

Keith Locke: Socialist Action League founder, Green MP and defender of New Zealand imperialism

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Keith Locke, who was a leading member of the Pabloite Socialist Action League (SAL) in New Zealand from 1969–1985 and a Green Party MP from 1999–2011, died on June 21 at the age of 80. His death prompted fawning tributes from the media and all sides of the country’s political establishment.

The Green Party’s current co-leaders Marama Davidson and Chlöe Swarbrick hailed him as “a shining light for the rights of people and planet.”

Kiwiblog editor David Farrar, a prominent figure in the ruling National Party, called Locke “a lovely, nice person whom you could engage with at length constructively.” Opposition Labour Party MP Phil Twyford, who attended Locke’s funeral, wrote on Facebook hailing “Keith’s political activism going back to the anti-Vietnam War protests in the 1960s and pretty much every progressive cause since then.”

The pseudo-left International Socialist Organisation (ISO), which supports Labour and the Greens, wrote on Facebook: “Keith’s earlier work building the Socialist Action League helped re-introduce anti-Stalinist Marxism into these islands [as] a living current and, whatever our disagreements with his political analysis since then, all of his contributions were towards a world free of war and oppression.”

Nothing could be further from the truth. The reality is that from the very beginning of his political life, Locke consciously rejected the fight for international socialist revolution. His career as a capitalist politician was the logical outcome of his Pabloite politics, which rejected the essential political foundation of Marxism—the revolutionary role of the working class.

The SAL was founded in 1969 as the New Zealand section of the United Secretariat (USec), a revisionist tendency led by Michel Pablo and Ernest Mandel, which emerged within the Fourth International during the early 1950s and sought to liquidate the Trotskyist movement.

The Fourth International had been founded in 1938 by Leon Trotsky as the world party that would lead the fight for socialism by breaking the stranglehold of the Stalinist bureaucracy over the workers’ movement. The Pabloites rejected this perspective. Drawing extremely pessimistic conclusions from the temporary stabilisation of capitalism and the apparent strength of the Stalinist regimes, Pablo asserted that the Fourth International was incapable of leading mass revolutionary struggles and that Stalinism would be compelled by mass pressure to project a revolutionary orientation.

The International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) was established in 1953 to fight for the principles of orthodox Trotskyism against Pablo and Mandel, who insisted that the perspective of building independent Marxist parties to lead the working class in a world revolution was hopeless. They ordered the sections of the Fourth International to dissolve themselves into the existing mass movements

variously dominated by Stalinist, bourgeois nationalist and reformist parties, falsely claiming they could be pressured to the left.

In 1961–63, the ICFI was compelled to wage a political fight against the reunification of the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which had led the struggle against Pablo and Mandel in the 1950s, with the Pabloite international which became the United Secretariat (USec).

Pabloism’s liquidationist program had catastrophic consequences everywhere it was implemented. In Sri Lanka, the Pabloite Lanka Sama Samaja Party entered a bourgeois coalition government in 1964, a historic betrayal that paved the way for decades of brutal civil war. In Latin America, entire sections of the Trotskyist movement were destroyed, leaving the working class without a Marxist leadership in the revolutionary struggles that would erupt, resulting in historic defeats such as the establishment of the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile.

Under the leadership of Mandel in Europe and SWP leader Joseph Hansen in the US, the sections of the USec functioned as “left wing” apologists for the Stalinist, social democratic and nationalist parties that dominated the workers’ movement.

This was the role played by the SAL in New Zealand. It was founded in close collaboration with the SWP, and Hansen assisted in training its leadership.^[1] The SAL echoed Hansen’s glorification of Castroism and similar petty-bourgeois nationalist movements, which were promoted as substitutes for the building of Marxist parties based on the working class.

This was a complete repudiation of Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution, which held that in under-developed and colonial countries the national bourgeoisie was incapable of leading the struggle against imperialism and for the democratic revolution. These tasks could only be accomplished by the working class, led by a Bolshevik-type party, as an essential component of the fight for socialism.

Locke—whose parents had both been leading members of the Stalinist NZ Communist Party—played a leading role in the founding of the SAL. He first joined USec’s Canadian section, the League for Socialist Action (LSA), in 1966 while studying sociology in Alberta. Along with other LSA members, he joined the New Democratic Party, a capitalist party similar to NZ Labour, and campaigned for it in elections. Locke then applied this political experience to building the SAL in New Zealand.

The political establishment heaped praise on Locke following his death because he and the SAL provided a vital service to the New Zealand ruling class by blocking the emergence of a revolutionary socialist movement. Amid the explosive class struggles and anti-war protests of the 1970s and 1980s, the SAL sought to politically subordinate workers and youth to the Labour Party and the Stalinist-led trade union bureaucracy, which carried out historic attacks on the working class.

After the SAL imploded at the end of the 1980s, several of its leading members joined openly capitalist parties. Locke joined the NewLabour

Party—later called the Alliance—and in 1999 he became a Green Party MP. Both parties joined right-wing Labour-led coalition governments that continued to attack workers' rights and living standards and joined illegal US imperialist wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Today, amid a historic crisis of capitalism, the ruling class feels a great need for politicians like Locke. Masses of workers are being radicalised by the genocide in Gaza, the danger of fascism and soaring social inequality, and there is growing support for socialism. The bourgeoisie is relying heavily on the trade union bureaucracy and middle-class pseudo-left groups—the political successors of the SAL—to politically subordinate workers and young people to Labour and its allies.

For those who want to build a genuine socialist leadership in the working class, it is vital to study and draw the lessons from the historic betrayals carried out by Pabloism internationally, including the SAL in New Zealand.

The SAL: a loyal adjunct of the Labour Party and the union bureaucracy

The SAL was established as the postwar economic boom was ending, triggering mass revolutionary upheavals throughout the world. The high point was the May-June 1968 general strike in France, which posed directly the question of which class would rule. The powerful movement of the French working class was eventually suppressed by the Stalinist trade union leadership, with the assistance of the French Pabloites.

In this revolutionary global context, and with class tensions sharpening in New Zealand, the SAL insisted that it was impossible to build a socialist movement independent of the Labour Party and the trade union bureaucracy, which was dominated by Stalinists and Labourites.

The Perspective for Socialism in New Zealand, a resolution adopted at the SAL's founding conference in August 1970, stated: "The clash between socialist and reformist forces in the working class will take place *within* the framework of the unions and their political arm, the Labour Party. It would be utopian to think that workers will simply line up behind the banners of small revolutionary organisations beckoning from outside the Labour Party."

This was a direct echo of Pablo's rejection of the decisive role of the Fourth International. He wrote in 1953 that "the least probable [variant] is the one where the masses, disillusioned by the reformists and Stalinists, break with their traditional mass organizations to come to polarize themselves around our present nuclei, the latter acting exclusively and essentially *in an independent manner, from without.*"

The SAL's document glorified the Labour Party as "a tremendous achievement of the working class," and said the task of socialists was to "support it at election time." At some unspecified point in the future, it said, the growth of socialist forces inside Labour would produce a split and a mass socialist party would emerge. The SAL sought affiliation to the Labour Party, which was denied, but by the 1980s many SAL members were also members of the Labour Party.

The SAL falsified Labour's history, claiming that it had been founded in 1916 as a socialist party. A resolution adopted at the SAL's conference in 1981 declared that the Labour Party's founding leaders were "class-struggle unionists and socialists" and that the party led "the struggle against the imperialist war policies of the government." The SAL denounced the founding of the New Zealand Communist Party in 1920, which initially sought correctly to break the working class from Labour and win them to a revolutionary program, as "sectarian."

In fact, Labour was always an imperialist party. Like their counterparts in Australia and Europe, New Zealand's leading union officials and social

democrats enthusiastically supported participation in World War I and called on young men to enlist to fight. This privileged labour aristocracy founded the Labour Party in order to divert the growing working-class movement against the war into a limited anti-conscription campaign, which posed no threat to the war itself or to capitalist rule.

The first Labour government, elected in 1935, enacted a number of reforms—including state housing, public healthcare and social welfare programs—in order to save capitalism from the threat of revolution brought on by the Great Depression. It then took the country into World War II in order to defend New Zealand's imperialist interests and its Pacific colonies, including Samoa. After the war, it established a close alliance with the US, which was maintained and strengthened by successive governments.

Initially, the SAL's activity was focused on the mass protests against the Vietnam War. Tens of thousands of people joined protests during the late 1960s and early 1970s, demanding an end to New Zealand's support for America's barbaric imperialist war.

The SAL sought to divert these protests into politically harmless channels. It explicitly rejected the fight for a *socialist* anti-war movement, that is, for the protesters to link up with the struggles of the working class and to develop a conscious fight against capitalism, which was the source of the war. Like the SWP in the United States, the SAL declared that slogans calling for a revolutionary victory against US imperialism were "inappropriate" and served to "unnecessarily narrow the movement." It backed the slogan "Out Now" as the best means of uniting with liberals and pacifists, and encouraged protesters to vote for Labour to bring about the withdrawal of New Zealand soldiers.^[2]

In fact, by the time Labour was elected in late 1972 almost all New Zealand troops had already been brought home. The Nixon administration in the US ended the draft in January 1973 after it became clear that the US military could not win against the Vietnamese revolutionary forces.

The election of the first Labour government in 12 years pointed to a significant leftward shift in the working class. New Zealand's economy had been severely shaken by a collapse in wool prices in 1967, which triggered rising unemployment, inflation and a recession in 1968. The National Party government responded by removing food subsidies, increasing public housing rents and electricity charges, and cutting public works expenditure.

The SAL peddled illusions that Labour would resolve the crisis. In April 1973 Locke wrote that "the pressure on the party leadership from the left is growing, and the prospects for beginning to build a socialist alternative within the party are brighter than ever."^[3]

This was a fantasy. The Labour government of Prime Minister Norman Kirk presided over the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. The global oil shocks of 1973 led to soaring costs for fuel, food and other essentials. Labour imposed the burden on the working class by ordering below-inflation pay rises.

Workers responded with a wave of militant strikes. In 1973, there were 394 work stoppages involving 115,865 workers, the highest numbers recorded up to that point. The official figures do not include hundreds more wildcat strikes, often undertaken in defiance of union officials.^[4]

The most significant strike occurred on July 1, 1974, when Bill Andersen, the leader of the Northern Drivers Union and a prominent member of the Stalinist Socialist Unity Party (SUP), was arrested for violating a court injunction against industrial action. This triggered a near-general strike, with 50,000 workers walking out in Auckland and thousands more in other centres, in actions that were largely spontaneous.

The strike caused tremendous fear in ruling circles: Kirk was prepared to impose a state of emergency and mobilise the army if necessary, as the ruling class had done during the great strike of 1913 and the 1951 waterfront dispute.

The union leadership rushed to bring the explosive situation under

control, agreeing to shut down the strike in exchange for Andersen's release after just one day. On July 22, Federation of Labour president Tom Skinner declared "it was better to minimise the dispute, not maximise it." He lashed out at workers "who think they have the right to walk off the job when it suits them."

The SAL criticised Skinner's statements and said his removal as president would strengthen the union movement.^[5] But the Pabloites tacitly accepted the shutting down of the strike and never proposed any struggle to mobilise workers against the right-wing bureaucracy, limiting themselves to giving friendly advice to the Stalinist and Labourite officials.

In response to the upsurge, the Labour government introduced tighter restrictions on the right to strike. It also sought to divide workers with a racist campaign to scapegoat Pacific Island immigrants for unemployment and the high cost of housing; hundreds of migrant families from Tonga and Samoa, in particular, were targeted by police in brutal "dawn raids" and deported. These measures were extended by the National Party government following the 1975 election.

None of this deterred the SAL from campaigning for Labour's re-election and fostering illusions that the unions would push it to the left. After the Labour government's crushing defeat in 1975, Locke wrote that the party could "come back more strongly than ever" and that it "should go out and campaign to win the majority to a socialist program, instead of defending business interests."^[6]

Meanwhile, the SAL strengthened its relations with the New Zealand Stalinists and Maoists. Like the SWP's *Militant* and other Pabloite newspapers internationally, *Socialist Action* regularly heaped praise on the most reactionary Stalinist regimes and movements.

A particularly stark example was an article by Locke in April 1975 celebrating the coming to power of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia as a "victory for humanity." Locke declared that this was part of "the world socialist revolution" and would inspire the people of Indochina.^[7] Espousing an extreme version of Maoism, Pol Pot's regime set out to create a primitive peasant-based society through the destruction of urban society and culture, killing more than two million people by 1978.

The SAL also organised a joint public forum with the SUP to defend the Soviet Union's December 1979 invasion of Afghanistan. *Socialist Action* echoed the Stalinist propaganda that it had intervened "to support a revolutionary process which has brought great benefits to the lives of the people of this economically backward country."^[8]

The invasion was not undertaken to defend any "revolutionary process" in Afghanistan. Rather, it was a defensive response to US military encroachment and efforts to destabilise the Soviet-aligned government that had alienated broad sections of the population. The invasion played directly into Washington's hands, enabling the CIA to fund and arm Islamic extremists to wage a devastating proxy war against the Soviet Union.

The SAL and the 1980s Labour government's historic attacks

The SAL's slavish pro-Labour Party politics culminated in its support for the 1984-1990 Labour government, which carried out a sweeping restructuring of the economy in favour of the corporate elite. Labour's right-wing policies, imposed with the crucial assistance of the unions, mirrored those of Margaret Thatcher's government in Britain and the US administration of Ronald Reagan, as well as the Australian Labor governments of Bob Hawke and Paul Keating.

In every country, governments responded to the globalisation of production by demolishing gains made by the working class in decades of

struggles. Social democratic parties dropped whatever remained of their national reformist programs and transformed into the direct instruments of big business, insisting that workers had to sacrifice to improve profitability and global competitiveness.

On the eve of the 1984 election, on July 13, *Socialist Action's* editorial told readers that a Labour victory would be "a setback for big business, and help to clarify for vanguard workers the path towards establishing a workers and farmers government."

The Lange government moved rapidly to drive up unemployment and reduce wages, while slashing taxes and regulations for the rich. Tens of thousands of rail workers were sacked as the network was prepared for privatisation with the help of the unions. The same process took place in the state-run forestry and coal-mining industries, where thousands of people were made redundant, turning many regional centres into ghost towns. Industries that could not compete internationally, such as auto assembly, were shut down as government protections were removed.

Overall, about 70,000 manufacturing jobs were destroyed between 1984 and 1990, in a country of just 3.3 million people.

Workers carried out hundreds of defensive struggles. In 1986, the number of working days lost to strike action reached 1,329,054, a record that remains unsurpassed. These strikes—including attempts by rail workers and meat workers to save their jobs, and by teachers and nurses to stop the cuts to public services—were isolated and sold out by the union bureaucracy, which opposed any sustained national campaign against Labour's agenda.

Throughout this litany of betrayal, the SAL sought to politically disarm workers and keep them chained to the pro-capitalist union bureaucracy. To bolster the unions' authority, the SAL had adopted the American Pabloites' "turn to industry" initiative. Beginning around 1978, SAL members including Locke applied for working-class jobs, especially in the meat processing industry. Former SAL member Phil Ferguson later wrote that the SAL "weren't interested in challenging the union officialdom, in fact they wanted good relations with left officials at the very time that an intensifying economic crisis was pushing the same officials to the right."^[9]

Socialist Action glorified bureaucrats such as the Meat Workers Union's Roger Middlemass, who played a leading role in imposing the closure of factories and tens of thousands of layoffs during the 1980s. Middlemass advocated the "orderly transition of ownership and reduction in plant capacity," insisting, "Hard decisions have to be made with far reaching consequences... The unions are prepared to accept that responsibility."^[10] Between 1986 and 1990, more than 15,000 meat workers' jobs were destroyed, cutting the industry's workforce in half.

Echoing the union leaders, the SAL accepted mass job losses as inevitable. In the meat industry, it actively undermined a united struggle against the cuts by seeking to divide workers along gender lines, insisting that "affirmative action" was needed to promote female workers.

"It has been estimated that up to a third of meat workers' jobs will be wiped out over the next 10 years through the introduction of new technology," the SAL's Eileen Morgan declared in 1984. "Measures are needed to ensure that layoffs and other cutbacks do not roll back the gains women have made, and re-establish a male jobs trust in the meat industry."^[11]

By the late 1980s, tens of thousands of people had left the Labour Party in disgust and the unions were hemorrhaging members. The SAL also lost most of its members, its pro-Labour positions having been deeply discredited. Locke left the SAL in 1985, but the exact circumstances of his departure are not known. In 1988 the SAL ceased publication of *Socialist Action* and by the end of the decade the organisation, now called the Communist League, was moribund.

Locke remained active in petty-bourgeois, pro-Stalinist politics. In 1986, he became the national coordinator of the Philippines Solidarity Network,

which had close ties with the Maoist Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). In September that year, the network hosted a lecture tour of New Zealand by Jose Maria Sison, the CPP leader who had played a key role in stabilising capitalist rule in the Philippines by subordinating the mass movement against the Marcos dictatorship to rival factions of the ruling class led by President Corazon Aquino.

New Zealand's three Stalinist organisations—the SUP, the Communist Party and the Workers Communist League—all collapsed in the early 1990s at the same time as the Stalinist bureaucracy dissolved the Soviet Union and restored capitalist property relations. This came as a shock to the Pabloite organisations internationally, including the SAL, which had glorified Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's program of *perestroika* (restructuring) as the renewal of socialism and workers' democracy.

In reality, as the ICFI warned in 1987, Gorbachev's pro-market "reforms" threatened all the gains of the October 1917 Revolution and were "bound up with a deepening of the bureaucracy's counterrevolutionary collaboration with imperialism on a world scale." The events confirmed Leon Trotsky's prognosis in 1936 in *The Revolution Betrayed*, that without the overthrow of the bureaucracy by the working class in a political revolution, the Soviet regime would inevitably move towards capitalist restoration.

The end of the USSR was the most dramatic example of a nationally protected economic system rendered completely unviable by the globalisation of production. The New Zealand Labour government's "free market" deregulation and onslaught against the working class was an expression of the same process.

The Pabloites join the parliamentary establishment

With the Labour Party facing a historic collapse in support, Locke and other former Pabloites sought to revive illusions in the party and the parliamentary system.

Along with a handful of former Maoists and other ex-radicals, several former SAL members joined the NewLabour Party, founded by former Labour Party president Jim Anderton in a split from Labour in 1989.

According to one account, six former members of the SAL were on NewLabour's first leadership council: Locke, Matt Robson, Paul Piesse, Francesca Holloway, Lew Stribling and Petronella Townsend. In 1996, ex-SAL member Mike Treen also joined the party, which had changed its name to the Alliance after merging with the Greens and other small parties at the end of 1991.^[12]

The former Pabloites were part of a middle-class layer of ex-radicals who were renouncing any association with revolutionary politics and integrating themselves into the political establishment in the wake of the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

The trajectory of these ex-SAL members was neither accidental nor unique to New Zealand; it expressed the political logic of Pabloism's rejection of the Fourth International as the independent, revolutionary leadership of the working class. Similarly in France, several former members of the Pabloite Ligue communiste révolutionnaire (LCR), which had assisted in the Stalinist betrayal of the 1968 general strike, went on to occupy leading positions in the bourgeois Socialist Party, the state apparatus and the corporate media.

Anderton had been part of the Lange government for five years, supporting its right-wing, pro-market policies. He only split when it was clear that Labour faced an electoral rout which called into question its very survival. The NLP's capitalist program was essentially that of the pre-1984 Labour Party.

While opposing the class struggle and socialism, the NLP/Alliance embraced feminist and M?ori nationalist identity politics. These "new social movements" had long been championed by the SAL, as a means of dividing workers along racial and gender lines and providing a "progressive" veneer for the Labour Party and its allies.

During the 1980s, the SAL campaigned for both Labour and Mana Motuhake, a M?ori nationalist party that had split from Labour, and which joined the Alliance in 1991. Mana Motuhake's race-based politics was aimed at subordinating M?ori workers—who are among the most impoverished in New Zealand—to the tribal capitalists who falsely claimed to represent all M?ori. The party's main demand was for the expansion of monetary settlements through the Waitangi Tribunal to create a layer of M?ori capitalists—supposedly as compensation for the crimes of colonialism in the nineteenth century. The SAL enthusiastically supported the settlements process.

In 1999 the Alliance entered a coalition government with Labour, led by Prime Minister Helen Clark. The former Pabloite Matt Robson played a significant role, becoming Minister of Corrections and Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs. Mike Treen, who had been a leading SAL member in the 1980s, worked in parliament as Robson's secretary. (Treen and other former Alliance members would later found the Unite trade union.)

Locke also entered parliament at this time as a member of the Green Party, which had broken from the Alliance. The Greens did not join the coalition government but provided crucial parliamentary support to keep it in power.

The Labour-Alliance government was hailed by pseudo-left groups internationally as "left-wing" and even "socialist." These claims were soon discredited. The Alliance imploded in 2002 after nearly all its MPs, including Robson, voted in favour of sending New Zealand troops to join the criminal US invasion of Afghanistan. The party was exposed as a supporter of a filthy imperialist war, which killed hundreds of thousands of people.

The Greens were alone in voting against the deployment to Afghanistan, but continued to provide crucial support to keep the Labour government in power. The Greens' support for Labour continued after it sent troops to join the US-led war in Iraq in 2003 and significantly strengthened New Zealand's alliance with Washington.

Locke, as the Greens' foreign affairs spokesman, provided "humanitarian" justifications for New Zealand's role in the military-police interventions in East Timor in 1999 and the Solomon Islands in 2003. In 2010, Locke told parliament that he was "proud of the good peace-keeping and reconstruction work" that New Zealand soldiers were doing in Afghanistan. In fact, they were part of a brutal occupation force and were directly responsible for the deaths of civilians.

Another former SAL member elevated by the Clark government was Cheryl Gwyn, who was appointed Deputy Secretary of Justice in 2001, and in 2003 became Deputy Solicitor-General. She played a leading role in the Labour government's persecution and imprisonment of Algerian refugee Ahmed Zaoui on unsubstantiated terrorism allegations.

In 2014, the National Party government appointed Gwyn as its Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security, one of the most sensitive jobs in the capitalist state, overseeing the intelligence agencies. Her meteoric rise to such a high position raised disturbing questions, including whether she had established a relationship with the state while still in the SAL, and what information she handed over.

It is well-known that the SAL was intensively spied on by the Security Intelligence Service, which collected a vast amount of information on its members and its internal meetings. The question of state infiltration of the SAL is all the more significant given its close relationship with the SWP, which by the 1970s was stacked with FBI agents, including in its top leadership. The US Pabloite organisation became, effectively, a state-controlled party.^[13]

In any event, the extraordinary ease with which the SAL members were able to take important positions in government and the state apparatus underscores that the ruling class viewed them as completely reliable instruments. The Pabloites had proven themselves by spending two decades loyally defending the Labour Party and, through it, New Zealand imperialism.

Locke retired from parliament in 2011. In his final years he occasionally voiced concern about New Zealand's close alignment with NATO in the war against Russia over Ukraine, and the country's integration into the US-led build-up to war against China. Yet he supported the 2020–2023 Labour-Greens government as it deepened New Zealand's alliance with US imperialism, ramped up military spending and imposed austerity measures, exacerbating poverty and inequality.

The ruling class showed its sincere appreciation for Locke when he was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for "services to human rights advocacy" in 2021.

Conclusion

The politically criminal role played by the SAL contains vital lessons for workers and young people, who are moving to the left and looking for a way to fight against capitalist barbarism—including the genocide in Gaza, the increasingly imminent threat of world war, and the dangers of fascism and dictatorship.

As the world enters a new period of socialist revolution, the perspective of Pabloism has been utterly discredited. All the Stalinist and nationalist parties and regimes hailed as "revolutionary" by the SAL and the SWP have disintegrated or adopted overtly capitalist programs. The Labour Parties in New Zealand, Britain and Australia, and the Democrats in the US, are all correctly seen by millions of workers as parties of big business and imperialist war.

The Pabloite organisations have largely ceased to exist, but their pro-imperialist politics continues to be propounded by numerous pseudo-left organisations. The ISO glorifies Locke because, like the SAL, it speaks for sections of the middle class, which are now completely aligned with imperialism. Along with the Democratic Socialists of America and Socialist Alternative in Australia, the ISO cheers on the US-NATO war against Russia, and seeks to subordinate the protests against the Gaza genocide to the dead-end perspective of putting "pressure" on the imperialist governments, including in New Zealand.

The ISO politically supports Labour and its allies, including the Greens and Te Pahi Māori, presenting them as lesser evils. It relentlessly promotes racial and gender-based identity politics to divide workers and secure privileged positions for a narrow middle-class layer; and it bitterly opposes the ICFI's fight for workers to break the stranglehold of the corporatist trade union bureaucracy by building rank-and-file workplace committees.

History has vindicated the struggle waged by the ICFI, founded by orthodox Trotskyists in 1953 to combat Pabloite liquidationism in the Fourth International. The Pabloites, as well as the Stalinists, the union bureaucracies and various petty-bourgeois nationalists, went to extraordinary lengths to politically isolate the ICFI and to slander, falsify and distort the principles of Trotskyism. These attacks failed to destroy the Trotskyist movement, which is today winning growing numbers of workers and youth throughout the world.

In New Zealand, the Socialist Equality Group is leading the fight to build a section of the ICFI. An indispensable part of this struggle is the education of socialist-minded workers and youth on the vast chasm separating revolutionary internationalism from the nationalist, middle-

class politics of the Pabloites and the pseudo-lefts.

Robert J. Alexander, *International Trotskyism 1929-1985: A Documented Analysis of the Movement*, Duke University Press, 1991, page 630.

"The 'Out Now' Strategy", *Organiser*, June 1973.

Keith Locke, "Government faces challenge at Labour Party conference," *Socialist Action*, April 27, 1973.

At just one factory, the Longburn meatworks, a government inquiry found that from 1969 to 1974 "a total of 362 unauthorised stoppages occurred, resulting in 250,000 hours not worked." (Toby Boraman, "Indigeneity, Dissent, and Solidarity: Māori and Strikes in the Meat Industry in Aotearoa New Zealand During the Long 1970s," *International Review of Social History*, March 2019, page 13.)

"Industrial Action", *Socialist Action*, August 9, 1974.

Keith Locke, "Why Labour lost," *Socialist Action*, December 12, 1975.

Keith Locke, "Cambodia liberated: victory for humanity," *Socialist Action*, April 25, 1975.

George Fyson, "USSR aids Afghan revolution," *Socialist Action*, January 18, 1980.

Philip Ferguson, "The Socialist Action League: An introduction to an autopsy," December 7, 2014: <https://rdln.wordpress.com/2014/12/07/the-socialist-action-league-introduction-to-an-autopsy/>

Roger Middlemass. "Change in the New Zealand Meat Processing Industry—A Union Perspective," *Papers presented at the New Zealand branch of the Australian Agricultural Economics Society conference*, 1989.

Eileen Morgan, "Women's fight for equality in the meat industry—why affirmative action is needed," *Socialist Action Review*, March 1984.

Bryce Edwards, "New Labour Party History", Liberation blog: <https://liberation.typepad.com/liberation/2009/05/newlabour-party-history-6-the-development-of-factions.html>

During the 1970s the ICFI uncovered information that exposed SWP leader Joseph Hansen as an FBI agent. Following his death in 1979, the organisation was taken over by his protégés, a close-knit group of graduates from the conservative Christian-oriented Carleton College, in Minnesota. Led by Jack Barnes, this clique expelled hundreds of SWP members, including party founders with decades of experience.

[1] Robert J. Alexander, *International Trotskyism 1929-1985: A Documented Analysis of the Movement*, Duke University Press, 1991, page 630.

[2] "The 'Out Now' Strategy", *Organiser*, June 1973.

[3] Keith Locke, "Government faces challenge at Labour Party conference," *Socialist Action*, April 27, 1973.

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[5] "Industrial Action", *Socialist Action*, August 9, 1974.

[6] Keith Locke, "Why Labour lost," *Socialist Action*, December 12, 1975.

[7] Keith Locke, "Cambodia liberated: victory for humanity," *Socialist Action*, April 25, 1975.

[8] George Fyson, "USSR aids Afghan revolution," *Socialist Action*, January 18, 1980.

[9] Philip Ferguson, "The Socialist Action League: An introduction to an autopsy," December 7, 2014: <https://rdln.wordpress.com/2014/12/07/the-socialist-action-league-introduction-to-an-autopsy/>

[10] Roger Middlemass. "Change in the New Zealand Meat Processing

