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No winners in the no choice elections

Two of the three independents have handed Gillard office in the recently concluded Australian Federal election. She is their captive. The primary vote was about even but the Liberals won more seats. Neither party won enough seats to form government in their own right.

Therefore, the independents decided. .The three amigos (as their called) represent a rural reaction against economic rationalism and reflect the instability of the middle classes. They vacillate between fascism and progressive policies. On the whole their instincts are conservative. They cannot be trusted! In the past communists would warn that such an alliance would drag Labor to the right. Today Labor is so right wing that it is doubtful whether they will make much difference.

Tony Abbott won the campaign but it simply wasn't good enough! Tony figured that if he took Workchoices off the agenda, he could take advantage of Labor's equivocal lack of direction and political correctness, This he figured would appeal to westy social chauvinists who want clear answers and hanker for action. People are hurting and he could point the finger at — "Labor's debt" He also addressed their racism. The boat people keep coming and Labor's answers simply don't work. Abbott promises "real action" to stop the boats. This won votes.

Gillard herself put the refugee issue on the agenda and her apparent impotence was exposed. Yes Tony Abbott is more effective in this chauvinist spectacle, a race to the bottom. Both sides are reactionary.

Communist Left totally supports the right of boat people to come here unconditionally! Our answer is not to pander to racism but to fight it. Smash all immigration controls! In no way are we party to this campaign to restrict immigration called "sustainable population" All proletarians should be welcome to come and live in Australia if they want to.

Abbott played on people's fear of debt. He suggested that people are suffering or will suffer as a result. There is simply no debt free answer to the economic crisis. Labor spent in order to save jobs which is more honourable than allowing jobs to collapse. Either way there will be suffering. Anyhow, both parties are committed to repaying the debt in roughly the same time. Actually there is no real

hurry and the debt crisis is a Liberal party fabrication. Labor was unable to counter effectively so people bought Abbott's scaremongering but not enough so to hand him victory. Abbott gained ground on state issues in Queensland and NSW. Anna Bligh is on the nose for privatising railway operations without popular consent. Some Queenslanders were pissed —off at the fact that the second Queensland PM since federation was kicked out by the ALP machine. In NSW many westy voters are angry at inadequate schools, education and transport. These are predominately state issue but voters vented their anger against Federal Labor. The Chinese community also backed Kevin Rudd which was a key reason Labor lost Bennelong. The unions spent money on a campaign which suggested that Abbott hadn't actually abandoned Workchoices. This no-doubt discouraged enough voters and prevented him from winning enough seats in the western suburbs of Sydney where he focused his campaign.

The current government will achieve nothing and the system is quite happy with the status — quo. Labor will make some concessions to the independents.

But no-one will rock the boat for fear of losing. The independents fear losing their seats due to local anti-Labor hostility. The Green's have declared their support for Labor. We wonder what will happen to their "principled differences". The Greens are professing their commitment to national stability. What will they sell-out?

This commitment to Labor is a sell-out even in terms of their capitalist frame-work. Gillard Labor makes it clear that it puts economy before environment.

So essentially the war will go on in Afghanistan, So will Fair Work Australia, So will the Northern Territory intervention, the reactionary treatment of asylum seekers, and so will mutual obligation and work for the dole. The war in Afghanistan has bipartisan support despite opposition from the majority of Australians.

Non communist Communists and non socialist socialists

These days it is as difficult to sort out the communists from the socialists as it is to sort the sheep from the goats. A hundred years ago things were simple. The term "socialist" was used as an all-inclusive term for those who want a socialist society. The term communist was used for someone who wanted socialism by revolutionary means. Things changed with the degeneration of the Soviet Union under Stalin who influenced the Communist International to pursued a peaceful and parliamentary road. Many used the term socialist to differentiate themselves from Stalinist communist parties even though they sort socialism by revolutionary means. For some it was with the aim of joining the Labor Party which barred communists. These days there is an alphabet soup of organisations calling themselves either socialist or communist.

The 2010 Federal election witnessed the parliamentary debut of a formation called Communist Alliance. It was initiated by the Communist Party of Australia. Also standing was the Socialist Alliance which was initiated by Democratic Socialist Perspectives and the International Socialist Organisation now called Solidarity. Now it is dominated by Democratic Socialist Perspectives

Despite the fact that they had been part of a Socialist Alliance in the past, when Socialist Alliance was established the CPA was offered membership but refused to join. What they argued was that

the new Socialist Alliance was a sectarian venture controlled by DSP and ISO. What they argued was that instead of a narrow Socialist Alliance, a broad peoples' front. They pointed out that the DSP/ISO led Socialist Alliance did not include unions or community groups. But does the Communist Alliance, today? If the broad peoples' front was needed when the SA was established, why not now? Is it not equally inappropriate to counterpose a "Communist Alliance" to the broad peoples' front or movement? Or was SA merely inappropriate because it was initiated by DSP or ISO? We have not been given answers.

The main issue we have with Communist Alliance is that it simply isn't communist.

For us the status quo means serious attacks on unions, the unemployed, refugees and Black people. We cannot be satisfied with a reactionary government whether it's called Liberal or Labor, Working people and proletarians must break from reactionary Labor and forge a new workers party committed not at propping up capitalism but at destroying it.

For the Federal election they put out two main publications. Both were in strident red with a red star. One demanded "Nationalise the public health system" and made a strong critique of bourgeois and privatised health care. The other emphasised rights which communists advocate. They assure us they will fight for these rights and that other parties will not.

The main issues are; Workers rights, environment rights, health rights, and refugee rights. They also point out their support for Aboriginal and women's rights details of which are not spelt out in the leaflet.

Rights is a bourgeois concept. Assumed within the concept of rights is the framework of the system. You are suggesting that the bourgeoisie has the continued right to rule! If you only fight for rights you are accepting the right of the system to exist. Within the system CA fights the bad apples such as the monopolies, the economic rationalists (etc) but the system itself is basically unchallenged. It is true that revolutionaries defend rights within the system. We would support the right of workers to choose their dress or hair length so long as it was safe to do so. We support the right of entry to union officials and so on. We also support the right to work, which we point out cannot be achieved under capitalism. Capitalism should therefore be overthrown. But the point is that rights for these "communists" is their strategy. Effectively they are fighting for a more worker friendly capitalism and not to smash capitalism. This is made clear when they explain "funding Communist Alliance policies". Apparently this can be achieved by cutting the military budget, pulling troops out of Afghanistan. Yes we oppose the military budget. Yes we want the money spent in the interests of working people. and not the imperialist war effort. But we do not suggest that this will solve fundamental problems such as housing and unemployment (though we may improve things a bit). Even if we managed to achieve these objectives, capitalism could not satisfy the needs of working people, the poor, unemployed or for that matter small farmers. Changing government may change spending priorities but it will not make an unprofitable system profitable.

There is no right to work under capitalism even with an enlightened government. Communist Alliance opposes the most right wing economic rationalists, the current policies and urges different priorities. But in no way does their propaganda suggest that the system has to be overthrown, let alone provide a programme to do so.

The Socialist Alliance also stood for a programme of rights. Under Democratic Rights they support the right of same sex couples to marry. Yes, this is supportable. But what about abolishing the reactionary anti-terrorist legislation or a republic? Their programme is broader than that of Communist alliance. For example they strongly opposing the Northern Territory Intervention which is not mention by the CA. The SA programme of rights was tailored to the green, anti-racist, black rights and gay rights movements. Revolutionary it isn't.

The Communist Alliance and Socialist Alliance both have gone a long way from the policies of the first four congresses of the Communist International led by Lenin and Trotsky. They have gone a long way backwards. Lenin's Third International believed in standing communists for parliament. But they believed in doing so in a revolutionary way. "So —called democracy is nothing but a veiled dictatorship of the bourgeoisie." They stood for "The smashing of the capitalist state and socialisation of means of production". The "Communist Party enters parliament not to function within as an integral part of the capitalist system, but to take action within parliament that helps to smash the capitalist state and parliament itself" Incidentally how can Communist or Socialist Alliance deputies be "fully subordinated to the Communist party" as demanded by the Third International, if they are elected on behalf of an alliance?

Communists and socialists complain that too few workers and others are communists. Part of the problem lies in the fact that "communists" and "socialists" of different varieties have instead of fighting for a communist programme put forward a programme to civilise capitalism. This does us a disservice not just in promoting our future communist society but in class struggle today. As long as workers accept capital's right to rule they will accept reactionary consequences such as wages cause inflation, the Australian borders need to be protected, more police and prisons, and many other components of the bourgeois offensive they accept the system This seriously hampers class struggle on the basic level, today. Communist Left believes in the fundamental principle that communists should stand for parliament. But the point should be to expose and capitalism. Parliament should be used to organise working people outside and overthrow that system. This requires a revolutionary programme. That was the method of Lenin's Bolsheviks.

'The Refugees Action Coalition and the Federal election

Apart from the economy, the main issue raised by both major parties was refugees. An hysterical Liberal campaign "exposed" Labor as unable to stop the boats as they kept coming. Gillard tried to show that she was no slouch, proposing a Timor solution which means diverting boats to a proposed concentration camp on East Timor. There is gross ignorance on the refugee question. Few know about the defeat of the Tamil Tigers and the fact that they face death or torture—unless they escape by boat. For the Tigers, "people smugglers" is the only way out.

This offers fertile ground for a left intervention. So why did the Refugee Action Coalition concentrate on Newtown when there is plenty of anti-refugee paranoia in Sydney's western suburbs? . And why did the substance of their propaganda amount to showing that there was a "real difference" between Labor and Liberal and those concerned should preference Labor above Liberal.

Overwhelmingly Newtown residents are both pro-refugee and would most definitely preference Labor ahead of Liberal. So what's the point?

The point is the RAC and its relationship with the trade union bureaucracy. The bureaucrats know that the refugee issue is potentially revolutionary if fought for consistently. They also know that Labor's record is little better than Liberal. The marginal difference is not sufficient to concern revolutionaries or for that matter, serious supporters of refugees. The bureaucrats fear left breakaways from Labor. The RAC need the bureaucrats and therefore do their utmost to discourage to discourage any exposure of Labor and any split to the left, By doing this they hope that the bureaucrats will sponsor their rallies and campaigns. The bureaucrats continued support for Labor is because of their political bankruptcy. Their support remains even though "Labor" is committed to jailing militant unionists such as Ark Tribe, They are bankrupt and gutless.

The Refugees Action Coalition is led by Ian Rintoul who is leader of the group known as Solidarity (formerly the International Socialist Organisation) This opportunism is typical of their mass work. Their aim is to curry favour with bureaucrats rather than expose them. Doing this sells-out any aim of using the refugee issue to expose the racist programme of Labor. It also limits their opposition to immigration controls.

Another year of troops in Afghanistan

Obama has finally announced the removal of all troops from Iraq. Yes they removed Saddam Hussein. But the price of occupation has been the destruction of infrastructure and heritage, homes, farms and the economy. Politically, the country has been destabilised. A hundred thousand lives have been lost. At least he has the decency not to call this a victory.

Meanwhile there is another war going on. Afghanistan is much more relevant to September Eleven as EL Qaida was based there. But it was not the ruling Taliban who were responsible for September eleven so the US had a responsibility to negotiate. This they didn't. The Taliban had every right to demand proof before handing over Osama Bin Laden.

They say that Afghanistan is now free of El Qaida. Instead El Qaida are now cooperating in Pakistan. Osama is probably somewhere in the frontier zone out of reach of the Pakistan armed forces.

Most Australians oppose this reactionary war and want the, troops home. The problem is that both major parties are at one in their support of imperialism. Within Labor, the left is silent. The Greens oppose the war but do not let their opposition get in the way of their support for a stable Labor Government.

Communist Left opposes this war because it is an imperialist war. What is at stake is not merely a government for Afghanistan but imperialism's desire to control the Middle East prop up the state of Israel and threaten Iran,. The war must be opposed unconditionally. It must be opposed by the force of the working class. The reason the unions do not act is their reactionary support for a Labor Government.

Islamophobia in the USA and the rise of fascism

It has been nine years since the terror attack on the World Trade Center New York. America still hasn't got over it. Currently there is a proposal from Muslims to build a mosque three blocks away from Ground Zero. This has produced a hysterical reaction. It is not on Ground Zero itself but for hysterical anti Moslems it is too close and an insult to victims of September eleven.. They want to blame the Moslem religion for the deeds of only a few extremists. We do not know what constitutes the real Islamic tradition but we do know that it is a broad church including both liberals and extremists. Moslems too were victims of nine eleven.

In the south, one reactionary pastor threatened to burn copies of the Koran. He blames religion for the attacks and considers the Islamic faith to be evil. He claims to have backed down because the mosque will not be built. We think the State Department had more to do with it. The Department fears that US forces and citizens will be attacked by radical Moslems.

is thoroughly and utterly corrupt and has no real authority. It is clear that an imperialist invasion is no real answer. With every year passed there is more and more destruction and more and more killed, troops and civilians.

This September 11 anniversary was commemorated. There was, on one hand a demo condemning Moslems. On the other there was one against bigotry. Barak Obama tried to cool the situation stating that America is not nor never will be at war with Islam. Obama has been compromised in the eyes of patriotic Americans for pointing out that in the US you had a democratic right to build a mosque. The big winner from this mobilisation is the semi-fascist right Tea Party

What is significant about all this is the mobilisation of the semi-fascist Tea Party which is based in the Republican Party. Its figurehead is Sarah Palm. This party called a rally for the anniversary of Martin Luther King's "I had a Dream" speech in order to co-opt that spirit of Martin Luther King as part of their agenda

When George W Bush lost to Obama, the Republicans were struggling for direction.

The Tea Party has direction and is growing from strength. Recently in Delaware, the Tea Party candidate won Republican nomination for Senate. Within the Republican Party their candidates for Governors, Senators and congress are winning endorsement. Make no mistake, the party is just beginning and the big losers will be the poor, Black people, Hispanics, Gay people, and the working class. It will force the Republicans to the right. There is talk of it leaving the Republicans. Whether or not this party will evolve into fully blown fascists committed to smashing both the working class and democracy remains to be seen.

Wrongly they accuse Obama of being either Marx or Lenin. He is neither. In fact he gives the left a bad name. in the USA today there is ten percent unemployment. Obama has handed over billions of dollars, taxpayers money to the likes of General Motors and Ford. Yet this is clearly not an answer. The US economy still struggles and ordinary people suffer. With his yes we can' rhetoric Obama appeared to empower people. Several years later, the people are still powerless

This provides fertile ground for the fascists to intervene. They will use Obama to expose the left (all of it) as impotent.

Small farmers struggling to survive want action. They will find the fascists attractive, They will only be attracted to the Left if it is serious in fighting. This means totally breaking from Obama and fighting for power.

Spain Basque ETA ceasefire Peace without justice

The Basques are one of two major nationalities within Spain. The other is Catalonia whose largest city is Barcelona. In 1959 they formed the ETA a national liberation front whose Basque name means Freedom and Independence. They declared war on the Spanish government, fighting for an independent Basque homeland.

When the ETA was formed Spain was ruled by notorious fascist dictator General Franco. Though nationalist they had some socialist ideology.

The ETA tactics have been controversial. They have used terror bombs and this has created enemies both amongst Spaniards and even amongst their own Basque people. It is clear that the ETA is failing. The problem is that their defeat will deny the Basque people of justice. They deserve the right to their own language and the right to form an independent state. This bourgeois Spain will deny.

The war is not yet over. The Spanish government not merely wants a ceasefire, it wants the Basques to renounce violence totally.

The defeat of ETA will not take the Basque question away. It is important that revolutionary communists stand up for the Basque people. A successful revolution in Spain requires justice for all nationalities. This means the right of the Basque people to self determination. This means the right to their culture and religion. This means the right to an autonomous area. It means the right for them and all nationalities to form a separate nation if that is what they choose.

Redbaiting the Greens

In 2010, the Greens are now well and truly part of the mainstream. This election, they won not only nine Senate seats but also the House of Representatives seat of Melbourne previously held by Lindsay Tanner for Labor. They are well and truly on the offensive

That right wing propaganda rag, The Australian has indeed been concerned. They fear that the Greens holding the balance of power might dampen down the right wing agenda of Labor who might have to make concessions. They also believe they have a duty to show their true nature to conservative carers of the environment who may be persuaded to vote for them.

They fear that former communists, within their ranks may put communist issues part of mainstream debate. So they feel they have to take a stand.

One writer describes them not as watermelons but as tomatoes meaning fully red instead of merely soft red on the inside and Green on the outside. Lee Rhiannon, was interviewed and insisted she was truly Green and not a Stalinist. Lee is the daughter of CPA Stalinist hack the late WJ Brown. The Greens contain a hodgepodge of ex Stalinists and pseudo Trotskyists and Anarchists.

Internationally, the Greens were formed in Germany by Petra Kelly. She was inspired by the green bans of the NSW Branch of BLF led by Jack Munday who was then a member of the Aarons led Communist Party of Australia.. This party was turning to middle class radicalism.

The green bans became famous. They were part of the Aarons led CPA campaign to become relevant to radical middle class protest politics. The BLF leadership became very ecology oriented. Their class character was clearly exposed when Joe Owens, a BLF leader and CPA member, when standing for NSW State Parliament gave preferences to the thoroughly bourgeois Australian Democrats. Yes the Democrats candidate did actually support green bans. But in no way is this thoroughly bourgeois party supportable. Owens argued that it was people who mattered not classes or programmes

In Sydney the initial Greens were established by the Pabloite grouping led by Nick Orighass. They were forced to broaden and include not just pure Green activists but also former members of the old Aarons led CPA (notably Jack Munday, pro Moscow Stalinists, Anarchists (especially in Queensland) and Maoists.

Some are using the Greens as a political retirement village (a place to meet and discuss politics in their old age.) Others see them as a chance to advance their careers. There are, of course Greens who have no connection with Stalinism. Bob Brown is the main example.

The Greens stand for many of the popularist aspects of Stalinism. They support many progressive components such as opposition to the Northern Territory Intervention and work for the dole. What they don't associate with is identification with the working class as the vanguard of change or any identification with post -capitalist states.

Bob Brown has taken a reactionary hard line stand against China. He suggested Australia boycott the Beijing Olympics.

The Greens have been strong in their opposition to Workchoices. But they oppose any idea that the working class is any vanguard for social change. For them, the working class is only one of their many interest groups. They are not socialists

Often they identify with militant protest action. But the object of this is to civilise capitalism and not to overthrow it.

In fact their solutions to the environmental crisis are thoroughly capitalist. Their method of opposing climate change is an ETS. They opposed Labor's ETS for not being effective enough. They offer plenty of options to make capitalism more eco friendly. They believe in rewarding capitalists for being ecologically sound.

The Greens are extremely dangerous. They know how to co-opt an idealist younger generation and divert them away from revolution and class struggle.

When they take a stand on progressive issues such as defence of refugees, what they do is divert these issues from the working class and from socialist revolution. A capitalist government can do it is the Greens message, so long as it has enlightened leadership such as themselves.

They believe that the environment is the number one issue. In doing so the advocate all sorts of creative alternatives for capitalism to implement and "ecologically sound" capitalists

The fundamental philosophical framework of the Greens is reactionary. Effectively they blame not the current mode of production, capitalism for the ecology crisis, they blame technology. Communists endorse progress and technological advance.

The Left are promoting the Greens. Partly because they endorse radical left popular fronts. The left wants to build campaigns on the basis of respectability. The Greens offer respectable support. For the union movement the Greens offer an insurance policy against Labor's reactionary anti-union laws.

The rightward direction of Labor has its problems. The more it goes to the right the more it loses to the consistent right wing party, the Liberals. On the other hand it loses more principled and left wing people to the Greens. The Greens, therefore have a future. The ruling class will not allow the Greens to administer capitalism. But they are a long way from doing that. In the meantime they will act as capitalism's safety valve entrapping radical young people

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