by opponents. The liquor question had been prominent at the election, and some thought it had clouded the issue.32 The executive blamed anti-Labour propaganda, and claimed that the National and Reform parties had made an arrangement so as not to conflict in electorates where Labour candidates were standing. Whether or not such an arrangement was made, it was a fact that four of the five Labour members defeated had not had absolute majorities in 1922, when three or four other candidates had stood in their electorates. In 1925 they had fought straight-out contests and had been defeated.

An explanation of Labour's failure which had particular relevance to Holland's leadership was the view that electors had visions of "a red-hot

J.G. Coates restrains a "wild-eyed, wire-whiskered, raving foaming bandit." An anti-Labour election campaign cartoon from the Dominion, 14 October 1925.
Bolshevik with a growth of two years or so or his chin, a knife dripping in blood in one hand and a six-shooter in the other. In the light of the apparent existence of such a popular misapprehension, might not Holland's leadership be an electoral liability? The attitude of moderates, particularly the Christchurch members, to Holland's leadership has already been examined, and Holland's reaction to the election result, and post-election developments suggest that the question of Holland's leadership was again in the air, though not referred to openly. This slight unrest was not allayed by the fact that Holland had apparently learnt nothing from the election result. Reform's success had been a personal triumph for Coates, as Holland must have known. This personal appeal had succeeded where Holland's invoking of electoral "intelligence" had failed, but Holland sought no new solution to the problem of attracting support. He re-asserted his belief that as the labour movement could not rise higher than the intellectual level of the workers, the greatest need was for education. A reference in the Melbourne Labor Call to "critics" who alleged that Holland claimed to be infallible, may be connected with dissatisfaction with Holland's unwillingness to re-assess the party's position, but it is possible these critics were communists.

Taking consolation in what it saw as evidence of the failure of capitalism and the inevitability of socialism, the declared conclusion which the national executive took from the 1925 result agreed with Holland's contention that education remained the party's greatest need. This suggests a harmony of outlook between the executive and Holland which, judging from post-election developments, did not exist. The executive was fully aware of the importance of personal factors, although it denied their necessary relevance. "The test is not between two opposing parties of men and women, or Mr. Coates and Mr. Holland - the test is between systems - Capitalism and Socialism."

If the executive had doubts about Holland's leadership it would certainly not have expressed these publicly, and in the circumstances had little choice

84. Argus (Melbourne) 16 March 1926.
85. Labor Call 4 March 1926.
but to follow the usual analysis unless it wished to repudiate Holland's leadership. If this course was not open to the executive, adjustment of Labour's electoral appeal was, and one of the most striking aspects of Labour's reverse was the disparity between the accepted official analysis and lesson-taking, and the reaction to the election result evident in policy changes such as that of the land policy in 1927 and in relation to socialisation in 1928. The executive was aware of the danger of "mistaking negation for policy", and Lee drew attention to another aspect of this problem when he remarked, "No matter how much we try to keep the other fellow's policy in the foreground, he won't let the electors forget ours." Despite this feeling, there was also some reluctance to embark on policy changes. Nash, for one, felt that the platform got too much revision, a reaction which suggests that loyalty to militant socialist principles remained strong among key members of the party. Indeed, one aspect of the initial reaction to the 1925 reverse was a renewed determination to stand by the platform. As a result of this, and the fact that the party's leaders were still recovering from the election shock, no major policy change was made at the 1926 conference.

The election result was a great blow to Holland, whose reaction was that of a man who felt Labour's failure as a personal responsibility and humiliation. It was rumoured that he was thinking of retiring from politics because of ill health. Again he failed to persuade the executive to follow his advice, this time in the handling of a Westland electoral petition. In February 1926, Holland and his wife left for Australia for a holiday which was to allow Mrs. Holland to recuperate from a serious illness. Holland reacted very strongly to the suggestion that he was running away from election defeat, but his mood at this time suggests that absence from New Zealand

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83. Ibid.
39. Lee to Nat. Sec. 22 March 1926.
90. Nat. Sec. to Mason 17 Dec. 1926.
at this time was not unwelcome to him. However, the extraordinary persistence of his reputation for revolutionary extremism was demonstrated pointedly by his reception in Australia. Because of his reputation, the N.S.W. labour movement virtually ignored him, an attitude to which Holland, deeply hurt, reacted with bitterness. The South Australian and Victorian labour movements were more hospitable, but the press paid him little attention, and he returned to New Zealand in March, little pleased with his Australian visit.

Soon after his return, Labour became the official opposition with the success of H.G.R. Mason in an Eden by-election. This victory did something to restore Labour's self-confidence, shattered by the 1925 election, but a widespread pessimism still remained.

A not unsympathetic press observer remarked during the 1925 campaign that "Mr. Holland must realise that the Leader of the Labour Party in Opposition and the Leader of the Labour Party as Prime Minister involve the employment of attributes which he no doubt possesses, but which have not yet been called into action." This raised the question of how Holland would react under greatly increased responsibility. Holland faced his role as Leader of the Opposition with intense seriousness. Feeling his responsibilities to be heavy ones, entailing much anxiety and hard work, he told the House that the session of June to September 1926 was one of the most strenuous since he had been elected, and that he never worked less than twelve hours a day, often sixteen or eighteen, seven days a week. His increased duties brought him to appreciate that others, particularly Ministers of the Crown, carried equal or greater burdens. Holland, it seems, was also anxious at this time to enhance his reputation, possibly because he felt that it had suffered in the contest with Coates. Partly because of lack of finance,
partly because of post-election apathy, the party deliberately curtailed its activity in 1926. Relatively free from other engagements, Holland devoted himself to research and writing in 1926 and early in 1927. Most of this work appeared as articles in the Grey River Argus or the Worker, usually taking the form of summaries of the historical background to various aspects of contemporary world affairs. His major studies were of the revolution in China and Italy, issued as two booklets, Chapters in the History of China and Mussolini and the Fascist reaction in Italy. Holland's information and conclusions were derived from published sources whose judgements he accepted. His obsession with historical facts was given full play in a context so remote from his experience that the booklets are devoid of the impelling force of informed protest which gave his parliamentary speeches immediacy and vigour. To Holland's mind, acquaintance with international questions was an obligation on any section of the world-wide labour movement. He had a natural interest in these questions, but he also fancied himself as a commentator on world affairs whose interests transcended the parochial concerns of the Dominion. The Leader of the Opposition, soon to be Prime Minister, must be fully informed on matters of national and international importance. To foster this impression was, perhaps, a subtle form of domestic propaganda, demonstrating to the electorate, and to his party, that

103. H.E. Holland Chapters in the History of China. Wellington 1927. This had originally appeared as a series of articles. G.R.A. 23 Feb. 3, 4, 5, 9, 10 March 1927 (Clippings H.P.)
104. H.E. Holland Mussolini and the Fascist Reaction in Italy. Wellington 1927.
Holland was equipped for the responsibilities of high office. Outside the labour movement, Holland's booklets were either ignored, or treated with contempt.106

The "explanations" of the 1920s had gradually whittled away most of the militant socialist meaning of the 1919 land policy, but formally and officially the policy stood as it had been at the high point of militant theorising in 1921. It remained, a striking testimony to the party's radical nature, a policy outlining a detailed procedure of socialisation. Its virtual abandonment in 1927 was the first, major, formal repudiation, by the party, of its aim of complete socialisation. Throughout 1926, Nash and the executive acted on the belief that the party's immediate task was to link farmers with industrial organisations and win rural support.107 An Industrial and Farmers' Co-Ordination Committee was formed in April, to "support and defend the working farmer in his everyday grievances and disabilities."108 Nash urged party members to take a live interest in questions relating to farmers and the land.109 The party's efforts were co-incident with a constriction of economic activity occasioned by falling prices in the 1925-26 export season. This recession led to vigorous public disputes between advocates of economic freedom, and those who wanted a measure of State control, a division of opinion particularly noticeable in relation to the Dairy Export Control Board. In view of this widespread controversy, Nash, who was anxious to get "the actual purport of our Land Policy into the minds of Electors",110 devised a general, immediate approach, based on co-operation, to assist primary producers during the depression. Nash held that any man who wished to work the land for profit could do so only with an assured market at guaranteed prices.111 In March 1927, Fraser carried this message, with particular emphasis on defence of the Dairy Control Board, around the North Island, Labour's first

106. Stratford Evening Post, 23 Feb. 1927 (Clipping H.P.)
108. Minutes, Res. Exec. 22 April 1926.
109. Nat. Sec. to Lee, 13 Nov. 1926; Jordan to Nat. Sec. 17 Nov.1926 (Telegram Mason to Nat. Sec. 13 Nov. 1926.
110. Nash to Parry, 2 Feb. 1927.
111. Ibid.
propaganda campaign since 1925. This campaign had several significant aspects. It revealed the high degree of practical co-operation and harmony of outlook that existed between Fraser and Nash. Even more importantly it was something novel in party development, a deliberate attempt to meet an immediate situation with the suggestion of practical remedies. That this action was taken by Fraser and Nash, no doubt with executive backing, but certainly without conference approval, indicates where the real initiative and control of the party lay. The major factors which led to this step were the executive's readiness to adopt a more flexible and less militant attitude to land policy, the particular issue of Dairy Control - a state socialist measure dear to Labour hearts - and the pressure of economic circumstances. This was the first occasion on which the Labour Party clearly showed a prompt response to a change in economic conditions.

Land policy came up for discussion at the 1927 conference as a matter of "supreme importance." The emphasis of the policy was altered to rest on the graduated tax on unimproved land values, a feature of the Liberal policy of the 1890s, and on various means of assisting the farmer and increasing production. The controversial State valuation clauses were deleted, as was the nationalisation measure. Usehold was to apply only to land acquired by the State. Existing ownership was safeguarded by a clause which ensured, "Full recognition of owner's interest in all land including tenure, the right of sale, transfer and bequest." The essence of the 1927 land policy was acceptance of the existing basis of land ownership in New Zealand, and the promises of various kinds of State assistance to improve the farmers' position. The committee which drafted the new policy was a large one of twenty-seven members. Its size may have been not only a means of ensuring the widest measure of consultation, but a device designed to submerge the

112. Nat.Sec. to Fraser, 15, 20 March 1927; Fraser to Nat.Sec. 22 March 1927. (Fraser Papers)
113. Ibid.
114. Nat. Sec. to Dear Mr. 28 March 1927. Circ. N.Z.L.P.
115. For 1927 Land Policy see Appendix 8.
117. Nat. Sec. to Dear Mr. 28 March 1927. Circ. N.Z.L.P.
militant socialist element. With the alteration of the land policy some conference delegates protested that principle was being sacrificed to expediency. Holland was not among them, for he had no difficulty in adjusting his views to the retreat from socialist theory which the modified land policy constituted. The theoretically crucial socialisation objective remained untouched, and Holland had come to the conclusion that the success of Labour in office would depend on economic development, and therefore the first essential was to build up production.\textsuperscript{118} This was an economic adaptation of Holland's former fears that Labour might fail in office because the electorate was insufficiently educated, another instance of the growing appreciation within the party of the importance of economic factors. Despite the party's general acceptance of the rural status quo, its socialisation objective remained, and at the 1927 conference, some party members made declarations looking forward to land nationalisation at some future time, a situation to which Labour's opponents drew prompt attention.\textsuperscript{119} The executive implied that it looked forward to nationalisation,\textsuperscript{120} and Savage, who held that recognition of the rights of owners would not preclude State acquisition, observed:

"Last time we were asked to show where we drive every nail and we were silly enough to try and do it, and our opponents hung their hats on them." 'Our scalps also,' added Semple."\textsuperscript{121}

However, all the references to nationalisation were vague or implied, whereas the readjustment of the policy on the basis of private ownership was definite and explicit. The swing to an emphasis on immediate concerns was obvious in Ben Roberts' suggestion of a farmer section of the party to champion, not only the party's objective, but a practical and attractive programme of immediate reform. Roberts saw the main concern of farmers as Dairy Export Control, farm economic and agricultural credit, and he feared that Dairy Export Control, a "socialistic" measure would be thwarted by the Government and "Big Business."\textsuperscript{122} The executive shared this fear and believed political capital would be made of the issue. Immediately after the 1927

\textsuperscript{119} E.P. 2 June 1927.
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid. Land Policy Considered.
conference, Holland toured the farming districts of the North Island, speaking on the new land policy and Dairy Export Control.\textsuperscript{123}

Holland, whose tour attracted considerable attention,\textsuperscript{124} claimed that the Government, hostile to control, was acting in the interests of London speculators who wished to defeat the Dairy Control Board's price fixing efforts, an interpretation with which many dairy farmers agreed.\textsuperscript{125} Exploiting this accordance skilfully, Holland received enthusiastic receptions and motions of appreciation,\textsuperscript{126} and by his use of the control issue he was able to prejudice the Government's support among dairy farmers.\textsuperscript{127} It was in these favourable circumstances that he expounded the new land policy, stressing credit provision. With justice, newspaper editors described Labour's new land policy as akin to the old Liberal one.\textsuperscript{128} Holland distinguished it from the Liberal policy of the nineties merely by claiming that the graduation of Labour's land tax would be much more severe than Seddon's.\textsuperscript{129} He answered critics of the State bank solution to the mortgage problem and the upholders of sanctity of contract, with an explanation of the party's attitude to mortgages:

"You can only get rid of the present mortgages by allowing them to mature. You can't do away with them by law; but they could look to the future. No Government could lift the 360,000,000 mortgages existing, but the State could assist a man to meet the mortgages or if it could not do so, then it could find other land for him at a proper financial rate!"

\textsuperscript{123} For Holland's speeches on land policy and Dairy Control, see Stratford Evening Post, 28 April 1927; Hawera Star 19 April 1927; Taumarunui Press 2 May 1927; Waikato Times 3 May 1927; Northern Advocate 4 May 1927; Christchurch Star 3 May 1927; E.P. 3, 4, 12 May 1927; Dom. 4 May 1927; Opotiki Herald 10 May 1927; Whakatane Press 10 May 1927; Mataura Ensign 13 May 1927. (Clippings H.P.)

\textsuperscript{124} E.P. 13 May 1927.

\textsuperscript{125} Round Table, No.66, March 1927, pp.421-2, No.67, June 1927, pp.650-2; Taumarunui Press 2 May 1927.

\textsuperscript{126} Mataura Ensign 13 May 1927; Hawera Star 29 April 1927; Northern Advocate 5 May 1927; Report N.Z.I.P. Conf. 1928, Nat. Exec. Report p.2.


\textsuperscript{128} E.P. 4 May 1927; Northern Advocate 4 May 1927.

\textsuperscript{129} Ibid. 4 May 1927.

\textsuperscript{130} Ibid.
The Evening Post warned its readers not to be influenced by Holland because his criticism of Government policy might accord with their own feelings. This did happen among North Island dairy farmers, but Otago and Southland sheep farmers remained hostile. Such was the reception given Holland on his tour, that Coates could not afford to allow Holland to remain unanswered. He issued a statement detailing Reform's agrarian programme and achievements, and criticising Holland's "sudden professed anxiety for the welfare of the primary producers." Holland promptly impugned Coates's administrative diligence and methods.

The success of the Labour candidate, W. Lee Martin, a dairy farmer and chairman of the Waikato Farmers' Union, in the Raglan by-election of September 1927, was regarded by the executive as an excellent omen. Martin won Raglan, a farming electorate which included some mining centres, by a small majority in a five-cornered contest. More accurate indications of Labour's standing in rural areas were provided by Martin's failure to induce the Auckland Farmers' Union to support the Labour Party, and by that Union's decision to continue its independent participation in politics. This decision assured the future of the Country Party until the 1923 election and was a measure of Labour's continued failure to attract substantial rural support.

The general theme of a N.Z.L.P. drift away from a militant socialist position has been examined in this chapter in relation to the land policy. That the beginnings of this drift should have been initially and most clearly evidenced in the development of the land policy is not surprising, given the importance of the farmer in New Zealand's economy and politics, and the urban industrial origins of the Labour Party. Between 1919 and 1927 the leaders of the N.Z.L.P. became increasingly aware that a substantial measure of rural

131. E.P. 13 May 1927.
135. Nat. Sec. to Dear Sir, 10 Sept. 1927 Circ. N.Z.L.P.
137. Northern Advocate 27 May 1927; Dom. 28 May 1927.
support was necessary to attainment of office, and that a land policy devised by militant socialists whose outlook was urban, industrial and theory-ridden, was not attractive to farmers. As Lee pointed out, the land policy made clear "the vagueness and the revolutionary nature of our programme" and it made this clear, not only to farmers, but to a section of the party. Some party members had a very limited understanding of what was meant by the party's socialisation objective, failing to appreciate its revolutionary nature because their thinking was restricted to terms of reform. However, the land policy did indicate, if vaguely, the radical nature of the party's objectives, and this was something alien to minds, even Labour minds, cast in the conventional mould. But loyalty was strong, and the active and influential agencies within the party were few, and those who could not understand, or distrusted, the land policy, were, in the main, content to accept the party's declared position. Change came when those who led the party, and who thought in terms of a radical re-arrangement of the whole organisation of society, gradually accepted Lee's proposition that "What may be just in the abstract sense is not always practical be in the political sense." Their very considerable reluctance to adopt this standpoint is revealed in the devices and delay which preceded the formal alteration of the policy. Some attempts were made, by those who wished to retain what was "just in the abstract sense", to find other solutions to the problem, such as the encouragement of industrial-rural co-operation, and a declared reliance on the efficacy of education. Numerous "explanations" of the policy were advanced, explanations which amounted to modifications and changes. This raises the question of why "explanations" such as those of the 1925 land policy committee were not incorporated promptly into the platform. This situation suggests that the party's leaders wished both to retain and to abandon the 1919 policy. While adherence to militant socialist theory demanded the retention of the policy, considerations of the need to win farmer support dictated its abandonment. Despite the retention of the socialisation objective, the land policy changes of 1927 amounted to a repudiation by the party of its former basis and an admission of the party's failure as an agency of militant socialist theory. That this would be the effect of substantial land policy changes, for the alternative to socialisation
was some form of private ownership, made party leaders most reluctant to embark on formal, official alterations. The issuing of "explanations", while the policy remained unchanged, was a procedure which arose from the same wish, to make adjustments without acknowledging them as such, as led to the continuing usage of militant socialist terminology and methods of analysis after the 1925 election, while action was increasingly being based on conventional political considerations.

The changes in the party's rural approach also signified the changing nature of the party's appeal, its attempt to gain general, rather than exclusively worker, support. Several important influences led to the policy reassessment which has been examined in this chapter. Because its provisions differed so strikingly from the established system, the land policy became a focus for anti-Labour criticism, an attack which threatened to nullify the party's efforts to win farmer support, and confronted the party with a choice between the letter and the spirit of its mission of "social service." Important too were economic circumstances which led to a growing conviction among party leaders that a sound economy was necessary to Labour's success in office, that the economy must be stable before any changes to it could be made safely, and that Labour's policy ought to take this situation into account. This type of appraisal, was made from two different standpoints, though both analyses led to the same conclusion, the adoption of a 'reformist' policy. Some, such as Lee and Savage, reached this conclusion in terms of the demands of getting office. Holland, however, was still thinking at a further remove from electoral demands, in terms of a Labour government in power.

It has been maintained that Holland accepted, in relation to the land policy, a retreat from a militant socialist position, and this has been put forward as evidence of the transformation of the militant socialist role from one of attempted leadership and initiative to that of acting more as a curb, at times passively resisting, at times reluctantly following, a gradual retreat. Holland's reactions may be explained in several ways. As the promulgator, at executive request, of land policy changes, Holland was himself committed to them, caught up and involved in the process of gradual modification. His own developing convictions were carrying him towards similar conclusions, though not so rapidly, and on different premises, for
particularly under the stimulus of the appearance of the Country Party; and of economic deterioration, he was awakening to the necessity of meeting practical and immediate situations as well as adhering to principle and theory. Moreover, given the general trend of party thought, it is difficult to see how Holland could have resisted these changes effectively, had he wished to do so. In fact, the nature of Holland's leadership, after 1925, was undergoing an extraordinary and complex change. It has been argued that the executive's use of Holland as the party's rural propagandist was, at least in part, an attempt to allow him to dispel, personally, farmer hostility associated with his reputation for revolutionary extremism. It has been maintained also that the terms of personal leadership on which the 1925 campaign was fought, drew attention to what might be viewed as Holland's shortcomings as a leader in public life. These arguments have been related to the contention that a number of party members were in some doubt, though this was not expressed openly, as to whether or not Holland's leadership was an electoral asset. But while these unspoken doubts, and Holland's loss of initiative in the determination of party development, point to the decline of his leadership and influence within the party, his public stature and prestige as a political leader were increasing. Holland's political activity up to 1926 gives a general impression of an incomplete involvement in the existing political context. Partly this situation stems from the nature of his beliefs, partly it is connected with the fact that Holland did not carry the full burden of leadership within the Labour Party, but shared it with others. However, the growth of the P.L.P. and particularly his translation to Leadership of the Opposition altered this position, for Holland was forced to accept responsibility, and, because he was in a position where political conflict was, in the main, on ground dictated by the government, he was brought into a much closer involvement in his political environment. About the same time, alterations to the land policy were bringing the party's appeal to farmers down from the realm of militant socialist theory to a level approaching general intelligibility. Where before the party's policy had been beyond the sympathetic understanding of farmers, it had now been moved into an area of reform with which they were familiar. It is the coincidence of these two developments, of policy, and of Holland's personal standing, which offers a solution to the problem of why Holland was apparently well received
in rural areas while the party continued to fail to attract substantial rural votes. The factors favouring a degree of farmer interest were that the land policy was being translated gradually into the terms of conventional thinking where it could attract attention and command enthusiasm, and that it was being expounded by a man whose public stature was growing as his party grew, after 1926 the Leader of the Opposition, part of the established political order. On the other hand, farmers still thought of the Labour Party as urban, and as representing the interests of industrial workers, and still remembered Holland as the revolutionary socialist of 1913. Holland could arouse interest and even enthusiasm, and as his 1927 tour revealed, he could exploit political issues adeptly, but once the impact of his personal appeal had ceased, his listeners, ever cautious recalled their earlier judgements of the Labour Party and its leader, and at the ballot box, acted accordingly.
Chapter 9.

SOCIALISATION, AND THE 1923 ELECTION.

In the 1922 election manifesto of the N.Z.L.P., an attempt was made to explain the socialisation objective in terms attractive and understandable to voters; in the 1925 manifesto it was stated bluntly, as in the platform; in 1923 there was no reference to the party's ultimate objective, and the manifesto dealt only with the projected immediate policy of a Labour government during its first parliament. The arguments put forward in relation to the development of the land policy, as indicating a drift away from a militant socialist position, are taken up in this chapter at the point where this drift had led to serious questioning of the socialisation objective, the keystone of the beliefs and theories of militant socialists. Holland's limited acceptance of the party's retreat from this objective is interpreted as a partial loss of faith, and the reflection of significant modifications in his convictions. To support and explain this, several related arguments are put forward, and developed in this and later chapters. The central argument is that Holland was becoming increasingly fearful that, given the adverse economic conditions that obtained after 1927, a governmental attempt to implement socialisation would fail. This was an important qualification of that certainty which had characterised Holland's convictions since 1907. With this went Holland's growing belief, also conditioned by worsening economic conditions, that immediate socialisation ought not be his first or only consideration. This conclusion was reached from two lines of approach — that economic conditions would have to be improved before socialisation would have any hope of success, and that, for humanitarian reasons, immediate relief of distress, by whatever means, was more important than anything else. Further, an integral part of the belief of militant socialists was their consciousness of their role as a vanguard. As has been argued, they no longer filled or even asserted that role within the Labour Party. While this reflect-
ed the waning of both militancy and devotion to doctrine, it also had a profound effect on what militant socialists retained of their former position. Further to the argument of enervation advanced in Chapter 7, it is maintained that, by 1923, this condition had advanced to a further stage, both circumstances and his own doubts forcing Holland to live on two levels, that of practical politician and that of militant socialist with less and less connection between them. The result of this split was that the enervation which partially explains the virtual paralysis of Holland's authority and initiative within the party, became, not only a negative force inhibiting the assertion of militancy and socialist theory, but an agency actively eroding the basis of Holland's long-held standpoint. Thus, as circumstances and doubts caused Holland to repress his militancy, his devotion to socialist theory underwent a gradual transmutation from a plan of action to a statement about an ideal society. It is in terms of this change that Holland's willingness to accept the dropping of the socialisation objective in 1928 is explicable. At the same time, another important change was taking place, in the nature of Holland's leadership and influence. As examined in the early chapters of this thesis, his leadership was based on his authority and initiative as a militant socialist. However, particularly after 1918, this situation was complicated by the demands of practical politics, which led to a debilitating split between Holland's loyalty to militant socialist theory, and his appreciation of the demands of the prevailing political environment. As this split widened, the balance of its constituents altered, and though retaining his theories as an ideal, Holland emerged with a new authority, that of practical politician, with, as has been argued in the previous chapter, a growing public stature. Although its internal balance had altered, the duality between theory and practice remained, and Holland continued to act, in important matters, on theoretical premises. This is obvious in the fact that although he ceased thinking in terms of immediate social revolution, he assumed that measures of gradual socialisation would be introduced immediately by a Labour government. The particular concern of the latter section of this chapter is the effect of the 1923 election outcome on the conflict between theory and practice in the N.Z.L.P. It is argued that, as Holland saw, the 1923 election result clashed with the militant socialist, class war interpretation of politics, by demonstrating that the rejection of a capital-
The election result emphasised the importance of transitory and political rather than enduring theoretical factors as electoral determinants, and made Labour's dropping of the socialisation objective seem marginal and of little consequence. At the same time, Labour's post-election support for United involved the party in the political context more closely than ever before. In effect, Labour had waived its independence and surrendered its initiative. The continued strength of devotion to theory is revealed in Holland's unwillingness to acknowledge this situation and his refusal to admit that Labour's theoretical role of independence and initiative were in any way limited by the fact of its support of United.

At the beginning of 1923 Holland declared that the elections of that year would be "the greatest opportunity that Labour has ever had of recording a decisive victory." 1 Confident that if all the workers and some of the farmers voted Labour, the party would win the election, Holland had stated earlier that the party must approach matters as though it was the government of the country. 2 These statements indicate the major aspects of Labour's approach to the 1923 elections, consciousness of a great opportunity with prospects never before so auspicious, 3 and awareness of the need for a practical programme and the need to campaign not merely in favourable electorates. 4 This approach has been studied earlier in relation to the land policy, and it produced, at the 1927 conference, a reaction among a few 'militants'. At that conference, militant unionist delegates attempted to give the platform a more militant socialist twist, and criticised older party members as mere Liberals. Holland and Nash hit back at these "so-called 'militants'", Nash vigorously, Holland with more restraint. 5 At the 1928 conference the 'practical' approach which had led to the 1927 land policy changes was even more marked, and this time was concerned with the nucleus of the platform, the objective. With power seemingly in Labour's grasp, stormy debates took

place over the election and post-election policy of Labour. Those who placed prime emphasis on the attainment of office attempted to persuade the conference to shelve the socialisation objective and concentrate on "an election policy containing only those proposals which could be brought into effect by a Labour Government in the course of a single Parliament." The narrow defeat of this proposal shows the strength of the element which placed attainment of office above all other considerations. This group was not exclusively moderate, reformist or non-socialist. It represented an agreement on the view that in order for Labour to do anything, socialise or not, it must hold office. For this, votes must be attracted, and the socialisation objective was not attractive. It was obvious that this objective could not be attained immediately on Labour's gaining office, and that progress towards it would be very gradual, and in a very different context from the present. It was absurd, therefore, to burden Labour's electoral appeal with something beyond popular understanding, indeed with anything beyond its immediately attainable objects. The conclusion of this reasoning, whether it stopped at the proposition that the objective was not attractive or went on to the further propositions, was that the objective ought to be at least shelved. Opposed to this view, were those who saw in the objective the true essence of the party's endeavour, believed that it ought to be attractive, and held that some acknowledgement of this must be made. Yet, so influenced were they by the views which moved the proponents of the 'practical' approach, that they were satisfied to make this acknowledgement virtually to themselves, and not to the electors. The conference passed a motion which re-affirmed the socialisation objective, but called for the compilation of a fighting platform, a legislative programme which Labour would implement immediately on becoming the government. With this, and the election manifesto that followed, the party had, in effect, abandoned socialisation as a palpable goal.

The decision of the 1923 conference regarding the objective illustrates again the paramount importance of the initiative and influence of the party
executive. As H.G.R. Mason remarked of the 1927 conference, only matters brought forward by the executive and "a few individuals possessing prestige", received consideration, and "crowd psychology" ensured their acceptance. Nevertheless there can be no doubt that the party's leaders were leading it in the direction which the majority wished to go. As a policy development affecting profoundly a central tenet of the beliefs of militant socialists, the dropping of the socialisation objective was intimately connected with the reaction of party leaders to economic conditions. Since 1926, the P.L.P. had become increasingly concerned with the worsening economic position and its manifestation in unemployment. This situation depressed Holland in particular, and apart from criticising the Government's attitude, he indulged in frequent predictions of further calamitous developments, and upbraided the public for its frivolous refusal to face serious problems. For a time he apparently believed the Government might attempt to honour its 1925 promises, but in 1927 he concluded that it would not, and continually reminded Coates of this failure and of growing social problems. This was, of course normal Opposition tactics, but Holland's criticism was complicated by anxiety. While he was sure that Labour held the key to economic betterment, he feared that it might become the government in such economic circumstances and that it would fail. This fear, that recession would frustrate and discredit Labour's efforts at economic transformation, had important consequences. As a theoretical, as well as a practical, position such a fear was not unsound, reflecting the application of economic determinism. While from one angle it appeared to conflict with the postulation of inevitability, from another it could be interpreted as visualising only a postponement of the social revolution. This fear led those who held closely to the socialisation objective to conclude, in terms of a sober estimate of the minimum conditions for the achievement of their ultimate aims, that immediate socialisation under deteriorating economic conditions would fail, and the attempt would retard

the implementation of a true social revolution. Therefore a first aim must be to so improve existing economic conditions that transformation could proceed in favourable circumstances. Given such reasoning, it was logical that stress should be laid on the initial task, improvement of existing economic conditions, and that this emphasis should be made clear in the platform and in the party's electoral appeals. Thus, assuming that the majority of the 1923 conference which re-affirmed the socialisation objective did so in full understanding and sincerity, an immediate reformist platform was a logical necessity and a first consideration in the economic circumstances.

The fear that Labour might fail as a government in the prevailing circumstances, though not necessarily affecting militant socialists' confidence in the ultimate realisation of their aims, nevertheless had a marked immediate affect on the attitude of party leaders to the political situation. The admission of doubts about their ability to solve existing economic problems was an important modification of the degree of confidence which Labour leaders had expressed hitherto. The consequences of this were revealed particularly in parliament, where much of the edge left Labour's attack, and a noticeably subdued party moderated its former intransigence and exhibited a greater degree of conformity to the standards of its environment. Holland was least affected by this trend. Denunciation and protest, particularly allegations that the government had complied with the wishes of private financial houses and failed to deal with unemployment or provide adequate credit, were still a feature of Labour speeches, especially those of Holland, but it was significant that when Fraser introduced an Unemployed Workers' Bill embodying a contributory scheme, his tone was reasonable, pleading, without denunciatory tirade. Significant also was the fact that at the opening of parliament, when Holland attempted to marshall all Labour's forces in a denunciatory onslaught on Reform, he failed to prevent the P.I.P. sending W.J.Jordan with a New Zealand parliamentary delegation which attended an Empire parliamentary conference in Canada. Holland alone opposed sending a delegate, a situation which indicates that he was still preoccupied with

attack on 'capitalism' while other party members were anxious to become more aware of the nature of the problems which capitalism faced.

There were many confusions and contradictions in the party's position. The emphasis of party argument was on the contention that the Government was in full control of New Zealand's economic position. This contention was not only connected with the attributing of blame to Reform for failure to improve conditions, it was also essential to belief in a Labour government's ability to remedy the position, although the waning of this confidence was obvious in the changing attitude of the parliamentary party. In debates on the worsening economic situation, Holland argued on the assumption that New Zealand was capable of being self-contained, and could rise above the troubles of other countries, an assumption which contrasted with his theories of the need for international co-operation because of the inevitable interdependence of nations. These arguments of self-containment indicate a growing absorption in national problems, at the expense of socialist internationalism. Holland and his colleagues claimed that the main cause of unemployment was the Government's immigration policy and the displacement of labour by modern inventions, a view which was to linger until 1921 to the virtual neglect of the importance of trade cycle depression. The obvious fact that the "Coates' boom" had given way to dissatisfaction, and a situation in which Coates himself declared that the electors must choose between Reform and Labour, led the leaders of the Labour Party to an outlook in which optimism and anticipation mingled with apprehension. Holland's reaction was to interpret the political situation much more favourably than the facts merited, and to exaggerate and dramatise the Labour Party's achievement during 1923.

The election policy committee which drafted Labour's manifesto in June 1923 was dominated by the executive, for of its nine members, only two, Holland and Savage, were not regular executive members. The manifesto, 

18. Round Table, No.70, March 1929, p.412.
21. Nat. Sec. to Dear Mr. 21 Sept. 1928. The other members were Fraser, Nash, Semple, Thorn, Roberts, Brindle and Bromley.
written by Nash, was, in line with the conference decision, a declaration of the projected policy of a Labour government during its first parliament, but unlike the conference resolution it omitted any mention of socialisation, an indication that while the executive were prepared to acknowledge the objective privately, within party and conference circles, they were not anxious to avow it publicly, for election purposes. After its drafting the manifesto was critically re-examined and discussed, an unprecedented procedure, but there is no evidence of any protest against the omission of the socialisation objective. The 1928 manifesto was the first occasion on which the party shelved socialisation in its formal appeal to electors. This was a further stage in the trend away from theory which has been examined in previous chapters, but there can be little doubt that the immediate occasion of the omission of the objective was the wish among party leaders to make the most of their opportunity in 1923. Nash, for instance, was afraid as early as 1927 that, public memory being short, the Government might introduce some side issue before the elections and thus obscure the real issue. Prior to previous elections, attacks on the party's objective, as revolutionary, had played a major part as campaign issues, and Labour leaders were anxious to avoid such distortions of the real issues. Such an attitude could justify the omission of the objective, and, furthermore, the manifesto included the salient points of the platform, which, according to the party's declaration of principles, were steps towards the attainment of the objective. While this linkage may have been implicit in the thinking of some, such as Holland, the manifesto did not make it explicit to the public. Again, in relation to the approval of the election manifesto by those who retained their militant socialist principles, such as Holland, the more general sections of the manifesto were phrased equivocally:

"The Labour Party appeals with confidence to all those who desire to build up a more stable order in which the perpetual conflicts of today will be avoided, and the relationship of those engaged in the manufacture and distribution of the goods necessary for the Dominion's progress will be that of co-operation and mutual service. The programme of the Party is organised to achieve these ends ... The Dominion is

22. Colleague of Holland A.
24. Nat. Sec. to Dear Mr. 21 Sept. 1923. Circ. N.Z.L.P.
26. Minutes, Election Policy Committee 7 June 1923 in Minutes Res. Exec.
one of the most favoured lands in the World, and given a progressive Government which will organise its productive resources - promote land settlement - make just industrial laws - place taxation where it creates no hardship - and distribute its wealth as far as possible in proportion to service, it will once more take its place in the van of the advanced nations, which it lost with the passing of the Seddon-Ballance Governments." 27

On the face of it, and interpreted from a non-socialist viewpoint, the manifesto, prefaced by the slogans "Co-operation and Mutual Service, Closer Land Settlement, Safeguarding State Enterprises, National Health and Unemployment Insurance," 28 was innocuous, suggesting development of resources and an era of prosperity and security similar to that assumed to have existed under Ballance and Seddon. But did an "order in which ... conflicts ... will be avoided" convey to the minds of the party's theorists, the concept of classless society? What did "co-operation and mutual service" entail? Did the placing of taxation "where it creates no hardship" and the distribution of wealth "as far as possible in proportion to service" mean to men such as Holland, legal expropriation of capitalists and eventually, the dictatorship of the proletariat? It is obvious that the general objectives of the party as set out in the manifesto were open to an interpretation which would harmonise with the theories of militant socialists, and this must be considered in explaining the manifesto's unopposed acceptance. The ambiguity of the manifesto is not evidence of duplicity, but testimony to Nash's skilful reconciliation of differing interpretations of the party's aims. It was a revealing comment on the unimportance of Holland's active role in policy making that, in expressing approval of the election policy manifesto, Holland remarked to the committee - a remark effectively directed to Nash - that he would require further information on specific measures before he placed the policy before the electors on his pre-election tour. 29 This indicates that it was the party's policy as defined by Nash and the executive, rather than his own beliefs and interpretations that Holland put before electors, and that he expected, not to determine, but to have determined for him, the details of the party's approach. In this situation, the real

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28. Ibid.
29. Minutes, Election Policy Committee, op.cit.
initiative and influence in policy matters is again made evident. In keeping with developments studied in the previous chapter, the emphasis of Labour's positive appeal in the manifesto was on land policy, for the party's leaders were aware that Labour must have farmer support if it was to win the election.

The campaign promised to be a dull one, until on 16 October, the aged and ailing Sir Joseph Ward, leader of the new United Party, the revived Liberalism, made his policy speech. The United Party had been formed in August 1927 with A.E. Davy, who had conjured up the "Coates boom" of 1925, as Dominion organiser. Its claim to existence was based on the contention that Reform had failed, and a non-socialist alternative to Reform was necessary, or Labour would become the government. At the time of the party's formation, the Evening Post dismissed it as just another ephemeral group, and in analysing privately the political situation in October 1927, Nash did not mention the new party. In October 1928, when expounding United's policy Ward inadvertently substituted seventy for seven, and United's spectacular seventy million pound loan was born. Ward later corrected his error, stating that the loan was to be spread over ten years, but the Reform press publicised Ward's mistake as evidence of absurd extravagance, and ignoring the correction, highlighted the seventy million pound loan. This, fostering the original false impression, gave Ward's policy a striking and easily discerned content. Reform's tactical error resulted in the election campaign becoming one of choice between the discredited policy of Coates and the untried proposals of the "financial wizard", Ward.

The spectacular rise to prominence of Ward and the United Party caught Labour totally unprepared. Writing on 10 October, Holland dismissed United as marginal to the contest, and Labour's election manifesto, issued on 17 October, insisted that the real issue was between Reform and Labour. Like Reform speakers, Labour candidates referred to the loan proposal as delusive.

34. Ibid. pp67-70.
36. Labour's Election Policy op.cit.
and economically impossible, but Labour did not emphasise the loan. Holland ignored it, and when he dealt with the United Party, usually referred to Liberal support of Reform, and to Ward's reversal of policy on nationalisation. Holland did not believe that United or the loan could be an important factor in the election. To him United was merely Liberalism in a new guise, and as he continued to insist, issuing a pamphlet on the subject in 1928, Liberal and Reform were in essence identical, for they both voted against Labour on important issues. He failed to realise that electors might see a distinction, for Ward and his loan were beneath contempt to one who trusted in the intelligence of electors. Thorn, editing the Worker, was more discerning, and quoted a remark from the Lyttelton Times that the discontent with Reform which would have aided the Labour Party would now be diverted to support for United.

Apart from a tendency not to take United seriously, Labour had exhausted its tactical resources. The policy developments, the protracted discussion and the adjustment of militant socialist consciences that had issued in the 1923 election manifesto had absorbed the party's energies and were taken as finalising its electoral approach. When Ward's unexpected prominence called for a new response from Labour, the party was unequal to the demand. This incapacity was compounded of failure to realise that United was a serious threat, inflexibility, inability to make prompt adjustments to new political situations, and a remarkable faith, among some Labour candidates, in the virtues of Liberalism as revived by Ward. Labour candidates were soon discomforted by the new factor in politics. While both non-Labour parties accused Labour of revolutionary extremism, their approaches were different. Reform seized on the mildness of the manifesto and contrasted it with the

41. Savage to Nat. Sec. 22 Oct. 1928.
platform, exploiting discrepancies and alleging misrepresentation.\(^4\) United was more subtle. Much Labour propaganda was denunciation of Reform policy\(^3\) and United supporters could, as well as capitalising on this attack, use the opportunity to brand Labour negative and contrast this with United's "constructive" policy.\(^4\)

The general election result was a surprise to everyone. United emerged as the strongest of the three parties, with thirty-two supporters, Reform's representation being halved, dropping from 56 to 28. Labour won seven seats and lost two to give it a strength of nineteen. Lee and Bartram were defeated, and the new members were J.W.Munro, W.E.Barnard, C.L.Carr, R.Semple, C.H. Chapman, F.Langstone and J.O'Brien, Munro, Langstone, Semple and O'Brien having been members on previous occasions. Labour's percentage of the Dominion vote remained almost stable at 27\(\%\) and United's main gains were at the expense of Reform.\(^4\) The astonishing success of United was a complete surprise to the Labour Party and Holland.\(^4\) Publicly, Labour's spokesmen took consolation in the rout of Coates and the improvement in Labour's position. Searching for an explanation of the result, Thorn, editing the Worker, stressed Ward's leadership and Labour's lack of financial resources, but he could not disguise petulant disgust with those workers who had been blinded by Ward's promises.\(^4\) Holland and Nash attributed United's success mainly to the seventy million pound loan.\(^4\) Bitterly disillusioned, Holland told Bartram:

"I was personally disappointed with the result of the elections and considerably disgusted as well. After the disillusionment they suffered with Coates in and after 1925 one would have thought that

\(^{42}\) Dom. 1,3 Nov. 1923; N.Z.Herald 25 Oct. 1923; E.P. 9 Nov. 1923; Southland Times 22 Oct. 1923; Also Questions handed in to Walter Nash (Hutt Election Papers 1923 N.Z.L.P.)


\(^{44}\) Dom. 13 Oct. 1923; Hutt News 25 Oct. 1923 (Hutt Election Papers)

\(^{45}\) For more detailed analysis see Chapman pp.105-127.


\(^{47}\) N.Z.W. 21 Nov. 1923.

the workers at any rate would not have permitted themselves to be stampeded by another organised fake. Ward's seventy millions cut ice alright. I wonder when they have kicked Sir Joseph as they kicked Coates they will run after some other golden calf." 49

To bring Holland to a position where the future seemed uncertain, the disillusionment must have been a fundamental one, and the hopes that were shattered, strong indeed. The result hit at the basis of Holland's electoral outlook, faith in education and in the intelligence of electors. United's success brought Holland to bitter awareness that the electors, and even the workers, were still unable to distinguish the "fake" from the genuine, and would follow the lure of immediate personal gain. This situation was a measure of the extent of Labour's failure to convert electors to its ideals, and it brought with it doubts as to Labour's future. In view of the stability of the Labour percentage of the vote and its increase in seats, Holland's reference to workers being "stampeded" towards United could apply only to United's considerable gains in urban centres, particularly Auckland. 50 This movement of predominantly lower middle-class votes, probably those of white-collar workers, from Reform to United, indicated that Labour had failed to convince these voters. Holland, however, maintained that Labour's greatest lack had been in organisation, particularly in the South Island. Perhaps with United's A.E. Davy in mind, both Holland and Nash believed that Labour urgently needed a competent organiser to increase affiliations and organise financial support, 51 but nothing was done to appoint one.

Immediately after the election, Holland observed that the United Party was an unstable combination which only Ward could have brought together, and which might disintegrate at any time. This was a shrewd judgement, but Holland's predictions that either Reform and United would fuse, or there would be another election, 52 proved inaccurate. Holland believed that in a fresh election, Labour would win in those electorates where it had been narrowly defeated, 53 a doubtful postulation, for Ward was more popular.

49. Holland to Bartram 11 March 1929 (H.P.)
50. Lipson op.cit. p.225.
51. Holland to Bartram op.cit. ; Nat. Sec. to Collings op.cit.
53. Holland to Bartram op. cit.
immediately after the election than before and another election, particularly as Labour had no funds, may have been disastrous for the Labour Party. Holland also believed that whatever happened, Labour was master of the situation. A short session of parliament in December clarified the position, and after Labour had voted with United, Ward and his party assumed office. Although Holland though Ward's parliamentary showing a poor one, and considered that United could not discharge its election promises, he construed the equivocal election result as indicating that Coates must go and Ward must be given his opportunity. After stating the measures which Labour wanted United to enact, Holland reiterated his claim that Labour would remain a party of independence, master of the situation. As the Worker pointed out, Labour could put Ward in, but it could not oust him, unless Coates was agreeable, and Labour willing to tolerate Reform, which it was not. Despite Holland's protestations, Labour was not master of the situation, it was committed to United. Holland's claims were dictated by theoretical considerations, his determination to maintain, whatever the circumstances, Labour's traditional role of independence. In fact, Labour's post-election support of United entailed the sacrifice of both independence and initiative. Holland's refusal to acknowledge this is evidence of the emphasis he still placed on the retention of a theoretically 'pure' position. Labour's commitment to United was not merely based on the mechanics of the political situation. There was a good deal of support for Ward within the P.L.P. itself. When Ward promised to raise relief wages to award levels, Sullivan said that Ward had earned the undying gratitude of Labour. Carr referred to the coming of the Ward Government as a fundamental change, and predicted legislation which would "give the people their fair share of the good things of life." Despite a rebuke from the executive, Carr maintained his view, adding that there was also a matter of tactics involved, that of winning the Liberal

constituency of Timaru for Labour. This type of reasoning was used also by W.J. Jordan. Such an attitude to United, and to electoral tactics was repugnant to some militant socialists. W.T. Young, secretary of the Seamen's Federation resigned from the party in February 1929, stating that Labour candidates had been more concerned with attaining government power than with expounding the principles of the party. While some Labour politicians accepted the United Government with confidence or enthusiasm, the party's leaders, particularly Holland, saw only the wreckage of their hopes. Optimism, not the ebullient self-confidence of 1925, but sober calculated judgement, based on public dissatisfaction with Reform, had come to nothing, for Labour was still far from power. Holland blamed the loan delusion, but at least one of his colleagues, of then junior standing, thought that it was an open question whether the loan would have been a distraction from Labour if Holland had appeared to electors as an inspiring and acceptable Prime Minister. Reform was discredited and electors wanted a change, but Holland still carried the stigma of revolutionary extremist. A substantial section of the electorate still thought of Holland as a leader in trouble-making. It was in the context of this belief, which undoubtedly existed among some electors, that party moderates objected to the uncompromising way in which Holland stated the party's platform, claiming that this made him, and the Labour Party, unpopular with the people. This attitude was not expressed publicly, but, more clearly than after the 1925 election, it was part of the atmosphere of party affairs after 1923. The fact that objection was taken to the way in which Holland stated the platform does not indicate the full extent of differences of opinion within the party. As had been argued, Holland, perhaps because he wished to avoid such criticism, was becoming increasingly careful to present only the policy decided on by conference and as interpreted in detail by the appropriate party authorities, election policy committee, executive, and secretary. Therefore, objections to the way in which Holland stated the platform were also objections to the policy.

60. Carr to Nat. Sec. 26 Feb. 1929; Nat. Sec. to Carr 27 Feb. 1929.
61. Jordan to Nat. Sec. 15 June 1928.
63. Colleague of Holland B.
64. Colleague of Holland A.
attitudes of party leaders generally, and in fact reflect the distaste of moderates, excluded from the party's controlling circle, for the remnants of militant socialist theory which continued to be evident in the decisions of those who dominated the executive. So far as Holland was concerned, the moderate's objection was associated, not only with the electors' reaction to what he said, but with what electors thought of Holland personally. Given the moderates' belief that electors thought of Holland as a revolutionary extremist, whatever he said, this reputation would remain, and could be removed only by the removal of Holland. The strength of Holland's leadership within the party was further weakened by the outcome of the 1923 election. Ward had repeated the performance of Coates in proving a superior electoral attraction to Holland, and, in the terms of this interpretation, Holland's ability to lead the party to victory, after two such defeats, might be a matter for some doubt. Striking evidence of Holland's failure to inspire confidence and real loyalty among the moderates of his party may be found in the way in which many P.L.P. members turned, in 1923, to Ward, for the realisation of the aims towards which Labour had been working, a situation which will be examined later.

Although Holland's confidence and position had suffered severe blows, his public statements on Labour's prospects were as optimistic as before. He did not brood over his disappointment, but turned immediately to making the best of the new political situation, one of unprecedented difficulty for Labour. The swift return of Holland's optimism and confidence were associated with his belief that Ward would soon fail and his failure would redound to Labour's advantage. In the early months of 1929 Holland observed the government's initial difficulties and failures, remarking to Bartram in March:

"One thing is certain, that in all the cities Ward's cake will take on the aspect of dough long before this Parliament ends. I am of the opinion that there will be an election long before the three years are up ..." 66

Holland's opinion that Ward would soon lose popularity, and that a political crisis would occur, was not generally held in the party, and all Labour politicians, except Holland, and perhaps Savage and Armstrong, expected

65. Stead's Review Feb. March, May 1929; Holland to Fraser 13 Feb. 1929 (Fraser Papers)
66. Holland to Bartram, 11 March 1929 (H.P.)
that a United Government would be better than Reform, to some degree. In view of the strong pro-Ward sentiment within the party, it was both natural and prudent for the executive to declare that United was "a Government with a varied programme much of which the Party can support," and to avoid, in its explanation of United's election success, any reference to the seventy million pound loan - the suggestion that Ward's supporters had been the victims of an absurd mistake. The executive took the attitude, more flattering to Labour, that United voters had been attracted by proposals, particularly financial, similar to those of Labour, and threatened Ward with ejection should he continue the policy of Reform. In circumstances where the public, and many in the Labour movement, expected much from United, all that party leaders could do, whatever their attitude to United, was to wait for the Government to reveal its intentions. Given Labour's unwillingness to support Reform, the operative question governing the party's attitude to United was how long Labour members were prepared to wait for Ward to show his colours, a situation which Ward exploited. Holland alone, was certain that Ward would quickly reveal his incompetence, a belief which underestimated Ward's skill in procrastination. Holland's certainty of Ward's imminent exposure led him to attribute to the political situation in 1929 an exciting obscurity which, in fact, it lacked. Visualising a situation in which he would be approached to form a government, Holland assumed that when he formed it, its life would be short, "for the Conservatives and Liberals would combine to replace it", a desirable clarification of the real political division. Holland still claimed that the United Government's fate rested with Labour.

To force the Government to present its legislative proposals, the Labour Party remained silent during the Address in Reply debate in 1929, but despite Holland's appeal, United and Reform members talked at length and to no purpose. Labour's abstention from the debate was strongly criticised by

69. Ibid. pp.3, 10, 11.
71. Ibid.
some party branches. This incensed Holland who personally informed these critics that the party was the best judge of its own tactics, that unemployment could be met only by legislation, which was what Labour's tactics were aimed at, and that to protest that "people were starving while Durnin talks", was not consistent with demanding that Labour prolong the debate. Such criticism reveals the peculiar difficulty of Labour's position. Whatever course the party took, evoked criticism. In parliament, Holland expressed impatience with the absence of legislation, but could do nothing. As in 1903, Ward had chosen a legislative holiday as a device to retain both right and left wings of his support, and Labour, unwilling to support the Reform alternative, was forced to bide its time. The most spectacular incident of the 1929 session was Ward's statement in September that within five weeks there would be no unemployment in New Zealand. Ward proposed to discharge this bold undertaking with a number of public works' schemes, but the problem was growing faster than the Government's solution. Holland declared:

"I am prepared, without consulting any member of the Labour Party, to pledge the solid support of the party to the policy which the Prime Minister has enunciated ..." 78

Ward's promise was not kept, and the Government's failure to solve the unemployment problem in 1929 aroused much rank and file criticism of the Labour Party's action in installing Ward in office. Such critics, mainly unionists, were unwilling to consider the party's problem as one of choosing the lesser of two evils. Meanwhile, the party's leaders looked for deliverance from their difficulties, taking much hope, initially, from Labour victories in Great Britain and Australia. However, Holland soon realised that MacDonald's success was not, as he had thought at first, "the greatest revolutionary change in British history." 81

The Hutt by-election in November

73. Pattison. Labour Party Taumarunui to Holland 19 July 1939. Telegram (Fraser Papers)
74. Ibid. Mrs. Walker Labour Party Taumarunui to Holland, Telegram; Neary, Chairman Haetiti Branch to Fraser 19 July 1929 Telegram; Holland to Pattison 25 July 1919; Holland to Pattison 22 July 1929 (Fraser Papers)
75. Gardner op.cit. p.11.
76. N.Z.W. 1 May 1929.
78. Ibid.
81. N.Z.W. 5 June 1929.
1929 was welcomed by the worker as an escape from perplexed idleness into action, a field where Labour was more at home, and Nash's success inspired new confidence. The effects of the 1923 election, and the political situation which followed it, on the Labour Party, were clearly revealed at the party's 1930 conference. Thorn, the party president, admitted that after the session of December 1923, the party had been plagued by indecision, had lost its political impetus and suspended its propaganda. Although principles had been preserved and stated, the post-election situation had led to apathy and irritation among supporters. Thorn pleaded for understanding of the parliamentary party's difficulties in an intricate situation, and welcomed the conference, which would consider the motives which had moved the party, as a solvent of doubt.

The theme of this chapter has been the Labour Party's plunge into the main stream of political life, a development represented on the theoretical level by the shelving of the socialisation objective, and in practice by the party's support of United. The dropping of the objective removed that aspect of the Labour Party's standpoint which distinguished it most sharply from other parties, and thereafter Labour's endeavour was, essentially, confined to the same realm as that of its rivals. The shelving of socialisation and the emphasis on a policy which could be implemented forthwith, represented a decisive movement in party concern from the ultimate to the immediate. This entailed a determination to face and solve immediate political problems and a repudiation of the escape from such problems offered in retirement into reliance on social revolution. Emphasis on immediate policy was a development associated with the pressure of urgent political problems, particularly the economic situation, a pressure which no political party, aspiring to office, could afford to ignore. The 1928 election demonstrated the Labour Party's political and practical shortcomings at a time when party attention was concentrated on these problems. United's success showed the advantages of an attractive, striking policy, of an appeal to the past.

and of popular leadership. It showed the disadvantages of inflexibility, either in theoretical attitude or tactical approach, and it brought to the surface the essentially non-socialist reformist nature of much Labour sentiment, and demonstrated the strength of this outlook in determining the party's attitude to the political situation. United's success was followed by Labour's involvement in the political melee, not on its own terms, but on those of its rivals, a position in which independence and initiative, those things which the militant socialist leaders of the Labour Party, since 1926, had been so anxious to retain, were lost. The lesson of all this was that politics had its own laws and a degree of conformity to them was necessary for success.

The developments examined in this chapter were accompanied by a further deterioration in Holland's influence and standing within the party. As the party moved further away from the theory and practice associated with the militant socialist position, Holland, at any point, was closest to this position. Holland followed the party trend reluctantly, endeavouring to preserve what he could of former theories and practices. At the same time he had suffered a partial loss of faith, for he was willing to accept something less than the blunt assertion of the socialisation objective, willing to tolerate a situation where social revolution became vague, implicit, a possible interpretation, a possibility. Loss of faith is evident too in the fear that economic circumstance would frustrate the realisation of militant socialists' ultimate aims, though it is interesting to see that this apprehension was forgotten in the election campaign, in the excitement of striving for power. Despite his apparent loss of influence and standing, and his doubts, in a curious, intangible way Holland sustained the party at this time, representing its traditional nature and values, its individuality, at a time when many of his colleagues were tending, in their attitude towards Ward, to a left-wing Liberalism. He preserved the party's ideals, its spirit of protest and many of its traditional attitudes, when these things were in danger of being forgotten in the absorption with political problems. The quickness of Holland's recovery from the blow of the 1923 election is evidence that his initial disillusionment was neither fundamental nor enduring, and that he still believed that political events would transpire to Labour's advantage, a belief obvious also in his assertion that the Labour Party remained master of the political situation.
Chapter 10.

SAMOA.

Throughout his parliamentary career, Holland's close interest in the administration of New Zealand's Western Samoan mandate provides an opportunity to examine, in a relatively uncomplicated context, the conflict between Holland as a militant socialist and idealist, and as a practical politician. The argument of this chapter is that Holland's militancy and aggressive dogmatism had not been abandoned by 1928, but merely repressed, and that this militancy, when aroused, was still capable of overcoming the dictates of political prudence in determining his attitudes. This situation is revealed most clearly in relation to Samoan problems because these problems, being not strictly domestic, were not matters of prime concern in the party, and thus Holland's opinions on them were not subjected to the same degree of surveillance as on internal policy matters. Furthermore, given the limitations imposed on him by party opinion and structure in regard to major internal questions, Holland tended to use Samoan affairs as an outlet and make them a matter of particular personal interest. His attitudes at various stages of New Zealand's Samoan administration exhibit the tendency of doctrinaire and idealist pre-conceptions to conflict with actualities, and show the numerous contradictions which arose from the attempt to apply rigid theoretical remedies to a complex situation. His attitudes to Samoan affairs show the uncertainty and confusion which the conflict between socialist theories, reforming ideals and the exigencies of practical politics produced in Holland's mind. The Samoan issue in New Zealand politics also demonstrates how opposition could force Holland into a position far more extreme than his original one.

At the Imperial war conference of 1916-17, Massey and Ward made it clear that in view of the possible danger of German naval power, New Zealand would strongly oppose the return of Germany's former colonies, particularly
Western Samoa. Early in 1913, when public agitation favouring Samoa's annexation to New Zealand began in Wellington, Holland concluded that "Tories" and commercial interests sought the subjection and exploitation of Samoa and were prepared to make this question a determining factor in their approach to any peace settlement. This seemed to Holland one aspect of a capitalist attempt to prevent the birth of a post-war new order; and, with Fraser, he attended one of the meetings called to further annexation. Holland put an amendment from the floor, demanding a peace policy of no annexations and declaring that Samoa should be placed under an international commission with full rights of internal self-government guaranteed to the Samoan people.

This policy, an application of the principles of the English Union of Democratic Control, was later adopted as a resolution by the 1913 N.Z.L.P. conference. Holland believed that those who wanted annexation were trading on popular ignorance of Samoan history, and in April 1913 he published a pamphlet designed to remedy this. His argument was that "no people whatever is good enough to hold any other people in subjection", but on the practical question of the government of Samoa, Holland presented little more than an unresolved problem:

"Now it is indisputable that all peoples are capable of self-government in the light of their own historical development; but it is a self-evident fact that no primitive people could possibly govern itself according to the standards and requirements of Twentieth Century Capitalism."

As a solution, Holland suggested fullest rights of internal self-government, international organisation and the ending of capitalism, but while capitalism remained, Holland was in a dilemma, caught between his belief that Samoans should be self-governing, and his wish that they might

1. Round Table, No.31, June 1913, pp.650-660.
7. Ibid. p.4.
progress towards the standards and ideals of European civilisation.

The conferring of the Samoan mandate on New Zealand in 1919 was not received with enthusiasm in New Zealand. Some, like Massey, had wanted annexation. Others presumed that Britain or America would incur responsibility for Samoa. Provision was made by Order in Council for the government of the territory by an Administrator, who would legislate with the advice and consent of a Legislative Council consisting of four official and up to four unofficial members, appointed by the Governor General. When this came before parliament, Holland raised the question of indentured labour, mainly Chinese, which, he claimed, amounted to slavery. He gave a comprehensive account of Samoan history, a subject which bored some members who clowned while he spoke. Holland told these pranksters that the days of conducting the affairs of parliament as though it was a comic opera had gone, but politicians of discernment, such as Apirana Ngata, thought his historical discursion pretentious. Massey told Holland that while indentured labour might be slavery under some foreign power, it could never be such under the British flag. In response to this, and as a move in the 1919 election campaign, Holland produced a pamphlet designed to show that indentured labour was slavery under any flag, and that a vote for the Massey Party was a vote for slavery.

To enable members of parliament to judge the nature of New Zealand's responsibilities, it was arranged that a parliamentary party visit Samoa early in 1920. The Labour Party decided to participate in the visit, Holland expressing confidence that investigation would lead to the abolition of the indentured labour system, and that sooner or later the Samoans must be allowed self-government. Holland, McCombs, Howard and Bartram left New Zealand with the parliamentary party at the end of February, after attention had been drawn to the indentured labour system by a strike for wage increases by

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9. Round Table March 1920, p.468.
Indian labourers in Fiji, and the dispatch of New Zealand troops to Fiji as a precautionary measure. On the voyage, Holland was indignant with Sir James Allen's refusal, as leader of the party, to allow Labour members to secure direct information regarding conditions from wage workers at any of the islands visited. Holland, in what was publicised as "bad taste", defied Allen, insisting that if he was permitted to land at Fiji he must be free to make enquiries among the Indian labourers as to the cause of their strike. In Samoa the parliamentary party received submissions from a Citizens' Committee, representing Europeans, which emphasised the economic necessity of continuing the indenture system and listed grievances such as excessive taxation, extravagant administration, the need for planter representation on the Administrator's Council, the censorship of the local newspaper and the imposition of total prohibition. Like the Citizens' Committee, the Samoans were not pleased with New Zealand administration. They too made representations which revealed hostility dating from the pneumonic influenza epidemic, introduced from New Zealand in 1918, which killed about one-fifth of the Samoan population. Among the Samoans' complaints there was no mention of indentured labour. Holland thought that the omission was the result of sinister "influence", for private enquiries by Labour members seemed to Holland to reveal that the Samoans were unitedly opposed to it. Both planters and Government were adamant in their defence of the indentured labour system. The Labour members returned to New Zealand convinced that the administration of Samoa was no better than a military dictatorship. Their ideal was Samoan self-government, and as a prelude to that, they believed

Samoa needed enlightened administration and a voice in its own government, such as prevailed in Tonga, a native kingdom under British protection. The publication of this criticism provoked some strong reactions, particularly from government supporters.

The Samoan Act of 1921 confirmed the organisation of the administration set up under Order in Council, that is, without elective representation for either Samoans or Europeans. On the basis of correspondence he had received, Holland claimed that Samoan disaffection was such that there was danger of insurrection, and the following year he was still pressing for representative government. In 1923 the Act was amended to provide for election of unofficial members, not to outnumber officials, to the Legislative Council. Statutory recognition was given to the Fono of Faipules, or native advisory council, but the Administrator had power to appoint or dismiss its members. The power was criticised by Holland as permitting interference with native customs, and he protested against the official dominance of the Legislative Council. In spite of the faults he saw in it, the amended Act seemed to Holland a move in the right direction, and under a new Administrator, Major-General George Richardson, appointed in 1923, conditions in Samoa appeared to be much improved. The indentured labour question became one of the past as indentures were discontinued, Chinese labourers gradually repatriated, and harmony prevailed among those who remained. Much was done to improve the material conditions of the Samoans. In August 1926, Holland stated that he had the utmost admiration for the Administrator, and had received no complaints from Samoa.

Up to this time Holland's attitude to Samoan questions had been based on militant socialist and liberal democratic principles, and it seemed, in 1926, that the most important of these principles were being applied successfully. However, Holland's praise for Richardson reveals that as well

as sharing the Administrator's wish to accelerate the pace of Samoan progress, he was equally ignorant of the nature of Samoan society. Richardson, acting from the best of motives, wished to lessen the economic power of the big trading firms, in the interests of the Samoans, and implement a policy of "Westernization." In doing this, he alienated the influential Europeans and half-castes by hitting at their trading interests, while his programme of sweeping reforms, particularly the Native Regulations of 1925, offended the conservative Samoans. Richardson's treatment of the Faipule as true representatives of Samoan opinion, upset the complex balance of Samoan political leadership and caused much Samoan dissatisfaction, the nature of which Holland, as well as Richardson, failed to understand. By 1926 dissatisfaction had taken an active form in Samoa. At the first election to the Legislative Council in 1924, the non-official representatives elected were O.F.Nelson, G.E.L.Westbrook and A.Williams. Nelson, a half-caste Swedish-Samoan, the principal of a firm which handled a considerable share of the copra trade, the basis of Samoa's economy, led this group with skill and determination. In February 1926, the Administrator took over the marketing of copra, and soon after, Nelson left Samoa for health reasons. In August, Westbrook, whom Holland may have met in Samoa, began writing to Holland of local grievances, intensified for Westbrook by his own bankruptcy. Upon his return in September, Nelson organised, with Westbrook and Williams, a public meeting to press for legislative and political changes. Samoans were admitted, and a committee formed of both races. This committee proposed to send a deputation to the New Zealand Government. Believing that Samoan participation in European politics was likely to lead to trouble, the Administrator asked that it be discontinued. Meanwhile Westbrook was writing frequently and at great length to Holland regarding the "administration of intimidation."27

The situation in Samoa worsened rapidly in 1927. The Mau, a native movement of protest against oppressive legislation and executive orders, was

27. Westbrook to Holland 27 Aug. 6,14,16 Dec. 1926 (W.P.)
launched. The administration attitude was that Europeans were fomenting discord for their own purposes, to further their trading interests and extend their powers. They had exhorted Samoans to refrain from paying taxes and to passively resist authority. This interpretation was partially correct, but the administration overlooked the fact that the Samoans had grievances of their own, and while Europeans might be attempting to use the Samoans for their own ends, the reverse process was also operating. In June, the Administrator threatened Nelson with deportation as the instigator of unrest, and in the same month the New Zealand parliament debated a Bill authorising the deportation of Europeans, Samoans already being subject to banishment. In May, Holland had stated publicly that New Zealand was not administering its mandate on the principles laid down by the League of Nations, and criticised Richardson's methods of treating the Samoans. To this he added the charge that the Government was adopting a policy of coercion. Westbrook claimed, in his letters, that the administration encouraged big trading companies at the expense of smaller traders, and that the dissentients in Samoa were being branded as pro-German, points which might have been expected to enlist Holland's sympathies, but although Holland used some of Westbrook's information, he did not use it uncritically, or without discrimination. In parliament in June, Holland contended that Richardson was obsessed with military methods, but commended his administrative achievement. Holland held no brief for the European Citizens' Committee, which he interpreted as standing for private profits, nor was he convinced of the purity of Nelson's motives. He merely argued that the agitation was a constitutional one, and that the issue was not a matter of who was right or wrong, but of the right of free expression of criticism. In view of what it saw as the fomenting of serious discontent to further Nelson's ambition to displace the Administrator and rule in his stead, the Government refused to admit the validity of Holland's arguments. Late in December, Nelson, E.W. Curr and A.G. Smyth were deported from Samoa. The Samoan troubles attracted considerable overseas

28. Round Table, No. 69, Dec. 1927, pp. 191-204.
29. Northern Advocate, 5 May 1927.
30. Westbrook to Holland 3 April, 30 May 1927 (W.P.)
attention and late in 1927 a Royal Commission of investigation was appointed. Nelson supplied Holland with a trenchant sketch of the Commission's proceedings in Samoa, and extolled his own role of pacifier among Samoans.  

When a summary of the Commission's report was published in December, it vindicated the policies of administration. In letters to Holland, both Nelson and Westbrook claimed that this would increase Mau support and intransigence, and referred to the danger of violence.

The criticisms of the Samoan administration which Holland made in 1927 were criticisms of method, not of the direction of policy, with which Holland generally agreed. What Holland did not see was that given the direction of policy, local resistance was likely, if not unavoidable, and the real questions were whether the policy or its speed of implementation were to be altered, or if they were not, how resistance might be overcome. Holland's criticism was, then, based on an inadequate understanding of the position in Samoa, but nevertheless his criticism of Richardson's methods as dictatorial was merited. The tone of Holland's comments was restrained, his arguments cogently presented and his attitude that of the prudent politician who, while anxious to defend principles as he saw them, did not indulge in sweeping condemnation. This attitude changed swiftly in 1928.

In January 1928, Holland published The Revolt of the Samoans, a pamphlet reviewing "an accumulation of intolerable administrative acts" and "outrageous injustices." He used information supplied by Westbrook and Nelson, but indicated he disagreed with many of Nelson's views, and included in the pamphlet a criticism of trading capitalism, suggesting that the copra market be nationalised. He criticised the deportations as terroristic, warned that there might be an outbreak of violence if New Zealand's policy was continued and concluded that the Mau would remain in existence until the Samoans gained "recognition of their rights as a people." In Holland's opinion the situation called for prompt action by the League of Nations. This pamphlet, in which Holland expressed his opinions outside the restraining influence of a parl-

32. O.F. Nelson to Holland 20 Oct. 1927 (H.P.)
34. Holland. The Revolt of the Samoans, pp.16-17.
iamentary atmosphere, was attacked immediately, and Holland was charged with attempting to make party capital out of Samoa's troubles. Coaded into a more extreme position, he claimed, taking up an assertion of Westbrook's, that an attempt was being made by the administration to provoke rebellion among the Samoans. The reaction to Holland's pamphlet seems to have been election engendered, an attempt by anti-Labour forces to seize on and magnify anything which might be used to discredit Holland and his party prior to the general elections. Soon after the publication of The Revolt of the Samoans, a Press Association report from Samoa stated that there was serious danger from the Mau to the lives of both Samoans and Europeans, and that Holland's support of the Mau, made known through the circulation of his speeches and pamphlets, was responsible for this situation. Holland was furious, holding that the report was designed to discredit him and to prepare New Zealand for a policy of shooting down the Mau. He prepared a denial, but to his intense indignation, the Press Association refused to transmit it in full. Holland concluded that the Government and the elements which supported it were frantically endeavouring to save their faces by slandering and misrepresenting those who were in opposition to them. The defiant attitude of the Mau led to the sending of two cruisers to Samoa in February 1928, but the display of force became a joke among the natives. With the expiration in March of Richardson's term as Administrator, the tension in Samoa eased, but it was revived in August by the censuring of Nelson by the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations, and the Commission's exoneration of the administration from the charge of having violated the mandate.

As in the 1923 elections approached, there was a difference of opinion within the Labour Party on the Samoan question. His pamphlet's hostile reception and the allegations regarding the incitant nature of his statements, changed Holland's attitude, for, holding strong views and believing them to be unimpeachable, he reacted strongly to attack. He abandoned the reasoned

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35. Westbrook to Holland 21 June, 12 Dec. 1927 (W.P.)
38. Holland to Westbrook, 20 March 1928 (W.P.)
criticism evidenced earlier, and, losing perspective in his indignation, came out, particularly in Stead's Review, as a purveyor of the questionable polemic of Nelson and Westbrook, accepting, for instance, Nelson's contention that the Royal Commission had whitewashed the administration on the basis of hearsay and prejudiced evidence. While Holland's attitude commanded some support within the Labour Party, some members thought it unjustified, and perhaps unjustified, Nash, for instance, distrusted Nelson and doubted that his attitude towards the Samoan administration was completely justified. While believing that Nelson was entitled to a fair hearing, Nash was not happy with the party's association with him, through Holland. In view of his doubts, and of possible electoral consequences, Nash wanted to avoid the controversial Samoan question during the 1928 campaign, and to exclude any reference to it from the manifesto. Holland, protesting that the matter was one of principle, secured its inclusion, but the manifesto referred only to a policy of conciliation and justice, and not to the controversial question of who was right. Nash believed that Holland's standpoint on the Samoan question was an electoral liability, but the analysis of the 1928 election does not support the contention of the New Zealand Herald, that Holland's stand on Samoa, by alienating anti-Reform votes, lost Labour the election. It seems more likely that Holland's vehemence on the Samoan question was taken by already suspicious, rather than wavering voters as further evidence of his extremism. The real significance of Holland's outbursts on Samoan affairs probably lies in their providing Holland's critics within the party, with additional reasons for holding his leadership to be an electoral liability. Holland claimed that the Reform Government's policy on Samoa contributed substantially to its defeat, and stated that it was "confidently anticipated" that the United Government would reverse this policy. There was little, if any, justification for either of these conclusions, although in Samoa a reversal of policy was expected. Ward declared that the former policy would continue, and agitation flared up again in Samoa, and in New Zealand, where

42. Colleague of Holland A.
43. Labour's Election Policy 1928, p. 11.
44. Colleague of Holland A.
47. Westbrook to Holland, 28 Jan. 1930 (H.P.)
Nelson was then living. A civil service investigation gave charges of mal-administration substantial foundation, which Holland and others were not slow to exploit. In May 1929, Holland insisted that there could be no settlement of the Samoan problem until the deportation orders were cancelled and Samoans given an adequate voice in their own government.

On 23 December 1929, at a welcome in Apia to one of the deportees, police and Samoans of the Mau came to blows. The police fired, a European policeman and eight Samoans, including the chief Tamasese, leader of the Mau, were killed or died of wounds. Holland described the shooting as a criminal blunder. Contingents of New Zealand marines were sent to Samoa in an attempt to round up the Mau, an action which aroused further local resentment. Throughout 1930 the Samoan question was one of lively public debate and protests in which Holland and Nelson, individually, but not in co-operation, were prominent. The Samoan problem remained unsolved in Holland's lifetime, and it was not until 1947 that the first step towards complete self-government was taken. In the early 1930s the worsening economic conditions in New Zealand forced Samoan affairs off the political stage and Holland was too preoccupied with other matters to give Samoan...
In 1923 Sir Apirana Ngata went to the centre of the Samoan problem when he stated that the Samoans were not ready for the reforms which were forced upon them, and that the administration had shown not enough understanding and too much haste. Holland's conception of political reform was also at variance with Samoan conservatism. He saw that Richardson was precipitate, authoritarian and tactless, and blamed the nature of the administration for the trouble in Samoa, but he does not seem to have appreciated the full difficulty of reconciling Samoan custom with effective, progressive government. The consequences of Holland's reaction to oppression as he saw it, in fact the oppression of those who thought themselves enlightened reformers, are interesting. In criticising Richardson, he attacked a man who had attempted to break trading monopolies and improve the economic position of the Samoans, and in siding with Nelson he took up the cause of petty capitalists seeking to preserve their interests. Although Holland initially attempted to maintain a distinction between ends and means, in the heat of controversy this was forgotten. This situation reveals again the primary importance which Holland placed on representation, self-determination and majority control, although in this case, as in others, the tendency of such determinants was against the reforms which Holland desired. Obvious also, was his sympathy with the oppressed, even those who were being forced to be free. Holland's attitude to Samoan affairs shows the influence of the continued existence of capitalism. He had the ideal solution to Samoan problems—the abolition of capitalism—but as this could not be applied, he became more concerned to improve the solution which was being applied, a concern which involved him in the assertion of liberal democratic, rather than militant socialist principles. Yet Holland was still very much the militant. The judicious politician and the rash agitator still warred within him. When the matter at stake was one of principle, the opposition seemed immured in ignorance and he was attacked personally, the agitator reverted to his stock in

trade of unbridled vehemence and dubious charges. The experienced politician was wary of the statements of Westbrook and Nelson, as those of men who wished to use him for their own ends, but the agitator, traduced and indignant, could not resist such ammunition at hand.
Chapter 11.

A NEW POLICY.

In the period 1929-1931, Labour Party policy development switched definitely from a retreat along the path previously laid down by militant socialists, to the formulation of a new policy which had as its goal, not the social revolution, but the reform of capitalism. It is argued that the two major influences which brought about this change were dissatisfaction within the party with its rate of electoral progress, and the demands of a situation of economic depression. Prior to this change, the spirit of Holland's leadership was in harmony at least with the party's orientation, afterwards it was not. Following the repudiation of the United Government, independent Labour Party initiative was reasserted, particularly in the development of a plan for dealing with the economic situation. This reassertion, associated with the formulation of an attractive topical policy, did not follow militant socialist lines, but was in terms of the reform of capitalism, and instead of being adjusted to a rigid theoretical standpoint, derived its impetus from Labour's humanitarian ideals and the party's leaders' assessment of electoral attitudes and demands. Because N.Z.L.P. leaders believed that they had solved at last the problem of attracting votes, while preserving the spirit of the party's traditional endeavour, the 1931 election result came as a bitter disappointment to them. The new initiative, eventually expressed in a positive, immediate and practical policy, was taken up by the executive, and, particularly, Savage. Holland's personal outlook continued to be negative, still wedded to the class war and denunciation of capitalism. When his convictions as a militant socialist were at their firmest, militancy and socialist theory had been inseparable, but Holland's parliamentary career had seen the process of their gradual separation. Theory being, in the last resort, a matter of personal conviction, might
persist, while militancy, the aggressive and public aspect of that conviction, was abandoned, or moderated. Holland's standpoint had undergone this development. In the period examined in this chapter, relations between Holland and the rest of N.Z.L.P. leaders were altered by the gathering momentum of the trend towards a new policy. Where before Holland had exercised a passive conserving influence within the traditional context of party development, now his opinions became marginal, for the new policy departures signified that party leaders were no longer moving in the traditional context, but outside the theoretical framework on which Holland still relied. Holland's loss of confidence in himself and in his party is patent. Age, disillusionments, and the problems of economic depression had sapped Holland's vitality and weakened his convictions.

After the 1928 election, particular problems, electoral and parliamentary, were all subsidiary to the main question - what lesson was Labour to take from the election result? Following the 1925 election, the executive had moved slowly, and with caution, and this procedure was repeated after 1923, the ground being prepared in 1930 and the first step taken in 1931. Holland went to the 1929 N.Z.L.P. conference convinced that the lesson of 1928 was that the party must, as a prime essential, review its organisation. Although the conference decided that the party should open a campaign fund immediately, and select candidates, this did not satisfy Holland, and later in the year he was still complaining to the executive that the matter of organisation was urgent. The executive's deafness to Holland's complaints reflects the fact that executive members believed that the lesson of 1928 was not primarily to perfect organisation, but to make some adjustments to Labour's electoral appeal. Holland's insistence on organisation was based on his supposition, a militant socialist one, that majority support for Labour must exist and needed only to be engaged, while the executive's position was that such support had to be created, where it did not exist. The executive's attitude was implicit in Fraser's message, on behalf of the P.L.P.,

1. Holland to Bartram, 11 March 1929 (H.P.)
to Ramsay MacDonald upon his becoming Prime Minister. Fraser stated that
the party would watch, "with great hope and interest", the development of
MacDonald's policy, particularly in regard to unemployment. The party was
hoping for practical guidance, but this was not to come from MacDonald.

Holland was alive to the practical political difficulties caused by
the depression, but he was obviously disheartened, and could see no hope of
their swift solution. In 1929 he told parliament that "we do not expect
that this government, or any other, can abolish unemployment in one Parlia-
ment." However realistic this view might have been, it was not a declaration
which would attract votes, nor did it indicate an attitude of mind which
might inspire confidence. It was as if Holland was afflicted with that
malaise which, according to Mason, had overtaken "most of our men" in 1929,
the idea that "victory will come from a concurrence of favourable external
circumstances rather than from our own efforts." Holland did believe that
capitalism was collapsing, and he also thought that the economic consequences
of that collapse were beyond the power of even a Labour government to rectify
immediately. As a theorist, Holland was in a difficult position. Given
that conditions were adverse for social transformation, then to discharge
its true mission Labour must await the final disintegration of capitalism
and build anew from the ruins. To take office during the process of collapse
was to risk a disastrous involvement in the wreck. Yet, the acceptance of
this outlook meant that immediate problems, that of the suffering occasioned
by the collapse, and of the good will of the people, would be neglected,
and to neglect them was inhuman, and political folly. As on previous
occasions, the conflict between theory and practice tended to immobilise
Holland in both spheres, and to undermine his confidence in the success of
either line of action.

Savage in particular was becoming increasingly impatient with the party's
policy and the outlook of Holland. Relations between Holland and Savage had

4. Sec. P.I.P. to Ramsay MacDonald 15 July 1929 (Fraser Papers)
6. Mason to Nat. Sec. 11 May 1929.
8. Savage to Nat. Sec. 22 Feb.1929; Grey Lynn Democratic Labour Party op.cit.
never been particularly close, and even before the 1923 election, Savage had difficulty in controlling an impulse to be critical of Holland's political judgement. Despite his later reputation for mildness and benignity, Savage in the late twenties was impulsive, self-centred and excitable, and assertively dogmatic in his opinions of how party affairs should be conducted. These characteristics, suggesting an impatient ambition, could not have made for good relations with Holland. Moreover, Holland was so devoted to parliamentary affairs and so seldom absent from the House that the deputy chairmanship which Savage possessed was merely nominal. Even when Holland was absent from proceedings, he supplied Savage with instructions and suggestions. This was galling to Savage, particularly when, as in 1929, he disagreed with Holland's parliamentary tactics, tactics which had, in fact, been forced on Holland by the opinion of the majority of the P.L.P. After the early months of 1929, Holland's attitude to the United Government was a willingness to move a no-confidence motion at the earliest opportunity, but when he suggested this in caucus he found no support. Like Holland, Savage was in strong disagreement with the P.L.P. policy of waiting for Ward to reveal his policy, as Savage believed that Labour ought to take advantage of an unequaled chance to take the initiative. In the face of what he thought to be "a stupid reverence" for Ward, he was unable to "set fire to things", and gain acceptance of his view among his colleagues. Although Savage and Holland both had no faith in Ward, their tactical solutions differed. Holland wanted the party to eject Ward's Government forthwith and accept whatever political consequences that might ensue, or failing this, to support Ward's Government fully. Savage believed that the party should oppose Ward by impeding him and making it as difficult as possible for him to govern, at the same time avoiding any risk of precipitating another election. The political delays occasioned by Ward's illness infuriated Savage, and he disagreed with Holland's policy of accepting Ward's illness as a proper reason for withholding criticism. Savage's attitude to Holland, at the

10. Ibid; Savage to Head Office 21 May 1925 (Telegram); Nat. Sec. to Savage 16 Feb. 1923; Savage to Nash 22 Oct. 1928, 22 Feb. 1929.
11. Holland to Savage, 24 Nov. 1932. (Savage Papers)
time of Labour's support for United, was one of impatience verging on contempt, a judgement which took no account of Holland's own personal opposition to Ward or the necessity for him to act in conformity with the opinions of the caucus majority. A further difference between the attitudes of Savage and Holland may be seen in their approach to a solution of the unemployment problem. Holland emphasised enlightened organisation and administration, a solution which did not, of its nature, necessarily involve the Labour Party, and which was essentially a plea for immediate amelioration, by the United Government, of conditions which resulted in human suffering. Savage emphasised Labour's solution, policy measures, land settlement and industrial development. This contrast, not superficially a marked one, but indicative of great differences in generosity of spirit, and political outlook, is an interesting comment on the usual contrast, based on their popular reception, which is made between Holland as "bitter and inflexible" and Savage as a "benign, political uncle."  

Holland was growing old and tired. The suffering occasioned by the depression became a personal anxiety which saddened and exhausted him. More importantly, he was losing heart and his confidence was vanishing. The fate of Labour governments in Britain and Australia testified to the magnitude of the task which Labour would face in office. The difficulties of the Labour Party's position in 1929 were great. Holland himself disagreed with the P.L.P. policy, criticism came from every quarter, and meanwhile the economic position and the suffering it caused, worsened. Holland, tutored in the rigid simplicities of theory, faced this complex situation as best he could, but he was unequal to it and sought refuge in work. His work, often pointless hackwork, became a tremendous burden, much of it self-imposed by an over-conscientious attitude. In the month of March 1930, by working seven days a week and never less than sixteen hours a day, Holland wrote 679 letters, prepared and delivered two public addresses and typed one of them for publication in the Worker, attended four committee meetings and a social

15. Ibid. pp.16-19.
function, addressed three unions in appeals for the National Campaign Fund, spent three days conducting the Minister of Internal Affairs around the electorate and attended to numerous callers who came to him with difficulties. Holland, then nearing his sixty-second birthday, had been ill early in 1930, and, making no secret of his exhaustion, he asked the executive to provide secretarial assistance:

"It is obvious that these conditions can only result in a breakdown in due time. When that happens my successor will have to be provided with secretarial assistance - and that will be satisfactory as far as it will have gone. Naturally, I feel that I would rather have the assistance while I am alive." 19

After a strongly favourable recommendation by Nash, assistance was granted.20

While Holland was immersed in his day to day tasks, having become concerned, almost exclusively, with the public, external aspects of his position as P.I.P. leader, and of party activity, internal developments of great importance were taking place within the party. These developments, it is argued, took place without Holland's active participation, and resulted in the effective abandonment of militant socialist principles and the assertion of a new policy, on the initiative of Savage and the executive, directed towards the attracting of votes and the reform of capitalism. At the beginning of 1930 Savage and Jordan were attempting to impress on Nash and the executive the necessity for a more attractive topical policy. Savage, implicitly criticising Holland and the rest of the party, remarked that Labour should not content itself with pointing out the ill effects of United rule, but should deal with the "big questions" which determined economic conditions and dominated peoples' minds.21 Convinced that electoral success was within Labour's grasp, Jordan argued similarly for a practical, simple and attractive policy on immediate national problems.22 Nash could see no need for haste, retaining his belief that if the party could arouse the idealism latent in

18. Holland to Nat.Sec. 7 April 1930 (Correspondence re Secretarial Assistance for Mr. H.E.Holland N.Z.I.P.)
19. Ibid.
20. Report by Nat.Sec. on Secretarial Assistance for Mr. H.E.Holland. 16 April 1930 (N.Z.I.P.); Minutes, Res. Exec. 19 April 1930.
the electorate, the next election would bring "astonishing results." The arguments of Savage and Jordan expressed the standpoint of those whose paramount concern was to devise an attractive and appropriate policy, and who were less interested in educating voters up to the level of Labour's policy than with adjusting Labour's policy to be acceptable to voters. Nash's view reflects the beliefs of those, like Holland, who, while admitting the weight of such political arguments, were anxious to preserve ultimate ideals, and maintained that Labour's appeal was to man's higher nature, to his "spiritual aspirations" rather than to his desire for merely material welfare. The P.L.P. met to discuss policy in February 1930, but although the statement issued expanded the party's economic policy, its approach was tentative and it was more an attempt to recall the United Government to its promises, than a policy of the kind wanted by Savage and Jordan.

How much the trend of formative thought within the party was departing from Holland's position and the traditional militant socialist framework, was revealed in Thorn's presidential address to the 1930 conference. Thorn condemned the view that capitalism was bordering on dissolution from inherent faults, as, not only erroneous, but conducive to apathy when effort was needed to construct a new society. What appeared to be signs of disintegration were merely disorganisation produced by new processes and by the development of backward countries. According to Thorn, the sufferings of the people, while a condemnation of capitalism, were not proof of its impending collapse or ground for believing that its replacement by something better did not require "a prolonged, energetic, informed and determined effort of the human will." Thorn's pronouncements, made ex cathedra, and not discussed by the conference, were made plainly with the purpose of reproving those who held the views he condemned. Such was Holland, for he still believed firmly that capitalism was in the process of breaking down. The method of reprimand made a reply virtually impossible. Had this matter of theoretical interpretation appeared before the conference in a remit, it could have been contested, but as discussion of the president's report was not customary, a

protest would have been tantamount to a challenge to presidential authority. The theoretical difference had important implications. A situation in which capitalism might endure indefinitely called for a very different response from the party than a situation in which capitalism was on the verge of collapse. If collapse was about to occur, the party would not need to adjust its electoral appeal. If it might continue indefinitely, the party would have to take measures to cope with the immediate situation. This consequence was clearly recognised in Thorn's speech, for after his doctrinal pronouncements, he went on to speak about "the immediate policy" of the party. This phrase suggests an implicit distinction from ultimate policy, but Thorn did not make any such distinction explicit. He declared that this immediate policy had been determined by necessity:

"It approached the social problem with the intention of gaining the greatest possible concession to humane ideas on issues upon which a wide and favourable public response is certain and which present no difficulties to the average citizens' understanding ... Such a policy is not merely a palliative; it is an assertion of the workers' needs and a means by which they can be met." 27

This apologia, the first official justification of that trend towards moderation which was expressed in the 1923 manifesto, revealed several important developments. As it stood, Thorn's statement not only failed to insist on an ultimate objective, but his insistence that an immediate policy was not merely a palliative, but a means to meet workers' needs, conflicted with the concept of the ultimate objective, for, according to the party's traditional standpoint, it was only under socialism that the workers' needs could be truly met. Furthermore, Thorn bluntly stated that the policy had been determined by necessity, whereas all previous official policy statements had been based on the assumption that policy had been determined by principle. The immediate policy, as interpreted by Thorn, ignored the party's declared reliance on education, for it was to be adjusted to "the average citizens' understanding", not put forward as a set of immutable truths up to which citizens would have to be educated. There was also an important difference.

28. This interpretation conflicts with the view (Brown "Labour Party" op.cit. p.196) that Thorn's speech reflected the traditional socialist outlook.
between the attitude towards immediate policy expressed by the conference in 1923, and that of the president in 1930. The emphasis in 1923 was on what the Labour Party would do in its first term. The stress in 1930 was on what the public wanted. The public, not the party was to be the prime policy determinant. Despite these departures from Labour Party tradition, no voice was raised in outraged protest. The matter had been broached in a presidential address where it was protected from criticism, the most significant rejections of tradition had been implicit and not immediately obvious, and most importantly, the majority, if not all the party, agreed that some kind of immediate policy was necessary. Thorn's statement did not baldly repudiate the notion of an ultimate objective, which still remained in the platform, and those who chose could still think in terms of it. The 1930 presidential address was designed to prepare the party for further policy changes. Although Thorn phrased his remarks in the past tense, their significance was also for the future, for they expressed the attitude of those who sought an immediate policy of the kind Thorn described. That this trend towards an immediate policy was related to a new theoretical assessment of capitalist development indicates the continuing importance of the formal role of theory in party deliberations. But the traditional process was being reversed, for instead of a previously conceived theory determining policy a policy determined by necessity had given rise to a theoretical justification. The result of this departure in both practice and theory from the previous militant socialist position was to increase Holland's isolation from the main stream of party development, for even his theoretical standpoint and his interpretation of Labour's principles were at variance with the officially proclaimed attitude. No open conflict occurred, but agreement between Holland and other party leaders could be expressed thereafter only in the general terms of their wish to improve the social and economic conditions of the majority of the people.

The path had been prepared for policy changes, but little could be done until the political situation clarified, for as Nash remarked:

"... we are faced with a half way House Government who are [sic] neither good nor very bad. At times some of our ablest men are keen on throwing them out, but we have to watch the alternatives." 29

29. Nat. Sec. to Collings, 31 July 1930 (Aust. File)
The Labour Party was still embarrassed by its position in the House and there were rumours of a split in the party but it was still unwilling to attempt to precipitate political re-alignment, not only because it was feared that this might result in a Reform Government, but because the majority of Labour politicians still retained faith in United's intentions. Labour refrained from opposing the Government, Holland claiming that Coates would reduce wages, while Thorn in the Worker explained that the party's attitude did not mean that Labour had confidence in United. The Reform accusation that there was a United-Labour alliance was echoed by communists.

There is ample evidence in 1930 that Holland no longer insisted on conformity to militant socialist principle as the criterion of political worth and virtue. This relinquishment of his former standards of political behaviour, and their replacement by the criteria of honesty, and efficacy in alleviating suffering, had been made under the pressure of Labour's political difficulties in 1929-30, and, particularly, in view of the increasing intensity of economic depression. These difficulties, economic and political, had pressed home the lesson which Holland had been learning slowly with advancing age and increasing experience, that what he valued most was not the letter of socialist theory, but its spirit, the recognition of human rights and values, and the aspiration to make a better life for man. Holland's abandonment of the intransigence of his past was strikingly apparent in his reference, at the unveiling of the Massey memorial in September 1930, to Massey as a great statesman, a description for which he was attacked by a few militants in the party's rank and file, and by communists. As well as springing from a more tolerant view of human nature, Holland's description of Massey at this time, as a man who kept his word, was also a reaction to Ward's failure to honour his promises, and Semple made a similar contrast between the two Prime Ministers. Other signs of the change in Holland were not wanting. The most important legislation of

30. F. Jones to Nat. Sec. 26 Nov. 1930 (Correspondence re Mr. Bromley's appointment to the Unemployment Board 1930. N.Z.L.P.)
34. Red Worker, 1 June 1930.
the 1930 session was the Government's Unemployment Bill, which set up an 
Unemployment Board and imposed a poll tax of 30/- which was to be subsidised 
from general revenue. Holland described the Bill as a palliative, but his 
description related to the inadequacy of the measure to solve the unemploy­ 
ment problem, not to its relation to the social revolution. It was significant 
too that although the Labour Party failed to get the flat rate poll 
tax altered to a graduated scale, Holland, like Fraser, was prepared to 
accept the Bill, whose enactment aroused much dissatisfaction among workers,
as better than nothing. Holland told the House:

"... we begin to feel that we would be prepared to take almost 
anything at all in order to relieve the awful distress that exists." 

This was far from being a strictly militant socialist attitude, and 
Holland's departure from his former canons was further revealed in his remark 
that in the next election, the working conditions and wage standards which 
would be at stake, would decide the issue. His claim that voters would be 
motivated by such issues indicated that he accepted, partially at least, the 
views of Thorn, to the neglect of his former emphasis on the importance of 
principle. This aroused the ire of communists who accused Holland of making 
a god of palliatives, and of being a traitor to his class and to Marxian 
economics.

So far as his leadership of the parliamentary party was concerned, the 
political situation in 1929 and 1930 was one of particular difficulty for 
Holland. A leader must lead, but what could he do when there was nowhere 
to go? Until 1923 the party appeared to be progressing towards office, 
but in 1929 and 1930 the road of advance seemed to have led into a morass 
from which there was no obvious escape. Moreover, some members of Holland's 
party looked, not to Holland, but to Ward, for leadership towards the real­ 
isation of their aims. In this situation, under worsening economic conditions 
the halted forces of Labour showed a notable lack of patience, some of which

38. For discussion and details of unemployment insurance and policy see J.K. 
Auckland 1934, pp. 121-155.
39. P.J. Oakley "The Handling of Depression Problems in Christchurch 1923-35" 
41. Ibid. V. 225, p. 772.
42. Ibid. V. 226, p. 1203.
was vented in criticism of their parliamentary leader. Holland's leadership was essentially one of protest, and under conditions where, because of a majority opinion with which Holland disagreed, this protest was not made, his leadership lost what remained of its impetus. Holland merited the criticism of Mason and Thorn, for he did tend to rely for the termination of Labour's political difficulties and the attainment of the party's aims, not on his own powers of leadership, but on external circumstances. He looked, not only to the collapse of capitalism, but to an inevitable popular realisation of the true nature of the United Party, and to the deliverance promised by the next election.\(^4\) Partly, this attitude was the product of his theoretical convictions, partly the result of his inability to see any new way of achieving Labour's aims, and partly due to a growing distrust of his own convictions and powers. In so far as Holland did rely on his own efforts towards the solution of Labour's problems in 1930, it was in the 'educational' field, rather than that of parliamentary or party tactics, that he acted. In an effort to emphasise Labour's distinctive policy and its adherence to declared principle, he produced five pamphlets, on the Labour Party and the unemployed,\(^5\) workers' compensation,\(^6\) public servants' salaries,\(^7\) factory production in New Zealand,\(^8\) and on his bete noire, 'political non-unionism.'\(^9\) This pamphleteering evidenced Holland's complete disillusionment with United. Although he had never believed that Ward would

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47. H.E. Holland. Public Servants' Salaries and the Political Parties. Address to the Public Servants of the Buller district, 22 Nov. 1929. Wellington, 1930.
effect any social transformation, his attitude in 1929 suggests that he thought Ward might ameliorate distress. By 1930 he was convinced that Labour was the people's only hope for any improvement, however slight. So far as Labour policy trends were concerned, Holland's attitudes were, for most of the time, in effective harmony with those of other party leaders, and when they were not, he accepted majority decisions. Basically his militant socialist outlook remained, often visible and occasionally flaring out, but Holland, dismayed and discouraged by widespread and increasing privation, placed alleviation of distress before theoretical considerations.

Partial clarification of Labour's parliamentary position came at the end of the 1930 session. In May, G.W. Forbes succeeded Sir Joseph Ward as Prime Minister. Ward, had held Labour's support by keeping it guessing about his legislative intentions. Time was against this tactic, and the unsubtle Forbes soon took action which resolved Labour's perplexities. The Government failed to provide time for the introduction of an industrial measure sponsored by the Alliance of Labour. This disregard of Labour's wishes finally disillusioned those members of the Labour Party who had trusted United. Semple complained that Labour had been "fired into the gutter like a sucked lemon." Fraser, Nash, McCombs, Hovard, Langstone, Chapman and Carr abandoned what remained of their belief that there was more feeling for the workers among the United Party than among Reform. Of the ten Labour members who spoke, Holland and Armstrong alone, claimed that they never had faith in United. The confidence in the United Government which characterised the majority of members of the P.L.P. testified to the weakness of the militant socialist faith of such former revolutionaries as Fraser and Semple, to the strength of the Liberal legend, and to the mana of Ward. It also indicates a remarkable lack of faith among many Labour members in the unique mission of their own party, a doubt probably due to the fact that Labour had never held office, while Ward had. Labour's reaction suggests too that the fear that, in existing economic circumstances, Labour

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51. Ibid., pp.1197-1207.
52. Ibid., pp.1209-1210.
might fail as a government, apparently forgotten during the 1928 campaign, reappeared after the election, in the form of relief among P.L.P. members that the responsibilities of government had fallen on others. Overawed by the reputation of Liberalism, for enlightened government, the majority of P.L.P. members were prepared to allow Ward to take the initiative in humane legislation, and waited patiently for two years for this to occur. In so far as he did not relish the prospect of leading a government under such adverse economic conditions, Holland was not unaffected by this modest desire to play second fiddle to an apparently revived Liberalism, but he thought that, in time, United must reveal its insufficiency. When this occurred, Holland was more concerned with the relief of distress than with militant socialist rigour, and the development gave him no great satisfaction. He still thought - an opinion which indicates that he viewed immediate policies as marginal - that Labour's support was increasing because people were getting to know more and more of the foundation principles of Labour. He did not share Nash's belief that most people "are not particularly interested in politics and their interest is almost confined to slogans and other propaganda means which will not bear very close investigation." Holland deplored the laxity and lack of a sense of responsibility which he saw in the functioning of parliament, but he retained his belief that, through education and true knowledge, the people would embrace the fundamental principles of Labour.

Following the Labour denunciations of United at the end of the 1930 parliamentary session, the question of future tactics became one of prime importance. As before, there was a difference of opinion between those who wanted immediate practical action and those who saw no urgent need for it. W.E. Barnard, noting that Labour's opponents were putting forward definite proposals, contended that it was imperative for Labour to pronounce on the general economic position, but he was more concerned with the political expediency of having some scheme than with the merits of any particular one. He wanted some "attempt to face up to the ugly facts of our position in a comprehensive manner and with an eye to the needs of all sections of the people, including the wage earners." This

53. Holland to Miss M. England, 26 Oct. 1931 (H.P.)
55. Nat. Sec. to Collings, 31 July 1930.
57. Barnard to Nat. Sec. 10 Dec. 1930.
was a far cry from the world's wealth for the world's workers. Nash thought that there was no immediate hurry for a scheme, particularly in view of the need for allaying distress. Nash's reaction to Barnard's arguments, that of placing the relief of suffering before the seeking of Labour's political advancement, was another instance of that difference of outlook which, as has been argued, separated Holland from Savage. However, Nash agreed that the party ought to make, within a short time, some pronouncement regarding its attitude to the moratorium, inflation, the Arbitration Court and reduction of wages, but held that this would need a lot of thought before any public pronouncement was made. Meanwhile, at the end of 1930, export prices were falling sharply, farmers renewed their criticism of arbitration and there were increasing demands for wage cuts, in harmony with the theories of a section of New Zealand economists that the economic remedy was higher production and lower costs.

In the new situation created by Labour's repudiation of United, it was not Holland but Savage who took the initiative in suggesting Labour's next step. He telegraphed Holland late in January that Auckland members believed that the party should meet in February to discuss matters of national urgency. Savage held that the party must wait no longer to challenge the Government to do something or get out, and that Labour members must do some hard thinking before the House met and take determined action during the session. In a letter to Nash, Savage again implicitly criticised Holland with a reference to the futility of "striking one's breast and repeating well worn phrases." As a new Labour policy, Savage suggested that all money necessary for current purposes be raised by a graduated surtax on incomes. Further funds to revive stagnant primary and secondary industry could be raised by internal loans, compulsory if necessary. Holland, in Westport, was not aware of the details of Savage's plan, but he strongly supported the suggestion that a meeting take place. Holland was less concerned with the details of a plan than with

59. Ibid.
61. Holland to Fraser, 30 Jan. 1931. (Fraser Papers).
62. Savage to Nat. Sec. 20 Feb. 1931.
63. Ibid. 30 Jan., 20 Feb. 1931.
meeting any situation which might arise, and preserving unity in the face of it. This reaction, together with his continued faith in Labour's triumph through increasing knowledge, throws light on Holland's attitude to moves towards the formulation of an immediate topical policy. Holland thought such a policy desirable for two reasons. It would enable the prompt alleviation of distress, on Labour's coming to power, and would preserve unity within the party on complex questions of detail and particular problems which members faced from day to day. But desirable, and perhaps necessary, though it was, such a policy was merely a transitory and marginal aspect of a broad continuous progression towards social transformation. This attitude explains, in part, why Holland played no active role in the formulation of immediate policy, allowing others, particularly Savage, to take the initiative. To Holland's mind, immediate policy had its importance, but he was quite prepared to let others devote their energies to what was, in the grand scheme of things, a comparatively minor matter. This interpretation does not conflict with the argument that Holland was disheartened and had lost much of his confidence. Although he believed in the coming, ultimately, of his ideal society, Holland was finding it more and more difficult to see how this would develop from existing conditions. The postulation of an economic catalysis had no attraction for him, for he knew what this would mean in terms of human suffering.

From Wellington, Fraser kept Holland informed of political developments, and gave him warning of Government proposals, including wage reductions. Holland had been half expecting wage reductions for some time, and in a way he almost welcomed the prospect as it would allow Labour "to put up a record fight" in the House. Holland still thought in traditional terms of militant socialist protest, and it was this outlook which Savage had described as futile. Holland also believed that economy measures would place Forbes in the position of having capitulated to Reform policy, and thus lead to a fusion. This, thought Holland, "would be the best thing that could happen", for it would clarify the political situation. 66 Again, this was traditional thinking

64. Holland to Fraser 8 Feb. 1931 (Fraser Papers)
65. Fraser to Holland n.d. (earlier than 8th)Feb.1931 Telegram (Fraser Papers)
66. Holland to Fraser 8 Feb. 1931 (Fraser Papers).
in terms of a political division along class lines, but it was evidence of the political distance Holland had travelled since he had first proclaimed fusion as a militant socialist objective in 1913, that he was not unwilling in 1931, to accept non-Labour assistance, believing, for instance, that some understanding could be reached with the Country Party.  

In February 1931, Forbes disclosed, with a blunt pessimism that hit deeply at national confidence, that there was a budget deficit, and announced that the Government proposed to make a ten per cent civil service salary cut, and to ask the Arbitration Court to make a similar general reduction in all awards. There was a unionist outcry, but in vain. Holland renewed his attacks on 'political non-unionism' claiming that unions' refusal to affiliate to the party logically entailed reliance on direct action, which was impossible under existing conditions. He also claimed that Labour's enemies were manoeuvring to precipitate an industrial upheaval. During the short session of March-April 1931 occasioned by the wage reduction legislation, Labour resumed its role of opposition. Holland moved a motion of no-confidence, but Reform supported the Government. Again, Labour speeches revealed the different approaches of Holland and Savage. In analysing the causes of the depression, Savage and Semple contended that distribution and marketing were at fault, and emphasised Labour policy. Holland's approach was largely negative, through protest. He demanded an immediate election, pleaded for a provisional moratorium, claimed wage cuts were the result of dictation by British financial interests, asserted that the credit system was faulty and argued that the country must aim at greater self containment to insulate it from export price fluctuations. It was typical of Holland's approach to the electorate that he issued the details of Labour's fight against wage reductions in a pamphlet entitled, significantly, Lest We Forget! Meanwhile the N.Z.L.P. was preparing for the 1931 elections. Holland told the 

68. See Report of No Wages Reduction Conference, Convened by the N.Z. Alliance of Labour and held in the Trades Hall Wellington from 10th to 13th March 1931; N.Z.W. 18 March 1931; Stone "Trade Unions" pp.113-116.  
1931 conference that this was Labour's greatest opportunity, and that the Government's only hope of remaining in power was to provoke an industrial upheaval which would cloud the political issues.\(^73\) Although, publicly, he expressed confidence that United would be defeated, privately, as has been argued, he was afflicted by uncertainty and doubts. He confided to Cocking that he thought that "anything at all may happen."\(^74\) When the parliamentary session opened in June, Holland's arguments centred on the necessity for a plan to combat the economic situation, stabilisation of producing and purchasing power, and the re-organisation of currency and credit.\(^75\) Interest in economic planning had grown as the community awoke to the importance of financial factors,\(^76\) but this more positive approach of Holland's was related not only to such schemes as the Australian "Lang Plan" of early 1931,\(^77\) but particularly to the formulation of such a plan within N.Z.I.P. circles. The Labour Party plan was announced at the time of the formation of a United-Reform coalition.

In view of rumours of coalition, Holland stated that Labour would enter no merger. He shrewdly observed that one of the main obstacles to coalition was Coates's determination to be Prime Minister.\(^78\) In August, Coates moved for an all party committee to consider the economic situation,\(^79\) a motion which Forbes welcomed. So did Holland, but he was opposed to the election post-ponement desired by Forbes. Holland's view was that the situation was grave, but not as serious as the Government suggested.\(^80\) The inter-party economic committee reached no agreement,\(^81\) but Forbes suggested that as a strong government would be needed to carry out whatever proposals were adopted the committee should recommend the formation of a national government and

\(^74\) Holland to Cocking 7 May 1931 (Holland File N.Z.I.P.); Holland to Cocking 2 July 1931. (H.P.)
\(^75\) N.Z.P.D. 1931, V.223, pp.453, 824.
\(^76\) Bashaw op.cit. pp.157-8. There are various 'plans' published in 1931-33 in the Holland pamphlet collection.
\(^77\) There is a copy of this in the Holland collection. A.C.Paddison The Lang Plan, Sydney 1931.
\(^78\) N.Z.P.D. 1931, V.229, pp.79-80.
\(^79\) Ibid. p.468.
\(^80\) Ibid. pp.30, 472,473.
\(^81\) Analysis of evidence presented to the committee and preserved in the Holland Papers is outside the scope of this study. See Evidence submitted to Special Economic Committee 1931. (H.P.)
postponement of the general election. The Labour members, Holland, Savage and McCombs, insisted that economic policy be considered first, to which Forbes replied that unless a national government was formed, and the election postponed, he could not allow the committee to proceed. The refusal of the Labour members led to the committee’s adjournment. Meanwhile Coates and Forbes had been in consultation, and on 18 September, Forbes announced the formation of a coalition.\textsuperscript{32}

Following Forbes’s announcement, Holland read to the House a report by the three Labour committee members, outlining Labour’s plan for dealing with the economic situation. As against deflation and wage reduction, this report stressed a policy of industrial development, and cited the evidence of manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers that decreased purchasing power had contributed to the crisis. In view of the comparative failure of the credit system and lack of co-ordination between finance and industry, the report stated that there should be state control of credit, a central bank with sole right of note issue. A provisional moratorium was recommended, together with legislation enabling mutual adjustments over a specified period between mortgagee and mortgagor, and between lessee and lessor. While not satisfied with many Arbitration Court decisions, the signatories of the report subscribed to the principle of compulsory arbitration. The solution to the unemployment problem was rehabilitation in industry at wage rates that would provide a reasonable standard of living, and temporary sustenance until this was achieved. The report called for re-organisation of industry along modern lines and a courageous and systematised policy of development financed by internal, State-guaranteed loans and by super-taxes on high incomes. Land must be prepared for settlement, dairy herds increased, fertiliser subsidised, guaranteed price proposals investigated, trade agreements to increase markets negotiated, and highways constructed. Industry needed a development board, and controlled imports of goods that New Zealand could produce.\textsuperscript{33}

The novelty of this plan, in effect Labour’s policy declaration upon its return to official opposition, lay not so much in its content as in the


\textsuperscript{33} N.Z.P.D. 1931, V.229, pp.709-11; Auckland Star, 18 Sept. 1931.
manner in which the general measures set out in the platform were firmly related, in detail, to a concrete situation. This was the immediate topical policy, directed towards the preservation and extension of existing State socialism and the reform of capitalism, which Savage and others had been urging since early in 1930. The party had made a definite statement on pressing economic problems, and clearly indicated the way in which it would face the immediate future. Partly the plan was Labour's reply to the demands of a situation of economic depression, and Holland contrasted it with the Government's failure to put forward definite proposals. Partly it was the result of dissatisfaction within the party with its rate of electoral progress, an attempt, as Thorn told the 1930 conference, to make "the greatest possible concession to humane ideas on issues upon which a wide and favourable response is certain." The plan was the product of the efforts and arguments of Savage, and the doctrinal re-orientation announced by Thorn, but its form and approach suggest the work of Nash. It represented, of course the agreed policy of both executive and P.I.P. The 1931 plan also represents the formalising of the trend away from the militant socialist position of Holland which has been described in earlier sections of this chapter, and was a decisive step in the process of Labour's increasingly complete involvement in the political context. That this significance may be attributed to the 1931 plan is largely the result of later developments, after Holland's death, which went to prove that the general approach and limits of activity set out in 1931 were to become the whole of Labour's governmental ambition. This could not have been known in 1931, and given Holland's faith in the ultimate objective of social transformation and his view of the transitory, marginal role of immediate policy, he did not suspect that the plan in fact set out the essence of Labour Party endeavour and signalised the abandonment of the socialisation objective. Nor was the plan, at this stage, formally anything more than a matter of P.I.P. concern. It had not been submitted to conference, the highest party authority, and it was not until its acceptance of "Labour's Plan." in 1933 that conference endorsed this major adjustment in Labour's electoral approach.

The major newspapers received the 1931 plan with various degrees of hostility, and even within the party it was criticised. The *Dominion*

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32. By the Kaiapoi Branch and North Canterbury L.R.C. Minutes Res. Exec. 3 Oct. 1931. No details are available regarding the nature of the criticism, but "disappointment" was expressed.
dismissed the plan as useless, based on:

"... that obsession peculiar to the Socialist mentality that there is an inexhaustible store of wealth kept by the State, the banks, industry, the land, or somebody or something into which the Government or employers can dip without limit." 35

The Auckland Star and Christchurch Sun admitted that the report had some constructive ideas, but held that these would help the future, not the present, and were not the exclusive property of Labour. 36 The Coalition cabinet with Forbes as Prime Minister, Coates as Minister of Unemployment, and Dowrie Stewart Minister of Finance had a Reform bias, and Holland remarked that, for all practical purposes, the Reform Party was the Government. 37 He believed that Coates's move to set up the economic committee was the outcome of the efforts of "certain business interests" to bring about an amalgamation of Reform and United to fight the Labour Party. 38 The editor of the Christchurch Times observed cynically that the economic committee had "accomplished precisely what it was designed to accomplish." 39 The full details of negotiations that preceded coalition are unknown, but coalition was certainly acceptable to those business interests that wanted a strong deflationary government. 90 Labour's maintaining of independence was criticised severely, particularly by the Dominion, as a shirking of responsibility in national emergency, and a seeking of party advantage, 91 but there was never any question, within the party, as to the correct course for Labour to take.

For the remainder of 1931, the Labour Party's main concern was to prevent the postponement of the elections. 92 The Worker concluded, correctly, that the government was watching Britain, and the rout of British Labour at the elections of October 1931 decided the government to allow the elections to take place as scheduled. 93 Even before the Labour reverse in Britain,

86. Auckland Star, 19 Sept. 1931; Sun 19 Sept. 1931.
89. Christchurch Times, 19 Sept. 1931.
90. Gardner op.cit.
Holland was afflicted by uncertainty and lack of self-confidence. In October he wrote to a friend that although he was convinced that the N.Z.L.P. would make gains at the elections, the result could not be foretold. Success, if it came, would not be an unmixed blessing, for Holland was by no means sure of his ability to discharge successfully the responsibilities of Prime Ministership under adverse conditions. "The position of Leader of the Opposition is certainly a much happier one than that of Prime Minister," he admitted. Moreover, he was doubtful if the party's policy could be implemented:

"If we should have to take the Treasury benches, we will present a programme that will not be lacking in courage; and we will either give effect to it or go down endeavouring to do so." 95

Under depression circumstances, Holland's attitude was an understandable human reaction, but it was not the outlook of a confident militant socialist, nor did his diffidence become the leader of a party avowedly striving for office. He doubted the power of either his principles or himself to rise above an adverse environment and transform it. Theoretically, doubt that a policy could be implemented in certain conditions may be distinguished from doubt in the policy itself, but practically the distinction is difficult to make, particularly in an urgent situation, and when that policy has been seen, for half a lifetime, as a kind of speculative knowledge of truth. Holland's realisation that Labour's mission might fail took him to the very core of his personal belief, but habit is a hard master and every tendency in Holland, save that doubt, constrained him to his old modes. Nash described the way Holland habitually reacted:

"A wrong had to be righted. The way to right it was to give full light to the facts. It was no use saying to him that the public would not understand... His method was to drive the facts home until the injustice was removed." 96

In 1931, Holland's despondency was increased by the British election results, further evidence that the workers failed to see where their true interests lay. 97

Holland opened Labour's election campaign with a speech that lacked
Relief Workers Cheaper THAN HORSES!

“So far as men engaged on Roadwork are concerned, the ideal” must be to move them ‘over the fence’ on to the land.”


Women of New Zealand!
WILL YOU STAND FOR THIS?
his usual degree of optimism, but the election manifesto reflected the new confidence which the formulation of Labour's economic plan had brought to N.Z.L.P. leaders. The manifesto posed the voters' choice as between the drift, gloom and depression of the Coalition, and the organisation, development and employment of the people under Labour, and declared:

"The natural resources are available - the human resources are at present idle - the Labour Party believes that it can command the credit which will link the human with the material resources. With the maximum encouragement to private initiative and the careful co-ordinated planning of our requirements and production, we can start the Dominion once more on the road to prosperity which is the rightful due of all our citizens."

With credit provision its keynote, and characterised by the economic approach of Nash who wrote the manifesto, the 1931 election policy was that of the minority report of Savage, McCombs and Holland. The essence of Labour's constructive appeal was not socialism, or even socialisation, but the revival of the existing economy, "encouragement to private initiative", under enlightened administration. Communists contended:

"The Labour Party stands today bound to the constitution of Capitalism, supporting a policy of protection of New Zealand industries instead of disputing the ownership of these industries. Today they strive to represent "loyally" the "Nation as a whole ..."

This judgement ignored the existence of theoretical idealism, such as Holland's, but in so far as Labour's ambitions had narrowed down to immediate policy, it was a fair appraisal. But so strong were the old habits and ways of thought that the real emphasis of Labour propaganda was on, not so much the new immediate policy, but on what the Coalition had done and might do, in fact the same attempt to arouse public fears as was being made by the Coalition. Labour's most striking leaflet was one which featured a photograph of relief workers drawing a chain harrow. Mason, then party president, and Nash, were apprehensive of the possible effect of a fear complex cultivated by the Coalition with such appeals to women as "Keep your man in a job."

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98. N.Z.W. 11 Nov. 1931.
101. Colleague of Holland A.
102. Red Worker, 20 Nov. 1931.
103. See Illustration opposite.
104. Mason to Nat. Sec. - Nov. 1931; Nat. Sec. to Mason, 24 Nov. 1931.
This perturbation gave rise to the denunciatory bias of Labour propaganda, a virtual admission of the strength of the Coalition's tactics and revealing a lack of faith in the attractiveness of Labour's constructive proposals. The Coalition did not submit a policy, declaring that "the situation is changing so rapidly that responsible men cannot commit themselves in advance to details of a policy."\textsuperscript{105} Safety was the keynote of Coalition propaganda, careful reconstruction instead of delusive and reckless theories. The old charges of extremism and disloyalty were reiterated, and again and again, the question was asked, in relation to Labour's policy, "Where is the money coming from?"\textsuperscript{106}

With fifty-three candidates, two less than in 1928, Labour gained five seats at the election, bringing its strength to twenty-four. The new members were F.W.Schramm, F.Jones, D.W.Coleman, A.S.Richards and J.A.Lee. Labour's total vote was 241,991, substantially greater than that of either Coalition party, and it had increased its percentage of the national vote from 27\% in 1923 to 35\% in 1931. Some of the percentage increase may have been due to the fact that the 1931 poll was smaller than that of 1928, but the increase in votes was over 45,000. Publicly, Labour spokesmen dwelt on the increase in votes and seats, and proclaimed the result as an assurance of the near advent of a Labour Government. Holland made his usual prediction of a Labour government within three years.\textsuperscript{107} Privately, party members were despondent. Jordan predicted that some other party would be formed and Labour defeated again.\textsuperscript{108} Nash, dejected, thought it possible, perhaps he wished, that Reform and United might fall out.\textsuperscript{109} Holland had told the election night crowd that if the three parties had gone to the poll separately, there would have been a Labour government.\textsuperscript{110} The situation was quite plain. Even after making "the greatest possible concession to humane ideas on issues upon which a wide and favourable public response is certain and which present no difficulties to the average citizen's understanding",\textsuperscript{111} Labour had failed to

\textsuperscript{105} N.Z.W. 19 Nov. 1931.  
\textsuperscript{106} E.P. 18, 24 Nov. 1931; Dom 24 Nov. 1931; Coalition Propaganda 1931 Election Papers (N.Z.D.P.) Questions to Walter Nash (Hutt Election Papers 1931 (N.Z.L.P.))  
\textsuperscript{107} G.R.A. 3 Dec. 1931.  
\textsuperscript{108} Jordan to Nat Sec. 13 Dec. 1931.  
\textsuperscript{109} Nat. Sec. to W.Forgan Smith, 4 Dec. 1931 (Aust. File).  
\textsuperscript{110} E.P. 3 Dec. 1931.  
achieve the degree of success for which it had hoped, and disappointment
was intensified by the feeling which Holland expressed. While Holland main-
tained that coalition clarified the political situation, under a three party
system, perhaps Labour could have formed a government. In fact, the possi-

bility was remote, but speculation about what might have been brought
dissatisfaction with what was. Moreover, the defeat of Lee Martin, a farmer
member for Raglan, depressed a party which urgently needed rural votes and
seats. Lee's reference to a Labour advance in rural areas was incorrect, for Labour's main advances had been in the cities, and farmer discontent
had assisted the Country Party or Independents. Labour's dejection was
increased by pressing financial difficulties and indebtedness, both local
and national, by the failure of appeals for funds, and by the collapse of
several party branches after the elections. Thus it was, that despite
the winning of five seats and a remarkable increase in voting support, Thorn
could write in the Christmas edition of the Worker, "For the Labour Movement
the year 1931 has been almost unrelievedly gloomy."

Under these circumstances, there was some party soul searching. Thom
asserted that while many people agreed with Labour principles, they would
not vote for Labour candidates, and this contention was supported by others. Thom listed what he thought were the reasons. There was press misrepresent-
ation and distortion, the belief that the Labour Party was identical with
the Communist Party, and Moscow controlled, and the fear, engendered by
P.P.A. propaganda, that a Labour government would favour Catholics. As well,
some thought the party irreligious, and there was a general and widespread
ignorance of Labour's policy. J.A.Lee emphasised external influences,
the split and defeat of British Labour and the similar fate of Scullin's
Australian Labor Government on the eve of the poll. Various internal factors

112. Nat. Sec. to W.Forgan Smith, 4 Dec. 1931 (Aust. File); O'Brien to Nat.Sec.
26 Dec. 1931 (Papers re Huntly Miners Dispute 1931-32 N.Z.L.P.)
Minutes Res. Exec. 8 Jan. 1932; Nat. Sec. to Dear Friend 16 June 1932.
Circ. N.Z.L.P.
had "a chilling effect on organisations" - the delay in announcing the election date, the severe check received by Labour in rural and semi-rural areas during the Coates boom, the defeats of 1925 and 1928, and the blow to prestige occasioned by the party's replacement as the Opposition in 1928. Financial difficulties had prevented Labour from contesting possible seats and from effectively organising outlying electorates. Lee believed that the party's effort should be directed towards contesting all eighty electorates. He was convinced that:

"We can win every seat ever held by the old time Liberal Party or by the United Party after 1923. The Liberal of yesterday must be the Socialist of today and tomorrow." 119

Lee's confidence, perhaps the product of his elation at re-election, was not shared by others in the party. Nash and Jordan agreed that the party lacked vital inspiration. Without inspiration, swift progress was impossible. They thought Labour's main task was:

"... to think out how we ought to proceed to get the inspiration and to utilise it to the best advantage from the Dominion's point of view." 120

That such a problem was thought to exist, reveals Holland's failure to sustain his earlier vitalising role in the party, and this in turn points to his disheartenment, to the dwindling of his self-confidence, and to his isolation from the main stream of party development. No longer could he provide his former degree of inspiration, for not only were his convictions less firm, but they were out of harmony with the party's new orientation. He was frequently exhausted and often ill, for he had taken upon himself a tremendous burden of work, and he felt an increasing weight of responsibility, particularly towards those in distress. Much of Holland's exacting activity was self-imposed, by his sense of responsibility, perhaps to demonstrate his capacity and to prove himself to the rest of the party and to the public. His work seems to have been, in part an escape from a situation whose demands he could not fulfil. Holland became so immersed in political detail and trivia that he was seldom able to disengage his mind from minutiae to consider the more general problems his party faced. Such was the pressure of day to

120. Nat. Sec. to Jordan 23 Jan. 1932.
day affairs, sapping Holland's energy, that he had little time, or resources of vitality, to do more than cope with the demands of the moment.

Although his colleagues, such as H.G.R. Mason, noted that Holland showed, in the later years of his life, surprising adaptability for a man of his apparently inflexible disposition, he never accepted the non-socialist immediate policy which the N.Z.L.P. had adopted under the pressure of political exigency and economic depression, as embodying its entire endeavour. As will be further argued in the next chapter, his devotion to socialist theory and attitudes continued. The published analyses by Thorn and Lee of the reasons for Labour's failure to become the government in 1931 did not touch on the question of leadership which had been part of the atmosphere of party affairs immediately following the 1928 election; but, privately, the party's introspection after 1931 again involved the role of Holland. Holland and his colleagues had seen that in 1931 electors were looking for a change, but the Coalition appeared to voters as something different, sufficient change to prevent a decisive swing to Labour. Those party members who were out of sympathy with Holland concluded that his extremist reputation and lack of initiative were partially to blame for the fact that Labour had been outmanoeuvred again. In 1925 there had been Coates, in 1928 Ward, and now the Coalition. Would Labour ever win while Holland led the party? This question recurred in the minds of those whose faith in Holland's leadership had never been strong. Even those whose outlook on the nature of the Labour movement was similar to Holland's were becoming increasingly irritated by Holland's testy temperament and by his annoying habit of preparing a speech he wished to print as a pamphlet and delivering it, irrelevantly, in the first major debate. But because Holland played a very minor role in policy making, and was content to abide by majority decisions of caucus and party, discontent never surfaced. Mason informed Fraser that he would move at the first caucus meeting of 1931, "That this caucus expressed the opinion that the long-continued holding of the same

122. Colleague of Holland B.
124. Ibid.
office by the same persons tends to create an association between the
person and the office which is not in the best interests of the party." 125
A direct challenge to Holland's leadership would have been damaging to party
unity and its electoral prospects, and Mason's motion seems to have been an
attempt to circumvent this difficulty by, in effect, asking Holland to resign.
The motion never appeared before caucus. There were numerous reasons why
Holland's removal should not be attempted. He remained formidable, occasion­
ally able to rise to his former heights of impassioned eloquence, and
certainly unlikely to welcome the device of resignation. He was a figure
of public stature and importance. Moreover, if Holland had critics within
the party, he had friends also, men whose outlook still accorded, at least
in part, with his own. Nash believed, certainly as late as 1930, that
Labour leaders ought to be faithful to the socialisation objective, 126 and
he retained a persistent belief in the transformative power of "the inherent
justice and strength of our principles", 127 even after the 1931 defeat. In
this he was in harmony with Holland, and in the counsels of the party, where
Nash was so important, his sympathy with Holland's outlook was an important
factor in maintaining Holland's leadership unchallenged. But most important
in this regard was the fact that the new policy developments of 1930 and
1931 had not been actively obstructed by Holland, who had accepted them,
though not as the end point of Labour's endeavour. Although Holland led the
P.L.P., policy development flowed in the direction desired by the majority
of the party.

The central argument of this chapter has been that, in 1930-31, the
trend of the N.Z.L.P. away from a militant socialist position, a process
which has been examined in earlier chapters, reached a decisive point in the
formulation of a new policy which signalised the definite abandonment of the
socialisation objective and the militant socialist orientation associated
with it. It has been maintained that although the new policy expressed an
outlook and approach which was outside the theoretical framework to which
the party had previously adhered, Holland did not construe the policy in this

125. Mason to Fraser, 27 Nov. 1930 (Fraser Papers)
126. Nat. Sec. to F. Jones, 28 April 1930.
way, but as a necessary development within the traditional framework. Interpretation of Holland in this chapter has been pursued along two parallel lines, the argument that fundamentally he retained his faith in the ultimate realisation of militant socialist ideals, while at the same time, in his attitude to immediate problems, he abandoned many of his former principles and theoretical criteria. The result of this duality was a peculiarly confused position. In moderating and abandoning aspects of his doctrinal intransigence, Holland accepted a standard and plan of political behaviour whose highest aim, albeit an 'immediate' one, was the reform of capitalism. This was, to say the least, a compromising position for a militant socialist, but Holland refused to acknowledge that he occupied it or to admit that it conflicted with his deepest personal beliefs. Yet he acted as if, and admitted, these beliefs had been shaken. His optimism with regard to the prompt electoral success of Labour evaporated after 1928, and he was no longer confident that a Labour government, if elected, would succeed in implementing a Labour programme as he understood it. The existence of these doubts, engendered by the blow the 1928 election result had struck at his faith in the efficacy of education and the intelligence of electors, and by the worsening economic conditions, testified to Holland's forsaking of the forceful confidence of his former analyses. Having partially lost his faith, Holland was led by humanitarian considerations to seek to bring about a better government, one which would alleviate suffering, but, to his mind, this need not be a Labour one. Holland demanded immediate relief of hardship, and as Labour was not in power, the existing government must be persuaded to act. There were theoretical reasons for, in fact, preferring some improved government to a Labour one. Given that economic conditions were adverse to social transformation, a government which would improve those conditions would be preparing the way for a Labour government to begin its true task at the appropriate time. Holland, precisely because he was so devoted to both immediate social relief and ultimate social revolution, was not the most zealous champion of immediate Labour government. Savage, precisely because he was not engrossed in assessing the conditions for social transformation, and because he was convinced of the importance of political rather than theoretical factors, had a far greater faith in the destiny of Labour. The attitude of Nash to the policy arguments of Savage, Jordan and Barnard
in 1930, again points to the division in the party between politicians—those whose first thought was for the advancement of the party—and those whose prime consideration was the alleviation of distress. However admirable such compassion might be, if Labour's legislation after 1935 is to be the criterion by which the achievement of the party is to be judged, it is to the politicians and their influence that the party owes its success. It was their drive and ambition which forced the party to act, to cut down its grandiose schemes to a size which would fit the situation, to translate its general principles into something resembling the language of legislative action, to adjust its appeal to attract an electorate. It is in relation to this practical political impulse that the shortcomings of Holland and his outlook are most obvious. As parliamentary leader he failed to give his party political leadership. He failed to take account of those factors which did not fit his theories, and he failed to adapt his attitudes when confronted with situations which demanded this. The impetus of his own take it or leave brand of leadership petered out in the election of 1923 and the complexities of 1929. This was largely due to the fact that about that time the majority of the parliamentary party came to realise the political insufficiency and unreality of the militant socialist approach to politics and the electorate. The question came to this—was the Labour Party to be an educational medium or a political party? For all his later vagueness and equivocation, for all his acceptance of immediate policy and doubts in the efficacy of education and in electoral intelligence, Holland's approach to Labour's problems continued to be, basically, an educational one. The explanation is not difficult to find. If there was to be an ideal society, education was the only answer to the problem of how an ideal society would develop painlessly from existing conditions. In the 1930s, protest and denunciation were still Holland's educational media, for before a new society could be erected, people must be convinced of the depravity of the old. But in telling electors how bad the Government was, Holland was telling them something they already knew. What they did not know, was how good Labour was, and to explain this, in generally understandable terms, was a political duty in which Holland was fain to neglect. In a sense, Holland was not interested in the electorate, for its failure to respond when he had put what he saw as the facts before it, had driven him back to rely, for the achieve-
ment of his ideal society, on non-human factors, historical process and the inevitable dawning of knowledge.

This chapter marks the end point of the major development of the central argument of this thesis - the argument that militant socialists of Holland's type set out to claim the leadership of the labour movement in Australia and New Zealand - for this chapter has been, essentially, a description, in relation to Holland, of the final failure of that attempt. Holland had not only lost the effective leadership of the Labour Party, but he and his ideas were fast becoming anachronisms within it. He had abandoned many of his old beliefs, and principles and nearly all his former initiative. He had taken the Labour Party as far as it would go under his leadership, for he had converted - not to militant socialism but to support of the Labour Party - the majority of those, workers, who were predisposed, because of their economic and social position to be converted. Those who were not so predisposed were the major electoral problem, and with them, only a politician, in fact Savage, could succeed. But while Holland lived, the party continued to reflect his approach, as the protest and denunciation which marked Labour's 1931 campaign showed. The politicians had triumphed with the new policy of 1931. It was a policy which had been designed to win overwhelming support, and it had failed. The question - and it bore strict relation to Holland - was why?
Chapter 12.

POLITICAL NON-UNIONISM.

The term "militant socialist" has been used in this thesis to denote, in relation to the labour movement generally, two broad and distinguishing characteristics, militancy and devotion to socialist theory. The purpose of this chapter is to confirm the argument that Holland, even in the last years of his life, merited the description of militant socialist. Just as his reactions to Samoan problems have been used as evidence that his militancy had not been abandoned, so his attitude to the role of unionism in the labour movement will be used, in this chapter, to support the argument that, despite party trends and his acceptance of them, his devotion to socialist theory continued. While the majority of party leaders had come to see Labour's primary electoral need as one of making itself understandable and acceptable to the average voter, Holland persisted with the notion that 'political non-unionism' — that is, the failure of some important unions to affiliate or co-operate with the Labour Party and so become members of the labour movement's political union — was the main cause of Labour's defeat. This claim was a direct application of the militant socialist theory which Holland had adopted in 1907, that the social revolution would be the outcome of the achievement of unity in both industrial and political fields and of unity between them. In fact, it was not so much the support of unionists which Labour needed to win to ensure electoral success, but that of farmers, white-collar workers and small business men. Holland knew, and candidly admitted this, particularly with regard to farmers, but nevertheless he asserted that only the complete support of unionists was needed to put Labour in power. This contradiction is explicable in terms of the duality

and confusion which has been examined in the previous chapter. When Holland declared that the support of all the workers and some of the farmers was necessary to Labour's becoming the government, he was thinking in political terms and making a realistic political judgement. When he claimed that 'political unionism' would result in a Labour government, he was thinking in terms of a class party and of the theoretical pre-requisites for Labour's success, not as merely another political party, but as the instrument of social revolution. He was claiming, as he had done since 1908, that the achievement of the social revolution would come through political and industrial unity, and that the organisations of workers in unions was logically complete only if these unions co-operated with labour's political organisation. Holland's attacks on political non-unionism throw light on the nature of the association he made, in his own mind, between the election of a Labour government and the achievement of ultimate social revolution. Although he did not equate a Labour government with the social revolution, and in fact believed that under depression conditions, Labour might fail in its mission, he retained sufficient of his faith to see a Labour government as a step towards social revolution. In theory, steps towards the ultimate goal depended on the presence of certain pre-requisites, and it was in order that these necessary factors be present that Holland appealed to unions to forsake political non-unionism. It is obvious, from this attitude, that Holland retained his basic devotion to socialist theory, looking to a Labour government in office as, properly, the instrument of social revolution.

As has been described in Chapter 6, the anti-political trend in the union movement which became evident, particularly in relation to the Alliance of Labour and the New Zealand Workers' Union, after 1919, caused Labour Party leaders grave concern. Thereafter, one of the aims of party leaders was to encourage the formation of one big union in New Zealand and to secure its affiliation to the party. The major organisational split was between the Trades' Council Federation, formed in April 1924, and affiliated to

the Labour Party, and the Alliance of Labour. The Alliance shared the Labour Party's wish for one national industrial organisation, hoping to absorb the Federation, but would not affiliate to the party. To encourage unionist support, the party, late in 1924, set up a committee of representatives of the Alliance, the Federation, and the Labour Party, to prepare and examine industrial legislation, but the Alliance still could not be induced to affiliate.

Because of his theoretical pre-conceptions, and the practical difficulties occasioned for the N.Z.L.P. by lack of union co-operation, Holland found this intransigence intolerable, and began what amounted to a personal mission to win recalcitrant unions to active support of the party. He appears to have arranged to be admitted to membership of the Westport General Labourers' Union so that he could speak at national union conferences. At such conferences, and generally when dealing with unions, Holland exhibited the more radical aspects of his convictions. This approach, while sincere, had tactical connotations also, for the union movement was, generally, more radical in its outlook than the N.Z.L.P., a reflection of their different environments. At a union conference in 1925 Holland claimed that a basic wage was merely a palliative, patching up the capitalist system. To progress beyond that system would be possible only with industrial and political unity, and the gist of Holland's remarks was that it was idle for the conference to discuss anything else. This argument indicates clearly the vital importance which Holland attached to conformity by unions to the terms of his theoretical scheme, as a pre-requisite to the social revolution.

The main obstacle to the affiliation of major unions were the personalities, particularly James Roberts and Arthur Cook, who dominated the Alliance of Labour and the New Zealand Workers' Union, and this continued to be a

determining factor in relations between those unions and the party. In 1930 F. Jones remarked that the leaders of the Alliance were "a group of men who allow personal spite and prejudice to overcome their judgement." These men viewed union organisation as more important to the workers than the Labour Party, and found support in the theory that industrial organisation would provide the framework and basis of the organisation of socialism once the Labour Party obtained power. Refusal to affiliate to the Labour Party was associated with the feeling that this would entail the acceptance of a subordinate position, particularly as F. Cornwall and W. Bromley, two leading officers of the rival Trades' Council Federation were members of the N.Z.L.P. executive. Basic to the attitude of the Alliance leaders was a determination to retain their organisation's independent identity, and an ambition to displace the Labour Party as the major workers' organisation. In 1926 the Alliance claimed that Labour politicians were afraid that one national industrial movement would swamp the political movement, and that these politicians, fearing oblivion, had hindered the attainment of national industrial unity. Shortly afterwards, the Alliance, in a remarkable display of suspicion and antagonism, demanded that the P.L.P. be excluded from the industrial legislation committee, where the Alliance could always be outvoted. The attitude of the N.Z. Workers' Union was less assertive, but this union adopted the device of promising to affiliate to the N.Z.L.P., and then postponing its affiliation indefinitely. The conduct of these unions infuriated Holland, who continued to rail against political non-unionism, claiming that the culprit unions were the very ones which pleaded with conservative governments for a few palliatives. Although Holland was outspoken on the general principles involved, party leaders did their best to contain injured feelings in the face of unionist criticism and abuse. After being reviled by N.Z. Workers' Union organisers, Parry complained to

8. F. Jones to W. Bromley 24 Nov. 1930 (Corresp. re Bromley)
10. Ibid p. 6.
11. Fraser to Nat. Sec. 18 June 1926. (Fraser Papers).
13. Ibid. 24 Feb., 26 June 1926.
Nash, "How do you expect one to be comradely with this kind of snake?" Nash sympathised with Parry, but thought open controversy between industrial and political movements inexpedient at that time, and Parry dropped the matter. Unionist militancy, and hostility to Labour politicians was expressed in several moves, all unsuccessful, at the 1927 N.Z.L.P. conference. Another aspect of the unionist problem was communist influence, particularly in miners' and seamen's unions. Because these unions held substantial shares in the Worker company, the N.Z.L.P. executive feared they might come to control that paper, a threat averted by the party's purchase of a new issue of shares with money borrowed from supporters. Holland attempted in vain to convert the communist controlled West Coast Miners' Union to support of the Labour Party.

The onset of depression, from 1927, wrought gradual changes in the relations between industrial and political labour movements. To meet farmer demands for replacement of compulsory by voluntary arbitration and exemption of pastoral and dairying industries from awards, the Government introduced an amendment to the Arbitration Act. Such was the protest from unions, now forced by economic circumstances to defend arbitration, that the Government agreed to Holland's suggestion of a National Industrial Conference of interested parties in 1928. Holland, at an open union conference called to formulate union policy, greeted with enthusiasm the conference's affirmation of the need for unity, remarking that the labour movement was never defeated by its opponents, but by its own disunity. When the National Industrial Conference was held, employers favoured optional arbitration, while union delegates pressed for compulsion. The deadlock on this question was

16. Parry to Nat. Sec. 26 May 1927; Nat. Sec. to Parry 7 June 1927.
18. N.Z.W. 10 Feb. 1926; Lee to Nat. Sec. 10 March 1926.
19. Powell "Working Class Party" p.25; Minutes Res. Exec. 24 Aug. 1926; See also Papers relating to History of Maoriland Worker (N.Z.L.P.)
not resolved, and thereafter union agitation centred on the continuance of compulsory arbitration, for unemployment had reduced their bargaining power, and if awards were maintained, real wages would rise as living costs fell.²⁴

As worsening economic conditions robbed it of independent bargaining power, the industrial movement turned to political labour with demands, entreaties and abuse.²⁵ Anxious to use this opportunity to heal the union-party breach, party leaders, particularly Nash, Fraser and Holland, paid close attention to union complaints and acted on them promptly.²⁶ Holland could not resist the temptation to drive home his attacks on political non-unionism,²⁷ but instead of bringing union leaders to a sense of their responsibilities, as Holland saw them, this worsened relations, for union leaders resented being lectured on their duties by Holland. Despite Holland's efforts on behalf of unions, J. Roberts, secretary of the Alliance, moved at the 1923 N.Z.L.P. conference that the party leader be elected by annual conference. The motion, defeated by a two to one majority,²⁸ reflected the industrialists' ambition to control the party, but it had undertones of personal feeling as well. Similar motions were defeated at the 1929 and 1930 conferences.²⁹

The accumulated suspicions and antagonisms which marked relations between industrial and political movements burst out at the 1930 N.Z.L.P. conference. Impatience with the Labour Party's position, and the worsening economic position, after 1928, brought matters to a head. In a special address to the 1930 conference, Arthur Cook, president of the Alliance of Labour and secretary of the New Zealand Workers' Union, made a scathing indictment of the Labour Party. Conflict between the industrial unions and party had been developing throughout 1929. In June, Fraser acidly expressed surprise to N.Z. Workers' Union conference that the Union was asking for Labour Party help to improve conditions, while at the same time co-operating in a movement to exclude Labour parliamentarians from deputations to the Government. Replying, Cook said that many unionists could not understand why Labour continued to

²⁴. Stone pp.102-106A.
²⁵. See Fraser Papers 1929. Also: Mason to Nat. Sec. 9 May 1929.
²⁶. E.g. Nat. Sec. to Mason, 10 May 1929.
support the United Government, but he also stated that it would be "suicidal" for Labour to put United out at that time.\footnote{30} This willingness to condemn whatever course the party took was typical of the reactions of Alliance leaders at this time. At a union conference convened by the Alliance in August 1929, Labour's support of United was criticised, and Labour parliamentarians excluded from union deputations to the Government.\footnote{31} At the Alliance conference of February 1930, Cook, Roberts and F.P. Walsh declared that the Labour Party had made little if any protest against low wages and unemployment, and Cook declared that industrial organisations should determine party policy. Cook suggested that Holland, whom he asserted was ignorant of the acuteness of the unemployed problem, be asked to meet Alliance representatives, so that the Labour Party's "deplorable endorsement" of Ward's unemployment policy should not be repeated\footnote{32} - a reference to Holland's welcoming of Ward's promise in 1929 to solve the unemployment policy in five weeks. The Alliance conference passed resolutions criticising the Labour Party's policy and diligence, insisting on industrial control of party policy, and demanding that Labour eject the United Government unless it improved wages and conditions on relief works.\footnote{33} Following this conference the Labour Party executive was convinced that the Alliance indeed aspired to control of the party.\footnote{34} This was so, but the Alliance's attitude and declarations were not without a strain of irresponsible exhibitionism, noisily beating the air in an effort to appear effectual. At the 1930 N.Z.L.P. conference, Cook repeated his criticisms. He claimed that Holland had ignored industrial organisations, in supporting, without consultation, Ward's promise of full employment in five weeks. In Cook's view, Holland's action was tantamount to accepting deplorable conditions for relief workers. Cook also cited statements

\footnotesize
33. Ibid. pp.51-56.
34. Minutes, Res. Exec. 7 April 1930.
favouring the Government and its policy, by Jordan, Barnard, and Lee Martin. As Reform had honoured agreements to pay standard rates, whereas Ward had not, Cook maintained that United must be ejected, no matter what party replaced it. Cook was cross-examined, mainly by Fraser and Nash, and various aspects of "political non-unionism" were debated, including Cook's use of Coates, instead of Holland, to bring union grievances before parliament.

In a firm reply to Cook's charges, in which he claimed that Cook and he were friends, "especially if he does what I want him to do", Holland attributed Labour's difficulties to unionists' support of United in 1928. He explained that his support of Ward's promise had been an attempt to hold him to it. Although these exchanges cleared the air a little, the Alliance continued its former intransigence and its attitude to the party in 1930 continued to be one of hostility and obstruction. Nevertheless economic pressures were encouraging co-operation. It was significant that the party's break with the United Party was brought about by the government's failure to provide time for the introduction of an industrial measure sponsored by the Alliance of Labour. But meanwhile, another hostile force was increasing its strength among workers. In November 1930 communists organised the National Unemployed Workers' Movement which rapidly gained influence among the unemployed. Communists, repudiating the Labour Party, maintained that the unemployed would obtain better conditions only by demonstrations and agitation, while Labour's attitude was that this was futile and the first consideration was to provide material help for the unemployed and find work for them.

36. Ibid. pp.6-7.
37. Ibid. Holland's reply to Cook, pp.1-3.
38. Thorn to Fraser, 29 Aug. 1930; President Wellington L.R.C. to F.E.Martin, 29 Sept. 1930 (Fraser Papers); Unemployment Board, Alliance of Labour leaflet n.d.(1930); Batchelor to Nat.Sec. 14 Nov. 1930; Nat.Sec. to Armstrong 27 Nov. 1930; Holland to Nat. Sec. 27 Nov. 1930 (Corresp. re. Bromley); Stone op.cit. p.111.
Late in 1930, Holland published *Political Non-Unionism*, in which his continued devotion to socialist theory was exhibited clearly. This devotion was apparent, not only the postulation of political non-unionism as the major source of Labour weakness, but in Holland's statement that political non-unionism "left the industrial organisations where they were unable to function as anything more than palliative-collecting organisations." This statement clearly looked forward to the achievement of a social revolution by the Labour Party, given industrial co-operation. Holland's attitude, and the fact that it was so vehemently expressed by him in 1930, leads to the question of whether his appeal to unions had a tactical motivation. By 1930, the trend in the N.Z.L.P. away from a militant socialist position had reached almost the decisive point, and it may be asked if Holland was looking to the industrial movement to redress the balance, and, by entering more fully into the activity of the N.Z.L.P., influence the party to return to a definitely militant socialist path. The available evidence conflicts with such an interpretation. As has been argued in the preceding chapter, Holland in his own way accepted the party trend. In this chapter it has been argued that he deplored the attitude, practical and theoretical, taken by recalcitrant union leaders, made no real effort to conciliate them, but told them bluntly what was their duty, and was extremely annoyed with their refusal to understand Labour's difficulties after 1928. The fact that he exhibited his more radical, militant socialist, side to unionists, points rather to the nature of the industrial environment than to any wish to enlist union organisations in support of his transcendentalist position against the party trend. Union organisation existed in an exclusively worker environment, isolated from the pressures and limitations which led to moderation in the political sphere. Generally, it may be concluded that there were two major reasons why Holland paid particular attention to the problem of political non-unionism. Firstly, the semi-hostile independence of some unions, and their refusal to co-operate with the Labour Party in working for the common good, was standing testimony to the failure of the Labour Party to discharge a first and most essential duty.

to unite all workers under one political allegiance. Secondly, while
economic depression was, on the one hand, obstructing the achievement of
the goal of social transformation, by creating adverse economic conditions,
on the other hand depression favoured the development of the pre-requisites
for social revolution by crushing the independent power of unions and
favouring the development of industrial and political unity to combat
adverse conditions. It was this latter aspect of the depression's effect
that Holland was anxious to foster and hasten.
Chapter 13.

DISCONTENT.

The theme of this chapter is discontent, Holland's discontent with his own position and with political developments, and the discontent of his associates with Holland. Holland, it is argued, although he accepted party policy trends, found his position, as a leader who still held to militant socialist theories and principles in a party whose tendency was towards abandonment of them, increasingly unpalatable. Aspects of his reaction, a determined adherence to the essentials of his former outlook and approach, have been examined in relation to Samoa and political non-unionism. After 1931 this reaction was exhibited as a factor in Holland's growing discontent. This discontent was evidenced both by his impulses to escape, partially or completely, from a situation which he was beginning to find intolerable, and by his extraordinary nervous tension and impatience, particularly after the Lyttelton by-election. The obvious source of Holland's discontent was the Government's continued failure to take measures to solve problems of poverty and unemployment. Advancing age and ill health had made him more irascible, but also dejected, and he was both saddened and indignant that the Government followed such a benighted policy when, as he believed, the solution to these problems lay within its power. To see suffering worsen while the remedy was at hand, disturbed Holland profoundly, as is apparent in his repeated pleas to the Government that it take up the policy he and his party propounded. The fact that Holland's impatience increased markedly after the Lyttelton by-election, suggests another explanation of Holland's discontent. His reaction to the Lyttelton result, which promised a Labour government at the next general elections, indicated that he was most anxious that the party become the government forthwith. This was a reversal of his pre-1931 attitude of uncertainty and lack of confidence in Labour's ability, as a government, to make effective changes in adverse circumstances. Following the argument

already advanced, Holland's anxiety that Labour immediately be given the chance to govern, reflects his despair of the Coalition's ever taking action to eliminate distress. This approach assumes that Holland was confident that Labour could act effectively as a government, a conclusion which may also be drawn directly from Holland's reaction to the Lyttelton result. Given the argument of previous chapters that Holland retained the essence of his militant socialist position, Holland's revival of confidence in his party's ability to implement its policy must be interpreted as a belief that its ultimate objectives, as he saw them, could be achieved eventually. For this achievement, Holland, as has been pointed out in earlier chapters, relied on education, and the Lyttelton result, in which a previous majority of thirty-two had been increased to a majority of 2,699 pointed to the coming of the intellectual revolution in which Holland had placed all his hopes.² In view of this argument, Holland's impatience following the Lyttelton result may be seen as a reaction to the N.Z.L.P.'s trend away from a militant socialist position and to his own previous doubts, a wish to see fundamental policy matters come to an issue and be resolved in practice, with Labour's winning of office, an anxiety to put the objective of social transformation to the test.

As has been argued in earlier chapters, not only had the party moved away from a militant socialist position, but some members considered Holland's attitudes and leadership of the party, a liability. As a result of this discontent, Holland was forced further and further into the background of party affairs, a situation which is examined in this chapter with particular reference to the Lyttelton campaign. These developments, the N.Z.L.P. trends and the discomfort of other party leaders with Holland's leadership, and Holland's anxiety to see Labour begin its appointed task of transformation, appear likely to have led to conflict, but these problems of discontent were abruptly resolved by Holland's death. The concluding argument of this chapter is that Holland's death played a unique part in assisting the N.Z.L.P. to power in 1935. Not only did it make way for Savage, but the public reaction

to Holland's death ignored the militant socialist, and saw Holland in the light of Labour's adjusted appeal, as a determined, sincere and self-less worker for the relief of distress and the social advancement of the people. While this reaction indicated appreciation of Holland's quality and significance in New Zealand political life, it also testified to his failure as a militant socialist. He had failed to impress on the public the real nature of his endeavour, which was not merely to reform society, but to transform it.

The 1931 election, promptly followed by the implementation of the Coalition's policy of rigorous economies, had the effect of turning Labour's forces into a confused rout. In the haste and preoccupation associated with the party's attempts to regroup and revitalise for the next attack, Holland found himself pushed further into the background of party affairs, although he remained prominent in Parliament. Holland still awaited the "complete breakdown of modern capitalism", an attitude which was now an anachronism in the party, and which tended to separate him, on matters of outlook and general tactics, from his colleagues. His position in the party was adversely affected by the resignation in 1932 of Nash, whose outlook had much in common with Holland's, from the key position of national secretary, and his replacement by the less sympathetic Thorn. Occasionally, during his parliamentary career, Holland had suggested to his wife that, if she wished, he would retire from politics and earn a more comfortable and lucrative living by freelance journalism. It is significant that he expressed a strong inclination to do this in 1932. As he aged, Holland lost much of his aggressive harshness. He had always been sentimental and this trait became more pronounced. Age and closer acquaintance also brought modification of the intolerance with which he had once viewed the 'representatives of capitalism'.

Holland's consideration, in 1932, of retirement from politics, is evidence of a profound discontent, and that this should have been evidenced in consideration of retirement, rather than action, points to the relationship

4. Mrs. Forman to writer 5 Sept. 1957; Mrs. Ivar to writer 12 Nov. 1958.
6. Bledisloe to Holland, 13, 18 April 1932 (H.P.)
between Holland and his party as its origin. Several possibilities require investigation, that Holland had abandoned all hope of ultimate social revolution, that he had lost faith in the Labour Party as an instrument of that revolution, that he had become convinced that the party no longer wanted him, and that he desired to escape from an intolerable situation, as leader of a party which no longer held the same ultimate values as himself. It has been established that he still looked forward to social revolution, and his behaviour during the Lyttelton campaign demonstrates that he did not feel unwanted in the party. The origin of Holland's discontent appears to have been a loss of faith in the N.Z.L.P. as an instrument of social revolution, and the wish to resolve an intolerable situation, in which he suspected that the party's objectives might fall short of his own. It is testimony to the fact that these were doubts, not certainties, that Holland did not retire, a course which fatigue, and his sadness and disheartenment in the face of worsening depression, also inclined him.

The Coalition's immediate implementation of a policy of economy in 1932 threw the labour movement on the defensive. Compulsory arbitration was abolished and replaced by collective bargaining in which unions were at a disadvantage under depression conditions. In opposing this, Holland admitted his previous opposition to arbitration, justifying his defence of the Act as it stood as the product of changed circumstances.\textsuperscript{7} The measure worked to Labour's eventual advantage, for unionists did not forgive the Coalition, and its effect was to make them take a more active interest in Labour politics.\textsuperscript{8} Again, as in the contrast which has been made earlier between Holland and Savage, Holland's attitude to the Coalition's economy programme tended to be the negative one of protest,\textsuperscript{9} while that of his colleagues and the executive was a more positive advancement of Labour's policy.\textsuperscript{10} Nevertheless, the party's major propaganda effort in 1932 was largely negative, a Dominion-wide series of demonstrations in conjunction with a "The Government Must Resign" petition, agitation which concentrated on protest against the

\begin{footnotes}
8. Stone pp.143-152.
\end{footnotes}
Government's legislation. In the realm of positive policy, and also of tactics, Labour's most pressing problem was again a rural one. The abolition of compulsory arbitration had been the outcome of agitation, led by farmers, for a second wage cut, and relations between farmers and the labour movement were deteriorating rapidly in the early months of 1932. The Trades and Labour Councils, the more moderate wing of the union movement, denounced farmers as exploiters of the working class, and condemned subsidies and concessions they received. It seemed that the rift would widen. Fearing this, the N.Z.L.P. executive instructed Thorn to solicit the views of farmer members so that land policy might be modified to meet the changing situation, and a more effective appeal made to farmers and the whole community. Further to this, a meeting to discuss the currency question and monetary reform took place in September 1932 between Savage, Nash, and Jordan representing the N.Z.L.P., and the Auckland representatives of the Farmers' Union. Two resolutions were passed, one insisting that employed and registered unemployed should receive sufficient payment to ensure an adequate standard of living, the other being directed towards a petition to parliament that the Government make provision for the public control of banking and credit. These resolutions marked the official commitment of the Auckland farmers' organisations to two aspects of the N.Z.L.P. policy, and, as such, represent an important tactical and propaganda success for the party. That it was Savage and not Holland who led Labour's representatives, again illustrates Holland's absence from discussions of high potential importance. True, Holland was no economist, relying on Nash to supply much of the information for his financial pronouncements, but the Auckland meeting had an electoral rather than a policy significance.

Holland was at home in Westport, busy with local matters, particularly the relief.

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11. Nat. Sec. to Dear Sir 29 April 1932, Nat. Sec. to Dear Comrade 14 June 1932 (Circs. N.Z.L.P.); Lee to Nat. Sec. 27 June 1932; Mason to Nat. Sec. 30 June 1932; Report N.Z.L.P. Conf. 1932. Exec. Report, p.3.
16. Savage to Nat. Sec. 26 July 1932 (Savage Papers); Minutes of meeting held in the Farmers' Union office. Auckland 15 Sept. 1932 (Savage Papers)
17. Colleague of Holland A.
the relief of distress, often from his own pocket. When parliament met in September, he was so pressed for money that he had difficulty in finding enough to pay his fare to Wellington. Having made its protest at the earlier session, most of Labour's debating time in the second session of 1932 was devoted to re-stating the policy of 1931. Holland too took up this more positive approach. In a speech published as The Way Out of the Labyrinth, Holland stated that currency control, increase of purchasing power, and planned social reconstruction were the answers to New Zealand's problems. He made no mention of socialism, but mustered support for his conclusions from mainly non-labour sources, emphasising that the N.Z.L.P. did not stand alone in its attitude to solution of the problem. Central to his argument was his humanitarian desire for immediate amelioration of misery under capitalism.

At the end of 1932, Labour's leaders were discouraged. The party's financial position was growing steadily worse. Great disappointment was caused by P.C. Webb's defeat by K.J. Holyoake in the Motueka by-election. Holland, returning to Westport, lost himself in a maze of work - correspondence, reading callers, local problems - often retiring at midnight and rising at five. On 20 January 1933, it was announced that Downie Stewart, Minister of Finance, had resigned, and that the rate of exchange was to be raised. By the raise, the Government hoped to increase farmers' incomes, believing that the benefit would percolate through the community. In 1932 Labour opinion had been divided on the exchange question, but had consolidated into the view that "Neither deflation or inflation show the way out. Each will result in futility." When it was announced, the party opposed the exchange adjust-

19. Holland to Nat. Sec. - Sept. 1932 (Corresp. re. Sec. Assistance)
25. N.Z.W. 9 March 1932. Also Fraser to C. Morgan Williams 7 March 1932. (Fraser Papers).
ment, holding that farmers would benefit at the expense of the rest of the community. Holland re-iterated the claim that the true remedy lay in raising the incomes of consumers and effective economic planning. At this time, the question of financial policy was becoming a divisive issue within the party. In March 1933, Savage, again taking the initiative in a policy matter, moved at a caucus meeting that the party adopt a policy of large-scale State borrowing. Lee, who believed in the issue of debt-free money, organised opposition to Savage's proposal. So remote was Holland from the centre of party discussion, and so forgotten were his past opinions by his colleagues, that they were in doubt as to the position he would take. True to his traditional opposition to borrowing as a capitalist levy on the people, Holland opposed Savage's motion which was defeated by 12 to 6, with Savage, Nash, Fraser, McCombs, Jones and Coleman in the minority. According to Lee, Holland did not disguise his satisfaction, nor Savage his annoyance. This incident again evidences the aspects of Holland's leadership which have been discussed in earlier chapters, his remoteness from the centre of party affairs, his adherence to long-held principles, Savage's initiative in policy matters and his impatience with Holland, and the difference between Holland's outlook and that of the coming leaders of the Labour Party, Savage, Fraser and Nash. Although, in the absence of evidence, the influence of Holland's views in determining the caucus decision cannot be estimated, it is obvious that his opinions were not always out of harmony with majority decisions.

In the parliamentary session of early 1933, Holland reached an extraordinary pitch of nervous tension. He took little rest or sleep, driving the party through marathon all night sittings or working far into the night on speech preparation, spending the weekends on correspondence, and articles for the Worker. His speeches, which had always been thoroughly prepared, became clearly set pieces, not debating speeches, and often irrelevant to

They made little impression on the House. After criticising the raised exchange rate, he was notified by Government whips that no Minister would speak in reply. Indignant, Holland answered that he would regard this as a deliberate affront, and in consequence J.A. Young, Minister of Health, rose to make what Holland described as "a most miserable effort." Nor was he pleased with N.Z.L.P. public meetings. After addressing a crowded and enthusiastic meeting in the Wellington Town Hall, Holland noted in his diary, "Too many speakers and Bob Semple's Vaudeville made it impossible to state a serious case properly." Holland's irascibility was the product of his nervous tension, itself a reaction to extreme exhaustion and the need to keep up an unrelenting yet apparently ineffective battle in parliament on behalf of those afflicted by poverty, hunger and misery. In April, less than a month after the parliamentary session finished, Holland, in response to a widespread demand from party branches and L.R.Cs that members of parliament should address meetings, began a tour of New Zealand, speaking on currency and finance. He had been ill, from exhaustion, and could get little sleep, but revived under the stimulus of his tour, for his meetings were crowded and enthusiastic, and he was able to find a little time for relaxation, walking and billiards. With resentment the initial impulse behind his development as a militant socialist, and with a natural seriousness of purpose, and human feeling, Holland felt keenly that aspect of the depression which could be seen in human suffering and humiliation and irretrievable damage to individual personalities. Sometimes, as in his New Year Message for 1933, dogged pleading gave way to a flash of his former indignant eloquence:

"The apologists for the existing conditions rest their case on a perpetuation of the age-long perversion that fate has ordained that poverty, hunger and misery must be endured in the midst of plenty - that economic laws are beyond the collective control of the community. In some cases they rely on the monstrous falsehood that want and hunger, with no shortage of life's necessaries is the will of the Most High God."

32. Diary, 27 Jan. 1933.
33. Diary, 21 Feb.
34. Asst. Sec. (D.Wilson) to Fraser 18 Feb. 1933 (Fraser Papers) Nat. Sec. to dear Comrade 10 March 1933. Circ. N.Z.L.P.; N.Z.W. 22 March 1933; Diary, 29 March - 6 April.
35. Diary, 9 April - 6 May.
Holland in April 1933, at the age of sixty-four.
To Holland, this situation demanded the devotion of all the party's energies. He noted in his diary during the 1933 N.Z.L.P. conference. "At night there was a dance - a welcome to the delegates; but it appeared to me as time wasted." 37 A couple of nights later, when he went to a film, he wrote in his diary, "This was time wasted, too." 38 This impatience, an expression of his nervous tension, sprang from his dedicated pre-occupation with serious things, his distaste for the inconsequential and his abiding sense of responsibility to do his utmost for those in distress.

The 1933 N.Z.L.P. conference adopted "Labour's Plan", which after re-affirmation at the conferences of 1934 and 1935, was the basis of Labour's 1935 election policy. This "Plan" held that the duty of the State was to organise agencies to supply the people's requirements. New Zealand could establish her own living standards by planned production and control of marketing and finance. The policy declared against deflation and for immediate control by the State of the entire banking system, with the provision of currency and credit to ensure adequate production with guaranteed prices and wages; re-adjustment of all mortgages; guaranteed prices for primary products and reciprocal agreements with other countries; fostering economic secondary industries to lessen dependence on overseas markets; scientific development of land and industry and reduction of hours to provide employment; guaranteed wages and salaries and negotiations to lessen overseas debt burdens. 39 This policy, a re-definition and expansion of that of 1931, and mainly the work of Nash, fitted into the predominantly financial pattern of the public controversy of the time, and underlined the party's contention that credit was the key to the country's problems. At the conference, the "Plan" seemed no new departure and occasioned no debate. In fact, it was the formal identification of the whole party with the adjustment made to Labour's electoral approach by the leaders of the P.L.P. and executive in 1931. There is no evidence of what Holland thought of this step. Did he view it as a formality? Or was it a factor in fostering his tense discontent, a further reason for suspecting that the N.Z.L.P. had abandoned ultimate objectives?

37. Diary, 19 April.
38. Diary, 21 April.
Holland, in the later years of his life, working in his study in Westport.
When he returned to Westport after his New Zealand tour, severe influenza and recurring periods of nervous exhaustion interfered with Holland's work, but he forced himself to leave his bed to attend to his usual duties of correspondence and engagements.\textsuperscript{40} He took little relaxation, begrudging any time spent away from his work. "I went to the Galloping Course where whippet racing was being held. Interesting enough, but takes up too much time."\textsuperscript{41} Loving flowers and well-kept gardens, he could sometimes find time to work for an hour or so in his garden, an occupation more congenial to him than any other. Holland had a passion for flowers.\textsuperscript{42} But, obsessed with the passing of time,\textsuperscript{43} and with his work, exhausted, and continually on edge, Holland's temper became increasingly variable. Any hint of a slight could throw him into despondency, or fury.\textsuperscript{44}

In August 1933, James McCombs died. The Lyttelton by-election which followed, was a triumph for the N.Z.L.P., but during the campaign, Holland suffered bitter humiliation at the hands of his colleagues. After much discussion, Mrs. McCombs was chosen as candidate. Holland believed her the strongest available, but thought that a general prejudice against female candidates would operate against her, and he was apprehensive, for McCombs's 1931 majority had been only thirty-two votes. "If the seat is lost, it will be lost not by the Party, but by the candidate", Holland wrote.\textsuperscript{45} The party, without financial reserves, was ill prepared for a campaign, in which victory was essential to prestige.\textsuperscript{46} Holland too, was in financial difficulties, for his attendance at McCombs's funeral had exhausted his slender resources, and when he was called to take part in the campaign, he had to arrange an over-draft with his bank to enable him to leave Westport.\textsuperscript{47} Before he left, Holland wrote to Wilson, the assistant secretary of the party, with suggestions for the conduct of the campaign. He was confident that Labour would

\textsuperscript{40} Diary, 7 May - 6 June.
\textsuperscript{41} Diary, 16-21 June.
\textsuperscript{42} N.Z.P.D. 1933, V.235, p.1284; Roy Holland Paragraphs, pp.41-43; Mrs. Forman to writer, 13 Aug. 1957, 29 May 1958.
\textsuperscript{43} N.Z.P.D. 1933, V.236, p.371.
\textsuperscript{44} Diary, 16, 23, 17 June - 1 Aug.
\textsuperscript{45} Holland to Asst. Sec. 6 Aug. 1933; Asst. Sec. to Parry 10 Aug. 1933; Asst. Sec. to M.Fagan, 8 Aug. 1933 (Lyttelton By-Election Papers N.Z.L.P.
\textsuperscript{46} Nat. Sec. Lyttelton By-Election Circular 8 Aug. 1933. (Lytt. Papers)
\textsuperscript{47} Holland to Asst. Sec. 6 Aug. 1933 (Lyttl. Papers); Diary, 18 Aug.
hold Lyttelton, but after examining the 1931 polling figures, he concluded that attention would have to be paid to every polling place, including the Chatham Islands, where, he believed, a speaker should be sent. He offered to speak at every centre in the electorate, and, in a comment which revealed the remoteness of his personal relations with Canterbury Labour leaders, he suggested that some of them should meet him, for the sake of party appearances, on his arrival in Christchurch:

"On quite a number of occasions I have landed at Christchurch like a stranger in a strange land. An experience of that sort on this occasion would not help the Lyttelton campaign." 48

After taking up his speaking engagements with zest, Holland wrote to Wilson asking him to make no arrangements for him to speak outside Lyttelton prior to the session, as the winning of the by-election was of paramount importance.49 The following day, Holland was astonished to learn from Langstone, the campaign organiser, that no further Lyttelton meetings had been arranged for him. The reason given was that the party lacked money to finance meetings, a situation Langstone described as attempting "to fight a champagne electorate on a Beer income."50 Holland thought this "calamitous" and urged Wilson to make an urgent appeal for funds.51 Although astonished and piqued, Holland does not appear to have suspected that the reasons for the curtailment of his speaking engagements were more than financial. He protested to Wilson:

"... at the place where above all others I should speak (Cashmere) and out around the Bays no arrangements are being made for meetings for me. These are the places where there are votes to be won. Meetings have been arranged for Mr. Langstone at the Bays and it is very desirable that he should go there – for no one can state a case to the farmers better than he can. But I think it is a grave mistake that I am not going there also." 52

Wilson rebuffed him, stating that too much use of the leader of the party cheapened his public position. He explained that the national executive did not expect Holland to remain in Lyttelton, but assumed that he should

48. Holland to Asst. Sec. 15 Aug. 1933 (Lytt. Papers)
50. Holland to Asst. Sec. 24 Aug. 1933 (Lytt. Papers)
51. Langstone to Asst. Sec. 24 Aug. 1933 (Lytt. Papers)
52. Holland to Asst. Sec. 24 Aug. 1933 (Lytt. Papers)
53. Ibid.
return during the last week of the campaign. Wilson's explanation showed that there was more to the curtailment of Holland's role in the by-election than merely the shortage of funds, the reason that Holland had been given initially, and that, in fact, Holland's exclusion was a deliberate executive policy. Evidently the executive and Wilson took the view that Holland's reputation for extremism lingered, and this alone, apart from what he might say in speeches, might alienate votes. This view of Holland as a liability had grown stronger with every general election since 1925, but the Lyttelton by-election was the first occasion in which it was obviously a factor in the determination of party tactics. Holland was thought particularly unsuitable to address the electors of Cashmere, the home of the well-to-do. That the Lyttelton by-election was the first occasion in which the executive acted to circumscribe Holland's activities, reflects the executive's awareness of the crucial importance for the party of the Lyttelton result. In Wilson's opinion, "the best thing was done" in not arranging more than a minimum of meetings for Holland.

During the Lyttelton campaign it was made abundantly clear to Holland that neither he nor his views were indispensable to the Labour Party. Not only was he prevented from taking what he saw as his rightful place in the campaign, but there were other rebuffs, not least of which was the peremptory tone of the letters he received from Wilson. Holland's opinion that a speaker should be sent to the Chatham Islands was disregarded, much to his vexation. When Holland left Christchurch, he was subdued and mortified, "very sore" as Wilson put it. Holland gave no definite sign that he saw the wider implications of the way in which he had been treated, the lack of confidence in his leadership. He neither made an issue of the matter, nor ceased to assert the authority he possessed. Although intensely annoyed, he apparently viewed the matter as one in which he must accept executive opinion. Returning to Westport, he made an effort to forget his humiliations,

54. Asst. Sec. to Holland 25 Aug. 1933 (Lytt. Papers)
55. Asst. Sec. to Langstone, 26 Aug. 1933 (Lytt. Papers)
56. Asst. Sec. to Holland, 9, 25 Aug. 1933 (Lytt. Papers)
57. Holland to Asst. Sec. 6 Aug. 1933; Asst. Sec. to Langstone, 17 Aug. 1933 (Lytt. Papers).
58. Asst. Sec. to Langstone, 26 Aug. 1933 (Lytt. Papers)
and was soon immersed in his usual routine. Fraser kept him informed of developments in Lyttelton, where confidence waxed and waned. When Holland returned to Lyttelton early in September he formed a very optimistic view of Labour's chances. Labour's main propaganda was on unemployment and it took to itself "The Ideal of Richard John Seddon" - the health and happiness of the greatest number. Restorative power was claimed for Labour's "Plan". Holland addressed Cashmere electors, but the schoolroom in which he spoke could hold only sixty and he was apprehensive:

"Cashmere is one of the places that we badly blundered over. I should have spoken here on my first visit & Fraser should have come later. If we fail to break even here it will be because of our own faultiness of organisation." Subsequently he complained again of poor organisation in connection with his meetings, another indication that the directors of Labour's campaign were not anxious that Holland be too widely heard.

The Lyttelton by-election resulted in a remarkable Labour advance, Mrs. McCombs increasing her husband's 1931 majority of thirty-two votes to 2,699. This success appeared to Labour leaders all the more impressive because their entire attention had been concentrated on merely holding the seat. The result convinced Holland that an immediate general election would return a Labour government, a conclusion to which the voting figures gave substantial support. This tantalising promise of power increased Holland's tension. The opening of the parliamentary session in September found him petulant and impatient. He was tired of the absence of constructive legislation, bored by the stupidities of some members, sickened by the "hopeless speeches" of others. He sought diversion as he had not done before, watching a Rugby match, walking with his son's family in the Botanical Gardens, and going to the films frequently. In the House, the slow pace of proceedings exasperated him.

59. Diary, 26 Aug. - 7 Sept.
60. Asst. Sec. to Langstone 26 Aug. 1933; Howard to Asst. Sec. - Aug. 6 Sept. 1933; Fraser to Asst. Sec. 31 Aug. 1933; Asst. Sec. to Fraser, 5,7 Sept. 1933; Asst. Sec. to Savage 7 Sept. 1933; Langstone to Asst. Sec. 6 Sept. 1933 (Lytte.P)
63. Diary, 11-12 Sept.
65. Diary, 21-27 Sept.
At the funeral of Te Rata Mahuta on the day of Holland's death, 8 October 1933. Holland is in the centre, with J.G. Coates on his right and on his left, F. Langstone and Sir Apirana Ngata.
Forbes, he thought, was merely raving. As has been argued at the beginning of this chapter, Holland's attitude following the Lyttelton result points, not only to discontent with the Government's purblind failure to take measures to solve problems of poverty and unemployment, but to his wish to see Labour's fundamental policy implemented in conditions which, given the indication of the increased Lyttelton majority, would be favourable to social transformation.

At Huntly on 8 October, Holland joined other members of parliament at the funeral of Te Rata Mahuta, a Maori King. Fellow members attempted to dissuade Holland from climbing the steep hill where the Maori King was to be buried, but he was curious to see how the Maoris buried their dead. At the summit, Holland collapsed. He refused to be carried, but accepted assistance for the descent. After being taken back to Huntly to rest, his heart failed and Holland died suddenly. A state funeral was held on 11 October.

Holland had written in Red Roses on the Highways:

"When I am dead
And you who fought the fight with me
Shall come to say the last farewell,
Let no sad funeral dirge be sung,
No "Dead March" played with dismal time,
Nor mournful beat of muffled drum
Before the hearse that bears me hence;
But let the silver cornets wake
The sleeping echoes of the hills
With vibrant notes that shall proclaim
There is no sting in Death for me,
No victory the Grave hath won.
O not in sorrow shall ye walk
In slow procession to my tomb,
But proudly march as though you come
To hail me victor in the fight -
When I am dead."

The casket left Parliament House to the sounds of the "Reveille."
Holland was buried on an eminence a few yards from the grave of Seddon, a spot where often in walks, Holland would stand and look out over Wellington Harbour.

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67. Diary, 6 Oct.
Holland's funeral, 11 October 1933. The hearse leaves Parliament House.
In death, Holland captured the imagination and hearts of the public in a way he had never done while he lived. Suddenly, he was revealed as a frail man of heroic effort, dedicated to the service of the people, and the people, caught by a common impulse, warmed to him. Austere, reserved, formidable, Holland lacked the common touch, but his death, at a time when depression was at its worst, occasioned a remarkable release of pent-up emotion. The unemployed and the destitute awoke to find they had lost a champion, "that great brooding heart, grown sultry, thunderous with others cares." Many who "could not feel the burn of mutiny" saw that:

"Such men as he are like a mood of Christ's
That mighty mood that thonged the temple clear ...
And yet his anger only matched his love ..."  

In part, this surge of emotion was due to the circumstances of Holland's death, which suddenly focused public attention on him, partly it was the expression of confused feelings of self-pity and the thirst for diversion, depression engendered, which found outlet in a sense of personal bereavement and absorption in the pageantry of a state funeral. These conventional reactions were fostered, intensified and exploited by Labour Party organising, so that Holland's funeral became an impressive labour demonstration, and "In Memoriam" meetings were still being held, by such critics of Holland as Semple, a month after his death. But there was also a genuine sense of loss, for death revealed Holland's stature, which commanded for the first time, general public admiration and respect. Political opponents joined Holland's colleagues in praising his ability and devotion to principle, his industry and knowledge, his sincerity of purpose, his courtesy and kindness, and the greatness of his vision. The press of New Zealand, except the Dominion, which retained its rancour, expressed similar sentiments. Beneath the platitudes and the usual expressions of regret, there was genuine respect for a man who fought untiringly for the principles to which he was devoted.

70. N.Z.W. 8 Nov. 1933 "A Leader Passes" by Eileen Duggan.
71. Mrs. Ivar to writer, 6 Jan. 1959.
72. N.Z.W. 8 Nov. 1933 Advert.
74. Dom. 9 Oct. 1933.
75. For a selection of editorial comments see N.Z.W. 8 Nov. 1933.
Yet, the spontaneous and sincere public tributes accorded Holland on his death were testimony to his failure, in terms of his own ideals. These tributes were not to the militant socialist whose enduring ideal and ambition had been social transformation according to a socialist theory basically that of Marx, but to the honest and sincere humanitarian, the "wonderful and forceful champion of the poor" as Savage described him. When Nash wrote of Holland's death, "The fighting centre of the Movement had broken", he described something of Holland's real significance in the New Zealand labour movement, but other party members, such as Savage, whose main concern was the public impression Holland's death had created, Fraser, Semple, Carr and Fagan, were anxious to excuse or explain away Holland's harshness and rigidity and to emphasise his great compassion and "quiet personal charm." The discontent of his colleagues with Holland in life was resolved by their making him conform, in death, to the character and spirit of the new leadership of the party. Their tributes and propaganda completed the process of modification and abandonment of militant socialist theories and principles which had been a marked feature of Holland's later life. His retention of faith in social revolution was transmuted by his colleagues into a wish, as Fraser put it, "to build a Jerusalem in this 'green and pleasant land'." Thus the revolutionary, theoretical and uncompromisingly socialist elements which remained in Holland until his death were buried under vague phrases and high-sounding platitudes. Holland became "the friend of the poor", albeit a fighter, but inspired by a "holy, giant tenderness." The origins of the unique Savage appeal, that of the "benign, political uncle", are to be seen in the sterner, more remote version created by his colleagues on Holland's death. This creation was not unreal, but it was only part of the truth. Holland, had indeed, placed the relief of poverty, hunger and misery before the dictates of theory, he was a sincere friend of the poor, but his basic loyalty to theory remained an integral part of his attitude to politics. As a perceptive Labour supporter remarked at Holland's death, "when he deemed it necessary in the public interest to withstand the public will", he would do it. Holland's first consider-

76. N.Z.W. 8 Nov. 1933.
77. Ibid.
79. N.Z.W. 8 Nov. 1933.
81. N.Z.W. 8 Nov. 1933.
82. Ibid. (J. Robinson).
ation was, not what the public wanted, but what was in the public interest, as he saw it in the light of militant socialist theory. In the later years of his life, what the public wanted - relief of distress - was what Holland considered to be truly in the public interest, immediately, and in preparation for the new society to come. This was a negative correspondence of viewpoints, and, even at his death, Holland's ideals went far beyond what the public understood or wanted. The fact that these ideals did not obtrude in a situation dominated by the negative element, the need to cope with economic depression, in which Holland and the public were at one, was a major factor in the enhancement of Holland's public stature and reputation in the later years of his life. It was as a result of these circumstances, public inability to comprehend his real ideals, and his colleagues' emphasis on Holland the "friend of the poor", that the real nature of his endeavour, to transform and revolutionise, not merely to reform society, was unacknowledged at his death. It has been maintained that events in the years 1930-31 marked the final failure of the attempt of militant socialists of Holland's type to claim the leadership of the labour movement in an endeavour to guide that movement along the lines of a postulated theoretical development. The completeness of this failure is evident in the accepted estimate of Holland at his death, an estimate which ignored the major source of Holland's extraordinary determination and perseverance, his faith, not in reform but in a millenium.

It has been argued that, after the Lyttelton by-election, Holland was impatient to see Labour in office, and that one of his reasons was his wish to resolve his doubts, both in aspects of his own belief, and in the Labour Party as the instrument of social revolution, to put the question of social transformation to a practical test. The Lyttelton campaign indicated that his colleague's discontent with Holland, formerly passive and not expressed openly, had now become active and a factor in party tactics. Holland was not insensitive to such treatment, as other evidence indicates that even the hint of a slight could throw him into despondency or fury. The question arises, in relation to his humiliations during the Lyttelton campaign, and also in regard to his failure to retire when driven to consider this, of why Holland did not react more strongly. It was obvious in 1933 that many of Holland's views conflicted with those of the executive, that he was dissatisfied with
party tactics and impatient of anything less than total devotion to party and parliamentary affairs. Holland's sense of party discipline and loyalty was strong and this was no doubt a restraining factor, but this does not explain fully his comparative lack of perturbation under considerable provocation. The explanation may be sought in the hope which the Lyttelton result brought to Holland and the extraordinary sense of urgency which preceded his death. These indicate that he was looking forward, impatiently, to the time when, in terms of the requisites, he had stated in 1921, dependence on leaders would cease and "the rank and file are capable of giving their instructions", instructions which he believed would accord with his own viewpoints.

Had Holland lived, it is likely that he would have led the Labour Party to victory in 1935, but his death played an important part in assisting that success. Most importantly, it made way for Savage whose virtues both as a politician and a personality were what the N.Z.L.P. needed to bridge the gap to office. His politics were state humanitarian, and nothing more. His personality was apparently amiable, showed every sign of ready sympathy and none of intransigence, and gave an impression of tremendous sincerity of purpose. Holland's death, and the emotional response it evoked among the public, laid the foundations for Savage's appeal, for Holland, in death, was publicly absolved from the sins of the cold and bitter proponent of class war and interred as the fearless fighter for justice, the champion of lofty ideals, reserved, kindly, selfless. In November 1935, when New Zealand's first Labour government was elected, Savage cabled Mrs. Holland, "Harry's life of service enabled us to win." 83 There was a sense in which this was true, for Holland's dedicated determination was a major factor in building the party and sustaining it. Moreover, the party which became the Government in 1935 was substantially the same as Holland left it. After his death there were no new policy departures, only amplification and extension, particularly of social service provisions, of the policy of 1933. 84 But, as has been argued, Holland's shortcomings in the field of practical politics were a grave liability, and the initiative in new policy making was not Holland's. Again, Labour's success

83. Savage to Mrs. Holland 29 Nov. 1935. Cablegram (H.P.)
in 1935 may be explained, not only in terms of the leadership of Savage and of Labour's policy, but also as the product of electors' determination to eject a Coalition government in which they had lost all confidence.  

Holland died in debt. After his death, an appeal to "the country of my adoption" was found in his desk. He asked that the Leader of the Opposition be paid a salary which would allow for the special expenses of that office, and that a full-time secretary be provided. His official expenses had reduced Holland's own salary to less than a general labourers' wage, constricting his political activities. He claimed that had it not been for the fact that his son was his secretary, and for help from friends, he would have been forced out of parliament by financial difficulties. As it was, financial matters were a constant worry to his wife and himself. After this appeal was shown to Forbes by Labour members, a permanent secretary to the Leader of the Opposition was appointed. Holland's main concern was for his wife, left without support. They had found it impossible to save, or pay insurance premiums. Holland presumed that their furniture and his library would merely liquidate his debts, and he looked to the nation to place his wife beyond fear of want. The Government made a grant of £600 to Mrs. Holland. She had been affected greatly by grief, and the thought of her husband's life of unsparing industry worried her:

"If I could feel sure that he wished for no other pleasure in his life than his work I could feel more reconciled, but I think of him every day of his life working till his head ached he would often ask me to rub the back of his head it used to feel numb after he would be writing for hours." sic

When the N.Z.L.P. executive decided to erect a memorial over Holland's grave, Langstone made a comment which indicated where his primary loyalty, and that of the party as a whole, lay. He expressed the hope that no attempt

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86. Roy Holland to Allan and Stella Holland, 15 Oct. 1933 (H.P.)
87. H.E.Holland "An Appeal to ... the country of my adoption" (H.P.)
88. Ibid. Covering note from Roy Holland (H.P.)
89. Ibid.
90. Roy Holland to Allan Holland, 15 Dec. 1933 (H.P.)
91. Mrs. Holland to Stella Holland, 11 Nov. 1933; Roy Holland to Allan and Stella Holland, 15 Oct. 1933.
would be made to overshadow the Seddon monument.\footnote{93} The Labour Party's loyalty was to be to the Liberal tradition of Seddon, not to the militant socialist tradition of Holland. The initial appeal for donations towards a Holland memorial failed,\footnote{94} and it was not until 1937 that it was completed. It was a group of figures designed to be:

"... symbolical of the struggles of humanity, of the onward and upward march of mankind from slavery and serfdom and the tyrannies and cruelties of the past to the Peace and Universally shared Prosperity of the Future." \footnote{95}

As a symbol, it was a harsh commentary on Holland's endeavour. The central figure stood naked, holding the fruits of the earth, looking up, sightlessly, into the heavens.

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{93. Langstone to Nat. Sec. 14 Jan. 1934.}
\footnote{94. Sec. Holland Memorial Committee to Dear Sir, 1 June 1934; Nat. Sec. to Dear Comrade, 27 July 1934. Circ. N.Z.L.P.}
\footnote{95. Mrs. Janet Fraser. \textit{Typescript of a talk on H.E. Holland}. Broadcast from Station 2YA. 22 April 1937.}
\end{footnotes}
Chapter 14.

CONCLUSION.

The central argument of this thesis has been that militant socialists of Holland's type set out to claim the leadership of the labour movement in Australia and New Zealand, and it has been the purpose of this study to explain, in relation to Holland, how and why this attempt was made, and how and why it failed, and to examine, in the process, what happened to Holland's ideas and principles. It has been maintained that the impetus behind this attempt was an amalgam of resentment, indignation and dedicated idealism, resentment of existing social conditions and a vision of an ideal society in which mankind's problems would be solved. The question of why militant socialists failed in their attempt to claim the leadership of the Australian labour movement has been discussed in the Australian section of the thesis, where it was argued that this failure was complete, both with regard to militant socialists' failure to attain personal leadership of the main stream of the labour movement and their failure to influence it in a militant socialist direction. It remains to draw together the arguments put forward in the New Zealand chapters to answer the question of why militant socialists failed in their attempt to claim the leadership of the New Zealand labour movement, and particularly, the N.Z.L.P. This failure was different in kind from that in Australia, for in New Zealand a number of militant socialists, and particularly Holland, achieved personal leadership in the labour movement, and their failure lay in their inability to make that leadership effective in relation to their ultimate objectives. With regard to the central argument of this thesis, the conclusion reached is that even when militant socialists had achieved personal success and leadership within the N.Z.L.P. they failed to impose a militant socialist direction on that party's movement towards power.

It has been argued that one of the main reasons for the failure of
militant socialists to achieve their objects in Australia was the existence and nature of the Australian Labor Party. In New Zealand, no equivalent to that party existed, and it was that situation which explains why militant socialists played a far more important role in the New Zealand labour movement than they did, up to 1912, in the Australian. Nevertheless, they failed to attain their initial objectives, a situation which points to the conclusion that their fundamental and enduring problem was failure to win majority acceptance of their views. This problem admitted of two theoretical solutions, reliance on the use of force, or on some process of free conversion. Holland had put forward theories of violence in 1909 at Broken Hill and in Wellington in 1913-14, but, essentially, he was opposed to the use of force, and the choice which the circumstances of the Bolshevik revolution forced on militant socialists within the N.Z.L.P., confirmed decisively their reliance on constitutional and peaceful methods to change society. Militant socialists were pledged to bring about a social revolution without the use of revolutionary methods, a paradox which was to prove an impossibility.

In their constitutional and peaceful efforts to bring about a social revolution, these socialists relied on education and the processes of history. These historical processes were, militant socialists believed, predictable, but, in fact, events did not follow the course which militant socialists claimed they would. This had a two-fold effect. Firstly, militant socialists were discredited within the N.Z.L.P. when events proved their predictions and analyses wrong, a situation which, as has been argued, was particularly obvious in relation to militant socialist predictions of the collapse of capitalism during the war, and the 1919 elections. The result was that, so far as winning majority support was concerned, militant socialists did not inspire the confidence which may have come from a demonstration that they in fact clearly understood the line of march. The other result of the failure of events to conform to militant socialists' predictions was that their tactics, based on confidence in these predictions, were thrown into confusion. In relation to the explanation of why militants within the N.Z.L.P. failed to impose their direction on that party's movement towards power, it is obvious that the situation arising from erroneous predictions of capitalist collapse was worsened by the fact that militant socialists, particularly Holland, did not acknowledge any error, admitting only the possibility of
delay, and continued to adhere to a tactical policy based on unaltered confidence. This policy was, it has been argued, the acceptance of the terms of action set out by the moderates, an acceptance based on the theory that working class unity was imperative in the face of imminent capitalist collapse. What was to be a temporary policy of compromise, designed to place militant socialists in an advantageous position when leadership towards social revolution was needed, became a permanent arrangement, as capitalism endured. Holland, and those who shared his views, had secured personal leadership of the main stream of the labour movement, but the events which would allow that leadership to become effective, in terms of their ultimate objectives, did not occur. It would appear that the basic error in the militant socialist analysis of society was the belief that there was class war and an intolerable degree of capitalist exploitation, where, in fact, even the policies of non-Labour governments took a state socialist and humanitarian direction. It may be concluded that a major factor in the failure of militant socialists to direct the development of the New Zealand labour movement was the failure of events to conform with their predictions based on an incorrect social analysis. This failure not only discredited militant socialists as leaders, but constricted their action to policies acceptable to moderates. In this situation, socialist theory may be seen as major factor governing the initiation of policy and tactics by militant socialists within the N.Z.L.P., but completely failing to direct and control those policies and tactics once they had been formulated.

The parallel reliance of militant socialists on an educational process to secure majority acceptance of their outlook was based on presumptions similar in nature to those which sustained their faith in an approaching capitalist collapse. They presumed that the majority of the people, in whose interests they claimed to act, must eventually see the truth of their social analysis. The defects of this educational method as a means of enlisting support are apparent. It was a method whose failure was never demonstrably obvious to those who had faith in it, for they assumed an inherent and satisfactory level of popular intelligence and good-will and ascribed failure to progress to inefficient enlisting of that latent force. As a result, should in fact popular intelligence and good-will stop short of the ultimate objectives of militant socialists, the educational method would prove a snare
and a delusion, for the socialists would not recognise that the peak of development had been reached. And even if they did recognise this, the educational method was an inflexible one and its failure left no alternative method - save historical process - to bridge the gap between electoral intelligence and the socialists' objectives. The actual failure of the educational process, in the situation examined in this thesis, is obvious in the fact that the N.Z.L.P., led initially by men who were militant socialists, gradually secured majority support, not by education towards the social revolution, but by concessions towards reformism. The electorate did not want social revolution. The result was that militant socialists were able to establish contact with a majority viewpoint not at the level of their ultimate objectives, but only at the level of reform of existing society. An unbridged gap existed, a situation shown by the distance between the general concern regarding practical political problems of winning office, and instituting reforms, and Holland's particular and fundamental concern about the successful exercising of governmental power towards militant socialist objectives. This gap is the measure of militant socialists' failure. To the question of why these men failed in their attempt to claim the effective leadership of the New Zealand labour movement, and particularly, the N.Z.L.P., it may be answered that their failure lay in the forces on which they relied for success, the progress of history and the progress of education, forces which failed to operate in the way they assumed, assumptions which were based on incorrect social and human analyses.

These were the fundamental reasons for failure, but there were others at other levels. Holland's own principles weakened militant socialist leadership in the labour movement. His constant emphasis was on the all-importance of working class unity - but this came to mean unity on the terms of the moderates for they would tolerate no other. Holland's emphasis, in the labour movement, on full representation and majority control was, in the circumstances, militating against an orientation towards the ultimate objectives he believed in. He accepted the limitations of party structure and organisation, and effective leadership within the party passed away from him. The nature of parliamentary life also militated against the assertion of an essentially militant socialist leadership. Alongside Holland's demands for humanity en masse grew up a concern for the predicament of the individual, a creed whose appeal was collective, came to be accompanied by an outlook which considered the need of
the individual person in a particular situation. The development of this change is associated with Holland's movement into the parliamentary life. His entry into parliament forced him into the world of liberal individualism, with its ideals of constitutional government and personal liberty, a world in sharp contrast to that of revolutionary and collective action. Holland came to believe that constitutionalism must be the mode of all change, an acceptance of liberal values which hit deep at the essence of his militant revolutionary socialist position. Acceptance of the parliamentary context and of the necessity to succeed in that environment was the most important single force inducing militant socialists to abandon their intransigence. Holland's acceptance of the exigencies of electoral success led to his adoption of a dual standard of values and it has been argued that this, resulting in an unresolved conflict between the demands of practical politics and the attitudes dictated by theories of social revolution, led to a virtual paralysis of Holland as a militant socialist.

No rigid canons of judgement can be applied to the assessment of Holland's personal achievement. In so far as his life's work was directed towards the attainment of social revolution, according to militant socialist theory, it was a failure. But his work was a major factor in bringing about amelioration of those social conditions of poverty and insecurity against which he had protested throughout his life. This, it may be argued, was participation in success, an important part in achieving the humanitarian spirit, if not the letter, of militant socialist theory. Nor is success or failure in these terms the only criterion for judging a man's life. But some of the major questions about Holland as a politician and as a man must always remain unanswered, for he never wielded governmental power, he was not proven in those areas where the worth of the politician and the man would be most clearly revealed. How Holland would have reacted to the demands of office can never be known. Because Holland never exercised power, there have been few penetrating appraisals of his significance. At his death, his colleagues' panegyrics were adulatory, though privately most of them would have concurred in the accepted historical judgement that he was a bitter and inflexible man whose qualities could be contrasted adversely, with those of Savage.¹

The only contemporary summation which can be found that was not cursory or platitudinous was that of the North Canterbury Gazette on the unveiling of the Holland memorial:

"When Henry Edmund Holland died, he was a tired man worn out by work and disappointment. Victory had been too long delayed, leadership too exhausting. Those who called him a great intellect ... were of course wrong; almost as wrong as those who called him a great poet. He was neither artist nor thinker nor orator nor sage (except by feeble comparisons.) But he was everything that his successor, Mr. Savage, said he was, and perhaps a little more - brave, honourable, persistent, just, in a life beset with great temptations. It was perhaps his fault in part that the wheel of fortune turned so slowly. He was often dull and sometimes not very gracious. It was his enduring glory that he descended to no base tricks to turn it faster. He saw the goal and kept right on, as indifferent to the impatience of his friends as to the hate and later the blandishments of his enemies. Mr. Holland moved against the stream all his life. He knew where he was going, but not when he would arrive, and he died before he did arrive. But he made the Labour Party." 2

Discerning though this appraisal was, it neglected the fundamental fact that Holland remained, in his hopes and ideals, a militant socialist, and that, despite his gradual acceptance of the standards of reformism, he was, essentially, not a politician, but a theorist. It was Holland's devotion to that theory which imparted to his character that extraordinarily forceful integrity which makes his colleagues seem lesser men. From one viewpoint it would seem that his colleagues deserted him and militant socialist principles, capitulating to the pressures of conformism and the demands of political success, while Holland though accepting this capitulation, yet retained his principles. Holland's devotion to principles and theory was the source of his strength and dominance in the Labour Party. He was dedicated, devoted to his ideals, pursuing them with tremendous energy and a form of religious enthusiasm, living as on a battlefield, constantly in a state of tension. Driven by his vision of the truth which he was certain he possessed, his moralist outlook was fixed on an ideal society, and in his generosity and impatience, he could tolerate nothing less than that. Alive with indignant protest and harsh resentment, he had faith in the millennium and in the

capacity of his fellow men to achieve it. This detestation of the tranquil pessimism of inertia, this effort to transform the world, this search for the largest and most abounding life were exciting pursuits. The inspiration and vitality which these provided were a driving force within the N.Z.L.P., a force which took it further, faster, than the merely humdrum, the second best, the self-interested would have done. Yet despite this dazzling exhibition of exalted optimism, the realities of human nature and social existence remained, and it was to these realities that any political endeavour must be adjusted. Holland failed to give his party political leadership, and those who abandoned principles which they had once shared with him had assessed an existing political position in which socialist theory had shown no superiority, or even congeniality. Theirs was the lower path, but it was the surer. Nor did Holland's faith remain unsullied by doubt, for he found militant socialism incomplete and unsatisfactory as a personal belief, and, in his later life, modified his certainties to meet changing circumstances. Moreover, his heart and mind were set, not on what the public wanted, but what was in the public's true interests, as he saw it. He believed the two must co-incide, but this, like much of Holland's belief, was assumption. Holland gave his party inspiration, but he failed to give it a sure basis in political reality.
Appendix 1.

The Objectives of the Australian Socialist League, 1887-1901.

A. Manifesto of the A.S.L. November 1887.

Objects.

1. To foster public interest in the great social questions of the day, by promoting inquiry in every possible manner; to promote free public discussions of all social questions; and to circulate and publish literature, throwing light upon the existing evils of society and the methods necessary for their removal.

2. To uphold and maintain the principles of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. By Liberty, we mean "The equal liberty of each, limited alone by the equal liberty of all." By equality, we mean "The equality of opportunity for each individual." And by fraternity, we mean, "That principle which denies national and class distinctions, asserts the brotherhood of man, and says 'the world is my country.'

3. To endeavour to alter from its foundation the prevailing system of production and distribution; to seek to overturn the reign of Capitalism and Land Monopoly. The land, capital, machinery, factories, workshops, stores, means of transit, mines, banking, all means of production and distribution of wealth, must be declared and treated as the common property of all. Every man will then receive the full value of his labor, without deduction for the profit of a master, and as all will have to work, and the waste now incurred by pursuit of profit will be at an end, the amount of labor necessary for every individual to perform in order to carry on the essential work of the world will be reduced to something like two or three hours daily, so that each person will have abundant leisure for following intellectual or other pursuits congenial to his nature.

4. The regulation of all commercial transactions between individuals upon the just and equitable principle of making the cost to the seller the measure of price, or consideration, to the buyer or receiver; and not as at present, making price dependant upon the incidental value of the commodity or service. In other words to make all exchanges of wealth or service on the principle of equal labor for equal labor - time for time - cost for cost - burden for burden.

5. 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 militarism and coercive laws; the people themselves being the best defenders of their own rights, they therefore can decide on peace or war.

6. To advocate and achieve the abolition of all monopolies, imposed authority, despotisms which destroy the freedom of the individual and which thereby check social progress and happiness.

1. Our Commonweal (Adelaide) December 1887.
B. Constitution of the A.S.L. May 1892.  

2. The object of the Australian Socialist League shall be the realisation of State Socialism.

3. The members of this League are expected to subordinate all other political associations to the Australian Socialist League.

C. Manifesto of the A.S.L. September 1894.

In consequence of the rapid industrial development of the last few decades - a development remarkable chiefly for the displacement of manual labour by the ever increasing labor-saving machine, and the creation of a permanent and menacing unemployed class - our industrial and social institutions are in a condition of fermentation and dissolution. A feeling of uncertainty and discontent is taking possession of all classes and the efforts made by the ruling class to patch and mend a state of things that has become intolerable, have proved vain and inadequate. No sooner is one prop in the shape of law set up to support the tottering house, than it is discovered that at ten other spots, support is still more needed.

Among the workers the feeling of discontent with their present industrial conditions is rapidly increasing, and more thought is devoted every year by them to the problem of how to better their unhappy lot. To them especially, the Socialist movement appeals for appreciation and support.

We live today in what is called the "Capitalistic Era." There are two great classes of Society - the one, the Capitalists, owns land and Capital; the other, the Workers, owning nothing except the power to labour. The modern wage earner receives only about one third of the produce of his labor, the other two thirds being taken by the capitalist who employs him or who employs his employer. The Capitalist Era is characterised by intense competition, which is felt by the workers in the steady lowering of the standard wage rate, and by the small business men in the fierceness of the struggle which they have to wage against the wealthy capitalists in their own lines of industry, and their steady disappearance as a class through innumerable bankruptcies.

Gigantic firms like the mammoth dealers and the colossal manufacturers and producers are rapidly crushing out of existence, the small employers.

This concentration of industry and the more extensive use of labor-saving machinery, causes a steady diminution in the demand for labor and a steady increase of the unemployed class from whose ranks are drawn the armies of so-called free labourers that defeat every effort made through the medium of strikes by organised labor to better its condition.

The worker who attempts by frugality and industry to accumulate, and to start in business as his own employer is today confronted with inevitable ruin, being compelled to compete on equal terms with the great capitalistic rings who dominate every department of industry.

Thus the Iron Circle is complete. The worker is shut in, and it is only in extremely rare cases he succeeds, either individually, or through an organisation in raising himself out of the condition of dependence in which everything conspires to keep him.
Let it be remembered that the cause of all these evils is the steady concentration of the Land and Capital in the hands of the few, and the depriving of the workers of all ownership of them.

The only cure will then be seen to be the Socialising of Land and Capital; that is, to let the State as a representative of all, be the only Capitalist and Land-owner and consequently the only employer. Every citizen must have a share in the ownership of all the Land and all the Capital in the country.

Every citizen must have a right to employment of farms and stations, owned by the State or the Municipality and controlled by administrators elected by the people. If there is not room for everyone, working hours reduced all round until there is. There must be work for all, and overwork for none.

There being then no idle Owning Class, the entire produce of the Nation will be distributed on principles of justice.

At present Landlords and Capitalists own all the means of production and take immense tribute, in the names of Rent, Interest, and Profit.

Under Socialism, the method of production would remove the competitive system by placing under official administration such departments of production as can be managed collectively, (socially or co-operatively) as well as the distribution among all, of the common produce of all, according to the amount of the productive labor of each.

Anarchistic Competition, which enables dishonesty and cunning, instead of merit, to succeed, would end, and National Co-operation, (under which national competition - the desire to excel, the joy in creative work, the longing to improve, the eagerness to win social approval) would take its place.

There will then be no unemployed and no sweating. There will be leisure for all and education and happiness for all.

With the abolition of Private Ownership of Land and Capital, the purification of Government would follow. One half of Parliamentary Corruption is due to Land Jobbing, and the other to Capitalistic "Private Enterprise," which is but a gentler name for Public Fraud.

To achieve these results we advocate only the use of Parliamentary means. We have nothing but the sternest reprobation for those misguided and desperate men who advocate either open violence or secret crime.

We propose to form a Parliamentary Socialist Party and thus alter legislation in the direction of Socialism. Already the people own, through the Government, many industries - Railways, Post and Telegraph offices etc. There is no reason why the list should not be extended until it embraces all.

The corruption which at present characterises the publicly owned industries is due to their being controlled in accordance with the present day commercialism, and to the fact that the competitive system in vogue outside, acts and reacts upon them. When all industries are publicly owned, the evils complained of today will certainly disappear.

These are the aims and methods of the Australian Socialist League. Our principles will be found to be altogether different from the wilful misrepresentations of them which are current.

Socialism has nothing to do with Atheism or with any religious views. It does not mean that it is either necessary or possible to "alter human nature" further than developing the best elements in it.

It does not propose to "make all men equal."

It means no contempt of machinery, no dislike of education or culture, no enmity to brain work or invention.

We simply contend that by national co-operation and by that only - by extending the functions of the State as an employer can the whole of the people be placed in a position of decent, rational and manly independence.
Appendix 2.

The Political Objects of the Active Service Brigade.

"to secure the election by direct adult suffrage of all administrative officers of State;

to see that no law should be binding without the direct consent of a majority of the people;

to provide that all education should be free, compulsory, secular and industrial;

that the administration of justice should be free; that there should be no standing army or navy;

that all questions of peace or war should be submitted to a direct vote of the people;

that all production of needed commodities should be regulated by the community;

and that all means of transit by land and sea should be free and owned and controlled by the State." 1

1. S.M.H. 23 April 1894.
Appendix 3.

Manifesto of the Socialist Federation of Australasia.
(relating to the principles of Industrial Workers of the World.)
June 1907.¹

The present form of society rests on the ownership of the land and the machinery (tools) of production. The owners of most of the land and the machinery of production constitute what are economically known as the capitalist class. Hence the use of the term, "The capitalist form of society". This form of ownership divides society in all countries into two distinct and opposing classes - the capitalist class and the working class. The working class produces all the wealth that sustains society, while they are held in complete economic and industrial subjection to the capitalist class, who live on the wealth produced by the working class. The statistics of all countries show that the working class receive a continuously decreasing share of the wealth they produce, the present proportion being only about one third of the total. Thus, although the workers constitute approximately 85 per cent of the population, 15 per cent who do no useful work, confiscate the remaining two thirds. This inevitably causes irreconcilable conflict between the interests of the capitalist class and the working class. The interest of the capitalist class is to secure an ever-increasing proportion of the wealth produced by the working class. The interest of the working class is to get the full value of the product of their labour. Hence there is a struggle which is called the class struggle between the two classes. To win economic freedom, the non-owning working class must organise on the lines of the Industrial Workers of the World, and they must force the struggle into the political field, and use their political power, the ballot, in conjunction with industrial organisation, to abolish capitalist class ownership, set up the Socialist Republic and thus revolutionize in the interest of the working class, the entire structure of industrial society.

Political power is only useful to the workers for the purpose of overthrowing capitalism, Parliaments being essentially capitalist machines, designed to enable the capitalist class to perpetuate class domination. The workers of Australia must without delay take up their position along with the organised class conscious workers of all other countries. There is no escape from the baneful effects of capitalism, short of its complete overthrow and this can only be achieved by the class conscious industrial and political strength of the working class.

The Socialist Federation of Australasia, therefore calls upon all workers to forthwith identify themselves with the existing Socialist organisations in their respective States and to work unceasingly for the complete overthrow of the capitalist system and for the emancipation of our class from wage slavery.

Appendix 4.


Principles and Objects.

2. The principles of the International Socialist Club are those of Social Democracy. Its objects are to provide accommodation for, and promote social and literary intercourse between its members, and to advocate:

(a) The socialisation of the whole of the means and instruments of production, distribution and exchange, to be controlled by a Democratic State in the interests of the entire community.

(b) The complete emancipation of labor from the capitalistic domination.

(c) The establishment of economic equality between the sexes.

(d) It recognises that the liberation of Labor must be the work of the working classes themselves, independent of all other classes whose tendencies are only towards reactionary ends.

(e) For the attainment of these principles the Club seeks to promote and disseminate a knowledge of the economics, ethics and politics of Socialism.

Appendix 5.

The Objects of the United Federation of Labor.

1. To organise systematically and scientifically upon an industrial union basis, in order to assist the overthrow of the capitalist system, and thus bring about a co-operative commonwealth based upon industrial democracy.

2. To secure employment of our members in preference to non-unionists; to maintain a spirit of fraternal sympathy with the workers of this and other countries by assisting them when necessary.

3. To use our united efforts to discourage the contract labor and bonus systems, and as soon as possible to abolish these, believing the said systems to be detrimental to the best interests of organised Labor.

4. To enable and provide for the Federation to own, publish, and control a newspaper or newspapers.

5. To ensure to members who are proved to have been unjustly treated the support of the Federation.

6. To link up with the industrial organisations of all other countries for the achievement of international solidarity, and also for more effective working-class action in time of international conflict.

Appendix 6.

Statement of Principles, Objective and Platform of the Social Democratic Party of New Zealand.

The Social Democratic Party stands for the common ownership of all the collectively-used agencies of wealth production for use. It affirms:

1. The greatness of a nation depends on the greatness of its people.
2. The greatness of the people depends on the physical power, the mental capacity, the moral character, and the economic independence of its average individual.
3. These qualities depend for their highest development on the best educational facilities and the best economic advantage for all, and the largest sense of social responsibility on the part of all.
4. The present capitalist form of society rests on the private ownership, and hence the private monopoly of land (the primary source of wealth production), and of the machinery and tools with which wealth is produced.
5. This form of ownership, with its resulting lack of equal opportunity, divides society in all countries into two distinct and opposing classes—the workers who by brain and hand produce all wealth, and the exploiters who by the power of monopoly based on the private ownership of things collectively used are able to appropriate without service the products of the toil of others.
6. The workers, by far the larger class, are brought into industrial dependence on the exploiters, by far the smaller class, with consequent political subjection to them. The workers produce all wealth. The exploiters appropriate it and return to the workers only a fraction of their own products in wages of some form.
7. It is because of these conflicting class interests between the workers and the exploiters that class antagonisms are generated and the worldwide class war is made inevitable.
8. The Social-Democratic Party does not make this class war. It is compelled to recognise its existence because it understands its historic and economic causes. It seeks to make an end of the economic causes of the classes in order to make an end of class war.
9. Because of the monopoly power of the exploiters, in spite of the multiplication of labor-saving machines and improved methods of industry— which cheapen the cost of production—the share of the producer grows ever less, while the prices of all the necessities of life steadily increase. The high cost of living is felt in every home. Thousands of wage workers have seen the purchasing power of their wages decrease until life has become a desperate battle for a mere existence. The working farmers are plundered as ruthlessly as are other workers. The extortion

of the money lords of the transportation companies, of the land monopolists, and of the commercial combines, with their ever-increasing prices extracted for land, tools, credit, transportation, and for household supplies, are rendering the working farmers' lot unbearable.

10. Because of the monopoly power of the exploiters the workers are exposed to unhealthy conditions in their homes, to frightful and needless perils to life and limb in the places where they work. Biased Arbitration Court decisions and unjust laws hamper the workers at every turn, while measures which are designed to help the workers are often so juggled with that they become instruments for their oppression.

11. Because of the monopoly power of the exploiters the educational opportunities of the workers and their families are limited. The schools, especially the secondary schools fail to teach the honor of social service, the dignity of labor, the shame of uselessness, and the sense of loyalty to the common good, while they foster snobbery and promote class distinctions of the most hateful nature.

12. In the face of all these evils, so manifest that all thoughtful people are appalled at them, the old Parliamentary parties are able to offer no relief; instead they defend and perpetuate the very things that have created these evils. The growing unrest in New Zealand bears eloquent testimony to the inability of the old parties to satisfy the people's need.

13. This is true because all parties are the expression of economic class interests. All other parties than the Social Democratic Party represent one or other group of the exploiters. Their political conflicts between each other represent merely their superficial business rivalries. However they result, these conflicts have no issue of real advantage to the workers. Whether Liberal or Tory win, the exploiters are always victorious.

14. The Social Democratic Party is the political expression of the workers. Its defeats are their defeats. It is a party founded on the economic needs of the workers, and is the outgrowth of the laws of social development.

15. In the face of the industrial and political aggressiveness of the exploiters, the only defence and the only means of emancipation left to the workers is the power of their industrial and political organisations. The Social Democratic Party urges the wage-earners to combine for industrial action into one industrial organisation, and all wage-earners, the working farmers, and all other useful workers everywhere, to combine for political action into one political party.

16. So organised the workers may not only wrest immediate and temporary concessions, but they will be able to abolish industrial exploitation for ever, and to substitute the industrial and social administration of collective interests by the people, and for the people. The workers in achieving their own deliverance will emancipate the race, and in this the Labor movement will transcend all other movements in human history.

17. The workers of New Zealand must take their place in line with the organised workers of all other countries. There is no deliverance from the rapidly-increasing evils of Capitalism short of its complete overthrow, and this can be accomplished only through the industrially and politically organised strength of the educated and united workers themselves.
18. The Social Democratic Party therefore calls upon all the workers of New Zealand to forthwith enrol themselves in the ranks of the United Federation of Labor on the industrial field, and in the ranks of the Social Democratic Party on the political field. To this end it declares politically for the following objective, platform, and Constitution.

III. OBJECTIVE.

The socialisation of the means of production, distribution, and exchange.

IV. THE PLATFORM.

The Fighting Platform.

1. Proportional representation, the initiative, the referendum, and the recall.

2. The abolition of the country quota; full civil rights to all public employees; the removal of the Parliamentary disabilities of women.

3. A Right to Work Bill, with minimum wage and maximum hours of six per day, a weekly day of rest, and a Saturday half-holiday.

4. Reorganisation and extension of the powers of the Labor Department to include scientific investigation of matters pertaining to the wages of labor and the cost of living, and to publish all findings thereon.

5. The right of unions to register or not to register without the loss of legal standing; Dominion awards, with power to regulate a minimum on a sliding scale in ratio with the rise in the price of commodities; and protection against the creation of bogus competing organisations of labor.

6. Increased taxation of unimproved land values both in town and country, and a graduated income tax, and a corresponding reduction in tariffs on goods not produced in New Zealand, and in railway freights and fares.

7. No further alienation of Crown Lands, and the establishment of homes and of improved farms as going concerns to be within the reach of all workers.

8. The direct representation of the workers on any governing boards in all departments of the Public Service and of local government authorities.

9. Free and secular education from kindergarten to the University, with compulsory attendance in all primary grades. All books and stationery shall supplied by the State free of cost.

10. To establish State-owned shipping; to extend and promote State fire, life, sick and accident insurance, and to establish a State Bank with the sole right of note issue; and when the time is opportune to take over insurance and banking as sole monopolies of the State.

11. Old-age pensions after 15 years' residence for all men at 60, and for all women at 50; the endowment of motherhood, including maternity care and infant life protection; free hospital care for married and unmarried, and medical aid in the direction of maintaining the national health, rather than simply in the treatment of disease; and pensions for all widows, orphans, the blind, and the incurably helpless.

12. The repeal of the present inadequate Defence Act, and the creation of a citizen army on a volunteer basis, democratically organised with standard wages while on duty, which shall not be used under any circumstances in time of industrial disputes, together with practical measures for the promotion of peace.
Appendix 7.

The Constitution and Platform of the New Zealand Labour Party.
3 July 1916.

1. Name: New Zealand Labour Party.


3. The Labour Representation Committee shall consist of industrial unions and Federations, Trades, and Labour Councils, District Councils, Social Democratic Party branches and other properly constituted progressive organisations which subscribe to the constitution and platform of the party.

4. Representation: Representation in the Labour Representation Committee shall be based on the numerical strength of each of the affiliated bodies, on such basis as is deemed advisable by the local organisations.

5. Affiliated organisations shall make a contribution of not less than 3d per member to the Labour Representation Committee, 1½d per member per year to be transmitted by the Labour Representation Committee to the National Executive.

6. The executive shall consist of a president, vice-president, secretary-treasurer and a committee of twelve, with power to add to their number. The first executive shall be elected by the joint conference of the United Federation of Labour, Social Democratic Party and Labour Representation Committees. The executive shall convene a conference of the New Zealand Labour Party in Wellington during the month of May.

7. It shall be the duty of the national executive to take such action as is deemed necessary to organise the workers into Labour Representation Committees for political action.

8. Each Labour Representation Committee shall have full powers to formulate its own municipal platform, subject to the approval of the national executive, also such machinery as is necessary for the selection and running of political and municipal candidates. No person shall be eligible endorsement as a candidate of the New Zealand Labour Party who has not been a bona fide member of an affiliated body for six months prior to date of nomination.


10. Platform: Electoral: Proportional representation, the initiative, the referendum, the recall, the abolition of the country quota, full civil rights to all public employees; the removal of the political disabilities of women.

11. Land: (a) All existing Crown Lands to be added to the national endowment; (b) tenant's absolute right to improvements.

12. State Ownership: (a) State Bank, with sole right to note issue; (b) State-owned shipping services; (c) State control of all branches of insurance; (d) Development of our present State coal mines, factories, farms and industrial services.

13. Education: (a) Free, secular and compulsory education from the kindergarten to the university; (b) uniform school books, printed by the Government and supplied free of cost.

14. Taxation: Increased taxation on unearned increments and monopoly for the purpose of removing the present burdens on family incomes. Increased taxation of unimproved land values, increased graduated income tax, with a corresponding reduction in indirect taxation.

15. Social: Extension of the pension system to cover all incapacitated citizens, and increased rates of pensions.

16. Industrial: (a) The right to work; (b) the full recognition of unionism as the basis of arbitration in industrial law, and the consequent membership of all workers engaged in the various industries.

17. Defence: A citizen army on a voluntary basis, with standard wages while on duty, together with practical measures for the promotion of peace; repeal of the Military Service Act.
Appendix 8.


2.

(1) Conservation of all State and publicly-owned lands.

(2) Full recognition of owner's interest in all land, including tenure, the right of sale, transfer and bequest.

(3) Development and settlement of unoccupied land by most advantageous methods.

(4) Acquisition (compulsory, where necessary) of areas of land suitable for closer settlement and town-planning.

(5) Tenure of Acquired Land. - The tenure of acquired land to be perpetual lease conditional on occupancy and use, with periodic revaluations.

(6) Compensation for improvements on leasehold lands.

(7) A graduated tax on unimproved land values.

(8) State provision of all facilities for the transfer of land.

(9) Maximum assistance to organisations of producers for co-operative production, purchasing, shipping, marketing and credit.

(10) Extension of agricultural education including the provision of research facilities to find means of bringing land to its fullest productive use.

(11) The securing of an adequate supply of fertilisers at the lowest possible cost to the farmers.

(12) (a) Adjustment of taxation on land in business areas to prevent exploitation and to secure community values for the people.

(b) The application of the "betterment principle" of land values which have been increased by public works or other community enterprise.

Plan of Bibliography.

A. PRIMARY.
1. GOVERNMENT (Printed)
2. MANUSCRIPTS.
   (a) H.E. Holland Papers.
   (b) New Zealand Labour Party Papers.
   (c) Other Manuscripts.

3. NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS.
4. OFFICIAL LABOUR MOVEMENT REPORTS AND CONSTITUTIONS, ETC. (Printed)
5. PAMPHLETS BY H.E. HOLLAND (Printed)

B. SECONDARY.
1. THESES (Unpublished)
2. JOURNAL ARTICLES, AND PAPERS.
3. BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS.

(Note: Only those works cited in source references are listed. On some items, critical or explanatory notes have been included, where this has been judged necessary or useful. Reference has also been made, throughout the thesis, to a number of letters to the writer and to interviews. The most important of these were: Letters from members of H.E. Holland's family, his son Roy, his daughters Mrs. Forman and Mrs. Ivar, and his grand-daughter, Mrs. Simpson; from J.A. Lee and H. Scott Bennett. Interviews with Right Hon. W. Nash, Hon. H. G. R. Mason, Hon. F. Jones, J. Collins (Sec. Wellington L.R.C.), L.C. Hair (N.Z.L.P. Research Officer) and G. F. Griffin.)

A. PRIMARY SOURCES.

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"Auckland Post Office Enquiry" 1917, V.II, F-3.
"Coroners Findings ..." Samoa 1930, V.I, A-4B.


"Royal Commission on Industrial Arbitration in New South Wales." Second Session, 1913, V.I.
Royal Commission on Strikes. Government Printer, Sydney 1891.

2. MANUSCRIPTS.

(a) H.E. Holland Papers.

These papers, now at the Australian National University, have been assembled from manuscripts made available to the writer by members of the Holland family. Almost all of Holland's papers were destroyed by his wife after his death, and what remains in this collection is relatively slight in bulk and very uneven in worth. Although of considerable biographical value, most of the collection, except in particular Holland's diary, some of his correspondence, and the evidence submitted to the 1931 Economic Committee, is limited in general political interest. However, with the papers is a valuable collection of two or three thousand pamphlets, belonging to Holland, published in Australia and New Zealand, and overseas, most of which relate to subjects of Labour movement concern in the period 1890-1933. Some of the pamphlets have been annotated and marked by Holland. Items in the Holland Papers, cited in source references, are as follows:

Ethel Herringe Release Committee, Minutes. 5 May – 13 July 1903.
Evidence submitted to Special Economic Committee 1931. (Contains some interesting confidential submissions relating to various aspects of the New Zealand economy.)

Fraser, Mrs. Janet. Typescript of a talk on H.E. Holland. Broadcast from Station 2YA, 22 April 1937.

Holland, Allan (Holland's son). Letters to his wife, Stella, 1913-14. (Contain lively and perceptive descriptions, from a militant socialist viewpoint, of aspects of the 1913 strike and of the public reaction, in New Zealand, to the outbreak of war.)

Holland, F.A. A Chapter in the life of H.E. Holland. The Barrier Lockout of 1909. Typescript. (Adds nothing to newspaper reports.)

Holland, H.E. "An Appeal to ... the country of my adoption." Letter written by Holland a few weeks before his death and found in his desk in Parliament House.


Correspondence. (This consists of about fifty miscellaneous outward and inward letters. The greatest number on any one subject are inward letters from G.E.L. Westbrook in Samoa, but these are not of great interest, their subject matter being generally the same as those in the Westbrook Papers. Holland's letters to his Australian friend Josiah Cocking, 1918-1931, form the bulk of the outward correspondence, and together with letters 1895-1931 in the N.Z.L.P. Papers, this candid and thoughtful correspondence provides an invaluable insight into Holland's attitudes, beliefs and judgements at crucial stages of his life)
Holland, H.E. (cont.)


Diary 1933. (many brief or trivial entries, but an occasional illuminating remark.)

The Great Strike that Moses led. Notes made in Albury Gaol. 1909.

The Law of Sedition. (Exercise Book in which Holland prepared his speech from the dock in 1913.)

Poetry Notebook 1924. (In which Holland revised his poetry for publication in Red Roses on the Highways.)


Holland, Mrs. H.E. Reminiscences. Typescript compiled from letters to Mrs. Holland by her son, Roy. (Detailed recollections of the Hollands' life, both personal and political, up to 1906. Judging from what can be checked from other sources, the standard of accuracy of these most useful reminiscences is very high.)

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Miscellaneous Letters from Ike Askew and W. O'Neill to Mrs. Holland after Holland's death. (Contains some useful information on Holland's early life.)

Newspaper Clippings.

1924.


1927. Holland's tour. His speeches on land policy and Dairy Control.

1931. Comments on Coalition.

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Poetry (Children). (Folder of typescript copies of Holland's favourite poems about children.)


(b) New Zealand Labour Party Papers.

These papers, the party's official files, are held in the N.Z.L.P. National Office, Wellington, kept in bundles which are labelled to indicate, generally, the contents. Some bundles contain printed, as well as manuscript sources, and there is a considerable amount of unclassified material. Apart from the Conference Reports, the documents listed hereunder have not been used previously for research purposes. The N.Z.L.P. Papers contain a large number of items, and cover many different aspects of the party's activity. They are of primary and unique importance to any study of N.Z.L.P. history.
Alliance of Labour, Minutes of Annual Meeting. Wellington 5-8 February 1930. Roneod.

Circulars. N.Z.L.P. Roneod Circulars sent out by the National Executive and National Secretary to party branches and members, and to unions, 1921-34. (Important in establishing historical fact, in studying the executive's and secretary's role in the party, and in examining their attitudes to policy matters. Often contain candid comments, in keeping with their semi-private nature. For most years, between 20 and 50 circulars have been filed.)

Conference Reports, Annual, N.Z.L.P. Roneod 1923-1934. (Official records, particularly important when, occasionally, and particularly in the 1920s, they contain reports of discussion, as well as conference decisions.)

Fraser, Peter. Papers and Correspondence 1924-1933. (Contain few items of interest, being slight in extent and mainly formal. These papers have been used by James Thorn in the preparation of his biography)

General Election Papers 1922, 1925, 1928, 1931. (Consists mainly of printed propaganda distributed by all parties, and of newspaper clippings.)

Holland File. (About twenty letters collected by Fraser in relation to a projected biography of Holland. Of considerable biographical importance are letters from Holland to Josiah Cocking 1895-1931.)

Holland, H.E. Labour's Great Endeavour. 7 August, 1922. Typescript.

Hutt Election Papers 1928, 1931. (Mainly printed propaganda relating to Walter Nash's campaigns.)


Maoriland Worker, History of the, 1910-1926. Typescript 1926.

National Secretary's Correspondence. Inward and outward correspondence 1923-1934. (This extensive correspondence, most of it informal, is the most important section of the N.Z.L.P. Papers. It throws valuable light on the inner history of the party and on the more personal views of its leading members. However the personal and informal nature of this correspondence should be evaluated in the light of the fact that much of it came before the national executive, and to this extent it was official, rather than private. The correspondence is divided into bundles on the basis of persons and topics. Those consulted are as follows:

Persons:

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Bertram, F.N. 1928.
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Jones, F. 1924-1933.
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McCombs, J. 1924-1933.
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Parry, W.E. 1923-1933.
Savage, M.J. 1923-1933.
Topics:
Lyttelton and Westland Petition Papers 1925 (Correspondence to and from the national secretary on these topics.)
Lyttelton By-Election Papers. 1933 (Important correspondence to and from the assistant national secretary during this campaign.)
Maori Papers 1922-1928. (Correspondence relating to the party's efforts to secure Maori support.)
Re. Mr. Bromley's appointment to the Unemployment Board 1930.
Re. Huntly Miners' Dispute 1931-32.
Relating to the History of Maoriland Worker.
Re. Secretarial Assistance for Mr. H.E. Holland 1930.

Newspaper Clippings. 1922-1933. (These are scattered throughout the papers, particularly in the General Election Papers 1922-1931.)

Parliamentary Labour Party Minute Books, 1920-1933. (Fraser Papers) (Very useful, but seldom contain more than a record of decisions and voting. Little comment on discussion.)

Propaganda 1922 (Printed).


Report of Conference convened by the N.Z. Alliance of Labour to Consider the Basic Wage Question. Wellington 6, 8, 7, August 1929. Roneod.

Resident Executive, N.Z.L.P. Minutes 1922-1934. Roneod. (Good reports of formal proceedings, but very seldom reports of discussion.)

Savage, M.J. Papers and Correspondence 1932-1933. (Of slight importance, being mainly formal, or of little consequence.)

Social Democratic Party, National Executive Minutes 1913-1920; Wellington Branch Minutes 1916-1922. (Very brief minutes, of little interest.)

(c) Other Manuscripts.


Active Service Brigade. Letters, Handbills etc. 1890-1910. (Mitchell Library)

Black, George Papers. (Letters from literary men, theatrical managers and other public men) 1893[sic]- 1925. Vol.1. (Mitchell Library)

Letters, Records and Comments. (C.N.L.)

Ferguson, J.A. Notes on Socialist Papers (C.N.L.)

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Greymouth Branch of the New Zealand Labour Party. Minutes, 1917-1933. (Greymouth Labour Party, Greymouth.)

Hunter Brown Family Papers. Mrs. E. Hunter Brown to her Children 1913-1922. (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)


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New South Wales Trades and Labour Council Minutes, 1890-1896. (Mitchell Library)

Ross, R.S. Papers. (C.N.L.)

Sydney District Council of the Australian Labor Federation (formerly N.S.W. Trades and Labor Council) 1898. (Mitchell Library)

Sydney Labor Council (formerly the above) Minutes, 1900-1912. (Mitchell Library)

Trades Council Federation (New Zealand) National Executive Minutes, 1924-1933. (N.Z. Federation of Labour Office, Wellington.)

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Grey River Argus (Greymouth) 1918-1933.
Hard Cash (Sydney) 1893.
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Red Worker (Wellington) 1930-1933.
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Sentinel (Auckland) 1925.
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Sydney Daily Telegraph 1901-1912, 1926.
Sydney Morning Herald 1890-1912.
Tocsin (Melbourne) 1900. Articles by J.A. Andrews.
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Labor's Challenge to the National Government. Wellington 1919.


Lest We Forget! The Salary and Wage Reductions and the Record of the Division Lists. Wellington 1930.


Mr. Massey's Liberal supporters. A Record of Some of the Main Divisions in Parliament. Wellington 1924.

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