

SMASH THE SENATE AND MALCOLM FRASER

The Liberal-Country Party Senate's refusal of supply is the final nail in a crucifixion of Australian democracy that has gone on for 74 years.

It is not the tainted gerrymandered rigged 197 Senate alone that now presides. over the ritual murder of democracy. Nor is it Fraser alone the man born with a silver dagger it's his mouth. THE SENATE ITSELF is an abortion of democracy.

The Senate was designed to thwart direct majority rule. It was undemocratic in 1901. It is twice as undemocratic in 1975. SO LONG AS THE SENATE EXISTS. SO LONG WILL LABOR GOVERNMENTS BE STRANGLING BY THE LIBERAL OLIGARCHY. The Senate represents States, not people, In times of crisis like the present, the Senate represents money, not men and women. The Senate is obsolete. It threatens democracy. It attacks the working class. IT MUST BE ABOLISHED. And if the Senate is not smashed now, when it threatens to drag Australian democracy down with it to extinction, when will overgoverned Australia ever have another chance to make its government rational and its democracy real? SO LONG AS THE SENATE EXISTS, AUSTRALIA IS NOT A DEMOCRACY.

The Senate came into being as part of a constitution designed to prevent federal governments making laws threatening banking and business interests — especially laws nationalising these interests. The two-chamber system, borrowed from America, was designed to prevent Labor parties easily securing a majority in both houses and legislating for radical change. What is now happening — the sabotage of a Labor Government hated by the banks and the stock. exchange — is what was intended by the makers of the constitution. They were not making rules for the good of the country. They were making sure that the ruling class always won the class war by making its own rules to fix a rigged fight. The other element in the constitution, borrowed from England, gave a gilded popinjay called the Governor-General power to dismiss governments. This power was last used against the Lang Labor Government of New South Wales in the thirties. There is no guarantee it will not or cannot be used against Whitlam. Sir Cohn Hannah, Queensland's Governor, attacks Whitlam's government. Sir John Kerr has links with the Joint Intelligence Organisation. These men, unknown to workers, and never elected by them have the power to make and unmake governments. They can be trusted as little now as in the last depression.

AUSTRALIA INHERITS THE WORST FEATURES OF BOTH AMERICAN AND ENGLISH GOVERNMENT.

No wonder it now faces a crisis no other Western country has experienced since the nineteen-tens. Not just the Senate, but the whole constitution is rotten. It was written by silvertails for silvertails. It protects only the Liberals and the ruling class. It is a colonial anachronism now used to protect class privilege and incompetence.

DESTROY THE CONSTITUTION BEFORE IT DESTROYS AUSTRALIA. As the constitution now exists, the number of different senates, legislative councils, houses of representatives and so on simply multiplies the number of parliamentary cretins — at the expense of the workers who pay their enormous salaries — and with this multiplies the possibilities of political corruption. The greater the number of politicians, the greater the chance there will be crooks among them.

A constitution as bad as Australia's would not have survived until 1975 unless its makers, determined to manacle majority rule in Australia for a century at least, had not made it immensely

difficult to change in the smallest detail. Here they miscalculated. For a Constitution which so often produces crises, without the smallest possibility of avoiding them through referenda (which hardly anyone understands) on the obviously necessary basic changes, has now become an obstacle to social progress in Australia which has to be changed by revolutionary means because the “constitutional” methods of change have been tried and found impossible. The Australian constitution is now the best argument for the inevitability of socialist revolution in Australia. This revolution will not happen now. The consciousness of workers is unready. But, in the end, the constitution which was designed to protect capitalism will turn out to be the grave Australia’s bankers and businessmen have dug for the corpse of their system.

Already the simplest suggestions from the most moderate Labour spokesmen — men like Deputy Prime Minister Crean for minimising the present crisis by paying some civil servants through circumventing the Senate assume the constitution does not really matter. And, of course, it doesn’t matter. The only question is why the Government takes it so seriously one minute to totally disregard it the next. There is no reason why one or a single worker should lose a day’s pay, or a pensioner a single weekly cheque because of Senate obstruction if the Government was prepared to do what it quite easily can: ignore the Senate completely. This would lead to the abolition of the Senate and the rubbishing of the constitution. But the Government could do it quite easily. The Government could do it tomorrow. If it wanted to. There would be a reaction. There would be a big political fight. But the fight would be about the real issues involved in the present crisis.

The Labour Government faces a choice: either it takes every possible step to minimise the chaos and disruption caused by the Senate, paying out the money the Senate is now blocking: or it allows the chaos to mount and the Senate to polarise the nation.. Either way, the continued existence of the Senate and the constitution is called in question. Senator McClelland and Treasurer Hayden have both predicted bankruptcies, layoffs, unemployment and factory closures as results of the refusal of supply. Such things can only lead to strike action. Men without pay will not continue to work. These strikes will go far beyond the objectives Whitlam has set for his party. The workers of Australia do not want Fraser to be able to use the Senate for political blackmail ever again. This crisis which began as a constitutional crisis, will end threatening the existence of the constitution. The Government will be afraid to intervene — it might break the constitution! It will, instead encourage Fraser to create chaos. In this chaos, the workers will break the constitution. Then Whitlam will have to choose between the working class and a piece of paper defended by the whole system of lawyers, judges, Treasury bureaucrats, the police and the standing army, a piece of paper in which the ruling class lay down the rules of class war to prevent the other side ever winning.

The fight against the constitution is an extension — a long overdue and necessary extension — of the fight against capitalism Labor has always had to make to carry through even the smallest reform. In the present circumstances, when the depression has been used as an excuse for Labor to retreat from its programme of reform, the overthrow of all constitutional restraints on Labor legislation and the end of any further possibility of Senate obstruction can mean the end of this period of retreat. If the Constitution is fought and destroyed, **LABOUR CAN NOW WIN BACK EVERYTHING LOST IN THE PARLIAMENTARY SELLOUTS OF THE PAST FIFTY YEARS.** The door to the old objective of the Labour Party, socialism, dosed for so long by a class constitution, will again be open. This path lies straight before the Labor Party’s feet — if, and it is an important if, it wishes to take it.

If, however, the chaos created by Fraser leads to strike action by workers against the constitution which costs them their pay and threatens their jobs, it will not be to allow parliamentary cretins to decide what is and is not allowed 'legally' if the constitution is abolished. The real constitution of Australia is the class struggle. If the workers can destroy the constitution without permission, they will, also without permission, expropriate the banks and private industry. They can end poverty, smash the bureaucracy, police and standing army, win equality for women, restore stolen land to black Australians, ensure racial equality, end Australian imperialism. This is where strike action against the senate and constitution can lead: to the working class doing what the Labor Party will not. If Labor will not act to smash the constitution, workers must act, to smash it, for otherwise Labor is threatened by defeat or serious retreat. THE DEFENCE OF THE LABOR GOVERNMENT CAN ONLY BE SECURED BY AN OFFENSIVE AGAINST LIBERAL POWER. Fraser will not back down until he has used every kind of threat, pressure, manipulation and blackmail at the disposal of the press, the banks and the multinationals. Labor must fight the Liberals total strength with every resource at its disposal — strikes, boycotts, demonstrations, agitation, education, organisation. So long as Whitlam restricts his tactics to parliamentary speechifying, the building of a revolutionary party can alone guarantee that every possible reserve of strength of the working class is used to keep Labor in power. If Labor repudiates the strike action, which is both unavoidable and necessary to counter Liberal lockouts, a revolutionary party must organise them to save the Labour Government in spite of itself. The building of a revolutionary party in this crisis is not only the way out of the crisis. It is the fight for every promise the Labor Government has made and not implemented and for the rights of every minority abandoned to win "business confidence". It is the fight to make the long-term objectives of the Labor Party, socialism and the abolition of the Senate realities NOW. And it is the fight for majority rule in Australia. Such direct majority rule has never before existed in the history of Australia. It can only be achieved if socialism is also achieved.

THE WHOLE LABOR MOVEMENT MUST FIGHT FRASER WITH EVERYTHING IT'S GOT!

GENERAL STRIKE AGAINST THE CAPITALIST CONSTITUTION FOR EXPROPRIATION OF BANKS

AND INDUSTRY

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