

New Leadership for a Time of Crisis: Australia's Curtin Labor Alliance

by Allen Douglas

Over the weekend of April 29-30, one hundred and ten Australian citizens gathered in Perth, the capital of the state of Western Australia, to form a new political party, the Curtin Labor Alliance (CLA). Founded as a statewide organization in Western Australia, the new party has great potential to spread nationwide, and is dedicated to concluding the unfinished business of Australian history: conducting a political revolution against the British Crown and the City of London — what the old Labor Party of wartime Prime Minister John Curtin called “the Money Power.”

The conference was co-sponsored by the associates of Lyndon LaRouche in Australia, the Citizens Electoral Council (CEC), and the Executive of the Municipal Employees Union of Western Australia (MEU); prominent members of Perth's Islamic and Chinese communities also attended.

The first day was opened by CEC Executive member Noelene Isherwood, who introduced the Chairman of the CLA, Adrian Bennett, who is the Secretary of the MEU for Western Australia, and a former Labor member of the federal parliament under the government of Prime Minister Gough Whitlam (1972-75), which government was sacked by the Queen. Bennett welcomed the audience, and identified the historic nature of this founding conference, noting that the CLA would not only field a slate of candidates in the upcoming state election, expected later this year, but would also contest the federal elections scheduled for late 2001. Moreover, he predicted, “This new party will change the course of this nation in the very near future.”

The U.S.-Australia Alliance

Noting that both major parties in Australia, Labor and the ruling Liberal/National Party Coalition, are controlled by the “financial oligarchy,” and that the world is facing a near-term global financial collapse, Bennett warned, “Our nation is no less threatened with extinction today,” than it was in the face of a Japanese invasion in the early days of World War II. The oligarchy's policies of globalization threaten all nation-states, as they do Australia, he said, and thus, once again, Australia “must therefore look to allies abroad, and to a global strategy to defeat this powerful enemy.”

After calling for the reestablishment of the wartime alliance between John Curtin and the America of President

Franklin Roosevelt and Gen. Douglas MacArthur, “an America which Australians have not seen much of in recent decades,” Bennett introduced Lyndon LaRouche, “the world's leading economist,” of whom “the global financial oligarchy is terrified, because he not only forecast the present global financial crisis over three decades ago, but he has designed a solution to it, known as the New Bretton Woods international monetary system.” LaRouche and his associates, explained Bennett, were framed up and thrown in prison by the global oligarchy, just as Australia's union organizers were thrown in jail during the 1890s depression, and even killed, “for simply organizing for a better life for working people.” Such jail sentences, he said, were “a badge of honor, a testament to the unshakable courage and commitment of LaRouche and his associates.”

LaRouche's Keynote

In a 43-minute videotape made especially for the occasion (excerpts will be broadcast by his Presidential campaign on public television in the remaining U.S. primary states), LaRouche gave an historical account of what led up to the current disastrous condition of the global financial system, noting that, following the crash of the Nasdaq and Dow Jones indices on Friday, April 14, Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan and Wall Street “organized the biggest bailout in history, the most hyperinflationary bailout of markets which has ever occurred in world history, at least in known history.”

LaRouche recounted how the international monetary system has deteriorated, from the 1960s through until today, in no small measure due to the hideous Trilateral Commission-controlled U.S. Presidency of Jimmy Carter. Referencing his own forecasts of financial collapse originally made decades ago, LaRouche said, “We're now at the point, where one day, soon, you will see on a world scale, perhaps in one country at a time, perhaps in several countries at first, a phenomenon which engineers would recognize as that of an earth dam beginning to disintegrate, and then suddenly disintegrating, flooding the entire area.” Unless the U.S. population responds to competent leadership, he concluded, as it had to FDR's leadership in the wake of the bombing of Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, the policies of globalization have brought us “to the point that the whole civilization would go into a new



Adrian Bennett, chairman of the new Curtin Labor Alliance, addresses the conference in Perth, Australia. "This new party will change the course of this nation in the very near future," he predicted.

dark age for a period of decades, a generation or more, as happened in the Fourteenth Century, the last time a general attempt to globalize European civilization had been attempted."

LaRouche's remarks set the tone for the entire conference, including the presentation which immediately followed, a strategic briefing by his longtime associate, *EIR* Counterintelligence Editor Jeffrey Steinberg, who elaborated on LaRouche's New Bretton Woods proposal. Following Steinberg's speech, the first official act of the conference, was to pass two resolutions, the first of which called for the CLA to send a delegation to the federal capital of Canberra, "as soon as possible," to start lobbying the Coalition government, as well as the Labor Party opposition, to adopt the New Bretton Woods proposal, and the second, was the call for an Ad Hoc Committee for a New Bretton Woods, which the LaRouche movement is circulating internationally. Both resolutions were passed unanimously.

The General Welfare

During the two-day conference, several speakers harkened back to the struggle of Australia's labor movement against the City of London-centered "Money Power," to provide lessons for what must be done today. Particularly cited, were the heroic battles waged in the 1890s by William Guthrie Spence, founder of the most powerful union in Australian history, the Australian Workers Union; by Labor Party leader and later Prime Minister John Curtin, in the 1930s and 1940s; and by Labor Prime Minister Whitlam during 1972-75, until he was sacked by the Queen's official representative and lapped in Australia, Governor General Sir John Kerr.

Gary Wood, the State Secretary of the Mining Division

of the Construction, Forestry, Mining, and Energy Union (CFMEU), one of Australia's largest, described Spence's outlook and activities in his presentation, "A Renaissance for Labor: 'New Unionism.'" After British banks pulled out most of their capital from Australia in 1890, precipitating a deep depression, and a crushing assault by Australia's employers against the young trade union movement, Spence led the shift from "Old Unionism," which adhered to a narrow concern with working conditions, pay rates, etc., to "New Unionism," a much broader, nobler fight for the nation as a whole, motivated by "the principle of love for one's fellows," as Spence put it, in a relentless fight for the "Common Good."

However, it was not merely the "Money Power" which oppressed working people, Spence said, but the people themselves: "If any body of persons in Australia is to blame for the evils of our social system, it is the working classes. . . . Let each remember that man had failed before because each carelessly left to some other the work of the Common Good. We must reverse that. Each must take his or her share."

Many working people did "take their share," and entered the political arena and contested parliamentary elections. By 1899, Australians had elected the "first labor government in the world," in the state of Queensland, and by the eve of World War I, controlled the federal government and five of the six state parliaments—an astounding result for a party (the Australian Labor Party) founded just in the early 1890s, and composed of "mere working people." Therefore, said Wood, "In the words of W.G. Spence, 'Let us Agitate, Educate and Organize,' " and "thereby elect some true-blue labor men and women to parliament, in order to save our nation, and to set an example for the world in these perilous times."

The heroic figure of John Curtin came to life again, in

presentations by CEC Executive members Noelene Isherwood and Robert Barwick. Isherwood recounted Curtin's dramatic break with the British Empire, and his decision to ally with the United States, in a statement issued on Dec. 27, 1941, only two months after he had been elected Prime Minister. This decision was particularly courageous, given the rampant Anglophilia which then infected Australia, which has not much abated, even today. Curtin fought British Prime Minister Winston Churchill tooth and nail, in order to bring Australia's battle-hardened 7th and 9th Divisions back from the Middle East and North Africa, to defend an otherwise defenseless Australia, which was facing a Japanese invasion.

Barwick recounted a side of Curtin which the oligarchy has been particularly keen to cover up: Throughout his career, beginning as a protégé of Member of Parliament Frank Anstey, the foremost Labor Party warrior against the "Money Power" for the first third of the 20th Century, and who wrote a book with that name, Curtin was entirely dedicated to national banking, and related government programs to develop the vast continent of Australia.

In his speech, "The Whitlam Era: Labor's Last Gasp," Adrian Bennett, who, as a Labor Member of Parliament in the Whitlam government, was privy to Labor's inner counsels, outlined Whitlam's bold plans to "buy back the farm," to take back control over the country's large deposits of raw materials from the mainly British multinationals, such as Rio Tinto, which were exporting them for a pittance. Whitlam had also planned a series of great infrastructure projects across the continent, and in particular intended to develop the still highly underdeveloped northern part of Australia. "The City of London would only lend us money at 16%," Bennett explained, which was "far too high for infrastructure, so we looked to the Arab petrodollars, which we could get for 2%." However, he said, London and its press outlets in Australia mounted a campaign, on phony "corruption" charges, against Whitlam's attempt to secure this credit. This set the stage for the Queen to sack him. "It was always the British," he emphasized, "who were carrying out a war against us."

Once Whitlam was dumped, the Australian Labor Party (ALP) which came back to power in 1983 under Prime Minister Bob Hawke and Treasurer (and later Prime Minister) Paul Keating, was an "anti-Labor Party," utterly controlled by the financial oligarchy, and dedicated to globalization.

'Politics as Classical Tragedy'

Perhaps the most polemical presentations, were by *EIR's* Michele Steinberg and Noelene Isherwood, on "Politics as Classical Tragedy," and "The Tragedy of Australian Political History," respectively. The two presentations flowed as one, as Steinberg established the purpose of great Classical art, as it began with the playwright Aeschylus and the Greeks, through Shakespeare and Friedrich Schiller, to solve the psychological and political problems necessary to build nations. Steinberg particularly stressed the case of Shakespeare's Hamlet, whose fear-ridden refusal to change his axioms of

thinking, as exemplified in his famous "To be, or not to be" soliloquy, not only doomed himself, but his nation.

With this groundwork established, Isherwood drove home the "Hamlet problem" in the case of two Australians, whom previous presentations had otherwise proven to be great leaders: W.G. Spence, and Gough Whitlam. In Spence's case, he was scared that Australia would be defenseless if it broke from Britain and established a sovereign republic, and, additionally, that imported Asian labor would undercut Australian living standards. Spence therefore chose to organize Labor around a racist policy of "White Australia." These two fears led to an inexorable political conclusion, of "loyalty to race rather than to government," which "abolished any talk of either republicanism or independence," as Spence himself explained in his book, *Australia's Awakening: Thirty Years in the Life of an Australian Agitator*. Many others in the Labor movement were fierce republicans; had Spence chosen to join them, it is most likely that Australia would have declared its sovereign independence, rather than submitting to "federation under the Crown," as it did in 1901, which meant rule by the Queen's all-powerful Governor General. This fear-induced decision by Spence came back to haunt Australia, in its 60,000 dead during World War I, and in Governor General Kerr's sacking of Whitlam in 1975, among other examples.

As for Whitlam, many who were in and around the federal government at the time, realized that Kerr, whom Whitlam himself had appointed, was playing a treacherous double-game, and undermining his government. However, Whitlam chose to blind himself to this, because he would otherwise have had to move decisively, to sack Kerr, as he could have done under the Australian constitution, before Kerr sacked him. The legacy of Whitlam's Hamlet problems, in turn, was seen vividly in the crushed, transformed Labor Party which came to power under Hawke and Keating during 1983-96. These so-called Labor governments spit upon the very national banking, protectionist tradition upon which the early Labor Party was founded, and were the first to introduce the policies of globalization and privatization, since continued under the Coalition, which have destroyed much of Australia's economy.

The third example of Hamlet, Isherwood explained, is the labor movement of today. Although most of the trade unions are thoroughly disgusted with the globalist policies of "their" Labor Party, which policies have collapsed trade union membership to less than half of what it was when Hawke and Keating took over, they, too, are acting like Hamlet, in refusing to take their 1.3 million members who are affiliated with the ALP, and their \$22 million a year in dues, and found a real Labor Party. And, as CEC Labor Coordinator and CLA Secretary Andrew Fox conclusively demonstrated in his presentation, the Hawke/Keating leadership of the Labor Party had in fact conspired with the Australian Council of Trade Unions, under just-retired Secretary Bill Kelty, to crush the unions. Thus, concluded Fox, the Curtin Labor Alliance has been founded.

A Farmer-Labor Alliance

One of the most crucial dynamics of the conference, was the exchange among union members, who are largely urban, and members of the CEC, most of whom are from the rural sector. The Australian establishment has long promoted bitter antagonism between unions and farmers, as in the charge led in 1997 by the radical pro-free trade, blueblood-controlled National Farmers Federation, which attempted to destroy the Maritime Union of Australia, by providing money and other aid to replace striking dockworkers.

One union member, reflecting on this long-standing enmity, asked, "Why do we need these bloody farmers, anyway? They are always attacking us." During the discussion, one CEC member passionately recounted all the inventions which Australians had made, and stressed the enormous potential of the country, if only farmers and workers would unite. "I have been a farmer for almost 50 years, and all my life I have been brainwashed against unionists," he said, with evident emotion. Many union members went up to him afterwards, and shook his hand and thanked him. Both farmers and union members were acutely aware, as several said explicitly, how important—and how extremely unusual—it was, that they were agreeing on policy matters, and on political action to achieve those policies.

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Will Wall Street Pick Mexico's President?

by Carlos Cota Meza

On April 25, the first widely advertised debate among the six candidates for the Mexican Presidency was nationally broadcast on radio and television, under the ridiculous title "Ninety Minutes of Democracy." The elections are slated to be held on July 2 of this year. As expected, not one of the candidates bothered to address reality in the slightest. The result of such a rhetorical exercise was that each one of the candidates concluded that he had bested his rivals, and had emerged victorious before the Mexican electorate.

However, the reality was otherwise. For example, the debate occurred just 15 days after the international financial system's most recent eruption, with the ruinous collapse of stock exchanges across the globe, and especially in the United States, where \$2.1 trillion in speculative paper values disappeared in a matter of hours. Five days before the debate, the Mexican government had been forced to declare 12 of the country's states "disaster zones," victims of a drought that has gone on for eight consecutive years. In these states, the devastation is now affecting water supplies for human consumption, after already ravaging supplies for agriculture and livestock.

And on the very day of the debate, President Bill Clinton put his signature to a non-binding resolution of the U.S. Congress, which reaffirmed the State Department's policy of intervention into the internal affairs of Peru. The resolution warned President Alberto Fujimori that the United States reserves the right to recognize or reject the "constitutionality" and "validity" of that Andean country's election process.

We mention these three developments because, in the final phase of the Mexican Presidential campaign and its sequel, they will make themselves felt like a freight train running head-on into the country's national political life.

A Glimpse of Reality

As a result of the ongoing stock market crisis, a "recessive attack" is already being forecast for the United States—collapse of the real estate market, mass layoffs, and an evaporation of the paper profits to which a select sector of Americans have grown accustomed. This "recession" will directly affect the Mexican economy, especially since the so-called recovery from "the December 1994 error" was purportedly achieved "thanks to the sustained economic expansion of the United States," as the Mexican government officially insists. None