

# Communist not capitalist Auckland

by Karl Puschmann

Many people may be surprised to learn that communism is alive and well in New Zealand.

So well in fact that the Communist League has a candidate in the race for the Auckland Mayoralty.

The party's candidate, Felicity Coggan, 48, says her party offers a "new perspective" for Auckland's working class voters.

"The city is being run by the capitalism people," she says. "My vision is for working class people to run the city to protect working class people."

"The three wealthy candidates you hear about want to protect capitalist business interests.

"We reject the whole idea that running a council is the same as running a capitalist business. We would not run it like that."

Coggan says her party has many policies that would be appealing to Aucklanders but her message is not being heard.

"The mainstream press coverage of this election has been outrageous. They are pretending we don't exist. It is undemocratic."

Coggan says the Communist League is strongly against the Eastern Motorway and says the best alternative is to invest in public transport.

"This current situation is a result of those capitalist politicians refusing to build a public transport system.

"It's a product of those politicians protecting the interests of those that profit from having



ON THE PICKET LINE: Felicity Coggan with members of the Maritime Union.

masses of public cars on the road."

Coggan also says the cost of building a functioning public transport system should not come from people trying to get to work in the mornings.

"We are completely opposed to the working class paying for it through road tolls. There is more than enough money in the coffers to pay for it."

On the big issues facing the country, Coggan says the Communist League opposes the foreshore bill, calling it "discriminatory confiscation", and also

opposes the US led occupation of Iraq.

"Those troops should be brought back immediately," she says.

Coggan says the Communist League is pro-state-funded abortion saying it is the woman's right to choose.

If she wins the election one of the initiatives she would introduce is a program called "Jobs for All".

"This is a state-funded work programme that would advance the fight against unemployment. It would create jobs at the coun-

cil's expense. These people could work on a public transport system."

Thanks to a diet of American movies painting Communism in a bad light, Coggan says she knows she has her work cut out for her convincing people that it is not all about hammers and sickles.

"It is very important for me to talk about what we stand for which is the interests of the working class people.

"It is very important for us all because the strength of the working class is in their unity."

## Anti-abortion candidate shuns personality politics

by Karl Puschmann

The mayoral candidate for the Christians Against Abortion party is calling on Aucklanders to vote on the issues rather than the personalities of the candidates.

Phil O'Connor, who is the only party candidate, says he has made a decision to keep himself out of the spotlight and refuses to be photographed.

"I am trying to depersonalise my campaign," he says. "The issue of abortion is far more important."

Aside from the party's anti-abortion stance O'Connor has no other policy options for Aucklanders.

"The mainstream media has ignored this issue because it makes them uncomfortable," he says.

O'Connor is also critical of the legal system, the politicians and wider-society.

"360 kids died in Beslan but 18,000 died from abortion in New Zealand last year and no one took any notice," he says.

Mr O'Connor says he hopes people can see past the "cult of personality" presented by the three major candidates.

"I'll be happy if five people vote for me.

"That will show they are voting for the issue."

# 'There's no government like no government'

by Peter James

At 21, supermarket worker Stephen Berry is by far the youngest candidate in Auckland's upcoming mayoral race.

Berry, the deputy leader of the Libertarianz political party, says his age and relaxed attitude give him a point of difference from the other parties.

"At least being the youngest candidate I can guarantee I'm the most fun candidate," he says.

"You've got people here to basically leech off you and they play themselves up as pompous statesman-like people when most of them aren't like that.

"They can't be. I'm not like that. I'm not pretending to be."

Berry has been in politics since his teenage years.

He was on the Mt Albert electoral committee for the ACT party at 15.

Now a member of Libertarianz, Berry says he believes in the freedom of the individual and minimal local government intervention.

"My core view matches the party really otherwise I wouldn't be with them.

"You own your own life and you have the right to live it as you see fit without initiating force or fraud against others," he says.

His policies reflect this view. Berry says that taxes should be minimised and the local government should take a user-pays attitude.

He says the proposed Auckland V8 race is an example.

"I have no problem with the V8 race going ahead, as long as there is no ratepayer money being put into it."

To promote the freedom of the individual, Berry once took to the streets to hand out free cigarettes.

This was part of Libertarianz reaction to the government's proposal to ban smoking in bars.

He explains: "If people are going to come on to my property and I'm quite happy to fill my house up with smoke then they're just going to have to put up with that or leave.

"So, while obviously it's going to be a lot nicer in the bars when the ban kicks in, it's still morally wrong."

Berry says his policies also set him far apart from the major mayoral candidates.

"All the options that we currently have in this election are for more of the same thing.

"Whether you've got Banks' more minimal growth of local government through to Fletcher or Hubbard's larger growth of government.

"I can honestly say that I'm the only candidate who's promising to shrink the government down.

"So that's a clear choice: you've got me and then you've got shades of red on the other side."

Berry estimates the Libertarianz party has 500 to 600 members.

It is using the Auckland mayoral campaign to warm up for next year's national elections.



STEPHEN BERRY: Could handle being top dog in the Town Hall.

PHOTO: BEN CHRISTIE