

Preamble

Humanity today stands at a crossroad. The knowledge and productive capacity that already exist could, if used rationally, enable all people not only to be supplied with the material means for a full and ample life but also provide for a vast advance in humanity's social and cultural development. The other alternative is already visible around us. It is the further intensification of human misery, destruction, and absurd contradictions that now abound.

While the economies of the industrialised capitalist countries stagnate under the weight of unsold products, billions of people throughout the world face increasing poverty, homelessness, unemployment, and hunger. In addition to these grave social problems, the threat of self-destruction — from the increasing pollution of the planet's air, water and land or as a result of the unleashing of the accumulated stockpiles of nuclear weapons — looms over the whole of humanity.

The after-effects of a global nuclear war would almost certainly make our planet uninhabitable. The destruction of the Earth's ecology through pollution leads in the same direction. However, while a nuclear war is an ever-present *potential* danger, the destructive effects of pollution are the product of both past and current human actions which are already having a dramatic impact on the natural environment. If the accumulating impact of pollution — which stems from the way contemporary society organises the production of its means of subsistence — is not halted in the near future, the increasing damage it is inflicting on the Earth's ecological systems will lead to an irreversible and generalised catastrophe.

Only through a revolutionary change in the system of ownership and management of society's productive wealth can working people guarantee themselves — and humanity as a whole — a future. Ownership and control of society's productive resources must be taken out of the hands of the capitalist minority and transferred to society as a whole, and subordinated to democratic planning in order to meet humanity's rational needs. Such a change is not only possible; it is long overdue. It will bring about the next great step forward in the evolution of humanity — the creation, through the transfer of political and economic power to the working class, of the classless socialist society.

The strategic aim of the Revolutionary Socialist Party is the construction of a mass revolutionary socialist party to educate, organise and mobilise the Australian working people for a revolutionary struggle to bring into being a working people's government. Such a government will be the instrument for the abolition of Australian capitalism and the building, in cooperation with the international working-class movement, of a world free of exploitation and oppression.

The Revolutionary Socialist Party bases its program on the progressive social experiences of humanity as summarised in the theory of scientific socialism expounded by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in the 19th century, and further developed by Marxists in the 20th century, above all by V.I. Lenin and the Russian Bolsheviks.

As the theoretical summation of the experience of the working class in its struggle for power, scientific socialism is not a dogma fixed for all time and circumstance, but a guide to revolutionary action that must be constantly enriched by new experiences. The theory of scientific socialism must be constantly developed and tested in the light of the living experiences of the working-class movement, and all who are struggling for social progress. This is particularly so given the early stage of development of the socialist movement in Australia. We expect that the future will bring many new experiences, which we and other fighters for progressive social change must think about, learn from, and incorporate into our theory and practice.

That being said, it is nevertheless important for the socialist movement to elaborate its present program as clearly as possible. The struggle for socialism is unique in that it is the first social revolution in human history to be conducted in a conscious manner.

The working-class struggle for socialism is prepared by and grows out of the contradictions of the capitalist social order. The socialist program must therefore begin with an analysis of the capitalist system, its contradictions and historical development — and on the basis of such an analysis, outline the basic tasks and line of march of the working class in its struggle to replace capitalism with the new socialist social order.