



'For the millions, not the millionaires'

Socialist Campaigner



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DONATION \$1

MUA militants to consolidate victory

BY IAN JAMIESON
(FREMANTLE BRANCH)

Following the formal announcement of the results in the Maritime Union of Australia's elections, members of this important union are now turning their attention to pressing industrial problems and to consolidating the gains won by its new leaders.

In the election, seven incumbent officials lost their jobs to opposition tickets in WA, Melbourne and Sydney. In contests nationally and in the branches, the official MUA Rank and File ticket won over 40% of the vote, and two of three positions in the WA branch.

An important plank of the MUA Rank and File platform was a pledge to return the union to its members. Central to this is creating a democratic structure to allow all members a say in the MUA and to encourage them to play an active role. Frustration had been building within the MUA because vital policy decisions were being made without real discussion or



From left: Ian Bray, Peter Treacy & Chris Cain

debate among the union ranks.

Anger has also been expressed about the lack of response by MUA officials to the continuing attack on conditions in the maritime industry. In the face of a rapid increase in the use of casual labour on the wharves since the Patrick's dispute five years ago, MUA leaders have shown little willingness to challenge stevedoring companies.

Members of the MUA Rank and File have argued for a real fight to end casualisation. Involving members in campaigns for pattern bargaining on the wharves and mounting a legal challenge to employing casual labour to replace permanent jobs is an important start to turning around the pernicious use of "throwaway labour". Casual labour now exceeds 50% on the wharves.

Chris Cain, elected as the WA State Secretary with 58.7% of the vote, believes it is important to unite all in the MUA. "We all have common interests as union members, whether we are seafarers or wharfies, permanent or casual. The employers and conservative governments are forcing us to act in common as they take our hard-fought conditions away", he

declared. "We will no longer meekly cop what they are dishing out, hoping that some time in the future a Labor government will restore our rights".

Chris, who is also a Socialist Alliance national executive member, recognises the tough road ahead. However, "The election results are showing us there is real anger in the ranks and our members are showing all who listen that there is a real determination to restore what is rightfully ours - decent jobs and conditions."

The significance of this victory for fighting unionism was clearly understood by the hundreds of jubilant unionists who attended the Rank and File victory party in Fremantle on June 20. Speaking at the celebration, former state secretary of the Victorian branch of the AMWU and fellow Socialist Alliance activist Craig Johnston declared Chris Cain's victory "a warning to all union officials who feel comfortable in ignoring the building anger in their ranks." The MUA result, Craig said, "will have all of the time-serving union officials who are just waiting their turn to jump into parliament worried". They certainly have reason to! ■

Congratulations Chris!

The Socialist Alliance sent the following message of congratulations to SA national executive member Chris Cain following the fantastic election result for the MUA Rank and File team last month.

Dear Comrade Chris Cain,
Congratulations on the Rank and File victory in the MUA elections. You and your comrades are set to provide the sort of class struggle leadership that is so necessary in the union movement. Socialist Alliance sees your victory as one for all workers and for socialist unionists in general. We are proud to have supported your campaign and look forward to working with the MUA in future.

www.socialist-alliance.org

Stop Killer Coke

BY CARLENE WILSON
(WILLS BRANCH)

Colombia is not a safe place to be a trade unionist.

Over the last 12 years, at least 2,500 unionists have been killed by right-wing paramilitaries. These paramilitaries are working with the full knowledge of the government and are backed by the large multinational companies in Colombia.

The campaign against organised unions doesn't end with murder.

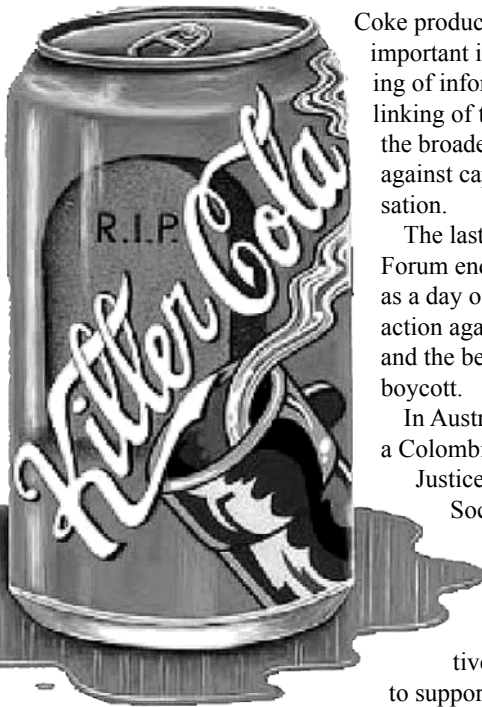
There are disappearances, kidnappings and daily intimidation.

The union covering food and beverage workers, SINALTRAINAL, has found itself particularly in the firing line. SINALTRAINAL covers the workers in Coca-Cola bottling factories. Eight unionists have been gunned down in recent years, often at the machines in the factories. There has also been systematic kidnappings and intimidation to break the union and drive down wages and conditions.

In the United States, the Steelworkers Union has brought a case against Coca-Cola, in solidarity with the Colombian workers. However, the company is hiding behind the fact that the bottling company is not an official part of the Coca-Cola.

A 1980s boycott of Coke eventually brought some changes in policy in Guatemala. SINALTRAINAL has called for a similar international campaign in solidarity with the Colombian workers.

Part of that campaign is a boycott of



Coke products, but equally important is the spreading of information and the linking of the campaign to the broader movements against capitalist globalisation.

The last World Social Forum endorsed July 22 as a day of international action against Coca-Cola and the beginning of the boycott.

In Australia there is a Colombia Demands Justice campaign that Socialist Alliance activists have been building. The SA national executive has decided to support the campaign and is encouraging SA members

to participate in and publicise campaign demonstrations and meetings in every way they can.

There is growing trade union support for the campaign and Socialist Alliance urges its members and others to publicise in their workplaces the brutal attacks on our fellow unionists in Colombia, and to pass motions of support for the campaign through their union branches and committees.

As part of the July 22 international day of action to "Stop killer Coke", actions will be held in:

Melbourne - 5pm, Federation Square, city.

Sydney - 5pm, Coca-Cola Amatil

National Office, 71 Circular Quay East.

For more information, visit the www.socialist-alliance.org, or contact Carlene Wilson on (03) 9384 6960 or kolontai@rocketmail.com ■

The struggle for a free Palestine

BY KIM BULLIMORE
(CANTERBURY-BANKSTOWN BRANCH)

Our branch's public forum titled "Roadmap or Roadblock: The Struggle for a Free Palestine" was very successful, attracting more than two dozen people, including five who had never been to a Socialist Alliance event before. It was the first of our monthly outreach meetings, which will focus on a topical issue and feature invited speakers. We hope the meetings will not only raise the Alliance's general profile, but also help us strengthen our links with other progressive groups and activists in the local area.

The meeting was addressed by Palestinian activist and local Greens

candidate Bashir Sawalha, long-time Palestine solidarity activist and Socialist Alliance member Bernie Rosen, and local Palestinian activist Rihab Charida who presents "The Palestinian Report" on TV Channel 31. Charida is also an Alliance member.

Bashir, who was jailed in Israel for participating in the first Intifada, outlined the history of the Palestinian struggle and argued that the best solution to the conflict was a democratic secular state for all Palestinians and Israelis.

Rihab outlined how the "roadmap for peace" did not address any of the real issues facing the Palestinian people, in particular the right of return for Palestinian refugees.

Iraq needs aid, not occupation

Socialist Alliance welcomed the news in June that a parliamentary inquiry into intelligence received on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq will have the power to call witnesses from three key intelligence organisations - ASIO, the Australian Secret Intelligence Service and the Defence Signals Directorate.

However, an inquiry which has no power to compel the Prime Minister and all his advisers to give evidence will not even begin to uncover how much Howard knew about the WMD lie.

The Socialist Alliance is instead calling for an open, public inquiry — an inquiry that has the power to compel all the politicians, senior public servants, military and spy chiefs who were involved in the WMD deception to give evidence. Howard, Downer and his spy chiefs must be brought to public account for their great deception.

* * *

While campaigning to expose the WMD deception, the Socialist Alliance is continuing to campaign for the withdrawal of all Australian troops from Iraq. You can help by signing and distributing the following petition (download copies from the web at www.socialist-alliance.org):

Troops out of Iraq: aid not occupation

We the undersigned call on the Australian government to withdraw all military personnel from Iraq. The people of Iraq should be free to build a new society, free from military threat.

Instead of participating in the ongoing occupation, the Australian government should be paying war reparations so that Iraqis can rebuild their country, at the same time redirecting money in the federal budget from military spending to Medicare and schools.

The "roadmap", she argued, would in fact entrench Israel's military domination of the region and the "bantustanisation" of Palestine.

Bernie discussed the nature of Zionism and argued that the horrors that Jewish people had suffered last century could not be fixed at the expense of the Palestinian people.

The next Canterbury-Bankstown public forum, on July 24, titled "Do we live in a police state?" will focus on racial profiling, the new "terror" laws and attacks on civil liberties in NSW, and how we can campaign against them. For more information phone Kim on (02) 9793 2188 or 0439 45 4375. ■

No troops to Solomon Islands

The Socialist Alliance condemns the Howard government's sending of a warship and thousands of troops and police to the Solomon Islands an imperialist act driven by the desire to protect Australian corporate interests in the South Pacific.

It is an assertion of naked neo-colonial policy. Rather than sending warships and troops, Australia should be sending reparations for decades of economic exploitation and political bullying of the region.

The crisis in the Solomon Islands is a crisis brought on by the corporate globalisation agenda pursued by the Australian government, the World Trade Organisation and the International Monetary Fund. It is no coincidence that the biggest single Australian business investment in the Solomon Islands — the Gold Ridge goldmine — is located on Guadalcanal and has not been operational since June 2000, when it was raided for its vehicles by one of the two main private militia groups on the island.

The real reasons for Canberra's decision to militarily intervene in the Solomon Islands are spelt out in the Australian Strategic Policy Institute's new report *Our Failing Neighbour*, which says: "The collapse of Solomon Islands is depriving Australia of business and investment opportunities that, though not huge, are potentially valuable... Australia's interests are also engaged in other ways. In a

Morris McMahon strikers win

The last issue of *Socialist Campaigner* reported on Alliance members' strong support for 40 striking workers at the Morris McMahon factory in Sydney. We are pleased to report that the workers, members of the AMWU, have won their struggle and returned to work on July 2 after nearly 16 weeks on strike.

The workers won a registered union enterprise bargaining agreement, a 19-day month, a 4.3% pay rise each year for three years, plus a tool allowance, and union recognition at their workplace.

Throughout the strike, hundreds of people, including dozens of SA members, attended early morning community pickets, collected strike funds and held public events to build solidarity with the workers. The workers have expressed heartfelt thanks for this solidarity.



subtle but important sense, state failure in the Southwest Pacific reflects badly on Australia... Australia's standing in the wider world — including with the United States — is therefore at stake."

This government spends up on wars of aggression and spying on innocent civilians while cutting back on urgently needed social services. Socialist Alliance says: Money for jobs, education and health, not more war.

[Based on a June 27 media release.] ■

Logo competition

The June 27 national executive meeting agreed to offer a prize of \$250 for the winning entry in the competition to find a new Socialist Alliance logo.

If you are interested in participating, or simply have some ideas on the logo that you want to share, please contact Michael Morphet at (02) 9981 2349 or email your entry to the national conveners at: ne@socialist-alliance.org

Solomons action gets wide exposure

BY MARGARITA WINDISCH
(MELBOURNE DISTRICT)

The Socialist Alliance's recent Victorian state conference decided to organise a July 9 demonstration outside the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade against Australian military intervention in the Solomon Islands.

While discussing the issue with a range of progressive activists in Melbourne it became clear that most organisations had no position on the issue, or had a different position to us (such as supporting unarmed "peacekeepers" or police-only intervention). The Socialist Alliance's unequivocal anti-imperialist stance did not go unnoticed.

Our media release about the protest was picked up immediately. We did radio interviews with 3AK, ABC and SBS, interviews with the *Herald Sun* and Channel 7 News, and the July 10 *Australian* gave over its regular "Scrapbook" column to the Alliance's statement on the issue.

The protest was a modest size — no surprise given the current confusion in the left about how to solve the Solomon crisis and deal with Howard's imperialist agenda — but our speak-out outside the department drew quite a few passersby into fruitful discussions with us.

All in all it was a terrific success and we strongly encourage other SA branches to follow suit with demonstrations and/or media actions on the issue. This is an important opportunity to inform people about Howard's imperialist agenda, and to get some well-deserved publicity for the Alliance.

Campaigning to save Medicare

BY ALEX BAINBRIDGE
(HOBART BRANCH)

Fifty people attended Hobart branch's July 3 forum titled "Save Medicare! Save Public Education! Reject Howard's War Budget!"

Jo Fox (NTEU) and Mike Poate (AEU) spoke on the education issue, and Frank Nicklason (Royal Hobart Hospital) spoke about Medicare. Perhaps the most passionate speech was from Anti-Discrimination Commissioner Jocelyne Scutt, and Peter Baker from the Alliance spoke about a much-needed alternative budget.

We put a lot of effort into building the

forum, including sending publicity to every school and major medical clinic, and networking with a wide range of other groups including trade unions, TasCOSS, Division of General Practice, Anglicare, Colony 47, and Parents and Friends Associations.

Unfortunately, there wasn't a lot of energy for organising an ongoing campaign, but the forum at least expressed the widespread community opposition to the federal government's priorities, and that sentiment — "Save Medicare! Save Public Education!" — continues to be broadcast via our big, bold posters still pasted-up around Hobart. ■

Get your own newspaper column

BY LYNDA HANSEN
(BRISBANE WEST END GROUP)

Brisbane's new West End group is firing up. We held our first public event in May, a screening of radical writer John Pilger's 2003 Sydney public meeting, in the local Grass Roots Centre (home of the Greens).

A lively discussion afterwards about Pilger's critique of the war on Iraq led to a discussion about Indonesia's military offensive in Aceh. This enabled us to involve people in the Socialist Alliance-initiated "Indonesian troops out of Aceh" protest action the following Saturday.

The group has now booked the Grass Roots Centre on the first and third Thursday of each month for branch meetings and events. Our weekly campaigning stalls in the main street are starting to take off too. We are building a healthy profile and have an "audience" of locals who regularly come over to chat about politics. The result is an expanding email list, which we use weekly, along with phone calls, to keep in close touch with members and supporters.

Maybe best of all, we also have a regular column in the local newspaper, the *Westender*, sharing the space with the Greens, Labor and Democrats. The *Westender* editor told me

Join the Latin America solidarity caucus

BY ROBERTO JORQUERA
(PARRAMATTA BRANCH)

The exciting developments in oppressed people's struggles around Latin America, plus the recent resurgence of Latin America solidarity activities in Australia and the world, is generating a lot of information, ideas and activity for Socialist Alliance members. This was reflected in the lively discussions about Latin America politics at the May national conference — discussions

SA member wins TLC position

BY SUE BULL
(GEELONG BRANCH)

On July 8, Tim Gooden, a founding member of our Socialist Alliance branch, was elected assistant secretary of the Geelong Trades and Labor Council for the next five years. He was nominated by his union, the CFMEU, and was strongly supported by the other militant unions including the ETU, AMWU, and TCFUA.

Tim is well known around the union movement in Geelong for his prominent role in organising solidarity with various picket lines. In this city, the core militant unions band together to support the picket lines of other workers, regardless of which union is in dispute.

As well as being active on industrial



recently that he thinks the Socialist Alliance is so great he has linked the SA web page to the *Westender* site. So, make a visit to <http://www.westender.com.au> to check out our columns.

How did we get this wonderful exposure for our ideas? I just asked for it.

The lesson for all SA branches is – start from the assumption that local newspapers are always looking for ready-made copy and just go in and make a proposal. If it will improve your chances of getting some regular space, maybe an approach to the local Green and/or Labor and/or Democrat branches to also participate in such a column would be worthwhile. ■

that are continuing in the branches, and in public forums and solidarity actions which SA members have been involved in.

Last year, the Alliance established a national caucus for members to keep informed about Latin American politics and to organise solidarity with struggles in the region. The caucus has an email list, which any interested SA member can join.

To join the caucus and e-list, send a message to: lasolidaritycaucus@yahoo.com, or phone Roberto on 0428 190 276. ■

issues, Tim has been a prominent link between the union movement and various social movements and campaigns. This was exemplified in his support for the community pickets against the proposed Stonehaven Power Station, which generated a lot of debate among locals about how to preserve jobs and the environment.

For most of the four years that Tim has been living in Geelong, he has been a CFMEU delegate. Before moving here, he had been very active in the FEDFA, then later in the ACT branch of the CPSU. Tim was part of a militant current within that union, Members First, and led the struggle in the ACT government for a decent enterprise bargaining agreement.

Congratulations Tim! ■

Militants win in CEPU

BY RIKI LANE
(WILLS BRANCH)

After years of trying, a group of militants has won the election for the CEPU Communications Division Postal and Telecom branch in Victoria. This covers most postal workers and external (lines) Telstra workers.

Socialist Alliance members were very active in the campaign. The militants' victory was assisted by a split between the incumbents, resulting in the outgoing state secretary receiving only 16% of the vote. From August 1, long-time left activist Joan Doyle will be the Victorian state secretary.

Given also the MUA Rank and File victory last month, it seems we are in the midst of a significant shift to the left in trade union elections. Comrades take note - be careful what you run for, you might win!

Socialist Alliance's Victorian state executive sent the following message to the CEPU militants:

"The victory of your rank and file ticket is an inspiration to all unionists suffering under bankrupt and do-nothing leaderships. You face a big task in turning the CEPU P&T branch into a union that truly organises its members as a fighting force.

Socialist Alliance congratulates you on your efforts over many years. We look forward to working with the new leadership in the struggles that you will face and offer our support."



National trade union committee gets to work

BY SUE BOLTON AND RIKI LANE

An important decision of the Socialist Alliance's May national conference was to establish a national trade union committee. This committee met for the first time on June 22 for an initial discussion about the trade union projects adopted at the conference and to make recommendations to the national executive.

Every state and territory, but not every branch, was represented. The participants were: Sue McKay (CPSU ACT); Melanie Sjoberg (PSA NSW); Janet Burstall (PSA NSW); Ray Hayes (NT); Riki Lane (national co-convenor); Sue Bolton (MEAA Vic); Judy McVey (CPSU Vic); Maureen Murphy (ASU Vic); Craig Johnston (AMWU Vic); Tim Stewart (CPSU Qld); Bronwen Beechey (CPSA SA); Linda Seaborn (HSUA Tas); Ian Jamieson (MUA WA); Chris Cain (MUA WA).

The short timeframe for organising the initial meeting meant that state executives had not yet been able to discuss who their representative would be, something that will be corrected next time. We also want more representatives from regional cities and a

"Hijacking" local politics

BY TONY ILTIS
(MELBOURNE WEST BRANCH)

Melbourne West branch has been taking full advantage of local forums in Sunshine to speak out for community needs – and getting a great response.

On July 2, four SA members attended an ALP forum on "Women in Local Government". It was generally a dull exercise in self-promotion by four councillors; however, the mayor inadvertently sparked a debate by mentioning that a new youth centre would be run by a board of "prominent representatives from big business, such as BHP".

Alliance member and AMWU activist Justine Kamprad voiced the audience's horror at council services being controlled by big business. She pointed out BHP's anti-union record and the contradiction inherent in a big business-run youth centre located in an old factory that was the site of historic workers' struggles in the late 19th-century.

Justine also said that, given the high rate of drug abuse and unemployment among young people in the area, the facility would be better used as a place where young people could take control and organise their own activities, and demanded that the council provide more



better spread of unions on the committee.

The committee is a working body - all major proposals will be put to the national executive. Its composition might change over time, and other members invited to participate in discussions about particular campaigns.

The initial meeting discussed the content of our first trade union pamphlet, trade union education, the MUA election result and the Skilled Six Campaign.

The trade union pamphlet, which should be published next month, will include the national conference's trade union resolution, plus articles on the current attacks on unions, unions and refugee

rights, the militant union current, and what the Workplace Relations Act means for unions. It will be a useful resource for branches' suburban stalls, public meetings, educational discussions and recruiting.

We also canvassed ideas for other short pamphlets that might be useful, including on: How to win a strike despite the Workplace Relations Act; How does pattern bargaining work?; Do tariffs save jobs?; How does capitalism exploit workers?; Unionising illegal workers; Organising for militant unionism within right-wing and/or badly organised unions; The shorter working week – a solution to unemployment; Combating racism in the workers' movement; Women workers organising; Workers organising across national borders; Unions and the anti-war movement; A history of red unionism in Australia.

Other suggestions are very welcome and anyone interested in writing an article for one of the trade union pamphlets should contact Sue Bolton at (03) 9639 8622 or sue_bolton@hotmail.com, or Riki Lane at (03) 9387 7819 or riki@rabbit.com.au. ■



Justine Kamprad

avenues for young people, particularly the local African community, to advertise their events, rather than persecuting them for doing paste-ups and so on.

Her comments drew a lot of assent from residents. Eventually the mayor spat out, "I will not have this meeting hijacked by political groups", to which various residents responded, "You brought up this issue. What will you do about our questions?"

Socialist Alliance won 6.5% of the vote in the March council elections in Sunshine — a good initial result. As we participate more in local politics in an ongoing way, it is becoming clear how much more support we could develop in this community. ■

Militant union education program launched

BY JANET BURSTALL

Would you like to be a trainer/radical educator in the Socialist Alliance's trade union education program? Please tell us.

In Sydney, Socialist Alliance will be holding a workshop in late July to plan our own trade union training program. Mike Newman, radical adult educator and former trade union trainer, has offered his services to help us design the program that we need. He will open the planning session with some of his latest work on teaching defiance.

We want to share our work with members from outside of Sydney, so even if you cannot get to a Sydney workshop but you'd like to help deliver an Alliance trade union education program, please let us know and we'll work on ways of involving you.

Alliance state executives are being asked to nominate a contact person for union education and to help identify potential union trainers in each state.

For NSW, contact Janet Burstall at jburstall@ozemail.com.au. Elsewhere, contact your local branch or national trade union committee members Sue Bolton on (03) 9369 8622, sue_bolton@hotmail.com, or Riki Lane on (03) 9387 781, riki@rabbit.com.au.

Taking on the traffic

BY TOM FLANAGAN
(NORTHERN RIVERS BRANCH)

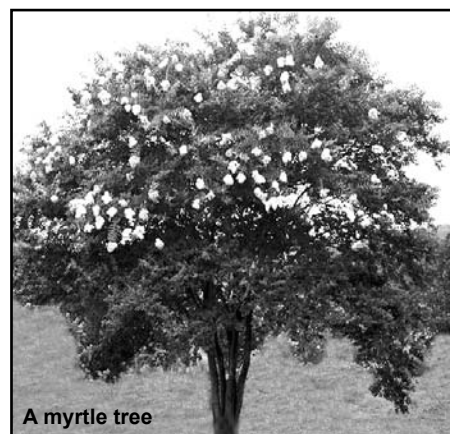
Socialist Alliance members here are backing the North Lismore Progress Association's campaign against Lismore Council plans to divert a big slice of the traffic between the neighbouring towns of Bangalow and Casino through North Lismore.

Lismore Council is looking at ways to reduce traffic congestion in the CBD and on the main Ballina Street bridge — nothing wrong with that. The problem is that their favoured option is to add another bridge across the Wilson River and divert the traffic from Bangalow Road down Pitt Lane, between the CBD and Richmond River High School, and then down Bridge Street.

Not only would this guarantee heavy pedestrian traffic (students walking to school) across what will be a major vehicle thoroughfare, but the "bypass" would divert the same heavy traffic through the middle of North Lismore, across a historic wooden bridge and through South Lismore.

And why this route? Because it's cheaper than widening the Ballina Street bridge — something that planners concede will have to be done eventually. So, Council's plan to delay the inevitable will make the trip to school a lot more dangerous and destroy the relatively peaceful ambience of North Lismore.

Petitions, street stalls and doorknocking, possibly leading to a rally, will be used to mobilise residents against the short-sighted plan. North Lismore roads are already



A myrtle tree

suffering from the heavy traffic — as evidenced by the half-road collapse in Bridge St, which is threatening two rare fragrant myrtle trees.

Socialist Alliance will help build this campaign and use the issue to highlight the need for planning that incorporates public transport options, including more passenger rail and bus services and sending more road freight by rail instead. And how about bicycle paths and footbridges to take people into town rather than presuming you need a car?

Fragrant myrtles — not smelly cars!
Another world is possible! ■

International protest against war and globalisation

BY DAVID GLANZ
(WILLS BRANCH)

The World Trade Organisation meets in Cancun, Mexico, in September and the world will be doing more than watching - it will be protesting. Peace and anti-capitalist activists have decided on a global protest against war and globalisation on Saturday, September 13 (see www.focusweb.org for the call to action).

The Socialist Alliance national executive meeting on June 27 voted unanimously to support the day of action. Branches and members are urged to get behind the protests already called, or to initiate broad-based organising meetings if necessary.

In Victoria, members were quick off the mark with Cancun being discussed at the Alliance's state conference on June 28. Forty people put their names down to get involved and the anti-war working group called an open planning meeting on July 7 at the Friends of the Earth office. Invitations went out to anti-corporate, Medicare and refugee activists, trade unionists, the

Greens, ALP members, Friends of the Earth, NUS, the Victorian Peace Network and many more.

The call to action has a double importance: it's against the WTO's privatisation agenda (the proposed General Agreement on Trade in Services)

and against the spectre of a society of permanent war. We've seen how economic and military domination work hand in hand: western corporations are looting Iraq thanks to the US, British and Australian occupation.

A million people came onto the streets of Australia against war in February and they haven't given up. September 13 is an opportunity to show that the struggle continues. ■



Socialism book under way

Socialist Alliance's May national conference decided to produce a book that presents a lively and compelling case for socialism, which we can use to introduce activists to our basic ideas and convince them to join our project. A writing group for that book has now been established, including Humphrey McQueen, David Glanz, Dick Nichols and Bryan Sketchly, and work on the first draft is under way.

Humphrey — one of the Alliance's

most experienced and skilled writers - has agreed to write the first draft, in consultation with the group. The draft will then be circulated to branches for comment before being adopted by the national executive for publishing.

SA members who have ideas about the content and presentation of the book need not wait until the draft arrives in your branch. If you would like to contribute ideas at this early stage, please send them into the writing group c/- the national conveners at: ne@socialist-alliance.org

Pubs, films and finances

BY JOHN GAUCI
(SYDNEY NORTHSIDE BRANCH)

Most Socialist Alliance branches would have a local pub, which will generally be fairly quiet on Monday and Tuesday evenings. Knowing this, our branch decided to approach the most prominent pub in Manly, the Steyne Hotel, about holding monthly political film screenings there.

It wasn't difficult to convince the publican to let us use his venue, big screen projector and in-house sound system for free once he realised we'd fill his pub on a normally quiet night.

We decided to kick off the screenings on July 15 with Mike Moore's *The Big One*. Having distributing some professional looking leaflets and posters, local residents began calling us to book tickets four weeks in advance and the publican has offered to pay for an advertisement in the local newspaper.

We expect these monthly film nights to be a lucrative fundraiser for our branch, but more importantly, they will provide us with an opportunity to talk socialist politics, plug campaigns and upcoming events, and build our contact base.

Socialist Alliance members John and Jill at Actively Radical TV in Sydney have a large collection of other progressive films on offer. So, contact your local pub, then ring ARTV on (02) 9564 1277 for a list of films.

Red tape spurs NSW Alliance recruitment

BY PAUL BENEDEK
(SYDNEY DISTRICT)

NSW branches have turned the arduous task of re-registering Socialist Alliance with the NSW State Electoral Office into a positive campaign for membership growth and involvement.

NSW law requires the Alliance to submit, by June 30 each year, detailed paperwork to maintain our status as a registered party. The process forces us to contact every single member in the state.

However, SA branches have been able to turn this anti-democratic bureaucratism (parties with MPs don't have to apply for re-registration) to our advantage.

First, we now have an accurate database of contact details for more than 800 Alliance members in NSW. We want to expand this database to incorporate further

Reaching out to working people

BY RENFREY CLARKE
(ADELAIDE BRANCH)

Regular public speak-outs and more emphasis on distributing information in suburban centres were among the projections adopted by our branch conference on July 6.

Entitled "A New Left Unity: Fighting War, Fighting Oppression", the conference was addressed by national executive member David Scrimgeour, who outlined the continuing moves by the Australian left toward shared structures and greater collaboration. Following a report by Renfrey Clarke on the activity and projections of the branch, which summarised members' active role in the anti-war and pro-refugee movements, the conference decided that a key task now is to take the Alliance's message out to working class areas, and seek out and support progressive campaigns and activists in those areas.

The branch also decided to step up its involvement in local labour movement campaigns. Reporting on members' participation in various struggles, Leslie Richmond noted the fight around wage demands by Adelaide bus drivers - in a three-day strike at the time of our conference - as an example of working-class battles that the Alliance needs to throw itself into. The bus drivers' campaign has been the most determined industrial action in South Australia for some time. The branch has contributed money to the strike fund and been supporting the picket line.

The next major activity for Adelaide branch will be a public meeting on Medicare at the Semaphore Workers Club on July 16. ■

info, in particular trade union details to help us establish strong union caucuses.

Secondly, we received a great response from people we hadn't spoken to for a while. This included offers of donations and keenness to attend branch events and/or take on Alliance activity. We concluded that, in general, most SA members are willing to do more, if we help them to do so. The fact that all NSW branches now have a clearer "map" of their members will facilitate this process.

Finally, the whole re-registration process has prompted the Sydney District subcommittee to plan a membership/outreach campaign, which will run through July and August. Its aims are to convince as many as possible of the Alliance's sympathetic contacts to join SA, and to help existing members get more involved and take more ownership of the Alliance.

The seven branches in Sydney are setting ambitious targets for new members and membership renewals. At the time many people joined SA to help us get electoral registration in 2002, we did not have the regular meetings, social activities, campaign and union caucuses, and so on that we are now developing, so there are now more, and more diverse, avenues through which members can get involved according to their specific interests and time.



An important bonus from the re-registration campaign is that it enabled us to identify parts of rural/regional NSW where concentrations of Alliance members live. We can now start planning some visits to those areas and maybe launch some SA activity with local members. If you are interested in organising or participating in such regional outreach trips, contact Paul on (02) 9690 1977. ■

Getting your branch on the web

BY JUSTIN RANDELL

Many Socialist Alliance members will by now have had a chance to explore the "new improved" national web site (www.socialist-alliance.org). We hope the site is working better for members and casual visitors alike.

The most exciting web news this month is that we have begun to set up a "branches section" on the site. So far, Northern Rivers, Hobart and Launceston branches have taken advantage of the new section by sending us the information needed to get their own branch pages running.

The idea is that eventually all 26 branches will have their own pages running off the home page, which they can instantly update with upcoming events, activity reports, local media releases, contact details, and so on. This

will allow the Alliance to use cyberspace much more effectively to publicise our ideas and spread of activities, and involve others locally.

To see how the branch section works, visit the site and have a look at the branch pages already up there. To arrange your own branch page, contact Justin at: web_team@socialist-alliance.org or phone (02) 9690 1230.

Do you have web skills?

We are still experiencing a small skills gap that is hampering our ability to achieve everything we'd like to with the web site. In particular, we'd like to hear from anyone who has knowledge of PHP and MySQL and could volunteer a little time (those who have these skills will know what those acronyms mean!). Please contact Justin if you can help.

Take a stand, get involved

Join the Socialist Alliance

If you've had a gutful of governments that rule for the rich, join Socialist Alliance.

If you're angry that corporations are allowed to kill for profits, join Socialist Alliance.

If you want to get together with others to make a better world, join Socialist Alliance.

Socialist Alliance is a broad, multi-tendency party. We stand for socialism — democratic ownership and management of the wealth of society. We believe that a society based on satisfying human needs can be created, but only by taking power from the elites who now rule.

We want a society run by and for working people, both here and internationally. We believe that socialism will be achieved by masses of people taking action on the streets

and in the workplaces.

Socialist Alliance members come from many different walks of life and political traditions. They are involved in a range of progressive movements; in local community campaigns; in building militant, democratic trade unions; and on schools and campuses.

We also seek election to parliaments, not to "represent" the people's movements, but to help build them and help them win their demands.

There are 25 Socialist Alliance branches around Australia. They hold regular branch meetings; public forums; film nights; caucus meetings for trade unionists, students and other members; and social-fundraising events. To find out more, contact the branch nearest you or visit www.socialist-alliance.org

I would like to join the Socialist Alliance

- \$60 high waged \$24 waged \$12 unwaged \$6 highschool
 Cheque/money order enclosed \$_____ donation

Name	
Address	Post code
Phone	Email

Return to: Socialist Alliance, PO Box A2323, Sydney South, 1235.

Cheques should be made out to Socialist Alliance. Email <ne@socialist-alliance.org>.

www.socialist-alliance.org

What do you think of our newsletter?

Is this newsletter interesting? useful? accessible? How can it be improved? What else would you like to see in it?

The national conveners received some very helpful feedback from members on the first issue of *Socialist Campaigner*, ideas that we have tried to incorporate into this second issue. We hope you enjoy it.

Socialist Campaigner aims to help keep Alliance members around the country informed about major national campaigns and new resources available, how to get in touch with other members in their trade union or movement area, and to enable a regular exchange of ideas about building the Socialist Alliance at the grassroots level.

If the newsletter is to be really useful to branches and members, we need your input. Please don't hold back. Feedback on past issues, as well as articles, notices, graphics or anything else you think might help keep members in touch with, and learning from, each other should be sent to the national conveners at: newsletter@socialist-alliance.org.

New Discussion Bulletin soon

The Socialist Alliance produces a national internal discussion bulletin for members to present and debate their ideas on theoretical, policy, campaigning and organisational questions, and to communicate important resolutions passed by the national executive and other information relevant to all branches and members.

The next issue of the discussion bulletin will be published in the second week of July and is full of interesting contributions and resolutions on topics ranging from public education, to Cuba and socialism, to the launch of a new Socialist Alliance magazine. The bulletin can be downloaded from the Alliance's web site, or you can obtain hard copies from your local branch.

Members who would like to make a contribution to the discussion bulletin should send it to the national conveners at ne@socialist-alliance.org.

Contact us in your area

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