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REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

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Gambling: the \$11 billion disease.-

Australians lose about \$11 billion each year through gambling.

The Productivity Commission, commissioned by the Federal Treasurer, found that gambling is a serious health issue in Australia, directly affecting at least 330,000 chronic gamblers who lose more than \$ 12,000 a year. The industry turns over \$80 billion a year. Australia has nearly 180,000 poker machines, 21% of all the gambling machines in the world.

The Commission's survey found that 42 % of problem gamblers had gone without food as a result of their habit. More than 90% considered themselves depressed as a result of their gambling; 37% had considered suicide; while 11.2% had attempted to kill themselves.

The result of these damning figures, urged the authorities to place warning signs on gambling machines, calls on States to set up independent authorities to oversee the running of the industry, and for premises to ban problem punters. The 'benefit' to the economy is, according to the report, between \$150 million and \$5.2 billion.

The gambling industry had been backed by the various State governments who get their share every time someone feeds a coin into the 'one armed bandits'. Since the Commission report there is much huffing and puffing on the part of politicians trying to distance themselves from this serious health problem.

Gambling machines are appearing in the areas of cities where unemployment is high. Many suburbs in the west are full of rusting factories and where one in five children now live in families where neither parent has a job. In many of these suburbs and in declining rural areas, where the banks have departed, the school has either closed or about to close, employment offices close, the football team cannot get a team together, and often the Doctor and hospital is threatened.

But, the gambling machines arrive and do a brisk trade.

The Government and the Opposition sent another war ship to Iraq to help kill the Iraqi children. They don't disclose how much this will cost. They also support the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia.

Imperialist governments look after imperialist interests at home and abroad.

Gambling is a disease of capitalism. No matter how much the 'spin doctors' of the capitalist press dress up gambling, and tell us how all this revenue pays in prizes and allows the government to pay for hospitals etc., gambling attacks the poor. There are 2 million poor in Australia. When life is uncertain, when you do not have enough money to pay for necessities, the few dollars you do have can be doubled: at least, that is what the propaganda tells us. Take a trip to the casino, there you will see two lots of people. One group of clients are well dressed and pass over the tables crisp hundred dollar bills and, on the other hand, others not even dressed to withstand the cold weather outside.

What did China do after the revolution in 1949? They shut the race tracks because there weren't any 'kings' to participate in the "sport of kings." They then helped with education the millions who gambled to overcome the habit. When life is secure and there is a whole country to build, there is no need to try to double your money.

When the Cuban revolutionaries entered Havana in triumph after overthrowing the fascist Batista, the revolutionaries took their axes to the roulette wheels. Cuba was known as the play ground of the American millionaires, but when the millionaires fled, there was no use left for the gambling dens. Australian revolutionaries will find their solution to this social evil !

CHILDREN'S POVERTY TO WORSEN

Professor Bob Gregory of the Australian National University told a conference in Canberra that there had been a dramatic increase in recent years in the proportion of children living in a household where neither parent has a job. The Professor said 18% of dependent children lived in a family where neither parent worked, this compared with 11% 20 years ago. Other figures included, one in four dependent children live in a family where no male is employed, up from 16.2% 20 years ago..... the number of jobless families increased by 229,000 between 1989 and 1998..... between 1975 and 1999 the average unemployment rate increased from 4.6% to 7.3%.

The Professor's paper follows the United Nations report that at least one in two Australian single-parent households lived below the poverty line. The United Nations said inequality in Australia was among the highest in the western world.

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Two months ago, children's health researchers in Sydney said the proportion of children living in poverty had almost doubled since 1983. The researchers warned that the increase had serious implications for children's health. Children from poor families were more likely to suffer infections of the ear, chest, throat and skin. Mothers on low incomes were more likely to have low birth weight and premature babies. (Melb Age 15.7.99)

These figures contradict the barrage pouring from the lips of the politicians that Australia has the 'best' economy in the world, that the 'Asian' crisis missed us, and we all have the best of everything. Don't believe a word of it. "Do your own thinking"

There is no way out but Socialism.

Last week more than 6000 Building workers took to the streets to protest at the number of workers killed in Australia each year. More workers die from work place accidents than from any other cause, including those from road accidents and heroin put together.

The Building workers carried coffins representing the 12 deaths on the job so far this year in Victoria. The widows and fatherless carried the pictures of the deceased workers. Almost 3000 workers and countless are injured each year in Australia and more than a million are killed world wide. This tide is the result of a ruthless drive for profit, long hours worked and the threat of unemployment, privatisation, contracting out. The Victorian government has stripped away the workers' rights to sue the boss under common law. In the past building workers fought long battles for safety regulations but these have been whittled away as the Unions and the working class are under attack. This demonstration of building workers was part of the rising tide of opposition to the steady and growing repression of the ruling class. Strikes and picket lines and demonstrations are part of the daily scene. It is absolutely correct to resist and to win back conditions under attack. But, is it enough to rely on the ACTU and the THC's and even some Trade Union leaders? Many times the wall of militant workers have reached the parliament steps to hear a few speeches and then told to go home! The workers have lost a day's pay and the capitalist system goes on with exploitation.

The peoples of the world are under attack every where. If we do nothing or wait for the system to collapse which it won't, or fight for a better slice of the capitalist cake, we won't weaken the imperialist system. It is necessary to resist but we should do so to build revolutionary organisation among the people.

The revolutionary party is necessary now. Capital has its organisation in the State. Their organisation never rests in trying to crush us. So we must have our own disciplined organisation to fight for our own liberation. The many struggles, picket lines and demonstrations must be part of a planned attack on the exploiters and a strategy to bring them down. It is urgent, for while we hesitate, the capitalist class reduce the people to poverty, cut away hard won conditions and try to bring the workers to ruin and degradation and bomb any country they like. They also assassinate leaders world wide and fill vile jails with revolutionaries.

Our sister and brothers all over the oppressed nations have been reduced to starvation, such is the much vaunted imperialist system. Support their great struggles against imperialism.
It is right to rebel!

On August 12, 1999, 80,000 plus workers marched in Melbourne against the Government's new stage in repressive Industrial Relations Bill. Demonstrations against the Bill were held in other cities and states and all well attended.

The march in Melbourne was addressed by the Leader of the Opposition, ALP leader Beasley and officers of the Trades Hall Council and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (TLC and ACTU).

Once again the militant marchers listened to the speakers condemning the Minister introducing the IR Bill and the Party to which he belongs, but the capitalist system is never condemned. The Opposition again promised to repeal this legislation when it is in power. Workers who think... will remember that the Australian Labor Party (ALP) presided over the Accords when the owners of the means of production sat down with the Unions and that "grave yard of disputes" the ACTU, led by R.J. Hawke, the Prime Minister, to talk about "what was best for the nation". The result was big profits for the boss and a wage freeze for the workers. Also, the Hawke government, the ACTU and the owners of the airlines plotted together the defeat of the Airline pilots. These are just two of the actions showing the class collaboration of big business, big unions and the ALP.

The recent demonstrations show that bourgeois ideology is still the main trend in the workers movement.

A fierce struggle is needed by the class conscious workers to divert the struggle from the road of trade unionism and co-operation with the ALP, ACTU and THC bosses who are the agents of the capitalist class in the ranks of the workers. There cannot be a third way to emancipation, the only choice is bourgeois or socialist ideology in a society torn with class contradictions. The striving of all workers to fight for the alleviation of their distress and to seek legislation to improve their lot is a day to day struggle, but it will not remove the subjection of labour to capital. Put it another way, if we rely on the bosses, the Courts, the ALP, the ACTU to lead, we will spend the next 100 years marching on the spot. The main task is not to win a larger slice of the capitalist cake but to take the whole property from the capitalist class.

After the next demonstration we should refuse to go home. We should set up committees in every factory, office, suburb to fight against the Industrial Relations legislation, for better Health and Education, against unemployment, build solidarity with the Indigenous people and East Timor and all people in the world fighting for independence and self determination and take the road to Socialism. We have to reach all the people who did not, or could not, march. We need to get agitation and propaganda going again. The objective conditions are ripe for struggle, many people are fed up with parliament, politicians, the lying press, and the status quo, they want change and we want socialism.

It is right to rebel!

