

Alliance Voices

Socialist Alliance Discussion Bulletin

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Note: The deadline for resolutions for the 2005 National Conference is midnight, Sunday June 5. Please email resolutions to ne@socialist-alliance.org

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The content of articles published in Alliance Voices reflect the views of the author, not necessarily those of the Socialist Alliance.

Social Justice Charter

By Dave Riley (Brisbane Central branch & National Executive member)

In the wake of the May 2005 federal budget's attack on the welfare system, Socialist Alliance has established a Social Justice Charter Group.

At its May 2004 National Conference, the Socialist Alliance decided, in addition to its Gender Agenda, to produce Policy Charters in other key areas of Alliance campaigning: workers' rights, health, education, social justice, refugee and asylum seeker rights, environment, and indigenous rights. Each charter will be based on policy positions and statements adopted by the Socialist Alliance.

Below is the adopted policy that will be the basis of the Social Justice Charter the Alliance will produce.

Adopted policy

"Socialist Alliance supports universal welfare rights for all who are in need. The welfare system was fought for and won by the working class over generations in order to protect its members from the unemployment and poverty intrinsic to capitalism. The "old age pension" was introduced in 1908 and, the last big win was the introduction of the "supporting mother's benefit" in 1972.

"The end of the post war boom saw the start of efforts to roll back the welfare state. The ALP introduced the assets test on the age pension, ended non-means tested family allowances and reduced young people's access to payments. This signalled the start of hundreds of changes, all designed to reduce payments, tighten eligibility criteria or impose waiting periods. Welfare rights are now under renewed attack from the Coalition Government, which argues that the family is the best provider of welfare.

"Under the guise of "welfare reform" the government is imposing "mutual obligation" on older workers, parents and disabled people, putting pressure on all workers' wages by requiring welfare recipients to volunteer or take low-waged jobs. Like governments around the world, the Howard Government is attacking the welfare state because this is what the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank requires.

"The Socialist Alliance says welfare payments for all those in need are a right!

A guaranteed independent income for all at a living wages. No to State- enforced dependency-end assessments based on relationship status or parental income.

Abolish work for the dole, immediately pay all Community Development Employment Program workers an award wage and abolish all mutual obligation requirements.

Scrap the 104-week waiting period for newly arrived migrants.

Establish voluntary, well-staffed, quality, public programs for those who wish to enter the workforce; provide free education and training; tackle child care, workplace accessibility, discriminatory employment policies and other barriers to employment.

Eliminate unemployment by reducing working hours with no loss of pay.

No further outsourcing of welfare services; keep Centrelink in public hands; renationalise the job network.

Scrap funding for the war machine-money for welfare not warfare!"

All members of SA are welcome and encouraged to join the new Social Justice Charter Group. The group address is: SA_social_justice@yahoo.com

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SA_social_justice/

Away With All Your Superstitions: A set of conference resolutions

By Craig Hall (Wills branch)

I strongly oppose Carl Kenner's eight resolutions on the support of animal testing for the upcoming National Conference this year. (*Alliance Voices: Vol 5 No 4, May 2005*)

Firstly, I would like to contest the ignorant assertion that animal testing is an absolutely vital part of medical research. Medical historians argue that key discoveries in hearty disease, cancer, immunology, anaesthesia, and psychiatry were in fact achieved through clinical research, observation of patients, and human autopsy.

In the case of cancer, in response to prospective and retrospective studies of human patients showing a strong correlation between cigarette smoking and lung cancer, (1,2) Clarence Little, a leading cancer animal researcher, wrote, "The failure of many investigators to induce experimental cancers [in test animals], except in a handful of cases, during fifty years of trying, casts serious doubt on the validity of cigarette-lung cancer theory." (3)

In relation to Asbestos, as early as the 1940s, human clinical investigation (read: research) strongly indicated that it caused cancer. However, animal studies repeatedly failed to demonstrate this, and proper workplace precautions were not instituted in the US until decades later. (4)

Once again, in relation to degenerative neurological diseases, a recent review of four prevalent degenerative diseases – Alzheimer's Disease, Parkinson's Disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease), and Huntington's chorea – revealed that animal models have contributed little, if anything, to our understanding or treatment of these conditions. (5)

Another area of medical research is in toxicity testing, where numerous standard animal toxicity tests have been widely criticised by clinicians and toxicologists. The lethal dose 50 (LD50), which determines how much of a drug, chemical, or household product is needed to kill 50 percent of a group of test animals, requires 60 to 100 animals. Because of difficulties extrapolating the results to humans, the test is highly unreliable. (6)

Animal tests for cancer-causing substances, generally involving rodents, are notoriously unreliable. An international study demonstrated that in vitro tests are more sensitive and more accurate than animal tests. (7)

Animal studies can neither confirm nor refute hypotheses about human physiology or pathology; human clinical investigation is the only way such hypotheses can be tested. (8,9)

Non-animal methodologies, such as epidemiology (population studies) have been used to identify risk factors for heart disease, so important for prevention techniques. This is in contrast to artificial animal modelling. (10)

In patient studies, cardiologist Dean Ornish has demonstrated that low-fat vegetarian diets, regular exercise, smoking cessation, and stress management can reverse heart disease. (11)

Autopsies are limited to various lethal stages of diseases, but biopsies can provide information into other disease stages. For example, endoscopic biopsies have demonstrated that colon cancers derive from benign tumours called adenomas. This is in contrast to the leading animal model of colon cancer. (12)

Further, in vitro cell and tissue cultures are powerful investigative tools. (13) These use cells with human DNA, which can detect DNA damage much more readily than animal tests. (14)

Next, that all medical treatments should undergo testing on animals is simply disproved by a few simple comparisons of the commonly used lab animals and humans. There is an extensive list of dissimilarities between species in relation to the problematic of animal testing.

| RODENTS (mice/rats): the most Commonly used lab animals | HUMANS |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3-year life span requires massive doses for drug/product testing – more than humans will ever use. | 72+ year life span during which drugs and chemicals will be consumed in minute doses. |
| Lysodren (cancer chemotherapy) does Not cause kidney damage in rodents. | Lysodren causes kidney damage in Humans. |
| Specially bred for laboratory studies. Live in a controlled sterile environment. Majority of diseases induced through Genetic breeding (tumours and genetic defects) or from parasitic infections. | Humans originate from a wide variety of Genetic, environmental and lifestyle Backgrounds, all unpredictable. Environment, diet and lifestyles responsible for most human diseases. |

Source: Compiled by Dr. Roy Kupsine and originally printed by the International Society for Animal Rights, USA and also FALCON, the animal and conservation charity in South Africa.

In considering the third statement in the resolution that animal testing is no worse than eating meat or the conditions animals endure in farming, and is far more beneficial to humanity, shows extreme ignorance or disingenuousness by comrade Kenner. For one, anyone conversant with the literature, let alone who has had any direct experience with the farming practices of mass industrial meat production knows the inhumanely cruel treatment of animals abused for mainly human consumption.

One example is broiler chickens that are mainly used for human consumption. They are fed growth hormones to speed up their life span and unnaturally increase their body mass. The results are mostly deformities, such as dwarfism in their legs that the induced acute growth rates of these birds cause, so that they are unable to move freely. Because of enforced inability to move they stay mainly in over-crowded enclosures in a life span that is one third that of even battery farm chickens.

Eating meat has an alternative in vegetarianism or even veganism, which when put into practice in full cognizance of dietary requirements is a viable and satisfying alternative to the cruelties of mass industrial farming practices. That the comrade groundlessly asserts that animal testing is no worse and more beneficial to humanity shows a singular lack of ignorance of the facts (that I have only chosen a few examples of).

Lastly, to defend scientists' right to conduct tests on animals without harassment is, by flying in the face of the comprehensive useless and dubious scientific gains to be made in medical research as I have argued, makes me concerned that the Alliance will be taking a step backwards in one area of health policy. That Kenner addresses himself, as a scientific materialist is a misrepresentation of what the Socialist Alliance is building to me.

What Socialists are about is being Scientific Socialists, which means honestly dealing with facts. The distorted and corrupt practices of imperialism abuse animals in the name of redundant medical research, that has been shown time and time again that real technologies that are relevantly human centred make more gains for humanity, rather than brutal, un-dialectical practices.

The health policy of the Alliance must take a dialectical approach to medical research and how it relates to humanity. We must oppose the present status quo of needless and irrelevant investigations using animals as models for human problems. We must promote scientifically proven methods in medical research that progresses us forward to real cures for humanities ills. Those methods already exist in the dialectics of societal change under capitalism at present.

In reaction and opposition to Kenner's eight resolution as part of his package proposal for Alliance health policies, I propose only one counter proposal to resolution eight.

Resolution 8: Oppose animal testing.

Animal testing is *not* an absolutely vital part of medical research. We *do not* expect that all medical treatments should undergo testing on animals. Animal testing is no worse than eating meat or the conditions animals endure in farming, and is *not* beneficial to humanity. We *do not* defend scientists' right to conduct tests on animals without harassment.

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A question of leadership

By Lisa Macdonald (National Co-convener)

Some members may have noted a debate at the May 8 meeting of the National Executive about how to deal with the situation wherein Linda Seaborn, a member elected to the NE at the 2004 national conference as a non-affiliated representative from Tasmania, recently decided to join the Democratic Socialist Perspective (see Linda's letter to the NE reprinted below).

The relevant section of the SA Constitution (also reprinted below) does not deal clearly with the situation that arose, which was not considered as a potential problem at the time of writing those sections. Whether or not a non-affiliated NE member who decided to join an affiliate should lose their NE position was therefore a question that had to be discussed and decided on by the NE *politically*, not "legally/technically".

There were two (counter-posed) positions expressed in that NE debate – positions that reflect quite different approaches to developing the Socialist Alliance into a more united, more effective and more democratic multi-tendency socialist party.

On one side, the proposal from four of the five national conveners - David Glanz, Louise Walker, Raul Bassi and Lalitha Chelliah - was to "interpret Linda's letter as requiring her resignation from the National Executive" on the technical grounds that she had originally been elected as a non-affiliated representative from Tasmania. The four conveners asked the NE to endorse their interpretation.

On the other side, I had argued at the national conveners meeting and then proposed to the National Executive meeting that Linda's decision to join the DSP:

- did not cancel out the position on the NE that she had won at the last national conference in her own right, and with the votes of both affiliated and non-affiliated delegates from Tasmania; and
- that rather than removing Linda from the NE, the Constitutional requirement for a non-affiliate majority on the NE could equally be met simply by electing additional non-affiliated members to that body.

(The other clear Constitutional requirement - that every state and territory have at least one non-affiliated representative on the NE - had already been met with the election of Rene Aragon, a non-affiliated member from Hobart branch, onto the NE.)

This debate boiled down to a choice between removing someone from the NE against their wishes or adding to the NE to meet the those Constitutional requirements that were clear. In my view, the latter option was equally Constitutionally correct and the most constructive (non-punitive) way to proceed.

In the end, the National Executive voted 13-11 against David, Louise, Raul and Lalitha's motion to remove Linda from the NE. The NE then voted 18 to 6 in favour of my motion that "additional non-affiliated members be elected to the NE as soon as possible to meet the Constitutional requirement for a 50% + 1 majority of non-affiliated members on the NE". Subsequently, Humphrey McQueen from the ACT and Karl Cossar from Victoria – both comrades who are enthusiastically building the Alliance - were elected on to the NE.

To my mind, the political considerations that underly this decision are very important for the future development of Socialist Alliance and deserve all members' serious thought in the lead-up to the national conference. They include:

- The need to value and respect members' real contributions to building SA and its leadership. The fact that Linda - who had served as a non-affiliated state representative on the NE for 23 months, taken on leadership responsibilities in the National Membership, Finances and Branch Building Coordinating Committee and the SA-GLW Editorial Board, and was a member of her branch/state committee - could have been removed from the NE when she wanted to continue to contribute, was a symptom of bad leadership, insofar as an essential aspect of good leadership is encouraging others to also lead.

- The need to safeguard non-affiliated, and indeed *all* members' "right the choose" – their right to be persuaded of any political position in SA, including to join any affiliate in between conferences if they wish, without fear of being excluded from leadership bodies at any level as a result.

- Recognising how problematic the current NE formula is. The current formula for electing the NE reduces SA members' political views and potential leadership contributions to being in either an "affiliates" or "non-affiliates" camp. There are two major problems with this:

- (i) It is a completely inadequate reflection of the diversity of political opinion across the whole SA membership. As the basic criterion for electing a national leadership it is therefore, in fact *unrepresentative* and undemocratic.

- (ii) Giving priority to "factional balance" in electing the NE, over all other requirements of an effective SA leadership body, has become a hindrance on the further development of the Alliance because it privileges people's opinions over their preparedness to take real responsibility for building SA. Neither membership of an affiliate nor "non-affiliatedness" should automatically qualify or disqualify someone from being on the NE because any national leadership, if it is to lead well, must both reflect and contribute to the real work that the organisation is doing "on the ground". A national leadership elected on any other basis will neither be able to build the Alliance nor have the confidence of the membership.

APPENDIX 1

4 May 2005

The National Executive

Socialist Alliance

Hello all,

This is to notify the National Executive and Convenors that I have applied for membership of the DSP and have been accepted as a provisional member.

I am informing you so that the NE can address the Constitutional requirement for a majority of non-affiliated members on the National Executive.

Linda Seaborn

APPENDIX 2

The Constitution states:

"6.6. The National Executive shall be composed according to the following formula:

From affiliated organisations, one representative for every 50 Socialist Alliance members or part thereof, with declared Socialist Alliance tendency figures subject to scrutiny by National Conference on request;

Unaffiliated state and territory representatives: The total number of unaffiliated State and Territory representatives shall match the total number of affiliate representatives, plus one to create an odd-numbered National Executive with an unaffiliated majority;

Each State or Territory shall have at least one unaffiliated State or Territory representative, with the remainder of the total number distributed proportionally among States and Territories in accordance with the total State and Territory membership at the time of the Third national Conference.

If an unaffiliated member cannot be found to represent a particular state or territory a casual vacancy shall exist and shall be filled through election at a state- or territory-wide meeting or the relevant state/territory executive; Between conferences, if necessary, proxies to the National Executive may be (i) appointed by the affiliated group, in the case of a representative of an affiliated group, or (ii) in the case of a representative of a state or territory be elected by a state- or territory-wide meeting or the relevant state/territory executive. State and Territory representatives can proxy to any member of that State or Territory.

State delegations shall submit their list of provisional State or Territory National Executive representatives to National Conference, including, if necessary, by meeting at National Conference and electing by proportional representation, subject to ratification at their next State or Territory conference.

Unaligned State or Territory representatives shall be responsible to their respective State or Territory Conference, and will be subject to full right of recall.

Any organisations affiliating to the Socialist Alliance after the Third National Conference shall, at the invitation of the National Executive, be accorded representation on the National Executive according to the formula for existing affiliates as above.

If further organisations affiliate to the Socialist Alliance, the extra State or Territory representatives needed to maintain an unaligned majority on the National Executive shall be distributed to States and/or Territories according to membership at the time of the Third National Conference, and elected by the succeeding appropriate State and/or Territory conferences.

National Conference shall ratify the list of National Executive candidates submitted by affiliates and State and Territory delegations prior to the election of the National Conveners.”

Looking for a way forward for the Socialist Alliance: debate on the National Executive about the relationship between the SA and *Green Left Weekly*

By Louise Walker, Lalitha Chelliah and Raul Bassi (Non-affiliated National Convenors)

On 23 May 2005 the Socialist Alliance held a National Executive meeting to deal primarily with preparations for National Conference. At this meeting it discussed a report and recommendations from the Socialist Alliance board responsible for overseeing the relationship between the Socialist Alliance and the newspaper *Green Left Weekly* (the SA-GLW Editorial Board).

At this meeting we three non-affiliated National Convenors of the Socialist Alliance put forward a counter-motion to the recommendations proposed by the Board. In introducing it, Louise outlined what the three of us feel are some crucial issues for the future of Socialist Alliance, raised by the experience of the SA-GLW relationship so far. Following intense debate the National Executive agreed by a narrow margin to support our recommendations to stick with the arrangements originally adopted.

The verbal introduction to this counter-motion is reproduced immediately below. It should be read alongside the SA-GLW counter-motion itself (Appendix 1) and the SA-GLW Board Report and Recommendations (Appendix 2). The original SA-GLW protocols and other documents previously adopted by the Socialist Alliance National Executive and the 2004 National Conference are available in earlier issues of *Alliance Voices*.

Any Socialist Alliance member who wishes to discuss the issues raised by this debate in the lead-up to Conference is urged to contact us. Louise Walker: at home in Melbourne (after 7pm) on 03 9808 7815; Lalitha Chelliah at home in Melbourne on 03 9355 8874, or Raul Bassi in Sydney on 0403 037376.

Verbal introduction to the SA National Executive in support of SA-GLW counter-motion delivered by Louise Walker

Many comrades here today were part of the National Executive back when I moved the motion for us to go ahead and trial a relationship between the Socialist Alliance and the Green Left Weekly. Many were not. Four years of history have accumulated for the Socialist Alliance project, and, fortunately for those new to this organisation, it is not necessary to understand all of that history in order to make sense of what is happening in the organisation now.

However, the key differences between the three approaches to taking the organisation forward that are being put forward are important to this discussion. They underpin the difference in our visions not only about the possibilities and potential of the SA-GLW trial for the Socialist Alliance, but also, ultimately about whether or not the Socialist Alliance is lead down a dead-end for the left. Therefore I'm going to talk a bit about the characteristics of those different approaches, in order to frame the discussion about the SA-GLW motion.

- The first model envisaged for the Socialist Alliance is termed the Electoral United Front. It is a coalition of the currently separate small socialist groups of highly politically developed activists on the one hand, and many socialist individuals with a much more diverse, but nevertheless progressive, political heritage and outlook on the other. With this model, non-affiliated members are meant to be mobilised around elections, and can be certain of nothing more in the way of a rounded political home. The Socialist Alliance in England was an example of this, and RESPECT in England is another example of this. This has been the preferred organisational model of the smaller original affiliates of Socialist Alliance including the International Socialist Organisation, the Freedom Socialist Party and Workers Power, but the DSP and some non-affiliated members have seen the need and potential for the Alliance to be much more. Raul, Lali and I have agreed with the DSP that the Alliance has to become and can become much more than that both to be successful and in fact even to reach its potential of initiating a fresh, new socialist movement in Australia.

- The second approach is based on the Scottish Socialist Party-style project, where small socialist groups of highly politically developed activists of various strands, and individual active socialists, group together at the centre of the organisation and steer it, while other socialists who are not highly politically developed activists or who do not wish to

commit to steering such an organisation with those socialists, again have certainty of little more in the way of a political home over which they can influence the direction, that broadly reflects their political ideas, and can be integrated into their lives. Until recently this was seen as the way to go primarily by the DSP leadership, although now they appear to be considering returning to a Electoral United Front model. This Scottish Socialist Party style formation has been misunderstood by many people, including them, as being able to produce a genuine multi-tendency socialist party in the Australian context. Like John Percy said, no-one has a map, and although we have had sharp disagreements with the DSP leadership about this, it must be said that the DSP deserve respect and acknowledgement for having a go at getting the socialist movement cohered and working together. However, it has never been an organisational form that Raul, Lali and I have thought would be successful in the Australian political context. We believe that if we continue to follow it, the Socialist Alliance will fail.

- That brings me to the third approach, which is our idea of a better organisational form. This form we believe to hold much more promise of success for the rejuvenation of the socialist movement in Australia, and we believe it is an organisational form more suited to becoming a multi-tendency socialist party. The principal elements underlying our 'third way' approach (if you'll pardon the arcane socialist reference), are outlined in the letters Lalitha, Raul and I wrote to the DSP in March and April, that I forwarded to you late last week. Many NE members will have read those letters, but many others will not. Those elements include developing a structure and better practices for fostering and supporting new socialist leaders and fresh socialist thought in Australia through the Alliance, while also ensuring that existing and new groups of socialists are able to maintain their specific socialist identity within the organisation. All would be ensured a platform for promoting their ideas to a wider political audience. We believe that if these elements were to underpin the Socialist Alliance's structures and practices, we could also attract more socialist individuals and groups who have stayed out of the Alliance up until now, by providing them with confidence that they do not have to give up their particular socialist identity or method of organising simply to join the project.

So that's a long introduction to the specific question of the SA-GLW motions before you, but hopefully it provides for some understanding of where we're all coming from.

That basis allows me to now turn to the few general things that I want to say about what is wrong with the SA-GLW Board's recommendations, and what it would mean for the Alliance if we continue toward the SSP-style model I outlined above that the DSP leadership has been trying to work with, whether consciously or unconsciously, in their attempt to implement the decisions of past conferences. This criticism is not an attack on the DSP itself, but rather a disagreement with its leadership within the Alliance.

The SA-GLW trial has been a cornerstone project for the transformation of the Socialist Alliance from a united-front style electoral alliance into an MTSP. If the National Executive adopts the recommendations of the SA-GLW Board we will turn our backs upon the original purpose and direction of the SA-GLW partnership.

As outlined in the rationale to our motion, if the Socialist Alliance adopts the recommendations of the SA-GLW Board, this means actually collapsing the work of the SA-GLW Board into the Green Left Weekly Editorial Board itself.

The protocols and structure that were developed and adopted were designed to enable the SA-GLW Board to busy itself with the work of securing articles and other contributions from non-DSP members of the Socialist Alliance, and to busy itself with negotiating space in Green Left Weekly for such articles to be published. This separate Board had to be established to do that job because DSP members were already completely oriented toward writing for Green Left Weekly, and to carry out this project the Alliance needed a dedicated group of people who were charged with helping other Socialist Alliance members to collaborate on the project.

The protocols governing the SA-GLW Board, and its relationship to Green Left Weekly itself, were adopted to ensure that the work of Green Left Weekly could (1) continue unhindered by the often deep political differences and other problems in the Socialist Alliance, (2) ensure that if there was a problem with political disagreement on the SA-GLW Board, Green Left Weekly could function, and (3) if it could not secure promised articles for the paper that the paper would continue to be produced. The protocols also ensured authors who provided articles that were rejected either by the SA-GLW Board or the GLW Board had a right of appeal, which ultimately tracked back to the National Convenors and the GLW Editor in Chief.

That is, the SA-GLW Board and the protocols were established precisely for the purpose of transformation of Green Left Weekly as a precursor to ultimately integrating the work of the two Boards. The 2004 Conference adopted a process that required the actual integration of the variety of political voices of SA within the pages of GLW before it can proceed further. Removing small affiliate, dissenting and alternative socialist voices, failing to encourage SA members with diverse political views on to the SA-GLW Board, and making life difficult for people who were on the SA-GLW Board because of strongly held political differences, is to walk away from the SA-GLW trial's core purpose.

So, unfortunately, there is nothing in the SA-GLW Board report to demonstrate that this transformation of GLW is currently occurring. The bulk of articles that take up SA movement work feature prominent SA comrades, and are part of the normal editorial work of the GLW Board itself through DSP contributors. The 'Our Common Cause Column' is largely written by people who would already find their opinions in the pages of Green Left Weekly. In a nutshell, the SA-GLW Board has been struggling with its charter.

This does not mean that the Socialist Alliance should walk away from the project. We should continue the relationship rather than skipping the vital intermediate process of integrating and reflecting the diverse voices of SA as we originally envisaged. We recognise that making GLW look and feel like something that SA's non-DSP membership would embrace as their paper is not an easy task. But it also holds tremendous promise for the possibility of developing

a broad, diverse, inclusive socialist organisation through SA, and one which has the potential to develop fresh socialist voices with plenty of energy and a passion for the social change we're all looking for.

That's why we're saying let's stick with the vision of the project. Let's stick with the current protocols. If the SA-GLW Board needs more support from SA members, let's help them find that. If the SA-GLW Board is having trouble with any aspect of its charter, let's hear from them and respond to that with a collaborative and supportive attitude.

Before I finish, I want to say this. I wasn't an active member of the Socialist Alliance when the DSP made its offer to provide resources and space in the pages of GLW to the Socialist Alliance. That doesn't stop me from being able to see the misunderstandings that exist for many about the SA-GLW relationship. Many of those misunderstandings are shared by members of the SA-GLW Editorial Board, members of the DSP leadership, all of the smaller affiliates who have expressed strong opinions against it since it was first proposed, and other valued comrades in our organisation.

So to those new members of the NE who may feel under-prepared for making a decision on the future of the SA-GLW project, my advice is try not to let the sudden deluge of argument that is now surrounding our debates on the future of SA obscure the main points that need to be grasped in order to make your decision today. Your decision is important, as it will send a signal to the National Conference about what one of its elected decision-making and leadership bodies thinks the future of the Alliance should be. However, having said that, there will be more debate, discussion and clarification over the future of the Socialist Alliance over the next few weeks and at Conference, before a decision is made.

To those who are still not sure where you stand on the wider question of the best direction for the Socialist Alliance I urge you to vote against the recommendations of the SA-GLW Board, which is actually part of a wider process of 'consolidating' the Alliance in the SSP-style model I talked about earlier.

Finally, if I haven't convinced you of the good reasons for the current arrangements, I urge you to vote for our motion on the basis that you and all of the membership yet to become informed about the emerging political perspectives for the Alliance, at least will have more time to think about and discuss the future of the Alliance as whole before making a final decision.

Appendix 1

Counter-motion on the SA-GLW trial project and recommendations of the SA-GLW Board

Motion moved by Louise Walker, Lalitha Chelliah and Raul Bassi (non-affiliated National Convenors of the Socialist Alliance)

The National Executive of the Socialist Alliance reaffirms its commitment to the trial relationship with Green Left Weekly, as agreed in November, 2003, the protocols that were accepted by Conference in 2004 and changes adopted in the review of December 2004, all with a view to transforming GLW into the paper of the Alliance.

The National Executive of the Socialist Alliance reaffirms the structure and spirit established by these protocols, which were for diverse political representation on the SA-GLW Editorial Board, and they reflect the diversity of the Alliance as an organisation in transition to becoming a multi-tendency socialist party (MTSP). They do this through the inclusion of a minimum of one dedicated position representing the interests of small affiliates and a majority of Board positions allocated to non-DSP representatives, elected from the floor of National Conference.

The National Executive of the Socialist Alliance reaffirms that the size of the Board remain at least at 12, as decided by the 2004 National Conference, with the aim of developing more active participation of those SA members on it.

Rationale:

We appreciate the work of those on the SA-GLW Editorial Board over the period between the 2004 National Conference and now, and thank comrades for the time and effort they have put into it. As the resolution above indicates, we support the Socialist Alliance continuing a trial relationship with GLW over the coming year.

However, the SA-GLW Board report and recommendations before the National Executive do not accord with the spirit and purpose of the SA-GLW trial as adopted by the 2004 Conference. If they are adopted they would, in practice, mean the collapsing of the work of the SA-GLW Board into the work of the GLW Editorial Board itself.

The SA-GLW trial has been a cornerstone project for the transformation of the Socialist Alliance from a united-front style electoral alliance into an MTSP. The existing SA-GLW protocols and structure are precisely for the purpose of transformation as a precursor to the integration of the work of the two Boards. The process adopted by 2004 Conference requires the actual integration of the political diversity of SA within the pages of GLW before it can proceed to the step of integrating with the GLW Board and, finally, get SA to the point where it can identify GLW as its own paper.

Removing small affiliate and/or dissenting voices from the SA-GLW Board is to walk away from the SA-GLW trial's core purpose: planning, initiating, demonstrating and winning the case for transformation and political integration.

There is nothing in the SA-GLW Board report to demonstrate that the requisite transformation of

GLW content has occurred or is occurring. Furthermore, the bulk of articles that take up SA movement work feature prominent SA members such as Chris Cain and Craig Johnston, and are part of the normal editorial work of the GLW Board itself through DSP contributors. That reporting would appear in GLW in any case - without the existence of SA-GLW Board itself. There is also quite a bit of anecdotal evidence to suggest that the SA-GLW Board has been struggling with its charter. For example, it has had trouble gaining copy from even a diverse range of new SA voices for Our Common Cause, the regular Socialist Alliance column.

This does not mean that the Socialist Alliance should walk away from the project. We should neither abandon the relationship altogether nor skip the essential intermediate step of integrating and reflecting the diverse voices of SA as we originally decided. Making GLW look and feel like something that SA's non-DSP membership would embrace as their paper is not an easy task. That is the precise challenge for the SA-GLW Board, and SA as a whole, if it is to become something completely new to the Australian socialist left: a multi-tendency socialist party.

Appendix 2

Revised Report and Proposals: Socialist Alliance-Green Left Weekly Editorial Board, April 2005.

Preamble

Green Left Weekly is the best known, most widely read paper of the left in Australia, with a broad coverage of a range of issues and perspectives from the socialist left, radical environmentalists, minority groups, and trade unionists, with the ability to command the support of respected and internationally renowned journalists such as John Pilger. The Green Left Weekly website is the most visited political website in Australia, now averaging more than 10,000 hits per day. Since early 2004 Green Left Weekly and Socialist Alliance have been engaged in a trial partnership governed by a set of protocols agreed between SA and GLW. In particular, GLW has made available: space for a regular weekly column Our Common Cause; free advertising for SA and discounted rates for SA members and affiliates; and, overall, and second to none, the type of coverage and exposure appropriate for a nascent political party like SA. The present report should be read against the background of a number of decisions by the Socialist Alliance National Convenors, National Executive, and National Conference. In the wake of the Socialist Alliance 2003 National Conference decision to progress SA in the direction of "a single, multi-tendency socialist party", the DSP made a number of proposals to the Socialist Alliance with the aim of facilitating "radically broader access and involvement of SA in GLW" (See *Alliance Voices* Vol 3, no 10, September 2003 for the full text of the DSP's letter). The DSP's proposal was subsequently accepted for a trial period by the SA National Executive on November 14 2003 (See *Alliance Voices* Vol 3 no 12, November 2003 for the full motion). On December 12 2003 the SA National Executive accepted the SA National Convenors recommendation to "initiate a 4-month trial period for SA to undertake an editorial role on GLW" and to establish a 9-person Editorial Board whose work would include "1. Securing access for SA members and affiliates and soliciting relevant material. 2. Preparing material that informs and promotes SA to GLW readers on behalf of SA. 3. Oversighting the public presentation of SA within GLW, and adjudicating any issues regarding publication of SA material that may arise with the GLW editorial committee, including further consultation with NC and NE as required. 4. Establishing draft protocols for working with the GLW editorial committee on behalf of SA, including recommendations for NC and NE consideration and ratification as required" (See *Alliance Voices* Vol 3 no 13 December 2003). The December 2003 National Executive motion was subsequently reaffirmed by the National Convenors when they rejected the "A paper of the Alliance, for the Alliance petition" on February 23 2004 (See *Alliance Voices* Vol 14 no 1 March 2004). The June 2004 National Conference of Socialist Alliance decided "to continue the relationship developed in the trial period, including the functioning of the editorial board in the capacity spelled out in its original charter motion of 12 December 2003 and with the additional charge of increasing collaboration with the GLW editorial team with a view to increasing the Socialist Alliance's editorial input into, and involvement in the production of, Green Left Weekly" (See *Alliance Voices* Vol 14 no 12 June 2004). Subsequently, on December 12 2004 the Socialist Alliance National Executive accepted the GLW-SA Editorial Board's recommendation "that the National Executive continue the existing relationship with Green Left Weekly and attempt during the next six months to take some modest steps forwards with a constructive engagement in the broader editorial process" (see *Alliance Voices* Vol 4 no 16 December 2004).

Alliance Voices can be downloaded at <http://www.socialist-alliance.org/idbpage.php>

1. The charter for the trial period was outlined in the protocols agreed to between Socialist Alliance and Green Left Weekly in 2003 and endorsed by the February 2004 National Executive. The main objectives are set out as follows:
2. "This first set of protocols between Socialist Alliance and Green Left Weekly has as its main objectives (a) encouraging and securing greater access and input by the Socialist Alliance, its members and affiliates into Green Left Weekly; and (b) placing the projection of Socialist Alliance within Green Left Weekly in the hands of an editorial body that is accountable to and appointed by the Socialist Alliance."
3. As affirmed by the GLW-SA editorial board and the Socialist Alliance NE in November and December 2004 the first objective (a) has been achieved during this trial period up to December 2004, and we now note that it has also been achieved up to April 2005. For the period up to November 2004, see the appendices to the November GLW-SA board resolution. For the period between November 2004 and April 2005, see the back issues of GLW available on <http://www.greenleft.org.au>
4. Objective (b) has also been met. During the trial period so far only one article submitted by a Socialist Alliance member has been rejected by GLW editors as not suitable for publication in the paper. That article (by Michael Morphett) was discussed by the SA-GLW editorial board that agreed that it was not suitable. It was subsequently withdrawn by the author. Only one complaint from an SA member (David Glanz) has been received. This concerned an OCC column by James Vassilopoulos and a comment and analysis piece by Dick Nichols. The GLW-SA editorial board rejected both complaints.
5. Green Left Weekly editorials have been written within the framework of SA policy, as agreed, and no objections to any of these have been recorded by the board from within the board or the broader SA membership.

6. The Our Common Cause feature has been flourishing, with columns in every issue of GLW since the inception of the column in early 2004. In the period since the December 2004 Socialist Alliance NE's ratification of a more relaxed set of guidelines, the following columns have appeared:

- Money for tsunami victims, not war: SA national convenors
- Drop the charges against refugee-rights activists!: SA National Convenors
- United action can stop anti-union laws: Sue Bolton
- Che's face still stirs rage on injustice: James Vassilopoulos
- Socialist Alliance condemns torture of Habib: Raul Bassi
- The ALP: Swapping deckchairs on the Titanic: Dave Riley
- No black-out! No whitewash!: Ray Jackson
- There is a real election on in Western Australia: Ian Jamieson
- Bring the troops home — don't send more!: SA National Convenors
- Money for aid, not war: SA National Convenors
- Those who pay the piper call the tune: Alex Miller
- The commandment of 'mutual obligation': Dave Riley
- Unity needed to reawaken the sleeping giant: Pip Hinman
- United action can stop anti-union laws: Sue Bolton
- Seeing Red web page launched: Dick Nichols
- May Day Greetings: Craig Johnston
- Make IR 'Reform' Howard's Poll Tax: Alex Miller (pending)

The Board notes that of these 17 columns, only 6 are authored by members of SA who are also members of the DSP.

7. In December 2004, the NE accepted the GLW-SA board's proposal that SA "continue the existing relationship with Green Left Weekly and attempt during the next six months to take some modest steps forwards with a constructive engagement in the broader editorial process. The SA- GL copy e-list offers a practical medium in which this can be done. Board members should join this e-list to participate in this process". Since then GLW-SA board members have initiated two weblogs to facilitate the integration of SA into the GLW editorial process. See <http://greenleftweekly.blogspot.com/> and <http://saglw.blogspot.com/> These can now be accessed directly through the Alliance's national web page

8. In line with the GLW-SA board and Socialist Alliance NE decisions in November and December 2004, the GLW editors draft plan for each approaching issue is now submitted for discussion to the copy list as part of the protocols commitment. It is also submitted to the GLW-SA writers blog that is in the process of being established (see below).

9. As the GLW-SA board now views matters, the main task of Socialist Alliance vis a vis GLW is to come up with concrete, workable proposals aimed at furthering the GLW-SA partnership, in particular, in the words of the November 2003 NE resolution, to "negotiating the integration of GLW and SA editorial committees and the transformation of GLW into the national weekly newspaper of SA". Although progress has been made in this direction, the nature of the board's composition has been a frustrating factor in developing the partnership along these lines. The composition of the current board - reflecting a variety of positions within SA on the GLW-SA project as well as on the transformation of SA into a MTSP - has meant that the board, instead of getting on with the concrete work of facilitating the development of the partnership, has instead provided a vehicle for recycling debates that have already been settled within SA. We believe that this was a mistake, and that we need a "working" rather than a "pontifical" or "senatorial" board. The board's job should be to find ways of implementing the decisions of the national conference regarding the GLW-SA relationship, not recycling old debates. Those debates should of course be continued if comrades see fit, but we believe that the proper vehicle for this is Alliance Voices. With this in mind, the board proposes the following resolutions:

Resolutions

1. That the protocols agreed on in February 2004 be adopted, with the effect of putting the GLW- SA partnership on an ongoing footing.
2. That the current editorial liaison board be replaced by a smaller board consisting of six members, elected by slate at the SA national conference. The board is conceived of as a working group and should not be tied down by revisiting debates that have already been democratically settled within SA. This smaller board will continue the current work of the GLW-SA board, and also make a concerted effort to exploit the current resources - copy list, weblogs - to make progress on developing the GLW-SA partnership. The board will report to the December 2005 NE on progress made towards this end.
3. That the board expresses its thanks to the GLW owners, editor and staff for their encouragement, cheerful cooperation, and commitment to the Socialist Alliance.
4. That in the light of the impetus the SA has received through this partnership the board encourages individual Alliance members who support this project to support it further by *voluntarily* contributing financially, *voluntarily* subscribing to, and *voluntarily* helping to distribute Green Left Weekly.
5. That it be noted that this is not a resolution recommending that Green Left Weekly, as it currently is, be adopted as "the SA paper", lock, stock, and barrel. The board encourages constructive debate from all quarters on how, with GLW as a starting point, the development of an SA newspaper can proceed. Nothing is ruled out a priori. The board encourages affiliates of the Alliance with their own publications, such as Socialist Worker, to consider ways of pooling

their resources with those of GLW to create an even more effective vehicle for left regroupment in Australia. The door is open.

Alex Miller, Dave Riley

Resolutions on SA's trade union work

The following resolutions on Socialist Alliance's trade union work were adopted by the National Executive on May 29, to be put to the 2005 National Conference:

1. The draconian nature of the new anti-union legislation means that the major focus of SA's union work over the next period will be:
 - (i) building cross-union resistance against the Howard government's anti-union laws;
 - (ii) building up the strength of our own unions and workplaces in order to resist the increased attacks on unions;
 - (iii) providing solidarity to any group of unionists that is being specifically targeted;
 - (iv) putting pressure on the ALP to vote against the proposed anti-union legislation, but also to commit to repealing *all* of the anti-union legislation, including the Workplace Relations Act, when next in office.

While SA unionists will be involved in other campaigns in addition to the anti-Howard campaign – local workplace disputes, enterprise bargaining campaigns, solidarity campaigns, health & safety issues, maternity leave and equal pay campaigns, stolen wages etc – these campaigns will be effected by the extent of union struggle against the anti-union laws. And the localized campaigns can flare up into significant tests of strength against the Howard government's anti-union laws.

2. For a trade union-community alliance to be real, SA unionists need to advocate that the unions should call on all sections of the community which will suffer from the Howard government attacks – welfare recipients, Aborigines, refugees, and others – to join them in united action against the government's attacks.

3. That after Craig Johnston's release, we discuss with him the possibility of a national speaking tour.

4. Hold more of a range of trade union seminars and films which include elements of historical experience, education, and training, as well as tactical issues in the movement.

5. Update and reprint the Socialist Alliance trade union pamphlet.

6. That SA unionists actively build union support for the campaigns against the Iraq war, for international solidarity, and for refugee rights.

7. Further improve the functioning of our union caucuses and organization of our union members by:

- (i) Organizing more district-wide cross union caucuses so that SA unionists can maximize our impact in alliance with other progressive unionist for a more militant union response to the government's anti-union agenda.
- (ii) Seeking out SA members who would be prepared to convene union caucuses which don't currently have convenors.
- (iii) Seek to involve more of a range of SA members at all levels of our union work – union specific caucuses, cross-city caucuses, the national trade union committee, the planning out of SA union seminars.

Resolutions on Constitution amendments

The following amendments to the Socialist Alliance Constitution were adopted by the National Executive on May 29, 2005, and will be moved at the national conference by the NE.

1. At the end of 6.9, which currently reads:

“The implementation of policy and new activities between Conferences, and the organisation of annual and any other Conferences, shall be carried out by the National Executive, and any national body constituted by the National Conference.”

add the words:

“or National Executive”.

Rationale

This corrects an inconsistency in the Constitution, which allows, in section 6.4, the National Executive as well as the National Conference to constitute national bodies.

2. Amend 8.8, which currently reads:

“Where branch meetings will conduct elections for office bearers, delegates or candidate pre-selections (except where a public election called at short notice makes this notice impossible), then 28 days' notice of the meeting and the intended ballot should be given to all members. Nothing in this section removes the responsibility of branch officials to carry out directions/policies of the state or national conference as appropriate.”

to read:

“Where branch meetings will conduct elections for office bearers, delegates or candidate pre-selections (except where a public election called at short notice makes this notice impossible), or consider a motion to close the branch, then 28 days’ notice of the meeting and the intended ballot or motion shall be given to all members of that branch, and the National Conveners shall be advised of the motion.”

Rationale

This amendment was decided by the National Executive at its March 13, 2005, meeting.

Amendment to the National Executive resolutions on Building Socialist Alliance

By Daniel Jardine (Adelaide branch and National Executive member)

Motion

That resolution 11 from the NE on Building Socialist Alliance be dropped and that there is no SA constitutional change relating the entitlement of branches to National Conference delegates to the branch having paid the national pledge while the national pledge is voluntary.

Rationale

Resolution 11 from the NE on Building Socialist Alliance assed on the 22nd of May stated: That a clause be added to the SA Constitution requiring branches to have paid their NE-ratified national pledge in full in order to be entitled to elect delegates to national conferences.

Amongst the other Building Socialist Alliance resolutions it is proposed that the national pledge be revised so that it may be negotiable between the national office of Socialist Alliance and the branches. This was always the case but it is now to be formalized. Although it is not stated explicitly, the payment of the national pledge is voluntary. That is, that the branch can decide to pay the targeted amount of \$1 per week per member or it can elect to pay a different amount or, in fact, nothing.

The problem with Resolution 11 is that it leads to a situation where branches are (by default) encouraged to determine a minimal amount as a pledge payment to the national office, otherwise they may find themselves in the situation where they are not entitled to any conference delegates, by virtue of not having paid any national financial pledges.

I believe, but don't have an old copy of the constitution to confirm, that under the previous National office funding arrangement where it received 25% of membership dues there was a requirement to have paid this in order to have conference delegates. This could be implemented, as the collection of membership dues was compulsory in accordance with the constitution: it was a set amount depending on the number of people joining the branch. The current national pledge is voluntary for the branches, so in practice this means that there cannot be a compulsion on branches to make any payment.

The current situation with the National pledge is that the money received by the national office is less than one third of the amount pledged and this is with some branches negotiating an amount less than the \$1 per member per branch. If Resolution 11 applied at the 2005 conference on the figures presented at the NE of the 22nd of May, only 1 branch would be allowed delegates, of course having the resolution in place may make all the other branches pay up but that would be a significant financial cost on branches on top of paying conference registration fees.

What is more likely to happen is that branches opt for a low national pledge, hence the motivation for the payment of a national pledge becomes self-defeating, in the absence of any other motivation. The national pledge should be about encouraging branches to contribute to the functioning of Socialist Alliance at a National level not perceived as a punishment for failing to do something that is deemed to be voluntary.

Proposal to back National John Pat Day Rallies

By Ray Jackson (Sydney Central branch), Alison Thorne (Wills branch) and Sam Watson (Brisbane South branch)

At the 2004 Socialist Alliance National Conference delegates voted unanimously in support of the proposal “The coroner must hear our rage!” where we vowed to mobilise our members and supporters in solidarity with the Hickey family around demands for justice for TJ Hickey.

Socialist Alliance should be proud of what we have contributed to the broader fight to end Indigenous deaths in custody over the last year. Around the country we took up the Indigenous Social Justice Association (ISJA) petition demanding a fresh inquiry into the death of TJ Hickey. In both Sydney and Melbourne we responded to ISJA’s call for a National Day of Action by playing a key leadership role in organising successful rallies in support of the petition’s

demands. Sydney comrades helped organise further rallies and Melbourne comrades were amongst those who mobilised a Solidarity from the South Team which travelled to Sydney for the Easter International rally in Redfern.

Brisbane comrades have played a central role in building solidarity with the Palm Island community in the aftermath of the death of Mulrunji Doomadgee.

Comrades around the country are organising in support of Letty Scott's tenacious twenty year struggle to prove the murder of her husband Douglas in Darwin's Berrimah prison in 1985. Darwin comrades have been an invaluable source of information through regular news stories in *Green Left Weekly* reporting developments in Letty's case in the Darwin Supreme Court. Melbourne comrades are fund-raising for a proposed Victorian speaking tour for Letty Scott later in 2005.

Affiliate publications — *Socialist Worker*, *Green Left Weekly* and *Freedom Socialist Bulletin* — have all helped build these campaigns by giving prominent coverage to the ongoing campaigns around the country to end Indigenous deaths in custody.

We have put our words into action!

Looking backwards — Looking forwards!

The prominence of the Hickey, Doomadgee and Scott campaigns have resulted in a greater public awareness of the broader issues surrounding Indigenous deaths in custody and created the potential for a heightened level of activism. We propose that campaigning to hold the racist state accountable for its crimes remain a Socialist Alliance *priority* for the upcoming year.

The Indigenous Social Justice Association is developing a call for John Pat Rallies to be held around the country this September. Let's back this call.

On September 28, 1983, John Pat — a sixteen year old Aboriginal teenager — was found dead in a police cell in Roebourne. Seven months later, an all white jury acquitted five police officers charged with the manslaughter of John Pat. The jury had heard 57 witnesses tell how a group of drunken cops provoked a fight with Pat and other young Indigenous people. The young people were arrested and, according to witnesses, were systematically bashed. John Pat died and two of his friends were hospitalised. While the five cops were let off, some of the teenagers served prison sentences as a result of events that night.

The death of John Pat, like that of TJ Hickey twenty-one years later, sparked community outrage and activism. The Committee to Defend Black Rights was formed and, amongst other things, organised protest marches around the country to mark Pat's death and demand justice. In 1986 the third anniversary of Pat's death was the catalyst for a national speaking tour of relatives of Aboriginal people who had died in custody in the previous three years. Relatives of John Pat joined family members grieving the deaths of Robert Walker, Tony King, Charlie Michael, Dixon Green and Eddie Murray to demand justice. This campaign eventually resulted in the establishment of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody and the birth of the NSW Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Watch Committee in 1987. During the 1990s, this committee, held politically effective John Pat protest marches several years in row.

Now, it is once again the time to mobilise around this anniversary.

We need to finish the struggle by ending Indigenous deaths in custody *permanently*. In 1991 the Royal Commission handed down 339 Recommendations. One was rejected by the Hawke Government and the other 338 accepted.

One recommendation of the Royal Commission was to install video monitoring equipment in prison watch houses to be taping 24 hours a day. The Doomadgee family has accused the police of deliberately switching this equipment off in the Palm Island Watch house in the period immediately prior to Mulrunji's death.

Most of the recommendations of the Royal Commission — and certainly those with real teeth — have not been implemented. For example, recommendation 92 states "imprisonment should be utilised as a sanction of last resort."

Despite the fine words of recommendation 92, Indigenous Australians are massively over represented in prisons and are frequently jailed simply for being poor and black. Indigenous Australians are 29 times more likely to be imprisoned than non-Indigenous Australians.

Recommendation 122 relates to duty of care. This has been ignored by those with the responsibility to exercise this duty of care. Indigenous Australians are 2% of the population but 11% of those killed in custody.

Around Australia, more prisons are being constructed. Some of these are under private management. In Victoria, the Port Phillip Prison was built *after* the findings of the Royal Commission were released. It was constructed with hanging points, despite the clear recommendations that these must be eliminated.

The Carr Government in NSW has committed itself to another 500 bed prison. NSW will have 10,000 inmates by 2007 - 08 and about 2,000 of these will be blackfellas!

The treatment of Indigenous young people is a scandal. Indigenous youth comprise 40% of the juvenile justice population! More than 60% of the Indigenous population is under the age of 25 and 50% are under 18. Too many of these young people will see the inside of a prison, often for little more than the "crime" of being black. This is a ticking time bomb.

The outcome of the Royal Commission was 339 recommendations — most ignored — and not a single custodial officer found guilty for their crimes.

Shame, shame, shame! Let's seize the time!

Proposal

We recommend the following motion for discussion during the Australian politics session at National Conference.

“Socialist Alliance will continue our efforts to hold police, prison officers and the racist state to account for its role in the deaths of TJ Hickey, Mulrunji Doomadgee and Douglas Scott among others.

We support calls for protests to be held around Australia to mark John Pat Day on September 23 or 24, 2005 and will, as our resources permit, commit to work with others to build broad, democratic coalitions to organise the protests and foster collaborative relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous activists.”

National Conference draft agenda

The May 29 National Executive meeting adopted the following provisional agenda for the 2005 National Conference and empowered the National Conveners to prepare amendments to this agenda to enable a discussion about general perspectives for Socialist Alliance (see the call below) and for conducting small group discussion around reports as time permits.

SUNDAY, JUNE 12

8.00am Registration opens
9.00-9.10am Welcome (both Indigenous and SA)
9.10-9.30am Procedural motions
9.30-9.50am Australian Political Situation report
9.50-11.30am Australian Political Situation resolutions and discussion
11.30-11.45am Morning Tea
11.45am-12.05pm Trade Union Work report
12.05am-1.00pm Trade Union Work resolutions and discussion

1.00-2.00pm LUNCH

2.00-2.20pm Building the Socialist Alliance report
2.20-4.15pm Building the Socialist Alliance resolutions and discussion
4.15-4.30pm Afternoon Tea
4.30-6.30pm Publications
(i) 4.30-5.15pm Seeing Red reports and resolutions
(ii) 5.15-6.30pm SA-GLW reports and resolutions

6.30-7.30pm Presentation by New Zealand comrades Mike Treen and Grant Morgan, followed by discussion, Trades Hall bar

7.30pm Conference Dinner (Trades Hall bar)

MONDAY, JUNE 13

8.30am Registration opens
9.00-9.20am Anti-war and International Solidarity report
9.20-10.00am Anti-war and International Solidarity resolutions and discussion
10.00-10.15 Morning Tea
10.15-12.30pm Leadership bodies & Constitution amendments
12.30-1.30pm LUNCH
1.30-2.30pm Leadership bodies & Constitution amendments continued
2.30pm Election/s of leadership bodies
5.00pm Conference close

Call from the National Executive for “perspectives” presentations to the national conference

The discussion in Alliance Voices and various SA leadership bodies in the lead-up to the 2005 national conference has indicated that there are a variety of general perspectives for the Alliance’s development being presented by different groups of members. At its meeting on May 29, the SA National Executive therefore decided that some space should be made in the national conference agenda for a general perspectives discussion.

In order to work out how best to accommodate this discussion in the conference agenda, the National Conveners are asking any member/s who want to present, at the conference, a general perspective for the future of the Alliance to contact us by no later than June 5. Please email ne@socialist-alliance.org or phone 02-9690 2508.

Any proposals from the National Conveners for amendments to the conference agenda to facilitate this discussion will be put to delegates at the beginning of the conference.