

Australia Dossier by Lydia Cherry

CEC campaign worries the establishment

The call for a Hamiltonian economic program instead of free trade has struck a chord in a country devastated by British economics.

The release of new statistics documenting Australia's economic collapse, in the run-up to the March 13 elections, belied the airy "recovery" promises of ruling Labor Party head Paul Keating and Dr. John Hewson, the former International Monetary Fund employee who now heads the opposition grouping known as the Coalition. In such a setting, the Hamiltonian economic policies enunciated by the Citizens' Electoral Councils (CEC), the cothinkers of Lyndon LaRouche, have drawn considerable attention.

Although the CEC is also fielding 11 other candidates, including Senate teams in four of Australia's six states, it is the flagship campaign of Maurice Hetherington in Queensland for the federal House of Representatives, that has made it most apparent that this movement could break out of the control assigned to minor parties by the elites.

The latest economic figures are gruesome. On Feb. 24, the Bureau of Statistics reported that in three and a half years, Australia has lost 1,762 factories that used to employ 10 or more persons. On March 4, it was announced that Australia's foreign debt had risen to Aus \$168.25 billion, the highest on record. Sources say this is still a coverup and the actual foreign debt is in the range of \$200 billion. On March 5, statistics were released indicating that the average wage has fallen for the first time since World War II. Official figures for unemployed and underemployed have reached 2 million, out of a total population of 17 million.

It was no surprise, then, that in officially launching Labor's reelection bid on Feb. 24, Keating offered an extra \$55 million over the next four years to help people "die with dignity."

At the national level, Labor is now running neck-and-neck with the Coalition, which is composed of the Liberals and the once agriculturally based National Party. Former IMF hack Hewson, who heads the Coalition, has pledged to allow unemployment and interest rates to rise; has called for \$33 billion in spending cuts; has announced the most far-reaching privatization agenda in Australia's history; and has proposed to turn back the last 100 years of Australian labor laws. Hewson proposes that employees make individual work contracts with their employers, to replace union bargaining.

The CEC says that only Hewson's Coalition could make the Labor Party's suicidal policies look good.

Meanwhile, the governor of Australia's Reserve Bank (the equivalent of the Federal Reserve System in the United States) has announced that both Labor and the Coalition will have to reassess their spending promises if elected. Noted the Melbourne-based newspaper *The Age*, "The Reserve may warn the new government soon after the election of the need to trim spending."

Major dailies in the Hinkler district, where cattleman Hetherington is running his campaign, have given extensive coverage to Hetherington's economic proposals, based on the

American System concepts of Alexander Hamilton. The Bundaberg-based *News Mail* on Feb. 26 focused on Hetherington's calls for removing the powers of the Reserve Bank and reconstituting it as the Commonwealth National Credit Bank. "Such a bank would be the key to recovery, without blowing out our overseas debt even further," he said.

There has been extensive coverage of Hetherington's attacks on Hewson's goods and service tax (GST), which is a 15% tax on everything bought and sold, and which Keating has pledged that the Labor Party would also back, and of Hetherington's polemics against free trade and for tariff protection.

A poll taken by the *News-Mail* a week before the election rates Hetherington third out of the eight candidates running for the seat.

Predictably, the Australian friends of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith intensified their ongoing slander operations against the LaRouche associates as the national election neared. Among numerous examples, the *Australian-Jewish News* came up with a special Queensland "supplement" edition, never seen in the state before, that published as its lead story a warning about Hetherington, "the most prominent candidate of the far right" in the country, "affiliated to the Lyndon LaRouche movement in the United States, which adheres to a range of conspiracy theories." It quotes World Jewish Congress head Edgar Bronfman's Australian sidekick, Isi Leibler, once again calling "for a government investigation into the increased activity of the LaRouche followers," who have "become a new force on the Australian far right wing." (For a three-part profile of the corrupt Leibler clan, see *EIR*, Feb. 5, Feb. 12, and Feb. 26, 1993.)