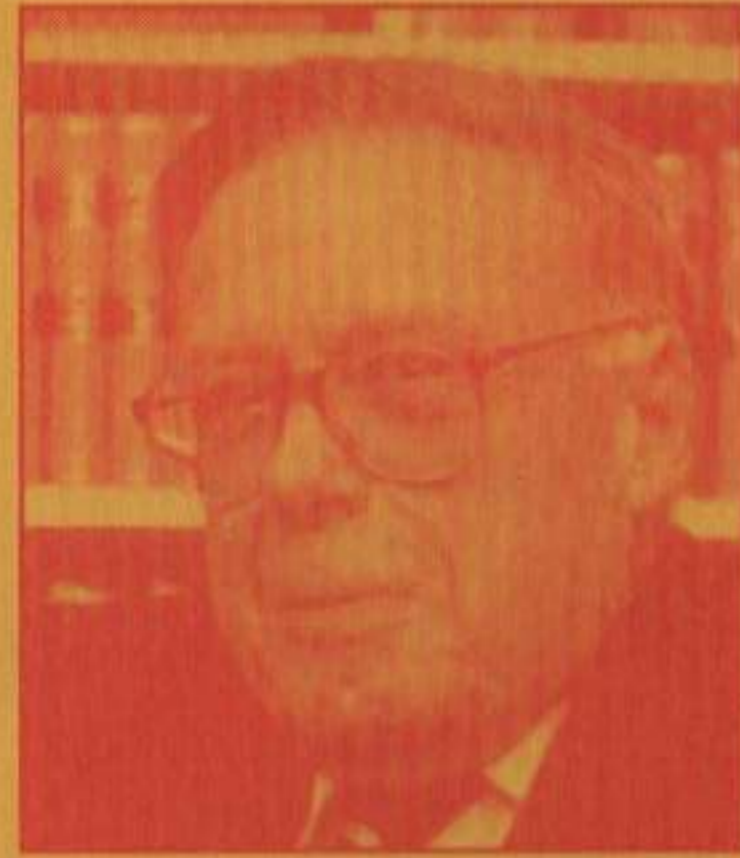


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# **M**arxism, *Australian Independence* & SOCIALISM



E.F. (Ted) Hill (1915-1988) was a towering figure in the Australian working class movement for half a century. He was the chief pioneer of a distinctively Australian revolutionary theory.

From the 1930s movement against fascism and war to the big industrial battles of the 1980s, Hill was deeply involved in all of the main struggles of his time as an activist, Communist Party leader, working class tactician, writer and lawyer.

In a period of ferocious attack on Communism worldwide and in Australia and while some deserted the revolutionary cause, Hill maintained his utter contempt and hatred for the capitalist system and his complete confidence in the Australian people, in Marxism and the inevitability of revolutionary social change.

Every activist looking for fundamental causes of, and solutions to, the deep difficulties facing the Australian people should find this selection of some of Hill's writings thought-provoking and inspiring.

# **M**arxism, *Australian Independence* & SOCIALISM

**E.F. (Ted) Hill**  
Selected articles  
1975-1987

# Marxism, Australian Independence, Socialism

## Part One: *Applying Marxism to Australia's specific conditions*

- Reject stereotyped notions of Marxism 4
- Significance of the 1917 socialist revolution in Russia 8
- Develop deeper the theory of revolutionary change in Australia 16

## Part Two: *Hill's last public speech*

- Australians reject Mr Keating's banana republic 22

## Part Three: *Some particular questions*

- Global capital turns its attention to the South Pacific 33
- Threat of fascism in Australia — central attack on the workers 35
- Patriotism and Australian independence 41
- Lesson of Cold War — broadest unity necessary to defeat fascist-like attacks 44
- Capitalism's basic economic workings 46

## Part Four: *The Australian Labor Party and parliament*

- Has the Labor Party changed? 48
- Looking beyond parliamentary politics 51

## Part Five: *Communist ideology and organisation*

- Serve the people in all struggles, big and small 57
- The Communist Party and trade union officialdom 61

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The Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist)  
may be contacted at 32 Johnston St, Fitzroy, Victoria 3065.

## About the Author

E.F. (Ted) Hill (1915-1988) was one of Australia's best known Communists. In the 1930s Ted Hill was attracted to the ideas of Communism as expounded by Marx, Engels and Lenin.

In contact with Communists and the Communist Party of Australia, he took part in the various struggles being waged both internationally and within Australia.

Abroad attempts were being made by anti-fascist peoples to hold back Hitler, Mussolini, Franco and Tojo.

At home workers were resisting the efforts to put the burden of the economic crisis on the backs of the workers.

Ted Hill's experiences and his study led him to the belief that the only way forward for the Australian people was in changing the economic system of capitalism for that of socialism, led by the revolutionary ideas of Marxism.

That belief remained and strengthened throughout his whole life.

He was a member of the Communist Party for more than 50 years up until his death in 1988, holding leading positions for most of that time. He was the founding Chairman of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) from 1964 until his 1984 retirement.

Hill wrote a number of books, many pamphlets and innumerable newspaper and journal articles.

He was not only a great student of Marxism. He was outstanding in his capacity to investigate Australian life and to creatively develop the application of general Marxist theories to this environment.

He fearlessly rejected 'sacred cows'. Right up to his death he never ceased to subject the politics of parliamentarism and trade unionism to ceaseless scrutiny.

His writings bear the freshness of Marxist analysis, providing a continuing weapon in the struggle for national independence and socialism.

What better way to introduce this selection of the writings of E.F. Hill than to take his own words in the book *Australia's Revolution: On the struggle for a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party* (1973).

'In its struggle for power the Australian working class needed organisation guided by Marxism-Leninism. Marxism-Leninism is the world outlook of Communism. It reveals the laws of social development and as part of that it reveals the part men play in that social development...

'The Communists understand how society develops, they understand where it is going and they struggle with and amongst the workers so as

to raise their own consciousness and that of the workers. If the workers understand where they are going, understand what is the purpose of their struggle, then they are thrice armed. On the other hand, if they merely take the line of least resistance, succumb to the spontaneous struggle for better economic conditions then they are riveted to capitalism. It has been truly said that theory without practice is sterile and practice without theory is blind'. (pp.31-32)

In this selection of articles Hill illustrates his tremendous capacity for investigation and leadership in the actual conditions of the struggle of the Australian workers and the intermediate sections of the people in their battle against the inroads foreign imperialism makes into this country. He advances a clarion call for Australian independence and socialism.

Certainly all social and political comment bear the particular characteristics of the time and place of their origin. Conclusions from one set of circumstances should not be automatically transferred into different conditions.

But broadly speaking, the relationships between the main classes in Australia continue to develop in the direction and manner in which Hill discusses them.

Today's activists will find this selection both relevant and inspiring.



## Applying Marxism to Australia's specific conditions

### Reject stereotyped notions of Marxism

(September 1984)

A great but glorious responsibility devolves on Marxists. That responsibility is to intensify their struggle to serve the Australian people. Here the ultimate aim is a socialist and then Communist Australia. In the achievement of socialism the correct steps and phases must be found.

Here arises the study of Marxism. No mystery exists about this. Leading Communists should be steeped in Marxism. As an essential part of that they should be steeped in familiarity with the actual conditions in Australia.

Being steeped in abstract Marxism is not going to help unless the ingredient of actual practice is present.

The study of Marxism has been complicated by the past. Marxism is itself the very antithesis and refutation of stereotypes. It sees everything in motion. It is not possible to 'freeze' that motion. Marx and Engels themselves gave perfect examples of this. Reading of, for example, their correspondence shows a fundamental scientific approach interpreting a kaleidoscope of events. Changes in emphasis, even a complete changing of view, are seen time and again. This could be the only approach. If Lenin is taken, then viewed absolutely, there are inconsistencies in his writings. Viewed historically the 'inconsistencies' are revealed as nothing more than changes required by changing circumstances. There is nothing absolute, pre-ordained, God-given. Marxism is simply not holy writ. The phrase 'Marxism is not a dogma but a guide to action', has been repeated millions of times but perhaps its full significance has not been appreciated.

Historically, Marxism did tend to become a dogma. A period occurred in the history of Communism when 'holy writ'-like quality was ascribed to every word of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin. Thus arguments were 'clinched' by appeal to some or other quotation from one of these classic writers. It didn't matter much what the circumstances were in which the statement was made. This had a very inhibiting effect on the study and use of Marxism. It really resulted in a caricature of Marxism. It created a stereotype of Marxism contrary to Marxism's being the very antithesis of stereotype.

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Along with it went the emergence of leading 'theoreticians' who were familiar with the text of the Marxist classics and thus were able to 'clinch' an argument by quotation. These theoreticians came to be accepted as authorities. Very often when argument was offered against their position they resorted to bluster and the authority of their office. This revealed an inability to argue out the substance of the matter under debate.

In addition, this sort of style necessarily resulted in emphasis being put on the general with the very important detail in a particular situation being passed over. Marxism, however, places its emphasis on seeking truth from facts. It derives the general from the particular. The general and the particular have a fundamental and essential dependence on each other. This aspect of the matter received insufficient attention.

It is essential that Marxism is studied and studied very deeply. Vital to this study is that it is not study as a thing in itself. It must be study to serve Australian people in the struggle for a socialist Australia. That means in its turn, it must not simply be concerned with the extremely laudable objective of a socialist Australia but it must set out to find the detailed phases on the way.

All preconceived, stereotyped notions of Marxism and methods of study of it need very careful critical examination. Those with a long background in the Communist movement have much that is positive to contribute. They have contributed positively. Some bring with them this stereotyped blustering Marxism. It is no good. Marxism is an emancipating liberating doctrine. It frees the mind from the fetters of bourgeois ideology. It is a complete rupture from the prison or circle of bourgeois ideology. Bourgeois ideology imprisons people and individuals within its own walls. It causes them to debate within its own confines. An example is the 'debate' that goes on amongst capitalist economists between the 'Monetarists' and the Keynesians. The debate occurs *within* the circle imposed by capitalism. Marxists break from that circle and take the view that the matter must be seen anew and from a fundamental standpoint. The monetarists and the Keynesians are concerned within capitalism; they are imprisoned. There is no escape. Marxism is a complete rupture from that. Marx could have been imprisoned by the ideas of his contemporary economists. He drew largely on them. But his point of departure was to consider the whole thing anew. In this way he broke from the prison.

If Marxism itself is turned into a dogma then similar problems arise. The prison of Marxist dogma is just as bad as the prison of bourgeois dogma. Thus a relentless fight is required in our mind against becoming a prisoner of Marxist dogma or of being influenced by styles of work influenced by Marxist dogma.

In the contemporary Communist movement, a great deal of 'reconsideration' of how Marxism was understood and used is required. Failures in the movement are not due to any failure in Marxism. They are due to shortcomings in understanding and use of Marxism. In the case of Australia a lot of them are due to the stereotyped blustering approach to Marxism.

Australian people live their own lives. No matter how similar to other countries or to another country Australia may be, it is an entity in itself. There is nothing that is so absolutely similar that an absolutely similar solution of a given problem applies. In short, Australians and Australian Communists must have minute understanding of Australia's conditions. Marxism, because it teaches approach to facts free from preconceived ideas, opens the way to correct study of detail. Because it shows that general laws are universal, familiarity with those general laws enables effective investigation of facts. It enables escape from circles imposed either by the environment of bourgeois ideology or by 'preconceived' Marxism. The facts must not be stretched to fill a preconceived Marxist idea but must be studied afresh.

It is sometimes said that there is creative Marxism. This expresses a truth. In the past it has sometimes been used to strip the revolutionary content from Marxism. So the US revisionist 'Marxist' Browder claimed to be creatively developing Marxism. What he was doing was 'abolishing' Marxism. Marxism is a developing living science. It is continually verified and enriched by new facts just as are other scientific systems. Its fundamental content is materialist dialectics. This is simply a world outlook shown to exist in everything. Its revelation in the particular environment of Australia is the job of Communists.

Because much is made of so-called failures of Communism, Australian Communists require to enhance their whole study.

The world is changing. That is true. Its changes obey the laws revealed by Marx. These changes do this not because Marx ordained this but because the universal principles that he revealed are scientifically true. Because events are rapidly unfolding, then Marxists must find the appropriate ways in which to explain them. They cannot or should not be bound by old methods when those methods no longer apply.

The advance of technology is fact. It does not alter fundamental social laws. On the contrary, it illustrates and enriches these fundamental laws. Because, however, it seems so different, it causes confusion. In addition, the bourgeoisie, some of its members even within the working class, seizes upon it to suggest everything has changed and that Marxism and the Communist Party are irrelevant. The Communists must come to terms with

these changes and show in modern times how they verify Marxism and that socialism and Communism offer the only environment for the correct handling of this new technology.

Nothing is fixed and static. Communism is the guide to the future. Marxism must really grip the advanced people.

('Australia's changing reality can only be explained with the use of Marxism-Leninism' — *Australian Communist*, No.125, September-October 1984)

## Significance of the 1917 socialist revolution in Russia

(November 1987)

Scientific socialists throughout the world hail the 70th anniversary of the 1917 socialist revolution in Russia. It is a time for reflection on the birth and development of socialism.

Apart from the very short time occupied by the Paris Commune of 1871, the Russian Revolution was the first consolidated socialist revolution. It occurred in accordance with the scientific laws revealed by Marx. Those laws showed that the process of production under capitalism was already predominantly socialised, while appropriation was concentrated in fewer and fewer hands.

In accordance with its own social laws, capitalism resulted in economic crises and war. People at one pole were impoverished, both in comparison with the very rich at the other pole, and were also impoverished in the absolute sense. Inevitably, capitalism led to collapse and part of its collapse was the socialist consciousness of its gravediggers — the working class. Those gravediggers were destined to bury the capitalist state apparatus to protect *people's* ownership of the means of production.

Marxism, however, apart from general principles of the need to smash the old capitalist state machine and build the new dictatorship of the proletariat, plan the economy and recognise the adverse influence of capitalism, provided only the most general guidelines about the building of socialism.

It is not a question of its being out of date in respect of precise guidelines for socialism; it never claimed to expound precise guidelines. It was and is a proposition entirely different from Marxist generalisations about capitalism. In capitalism, the essential facts have accumulated. But to this day under socialism, more facts must accumulate.

### Close analysis of facts and practice

Marx had subjected the *facts and practice* of the Paris Commune to extremely close analysis. From it, he had drawn *general* conclusions about the overthrow of capitalism and much vaguer generalisations about the building of socialism. His analysis was particularly concerned with the nature of the state and less concerned with socialist economy.

In *The State and Revolution*, Lenin dealt with and described Marx's conclusions. He further elaborated and developed Marx's conclusions.

Amongst Lenin's central points, was that Marx shunned utopian ideas. Conclusions could be reached only on facts. The facts of the economy and other aspects of socialism in practice were very scarce. Analysis of capitalism, of the growth of socialism within the womb of capitalism, the nature of the capitalist state and the *general* nature of the socialist state, were conclusions that could be deduced from facts. Vital *general* fundamental guidance existed. It did not provide a blueprint nor specific detailed guidance for socialism.

Of necessity, the building of socialism involved attempting to put these general principles into practice. As to the precise way to go about building socialism, very much trial and error was required.

The Russian Revolution naturally aroused immense enthusiasm among the people of the world. Advanced thinkers had for a long time yearned for socialism. Marx's predictions were scientifically based. Science had been realised and for the more romantic, a dream had come true.

The inspiration from the Russian Revolution spread with amazing rapidity. Capitalism itself had prepared soil fertile for the seed of socialism. The 'contagion' of socialism (as Lenin had called it) shook the capitalist world to its very foundations. The experience of the new socialism was examined just as closely by the capitalists as by the workers and working people.

The capitalists hailed every error, every failure, every disaster. They sought to strangle socialism 'in the cradle' (Churchill's expression). On the other hand, the workers and working and oppressed people hailed the whole magnificent victory and then hailed every advance, every step forward. Each class and its representatives tended to exaggerate that which seemed to serve the respective class causes. Hence a subjectivism in class outlook arose — the capitalist wish for defeat of socialism caused exaggeration and invention of errors, lies abounded; provocation, sabotage, etc. were all nourished. Amongst the advanced workers, 'errors' were explained away, advances seen out of proportion, difficulties ignored, etc.

Amongst the Communists in a general sense, insufficient attention was paid to the *scientific* principle of seeking truth from facts. The facts of difficulties were insufficiently realised. They tended to be put in the background precisely because of the magnificence of the general victory. The capitalists used their ruling position to denigrate and discredit socialism.

Amongst the Communists and others, romanticism certainly had an influence. Much of Lenin's '*Left-wing*' *Communism, an Infantile Disorder* was a plea to keep Communist feet on the ground of fact. Subjectivism, the wish being father to the thought, led to a degree of overlooking difficulties. Naturally enough, the eyes of the Communists and advanced workers

centred on the storming of state power. That storming was only the first step. After its victory, even more difficult steps required to be taken.

The facts of the Russian Revolution and each subsequent socialist victory, have proved the correctness of Marx's generalisations. They have also proved the correctness of the secondary question of difficulties to which Marx and, more particularly, Lenin gave much attention. Facts proved that the dictatorship of the proletariat is absolutely critical, Marxism is absolutely critical, a sound Marxist Party is absolutely critical and adherence to striving to build socialism is absolutely critical. From the experience of socialism, these general laws can be readily deduced.

It was thought that the pattern set by the Soviet Union was universal. That turned out to be wrong. Not only was it not universal, but *within* it were both successes and failures. Capitalism as a generalisation describes an overall social system but each capitalist country has its own vitally important separate character. So too is the case of socialism. Each country had its own peculiarities. Lenin had adverted to this, as had Marx and Engels before him. On the very first page of *'Left-wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, Lenin writes about this matter. However, it was above all Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communists who realised in theory and practice the error of this. To an extent, Tito and the Yugoslav Communists and people also realised it.

Again, a degree of romanticism arose around new revolutions. Seeking truth from facts suffered a little. Somehow the idea evolved of the Soviet or Chinese or Yugoslav or other Communists solving problems in other countries. In another sense, the Communists and people of other countries were influenced to try to follow exactly similar ways as those countries.

### **The arena of struggle is one's own country**

This type of approach actually hindered the overall cause of socialism. It simply was not scientific. Despite numerous statements centred around the correct conception that its own country is the arena of struggle for a given working class, the attitude of Communists and people in given countries caused the foreign victories of socialism to exercise a disproportionate and distorting influence on the struggle in those given countries.

It reflected shortcomings in the thoroughgoing independent grip by the Communists of materialist dialectics. The very heart of materialist dialectics is to seek truth from facts and seek the contradiction within the essence of things. This involved the general and the particular. Mao Zedong's 'On Contradiction' is directed at this very matter. There he was dealing with the generality but showing the vital importance of the particular and the interdependence of the two. It was the only *scientific* way to approach the

problem.

Thus in the practice of revolutionary struggle in Australia, much could be learned from socialist revolution, wherever it occurred, but that socialist revolution did not *solve* the problems of socialist revolutionary struggle in Australia. All Communists cherish every socialist victory and support it. All Communists support each other. All workers have a common interest in the victory of socialism. The world's working class and people have a common interest and solidarity. But the emphasis must be on their own country — *the arena of struggle is one's own country*. In that way, they serve themselves, their people and each other internationally. There cannot be any doubt of this.

If the matter is looked at from outside given socialist countries, then the detailed successes and failures of socialism have been distorted. The basic central success, in each case never to be underestimated, never capable of exaggeration, has been the conquest of state power by the working class as the core of the people. After that, the tendency was to see only success.

Statistics, description, details, have been produced to 'prove' steady success at every phase, even though leading policy changed. Apologies and rationalisation have been made about failures and failures have been put in the background. Within the socialist countries, some Communists set themselves up as experts on the socialist struggle in other countries, whereas in fact those Communists could know very little of the countries concerned. This evil thus had a twofold character — romanticism in the capitalist country (Australia) and patronage and 'advice' from amongst some Communists in socialist countries.

Maturity and the accumulation of facts have caused a reconsideration of this type of 'socialist' romanticism. It would be a serious error to ignore the negative features of romanticism. The existence in the minds of Communists and others, of romantic ideas is no bad thing. It reflects a deep yearning for emancipation of the people. It is a very bad thing if it diverts attention from facts and from the actual arena of struggle for Australians, for example, as Australia. Of course, Australia in the world and particularly in the Asian-Pacific area, is part of the environment in which Australia's arena must be seen.

Examples of how subjective or romantic ideas can distort practice, and can distort accurate reflection of facts in Australia, abound. In the Australian arena, examples can be taken from the trade unions. Worship of the trade union leader as the ideal Communist is a common experience. In days gone by, very good Communist leaders of trade unions became objects of 'worship'. Workers and intellectuals went to work in industries in which this or that 'famous' union leader operated. Other areas of important struggle

were, by comparison, neglected. This is not in any way to write down the importance of the work that was done by those attracted in this way. It is to record the fact that there was involved a degree of romantic distortion.

This phenomenon exists to this day. It existed in Lenin's day. In his early writings, he specifically dealt with it. Later he expounded the practical reality in western capitalist countries in such writings as *'Left-wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder*. From this standpoint, this book deals with the disease of romanticism. One can call it by various names, best known of which is 'subjectivism'. Much of Mao Zedong's writing adverts to it.

In the thirties, as another example, the Spanish Civil War attracted enormous support among other workers, working and anti-fascist people. This was exceedingly good and very important. It helped immensely in developing the world-wide struggle against fascism and war. Amongst some, it caused something of a diversion from Australia's own arena of struggle. Nicaragua today is a magnificent example of people's liberation. It assists the struggle of the people of the world. Some progressive people correctly go to Nicaragua to 'help'. But fundamentally, the Nicaraguan people have won their own victory and will continue their struggle with world-wide people's sympathy and support. It is correct to pay attention to it but it is not correct to pay such attention that it diverts from Australia as *the* arena of struggle for Australian people.

Indeed, there are very important people's struggles in many countries. Each supports the other. In the Asian-Pacific area, Australia is the proxy of the US superpower. What occurs in the Asian-Pacific countries and Australia's attitude, impinge on the Australian immediate agenda of struggle.

In the socialist countries, trial and error have caused the distortion referred to earlier. In *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Marx said that what has to be dealt with after the victory of revolution is socialism 'just as it *emerges* from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it emerges' (Marx's emphasis).

Within the thinking, speaking and writing of some Communists and others, both in the socialist countries and capitalist countries, the import and significance of this *truth* were insufficiently realised. It is in fact a correct scientific generalisation.

Mao Zedong correctly said that a whole historic epoch separates the victory of socialism from capitalism to complete Communism. It is easy to be wise after the event and often, as a great man once remarked, sometimes only possible to be wise *after* the event. That wisdom, however, is important. In the history of the Soviet Union, there is not the faintest doubt that some within the Soviet Communist Party and other Communist Parties, both in

the spoken and written word, presented only the successes. Every single Soviet person was a model of wisdom. Errors got but passing reference or were denied or explained away.

Visitors to the Soviet Union from Communist and other progressive circles saw only the successes. At different stages, statistics, etc. were presented which proved and vindicated the policy then current, even though it differed from its predecessor. Errors were blamed on predecessors. It distorted the picture. The capitalists seized on and magnified the difficulties. They also used their intelligence services. Many Communists outside the Soviet Union denied the truth that errors existed. Inside the Soviet Union, no doubt, that also occurred.

In retrospect, it is not difficult to understand and it is not so difficult to see that a better balance could have been kept both within and without the Soviet Union. The 'revelations' about Stalin were transmitted around the world. They were eagerly seized on and magnified by the enemies of socialism. 'We told you so' was their refrain.

No doubt Stalin did make errors. They were a product of 'feeling the way', trial and error. Just as, even more important, they were never errors of Stalin alone and simply could not be. It is a capitalist parliamentary practice of an incoming new government to heap blame for errors on its predecessor. Hawke blamed Fraser for errors; Fraser blamed Whitlam. Each exaggerated 'successes'. This sort of thing should have no place in scientific socialist appraisal. Stalin was a very great man and was a product of history.

#### **Conscious search to discover laws of development from facts**

All those around Stalin, and the Soviet Communist Party as a whole, had their responsibility for successes and failures in socialist construction. It simply cannot be that one man alone can be responsible for some of the types of errors ascribed to Stalin. It is a denial of historical materialism. Even the phrase 'cult of the individual' in Communist circles, contains theoretical error — departure from science.

In other socialist countries, similar errors were committed. It was so in Eastern Europe. 'Revelations' about Stalin, about Mao Zedong, about Pol Pot, undoubtedly gave the capitalists anti-socialist, anti-Communist ammunition. Intemperate statements about them from within socialist countries departed from scientific appraisal of the individual concerned, the conditions and the overall responsibility of other leaders and whole Communist Parties. The errors attributed to such men (but essentially collective errors) had their own scientific explanation. In retrospect, the whole Communist movement could have handled the matter in a far more scientific way.

The role of the individual in history has been the subject of correct Marxist scientific analysis. It is a reflection of bourgeois historiography to attribute to any single human being supernatural qualities or to elevate a person abnormally. This does not mean denial of different capacities in people. Nor does it mean artificial 'modesty'.

The overcentralisation of the Soviet economy turned out to have been an error. It contains the possibility of exploitation of the working class by the privileged bureaucracy. If one wants to ascribe 'blame' on individuals, then *who* is to blame? Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, Bukharin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Andropov, Gorbachov or whom else? Who is to blame for Soviet expansionist departures from socialist principle? In several years, if this type of thing continues, current leaders in socialist countries will be 'blamed' for their own 'errors' without balanced estimates.

Distortion was a product of the difficulties experienced by Communists, human beings, in response to changes in the forces of production and corresponding relations of production. It was a collective distortion. Unlike any preceding social epoch where changes in means and forces and relations of production are blind, changes to socialism and building of it are not at all wholly blind. There is *conscious* search to discover laws from facts.

#### Study of classics cures subjectivism

Lenin was not responsible for the seizure of state power in Russia — the Russian *people* were responsible. Lenin played an outstanding part. Lenin alone penned the words of his books but their ideas, their correctness and their errors, all arose from the people in given social conditions and Lenin's reflection of it. He acknowledged his own lack of accuracy or reflection many times — he recognised and analysed errors in which he was involved.

Similar comments can and should be made about people who have been at one time elevated and another time pilloried. The capitalist enemies of socialism seize on it all. Examples are Stalin, Mao Zedong and Pol Pot. It is simply plain distortion to concentrate 'blame' on these individuals. It is simply plain distortion to attribute all success to these individuals. It is a reflection of the penetration of bourgeois thinking into Communist ranks.

In Australian Communist history, great advances have been made and many errors have been and are being made. Every single Communist, particularly around the leadership, deserves (if there is any case at all for credit) credit for advances and deserves blame (if there is any case for that) for errors.

Success and failures are not the product of human minds in a vacuum. They occur in given circumstances in which people make history and Communists participate in that. The Communists have added responsibility

because they consciously, in accordance with their understanding of Marxism, serve the people. They must be 'disciplined' by confidence in the victory of socialism that will be achieved by the people and must be disciplined by the errors that arise from their shortcomings in Marxism.

The blaming of all errors on a predecessor and crediting all success on a single individual (or individuals) or a single event is plain philosophical idealism. It is correct enough to extol correctness of a policy thought to be correct, but it is wise to be disciplined by consciousness that in correctness, there is also error.

Moreover all socialist societies in the world today have taken only the initial steps along the road of building socialism. Marx's statement quoted above is proved in practice to be correct, so too Mao Zedong's views. Enough facts have accumulated to draw some general conclusions. The idea that overnight, socialism was won and all would be well, an idea that prevailed for years, has been demonstrated by facts to be wrong.

The idea that allegiance to some foreign Communist Party could solve problems in Australia's own arena has been proved to be wrong. The origin of the idea was understandable. It is still wrong. It exercised an incorrect influence. It took much experience and many facts to demonstrate that it was wrong.

There is much else that could be written. A world-wide responsibility exists in Communist ranks to learn from each other. This is not merely a question of words. Australian Communists cannot speak with *detailed authority* on any other genuine Communist Party or socialist country. Those are matters for the Communists of those countries.

Australian Communists can and do write and speak in general about developments in other countries including socialist countries. It is a happy revolutionary duty. Identification is another matter. Socialism has a historic trend to success. One-sided denial of error or one-sided praise of success require reconsideration.

Study of the classics of Marxism is vitally important. Those classics show where people are going socially and what to do about it. The detailed way calls for close study of Australia's own immediate arena and an end to the disease of subjectivism which includes romanticism.

('70th anniversary of the 1917 Russian Revolution' — *Australian Communist*, No. 144, November/December 1987)

## Develop deeper the theory of revolutionary change in Australia

(February 1975)

One aspect of the work of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) is that it has begun to develop the theory of the Australian revolution in a way deeper than in the previous history of Communism in Australia. This is not by any means to say that the theory of the Australian revolution has been yet worked out in a thoroughgoing way but it is to say that deeper efforts to that end than before have been made.

Chairman Mao in speaking of China said: 'We have read a great many Marxist-Leninist books, but can we claim, then, that we are theorists? We cannot. For Marxism-Leninism is the theory created by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin on the basis of practice, their general conclusion drawn from historical and revolutionary reality. *If we merely read their words but do not proceed to study the realities of China's history and revolution in the light of their theory or do not make any effort to think through China's revolutionary practice carefully in terms of theory, we should not be so presumptuous as to call ourselves Marxist theorists. Our achievements on the theoretical front will be very poor indeed if, as members of the Communist Party of China, we close our eyes to China's problems and can only memorise isolated conclusions or principles from Marxist writings.* (Rectify the Party's Style of Work — emphasis ours). Perhaps it is wise to paraphrase into Australian terms the two sentences emphasised. It would then go like this: If we, the members of the Communist Party of Australia (M-L), merely read the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong but do not proceed to study the realities of Australia's history and revolution in the light of the theory of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought or do not make any effort to think through Australia's revolutionary practice carefully in terms of theory, we should not be so presumptuous as to call ourselves Marxist theorists. Our achievements on the theoretical front will be very poor indeed if, as members of the Communist Party of Australia (M-L), we close our eyes to Australia's problems and can only memorise isolated conclusions or principles from Marxist writings.

The Communist Party of Australia (M-L) is deeply involved in the practical work of the Australian revolution. It must indeed be guided by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought but *the general truths of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought must be integrated with the actual conditions of Australia.* This last italicised passage can in itself be endlessly repeated

without really coming to grips with the actual task of integration. There was a phase in our history when this was a definite tendency: its influence still lingers. No doubt it is good to keep emphasising the need to integrate the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought with the actual conditions in Australia. But in itself the mere repetition of the words solves nothing. The problem to be solved is the actual practical task of integrating the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought with the actual conditions of Australia. That involves knowing these universal truths and knowing the actual conditions in Australia so that those actual conditions can be elucidated by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and can be guided by them. Only people who are involved in actual practical revolutionary work and who know at least something of those universal truths can hope to integrate Marxism with the actual conditions of Australia. It is only Australian Communists who are engaged in the actual work of Australian revolutionary struggle.

Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought does most emphatically have direct and intimate relevance for the Australian revolution but not as an abstraction, not as a lifeless dogma. It has direct and intimate relevance as a guide to action, as the key weapon in the Australian revolution. We quote Chairman Mao again '... people engaged in practical work must at all times keep abreast of changing conditions, and this is something for which no Communist Party in any country can depend on others.' (Preface to *Rural Surveys*).

There is still an immense amount to be done in Australia in elucidating the theory of the Australian revolution. Until it is elucidated in comparatively clear terms, there can be no successful revolution in Australia. Lenin said that without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. And we can say in Australia that without revolutionary theory properly integrated into the actual conditions in Australia there can be no revolutionary movement in Australia. Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao Zedong, have given us the weapons. Our task is to use them correctly.

The journal *Australian Communist* and the newspaper *Vanguard*, if they are examined historically, reveal a process of development in the use of these weapons. Earlier the material in *Australian Communist* and *Vanguard* was more general, more abstract than it is now. This is because the Communists were not very experienced in the practice of revolution and were inclined to dogmatism in Marxism-Leninism, that is, they accepted the generalisations of Marxism-Leninism without sufficiently integrating them into the actual practice in Australia. Although they used the words about the need to integrate the general truths of Marxism-Leninism with the actual conditions in Australia, they did not do enough about actually integrating those truths

with the actual conditions in Australia.

Lenin in *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, spoke of 'the diverse forms of dependent countries which, officially, are politically independent but in fact, are enmeshed in the net of financial and diplomatic dependence'. In early days, we were not alert to the relevance of this for Australia nor alert to appreciate that capitalism in Australia was and is predominantly imperialism in Australia. In short, we had not sufficiently investigated the actual history of Australia during the black people's ownership of it and the invasion against the black people by British imperialism through the period of the dominance of British imperialism and the weakening of British imperialism and the growth of US imperialism. Our failure to investigate and understand this process led to wrong characterisation of the nature of the Australian revolution as direct socialist revolution instead of continuing revolution by stages, the immediate stage being anti-imperialist people's democratic revolution. Such an error leads to wrong identification of enemies and friends. When the error was revealed we frankly stated it and corrected it. We have made other errors which we have revealed, examined and criticised. Errors must be frankly admitted and examined. We do not satisfy some people who say we speak of errors in general but do not identify those errors. But to these people *all* our work is in error because they really oppose Marxism-Leninism. To return to the Australian revolution, much more needs to be done on its nature, who are our friends and who are our enemies. There is a constantly changing situation which requires constant study, constant practice, constant integration of the general truths of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought with the actual conditions in Australia.

We take this instance as an example only. There are many other examples. Indeed our whole development has been one from ignorance to comparative knowledge. As other examples, the recognition of this process has enabled us to get greater clarity on the nature of the trade unions in Australia, the nature of the Labor Party in Australia, the nature of the Australian state and relation of the States to the central government, the integration of intellectuals with the working class and a host of other questions. The pamphlet published by the Party on the lessons of the Ford strike was a splendid example of comrades integrating the general truths of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought with the actual struggle and shows how Australian Communists are learning to integrate the general truths of Marxism with their own actual practice.

The Party has begun to develop a core of leading comrades, both older and younger, who are coming to grips with the question of how really to integrate the general truths of Marxism with their concrete practice in the

revolutionary struggle.

A problem of the past was the onesidedness of Communist leaders. Those who had a trade union background tended to place the trade union before anything else; others who had a student background tended to a onesided emphasis on that and so on. This is the subject of a previous article in *Australian Communist*. Because now there is a better understanding of the question of integration, comrades with an all-round view of the situation and work are arising. Those who were previously onesided are becoming more allsided.

Many questions which had never been really examined have come to be examined because the Communists are much more closely connected with the mass struggle. Examples are the struggle of the black people, the place of gaols in our society, the nature of revisionism and others. Some questions that ought to be examined and dealt with have either not been examined and dealt with or have been inadequately examined and dealt with. Examples are rural problems, the relationship of the Australian struggle to that of New Guinea. This is because our practice in these spheres has been insufficient.

Then new problems continually arise such as rampant inflation, unemployment, deep economic crisis. There has been previous experience of such things but they occur now in new conditions, in conditions where the decay of capitalism is far more advanced and when there is an irresistible trend of history — countries want independence, nations want liberation and the people want revolution. There is no preordained, God given solution to these problems. The solution can only arise from correct practice and correct conclusions from practice. The struggle of the people exists. It is an objective fact outside the mind of man. To be with it summing up experience and offering the guidance of Marxism-Leninism is our task. We learn in order to be teachers, learn from people's struggle, understanding that the people are the real heroes. This is the process of Marxist-Leninist integration. None of this is to urge passivity, wait and see. Revolutionary theory guides action, enables the Communists working correctly among the people to initiate action. Because theory shows the way ahead its correct use helps to influence events and can be the decisive factor. Chairman Mao said: 'The creation and advocacy of revolutionary theory plays the principal and decisive role in these times of which Lenin said: "Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement." When a task, no matter which, has to be performed, but there is as yet no guiding line, method, plan or policy, the principal and decisive thing is to decide on a guiding line, method, plan or policy' (*On Contradiction*). This statement underlines the need for a thoroughly worked out theory of the Australian revolution.

Correctly in the struggle against revisionism we defended the general truth of Marxism-Leninism that the key question of politics is state power and that the struggle for proletarian dictatorship could not (except in the most exceptional circumstances) be a peaceful struggle. It is very important to proclaim that truth. It is essential ideological preparation. But in Australia there has really been no experience of armed struggle in the workers, working and patriotic people. Moreover the circumstances in Australia are different from those in China, Russia and other countries where there has been armed struggle. Careful study of practice, both of the enemy and of the workers and working people, will, if examined correctly in the light of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, offer the solution. There is a great deal of meaning in learning to do by doing. In days gone by, the Communists produced blueprints or schemes for the path to socialism. There can of course be a general conception but the concrete solution of the concrete problem can only arise in concrete practice.

At all times Communists must be strongly disciplined by proper modesty (not false modesty). There have been achievements; there have been mistakes and shortcomings. Everything does divide into two. Error as Chairman Mao has said, is often the precursor of what is correct. We must never be irresponsibly elated over achievements nor despondent with errors. As to the former, there are shortcomings even in the best achievements; as to the latter, they give some guidance as to the way to success. As to our achievements, they simply never could be all embracing; there will always be problems (without contradiction nothing would exist). We are waging a revolutionary struggle that goes through many twists and turns, ups and downs. It is a revolution by stages. After the victory of the revolution there will be problems of a new kind in addition to many old problems. As a matter of fact, if we look back at some of the things we did 10 years ago, they seem crude and primitive yet at the time we thought they were good and advanced: 10 years hence we will look back on what we are now doing and think much of it is crude and primitive. In short we are dealing with a never-ending process.

The attitude of the Party leaders to achievements and shortcomings is critically important to the growth of the Party. The traits of a Marxist-Leninist Party leadership tend to be reflected throughout the Party and into the working class just because the Party is *the* leadership of the working class and the Party leaders are or should be the highest expression of that leadership. Therefore the Party and the working class must demand of the Party leadership and the Party an exemplary style of work, a proper attitude to achievements and shortcomings, proper conduct in every respect, capacity to withstand the corrupting influence of capitalism and above all, the capacity

to strive unremittingly to integrate the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism with Australia's actual conditions. We must certainly welcome criticism and suggestions by the masses precisely because we serve the greatest cause in Australia and it is those masses who actually make the revolution in Australia.

(‘Developing theory of Australian revolution’ — *Australian Communist*, No.69, February 1975)



## Hill's last public speech

### Australians reject Mr Keating's banana republic

(15 June 1986)

Let me begin by repudiating completely the conception of banana republic that Keating outlined for Australia the other day. This morning I was reading Paul Robeson. He said the character of a nation is determined not by the upper classes, but by the common people. And it is in that position that we stand here today.

It is the people who are the most important, indeed the only important Australia. It is the common folk who constitute the real Australia and it is they who will defend and extend to the end the cause of Australia's national independence and towards a socialist Australia. It is not the few who serve the system that brought about conditions that lead the Treasurer to speak about a banana republic. It is the banks and monopoly capitalists, the finance capitalists as we call them, who have brought about the situation which threatens Australia with disaster. It is the finance capitalists who are betraying Australia. It is they who are standing in the way of our sovereignty, in the way of our independence.

It is this unholy partnership of the great banks, the great industrial institutions that has been given full rein by the government of the day, by the very people who talk about banana republics.

You can walk down Collins Street and see the names of huge Japanese financial institutions where once British financial institutions ruled the street. You can see the old British-based Australian banks in partnership with American or Japanese banks. What has happened has been an intensifying of foreign exploitation of Australia, of imperialism; a system which must expand or burst. You can see that going on today. The United States is expanding in conflict with an expanding Soviet Union. Each must look everywhere for sources of profit, sources of raw materials. Foreign exploitation of Australia like that means foreign domination, means foreign interference, means an erosion of what independence we have managed to build up. It means Australia is sucked into the military adventures, the

military expansion, of the US in its conflict with the Soviet Union.

Historically the Labor Party has been thought of as the party of Australian nationalism, to serve the interests of the Australian native capitalists more so than any other parliamentary party.

But now the Labor Party leaders can be seen responding to the biggest financial institutions of the world — US and Japanese. They abjectly submit to imperialist domination. We must ask, do these banks and monopolies, do the finance capitalists come here for the benefit of the Australian people? And we can emphatically reply, no. Do they serve our country? On the contrary — they serve their own profit interests and the military operations that go with profit. And so we have US bases throughout Australia.

The banana republic proclaimer spoke of the alarming foreign deficit, the adverse balance of trade — billions of dollars. He spoke of the drain on Australia, but who submitted to the imperialist expansion that led to this situation? The responsibility is that of the foreign finance capitalists, their pitiable Australian partners, and their parliamentary political servants.

The social system of capitalism, of imperialism, does compel expansion, it compels exploitation and oppression. They are its very nature.

In the name of Labor, the Labor Party leaders serve this expansion. They use deception of the people in the very name of Labor.

They say — our banana republic expert says — Australian people must tighten their belts. They must accept a lower standard of living. Why? So that the monopoly finance capitalists will be able to invest and create jobs! And a pitiable plea goes up: please invest. It is the unions, the workers and farmers who must make the sacrifice, according to these people. Why? To offset the adverse balance of trade and the foreign account deficit. This is the line of these people. Their idea of consensus, a much-used word, of the accord, is to reduce wages. They have complete consensus on the need to reduce wages, to attack living conditions. And that is the whole content, as it has now turned out, of this idea of consensus, of the accord. Examine the Prime Minister's address to the nation, a highly contrived television show the other night. Its only substance, its only point of substance was the reduction of wages, tighten the belt.

Since capitalism started, the workers have borne the burden. It is the labour of the workers that is the source of profit of the capitalist system. The eternal cry of monopolists is that wages are too high. Profit cannot be made. There is no incentive to invest, they say. Let us remind ourselves to walk down Collins Street and have a look around. Is there any reluctance revealed for the foreign financiers and monopolies and their Australian

partners to operate? They come all right. They are there and still they're coming.

They bring trouble on all fronts, trouble for the people, more trespass on the limited Australian independence and sovereignty. They buy up the country cheap. They force down wages. They force Australia more firmly into their imperialist orbit in the world struggle.

They use the very devaluation of Australian currency to buy up the little Australian industry that there is, often just to close it up. They buy up the land. They enter into partnerships of inequality. They deny the black people what rightfully belongs to those black people. To further their profits, their domination, their expansion, they demand that wages be reduced, hours lengthened, ID cards introduced, unions suppressed, telephones tapped, police numbers and powers increased.

There is an essential link-up in all of this. Foreign domination threatens involvement in foreign adventures. It offends national interests. It speeds intensified exploitation of the workers and people. The finance capitalists are stronger than their Australian partners, than what Australian native exploiters there are. The intensity of exploitation is greater. It arouses Australian people. They protest. They struggle. Their struggle grows.

And so these finance capitalists prepare to meet and do meet people's protests in many ways. They try to anticipate and to offset it. They use Labor and trade union leaders to deceive and to oppress. When outright deception fails, they use more subtle forms of deception plus intensified repression.

It goes on before our very eyes.

The ACTU leaders are very active in serving the process. We can leave aside the question whether they are good or bad men. They are not Hitler, but it was said of Hitler that even he treated his mother kindly. The question is — what is the effect of what they do? They work within the circle imposed by monopoly capitalism. They do not step outside the circle, as we must step, and mobilise the people even in limited demands against the finance capitalists. These gentlemen brag and have bragged for them, their new professionalism, their tertiary education, union leaders of a new type it is said. All sorts of bragging goes on and one of them was even described as the most powerful man in Australia. We think of the common people of Australia as the most powerful people in the country. But these 'leaders' 'deliver', they 'deliver' Australian people. You can read it every day in the press — can we deliver? The eternal question then is — can we deliver? How offensive it is that these people in their almighty positions can think in terms of delivering the people. And to what do they deliver them? Into the hands of the finance capitalists for further exploitation.

They deliver you to a new Premiers' Plan. They don't call it a Premiers'

Plan. You will have heard that I've been 50 years in the revolutionary movement. I lived through the Premiers' Plan. Fifty-five years after that Premiers' Plan it still stinks in the nostrils of all Australians. That Plan was dictated by Sir Otto Niemeyer on behalf of the British banks. The banks were so bold in those days as to crudely demand a 10 per cent all-round cut in wages and demand it be put into effect by Labor governments, and they abjectly did the job. Sir Otto Niemeyer was correctly identified as the representative of finance capital. But today, behold the new Premiers' Plan unfolding in a slightly different way.

The Prices and Incomes Accord was an agreement between the ACTU leaders and the Labor leaders to peg wages except for the cost of living adjustments and anomalies and in return, no demands and no struggle for other rises. And what happened? The ACTU leaders and their government counterparts skulk in corners, plot against the people, talk a lot of absolute gobbledegook before 'business' conferences — safe places for them. They never come before a meeting like this, or before a mass meeting of workers to put forward their plans. And as our last speaker said, when such a situation arose, they sent one of their lesser officials to face the music. These great, new professional men do not have the courage nor the honesty to come and talk to the people about the problems that confront them. Their talk is of 'delivery'. The ACTU leaders and Labor Party leaders are hailed in the press as liberators. Struggle died down in the first period of the accord. The people are caught up. It's like the insurance salesman — an attractive proposition with a cheap premium for a seemingly large sum at the end of 20 years and having got you in, up goes the premium and all sorts of conditions are imposed. The idea of the accord was to get the workers and the people into a net and tighten the net as the net is being tightened today. It adversely affected all but the monopoly capitalists. Its promise of the very limited cost of living adjustments was never fulfilled. Everybody knows that the consumer price index lags behind the real increase. Everybody knows that real wages have been cut. And then when devaluation came, they said 2 per cent discount for devaluation. More recently they said 3 per cent increase for productivity increases but to be taken in the form of superannuation. And all that is now back in the melting pot. The Arbitration Commission which is considering the matter, or supposed to be considering it, takes endless time. In the meantime prices go up, real wages are reduced. And now more discount is demanded. The accord is to be renegotiated or to be scrapped in order that wages can be cut.

People must work for the dole said the Prime Minister — shades also of the thirties. Belts must be tightened — the belts of the people. Nobody could accuse Mr Holmes a Court of being asked to tighten his South African

money belt. And the millions, billions, that change hands on the stock exchange could provide many lunches, many feeds for those who are asked to tighten their belts. The obscene profits of the banks are published amid the systematic reduction of real wages and overall living standards. And still the Japanese, US and their Australian partners join in their finance capitalist expansion. Martin Place, Collins Street, Adelaide, Perth, Hobart, Brisbane, all prosper in their stock exchanges.

You see the Premiers' Plan is more subtle and more cunning. It does not crudely say 10 per cent cut all round — that would never do. While the finance capitalists commit acts of incredible stupidity, they also learn from the past. And their new Plan is bit by bit, piece by piece, to cut down on living standards, to change the character of the accord, to use the accord in order to bring about its own change, from being a wage pegging device, it becomes a direct wage cutting device. It always cut real wages — now the cut is to deepen. Deception and strong arm, accompany the process.

Its very name is deception — accord is meant to convey we all agree on the basis of that very well known consensus. But how can there be consensus between two diametrically opposed interests? Those who have plenty on the one hand, and on the other hand, those who have not and often have nothing; between enormously wealthy finance capitalists, and on the other hand, workers and working people, working farmers and working small businessmen.

There is more deception. The union leaders and their use of the trade union structure to agree, to be part of 'consensus', to subscribe to the accord, is to pretend that all workers go along with increased exploitation of themselves, and reduced wages. The very name 'Labor' serves a similar process. The people rightly respect the great names 'trade union' and 'Labor'. But those ideas are abused by this type of leader. Deception is in the newspapers, the mass media. All sorts of nice dressing is put on exploitation. There are hired assassins of the truth who parade as 'experts' and deceive people with rubbish. Diversions are employed. Sport is abused, drugs, crime, sex, cheap sensationalism, all become weapons of deception.

The ideologists of capitalism are experts — experts in lies.

Alongside deception goes coercion. Deception goes so far. There is a limit to it. Lies do have short legs. It cannot persuade a person whose stomach is empty that his stomach is full. The fact of the empty stomach defies deception.

To meet the growing protest and the anticipated greater protest, our banana republic man, the ACTU and Labor leaders, warmly applauded by the Confederation of Australian Industry and Liberal/National Party leaders, discipline and dissolve the Builders' Labourers' Federation, persecute

Gallagher and his colleagues, attack the Mudginberri workers, starve the South East Queensland electricians and they threaten others. They hold the action they've taken against these people as a standing threat against anybody who dares to rebel. They introduce identity cards to keep track of all opposition. They legalise and extend the illegal telephone tapping that has gone on for years, they increase police powers.

Are these things separate? I said before they are all linked together. Economic exploitation is bound to raise opposition and increasing opposition. Co-operation in US war plans rouses people to defend peace. The finance capitalists are the decisive factor in the control of the state apparatus. By state apparatus is meant the army, the police, the courts, the gaols. These bodies too are cloaked with deception. They are represented as being above classes, as serving the people's interests. No doubt there is the odd kind and honest general or kind and honest policeman — but it would take a couple of those Royal Commissions they're so fond of to find them. But that is not the essence. The essence is police violence as exemplified in Queensland, on building jobs, police surveillance, telephone tapping, courts and their sentences, gaols. That is the essence of the state machine. We should never forget its essence — class suppression, class oppression of the common people.

Anyone who protests in any way is persecuted. Even a distinguished liberal judge — I use the word liberal with a small 'l' — of the High Court who challenged tax rorts is persecuted — thrown to the wolves by the Labor and trade union leaders. This is to discipline and threaten other judicial officers who might take the much-vaunted independence of the judiciary too seriously. Let me pause to say that a servile judiciary marked the period of Hitler's reign. That's not to say that a judiciary is at any time much good. But they can be good and bad, they can be servile or not quite so servile. What we're witnessing in this country is their use as completely servile to the monopoly capitalists. Then even in the Labor Party, the Labor Party leaders act to expel and discipline those people within their own organisations who really uphold the progressive demands of the Labor Party.

There is the picture — economic deprivation, oppression and exploitation of the people imposed, intensified deception and coercion — coercion and deception intensified all along the line to intercept and deal with opposition to war and greater economic exploitation.

Now should we be depressed like the economy is?

Certainly not. Victory of the people is assured. I started off by speaking of Robeson — that the essential character of a nation is determined by the common people. And the people of Australia, like the people all over the world, the common people, are magnificent. There has never been a situation

in Australia where the people did not fight for themselves and their country. We can go back to Eureka and earlier, we can go back to conscription in World War I, we can go back to the Premiers' Plan, we can go back to the 'thirties struggle against fascism and war, to the great coal strike of 1949, the anti-Communist Bill of 1950, the fight against McCarthyism and the Petrov affair, against the aggression in Vietnam. Yes, the Australian common people proved to be heroic and proved to be correct whereas the traitor class stands condemned. Australian workers as the solid core of the Australian people have never backed away from a struggle and they never will. They are fighting now and the fight is gaining momentum; they will fight and they will win. The finance capitalists and their lackeys, lift up big rocks only to drop them on their own toes. The big rocks are the SEQEB workers, the BLF, Murphy, Gallagher and there are hundreds and thousands of other rocks that will smash the feet of the betrayers of our interests.

The measures of the finance capitalists are in fact self-defeating. By driving down wages, they restrict the very market upon which they ultimately depend. By multinational increased production in their home countries, they restrict Australia's market for its exports. They simply use Australia for their own ends. This is the logic of capitalism; the logic of imperialism; it's caught in insoluble contradictions. If Australia serves their immediate interests they see no further, but to hell with the Australian people.

It is obvious that if the Labor and ACTU leaders stepped out of the stranglehold, out of the grip of these monopolies, out of the circle, great achievements could follow. The positive aspects of the Labor Party programme could be fought for. The country is under-developed. Nationalisation of the steel and vehicle building industry provides a clear example. BHP is a mocked up Australian — the so-called Big Australian. Enough comment on its Australianism is provided by what's going on now; the London Stock Exchange, the South African money, all demonstrate that it's very far from the Big Australian. We are the big Australians. The United States and Japanese motor vehicle manufacturers also for example use Australia. If these people in the ACTU leadership and the Labor Party were genuinely for the people, they would organise a great campaign for Australia to take these industries over even if compensation had to be paid. But instead they cringe and fawn. They beg. The people are compelled to fight not only the BHP, not only General Motors, not only their local Australian partners, but to fight in the teeth of these very so-called leaders.

Nothing remains for the Australian workers and people but to take the cause of Australian independence and sovereignty firmly into their own hands. Given perspective and struggle, much can be done. In the present

circumstances, we reject entirely wage reduction. Wages must be increased, taxation on low incomes removed, pensions increased, heavy taxes imposed on the rich, ID cards ended, increased police powers rebuffed, the SEQEB, BLF restored, US bases should be expelled and unlike the BLF, ought to be dissolved. We should close ranks with the stand New Zealand has taken against the Americans. In small and big ways all struggle that assists the people should be developed and supported.

I have said a lot about the Labor Party leaders and the ACTU leaders. They are bringing about their own destruction. They're exposing themselves. It is not our policy to urge people to vote against the Labor government. It is much better for people to see that neither those leaders nor parliament is decisive. They have their importance. The Labor government in our opinion should be left there to get what can be got from it, even though we recognise much of it is negative. It provides experience. Thorough-going and repeated experience is necessary. You see even after the Premiers' Plan and the despicable things that were done by the Labor leaders, there was a resurgence of support for it after a few years. There is this pendulum — Labor government brings about its own destruction, is defeated, a period goes by, illusions in it regenerate. We must go through the process, unfortunately, many times. It is the spirit of the people that we must build up. The critical thing is people's unity and people's struggle.

Communism offers an overall analysis of the world and of local economy and politics. Australia is simply a victim of world imperialism. It grew up as a British colony. As a British colony it imported British machines and consumer goods; it exported food and wool to Britain. And the British discouraged the development of an independent Australian industry which would underpin genuine independence. So independence with severe colonial relics developed and some of those colonial relics still remain. The US and Japan ousted Britain on a world scale. Australian independence lacked the underpinning to stand up to the new predators. The strength of the people remained, it was never suppressed. Communism shows the inadequacy of the Australian economic base, the colonial relics, the most serious of which is the division of Australia into States. It shows there are many preliminary steps on the road to our ultimate socialism. It also shows the leading position of the working class. With other sections of the people around the workers, independence is championed. We have to edge out the imperialist invaders. All struggles against the monopolies assist the cause of independence. Nationalising the steel industry as I mentioned a moment ago is one example. It would undoubtedly contribute to our independence. So too with other vital components of the economy. A machine tool industry — machines which make machines — is vital. It will be resisted by the

existing monopolies, but if the people are strong enough and the stranglehold can be broken or chipped away, then Australia can progress.

In Australian conditions the guidance of Marxism shows there are steps that must be taken as part of the process of making Australia a socialist country — a country where industries are owned by the people and not owned by a handful of monopolies whose only interest is private profit. Colonial relics can go. Division of Australia into sovereign rival States must go. These are hangovers left by imperialism upon which the imperialists fasten to keep Australia in a subordinate position. Ending these relics is vital in the struggle for socialism where finally Australian people will own the big factories and farms, own the state machine with its police, army, courts and gaols, administer society for the people who individually will enjoy a much greater fullness of life in their consumer goods and in their spiritual life.

All this requires a united labour working class movement acting with many others in a patriotic front. It would all be greatly helped if the various Communist Parties, groups, individuals, got themselves together. Division is a weakener. It arises from the competition imposed by capitalism and reflected in the working class. Almost all the Communist Parties, groups, socialists, socialist groups, progressive people, Labor Party left, Labor Party rank and file, trade unions, trade union rank and file, stand for improved living standards, stand against monopoly foreign domination, stand for democratic rights. Put in tangible terms, all these reject attacks on unions, on individual liberty through telephone tapping, ID cards, extended police powers, betrayal of the black people and the various other assaults that are made.

The very economic process of exploitation tends to unify the people, to bring them together. We can feel today, under the assault, people closing ranks. Capitalism has two effects in this regard — intensified competition amongst the monopolies; a little competition within the working class; but the main trend is towards unity of the working class and the people. Of all the tendencies, the unity of the working class and the people is by far the dominant and growing. Human beings have developed as social beings with powerful capacity to think and to influence events. Thought shows the need to unite, to unite in struggle. One rebel against exploitation and against foreign domination is good; one champion of independence, sovereignty and socialism is good but thousands of rebels and champions acting together are far, far better. Consciousness and action are characteristic of human beings. Of all things, people are undoubtedly the most precious. Division in the working class and among the people has been and is used against the workers and people. Some of us in Australia have fallen victim

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to it. Damage has been done. The profiteers from it have been the monopoly capitalists. Each of us separately — I hope and I believe — has been a devoted, even I may say a devout, enemy of those profiteers. But division has helped the profiteers. Our unity weakens them.

Technological change in capitalism is rapid. It leads to changes amongst the workers and other working people. It is in the immediate sense upsetting. It tends initially to feed division. But the breaking of machines at the beginning of capitalism gave way to a consciousness that led to trade unionism. Then socialist consciousness developed because the limitations of trade unions were recognised. Over a century later, we can point to the need for united action in off-setting the changes in working class and people by technological change and using the enlightenment that Marxism gives us on these questions.

Progress towards reaching at least limited agreement has been made. None should seek to *impose* a view on others. There is no harm in expounding a particular view as I am doing here today and as the previous speaker did — there is no harm in that at all — so long as imposition is not demanded. We do not and could not demand that our views be accepted. We would like to have them accepted of course, or at least thought about. We are willing to listen to others — we must listen to others. We Communists in the CPA(M-L) adhere to our idea of Marxism and expound it. And we urge others to read it, to study it, to think about it, to consider it. But it is not a condition of our unity with many others in the struggle around immediate issues that those others accept our position. We accept the analysis put forward by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Mao Zedong. We explain the advent and demand for extended police powers, court action, gaols, ID cards, Aboriginal repression, telephone tapping, in the light shed by the fundamentals of Marxism. Others may see society in a different way. Many will agree or partly agree with us and we will agree or partly agree with others who have fundamentally different views. The important thing, particularly in present circumstances, is united action and expanding that united action. Our explanation, for example, of the danger of war may differ from that of others but we unite in the struggle for peace. Our explanation may differ from that of others but we unite to defend living standards. And so through all the immediate problems that confront the people.

Over a period, the united action which already exists, can be extended, greater thought and consciousness to improving it can be developed. Because as we get experience, so we get better ideas and those ideas lead to better unity. In the process, overall views can be exchanged. Each of us has confidence in our own views or we wouldn't express them, but each must be disciplined by the need to learn from others. Australian people will be

the ultimate judges of who is correct and what is the correct action to take.

Australia is in a very serious situation in a dangerous world. Everything must be done to change the position. Preoccupation with division, abuse and counter-abuse, really get nowhere. All of it might give some personal satisfaction. But if it were effective, then there has been enough abuse to solve all problems. Really, abuse and counter-abuse amongst the people is a reflection of the competition among the monopolies. Given consciousness of the need to unite, to get rid of destruction, division, to bring groups, parties and individuals together, big steps can be taken. This is service to the Australian people whom we all hope to serve. The Communist mind, heart and conscience of which Lenin spoke, can be greatly strengthened.

The struggle for ultimate socialism has its ups and downs. I have spoken of division. Some get despondent. Some get carried away by a single victory and think socialism is about to be achieved. There are many variations. And I don't want to minimise the problems that confront the people. The heavy artillery is seemingly in the possession of those finance capitalists whom I have abused here today. But the real strength, the real force is troops on the ground, and the troops on the ground are the common people of Australia. If we base ourselves firmly in the people we know there is no obstacle that cannot be overcome. The workers and people have on small things, middle-sized things and big things, infinite resource. We can have infinite confidence in the people. There is an enormous reservoir of talent. It is our job to unite with all who can be united in order to prosecute the struggle for the salvation of our country and its ultimate complete emancipation in socialism.

('Australians reject Mr. Keating's banana republic' — *Australian Communist*, No.135, May/June 1986)



## Some particular questions

### Global capital turns its attention to the South Pacific

(August 1987)

The Federal Treasurer is fond of boasting about his accomplishments such as floating the dollar, deregulating the economy, freeing the Australian banks to foreign competition and like measures.

This is turning necessity into a virtue.

There are very good objective reasons why this had to be done. It was derived from Australia's position in an imperialist world. If Mr Keating hadn't done what he did, then sooner or later someone else would have.

The great imperialist powers, and we include Japan, have enormous capital resources. They have exploited every other country. Imperialism is a world system. Lenin in his classic work *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, described the development of monopoly from free competition. He described the development of what he called finance-capital (the merging of industrial-commercial and finance capital), the division of the world among the great imperialist powers. After his death, new facts accumulated but the expansionist nature of imperialism has in no way changed. Lenin, while warning of the resilience of capitalism and imperialism, probably underestimated that resilience.

After World War II, there was a period of relative capitalist expansion. Some of that derived from repairing war damage. The US imperialists with their Marshall Plan made great profits from Western Europe. Their activities in Japan, likewise gave them great profits. Far less in proportion, were countries like Australia and New Zealand.

But the European countries and Japan got on their own capitalist feet. In Europe, the EEC developed as a big economy (certainly torn with internal contradictions). Japan developed a huge capitalist economy. The Soviet Union assumed expansionist aims. The US suffered severe military defeats in its efforts to keep open its Asian imperialist positions. It was defeated in Korea and Vietnam. It declined as an imperialist power.

The ASEAN countries developed as significant trading powers.

The world's sources of raw materials and markets were contracting. The nature of capitalism *compels* intensified search for new fields for the export of capital, for sources of raw materials, for markets. It is simple fact that that is the nature of imperialism.

Places like Australia, New Zealand and the whole of the South Pacific were relatively (certainly unevenly) 'undeveloped'. Australia and New Zealand were comparatively more developed but had always borne the mark of their colonial origin.

Imperialism in its present desperate stage compelled developments of Australia's natural resources and opening of its markets and finances. The Labor leaders acted in accord with this compulsion.

The South Pacific, after years of more or less passive colonial and neo-colonial existence, has become an active field for intensified imperialist exploitation.

This whole process has caused a leap forward in independence activity and sentiments in the South Pacific countries and in Australia and New Zealand. It is like the law of physics that to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Unlike the law of physics, in imperialist domination and opposition to it is the will of the imperialists and the will of the people. The people act in a just cause, are far more numerous and potentially powerful, than the imperialists.

The people are accumulating strength and despite the boastings of the Keatings, the people will establish independence. All the peoples of the countries of the South Pacific have common cause — national independence and sovereignty.

('Expansionist nature of imperialism has never changed' — *Vanguard*, 19.8.1987)

## Threat of fascism in Australia — central attack on the workers

(September 1985)

The working class holds a pivotal place in Australian society. It is the leading class. It is the main source of the country's wealth. The struggles of the working class are bound to throw off the yoke of capitalism, paving the way for the emancipation of the entire people.

The ruling class of a few foreign and local monopoly capitalists is forever in dread of the workers and people. The class struggle is ceaseless. The ruling class knows that the workers have no fundamental interest in the survival of capitalism. Whether the struggle of the workers be at a high, medium or low point, the ruling class never rests easy.

It cannot forget the many times in Australian history when it has been shaken to its boots by upsurges in the workers' struggle. Nor can it be blind to the fact that the working class is a rallying point for large sections of the middle class, and even, under certain circumstances, for sections of the bourgeoisie. Neither can the ruling class disregard the reality that the Australian working class is part of the international working class, which with allied forces has fundamentally altered the political and economic landscape of the world from the Great October Revolution onwards.

In the past decade or so the ruling class has faced many new difficulties. The general crisis of capitalism as a corrupt, rotten and historically doomed system has intensified. Never has the Australian capitalist class looked so tawdry. The political consciousness of the people has continued to mature. In various parts of the world, socialism advances. Whatever its youthful problems they are nothing compared to the approaching *rigor mortis* of capitalism.

Amongst the Australian people there is great interest in socialism, in finding alternatives to the worsening chaos of capitalism. People seek solutions not only to the economic difficulties of many sections of society but also to the spiritual emptiness of capitalism that robs human life of purpose and hope.

In this historical environment the ruling class is like a caged beast. It prowls up and down, seeking a political strategy that will combat the pressure of the workers and people. Partly through cunning, partly through uncertainty, the ruling class switches back and forward from hard to soft tactics, or combines the two. Deception and flattery are mixed with coercion. There is great disagreement within the ruling class over the tactics of handling

the workers. Bitter commercial rivalries fuel the disagreement.

Partly as a result of this uncertainty and disagreement, and partly by design of the dominant monopolies, a multi-pronged strategy is today deployed against the working class. In some respects it adds up to the most sophisticated system of attack ever mounted on the Australian working class. It is important to carefully understand this system in order to effectively combat it. The system contains various elements.

*Firstly, a high-level arrangement operates between a few top ministers of the Federal Labor government and a few top officials of the ACTU.*

The top ministers channel the demands of the leading foreign and local monopolies. The ACTU officials adapt the demands to a form appropriate for the 'locking in' of leaders from key affiliate unions who then 'deliver' the working class. Great flattery is dispensed by the monopoly media on those who keep this arrangement working. At times one 'deliverer' is played off against another to keep them all on their toes.

The Prices and Income Accord promised significant gains for the working class. In practice it has turned out to be an instrument for the reduction of working class living standards. The second version of the accord is much more blatantly a wage-cutting device.

*Secondly, an array of coercive measures has been developed for dealing with any unions or groups of workers that resist being 'delivered up' under the ACTU-government arrangement.*

In co-ordination with the governments, industrial commissions, mass media and employers' organisations, the ACTU has acted as a policeman over the workers. Vile abuse rains down on anyone who is deemed to be 'outside the accord'. Those who do no more than struggle for a few extra dollars to keep the wolf from the door are cast as notorious rebels.

Where the campaign of abuse does not succeed, extreme punitive measures are employed. These include the Commonwealth's Building Industry Act, the Deregistration move in NSW and Victoria's BLF Derecognition Bill. Such moves come from the government but they have the tacit consent of the ACTU chiefs.

*Thirdly, a further campaign of open reaction is waged against the workers and people by the monopolies.*

Politically it is implemented through the Liberal and National parties. The campaign is separate from the anti-worker measures of the ACTU-government arrangement but the two run in parallel. The campaign of open reaction includes the anti-union legislation passed in Queensland, the sacking of the SEQEB workers, the Mudginberri provocation and the fining of the meatworkers' union, stepped up use of Trade Practices legislation as new penal powers, the push towards extensive use of contract labour, calls for

deregulation of the labour market and moves to privatisation of public enterprises.

In the Federal parliamentary sphere Howard has been elevated by the dominant monopolies to head up the openly rightist line. It is a reserve position. Should the ACTU/government arrangement break down there is another horse ready to run the race. But in the present term the building up of the open reaction has a specific purpose. It is to discipline the ACTU/government arrangement — to prolong its life.

The top ministers and the government are politely reminded by the monopolies: 'Do as we say. Howard and his alternative Cabinet are waiting to sit in your chairs'. In turn the top ministers tell the ACTU chiefs: 'Do as we say or we will be out of office. Then your special relationship with the government, your esteemed place in national life, will be no more'. The ACTU chiefs complete the process by telling the workers: 'Do as we say, or you'll get Howard and something even worse than what you've been getting from us'.

*Fourthly, in addition to the assault on the unions a strong general attack is staged against democratic rights and ideas. The aim is to further restrict the freedom of the workers and people to struggle for a better life.*

This attack has many features. It includes restrictions on the right to demonstrate in the streets, continued strengthening of 'emergency' powers, beefing up of police, para-military and internal intelligence organisations, increased surveillance of citizens, undermining of the jury system, reversal of the traditional onus of proof in some legislation, greater regimentation of the people in all their dealings with the bureaucracy and now the introduction of identity cards.

The attack on democratic rights also extends to the ideological front. There is an attempt to suppress thinking and culture which puts stress on the worth and central place of ordinary people in the making of history. Institutions which express the will of the people, to a greater or lesser extent, come under fire. There is promotion of a few 'great men' (spokesmen of the so-called New Right) as 'guides of the nation'. Superstition, evil spirits and demons of all kind are coaxed from their graves in yet another vain effort to overcome scientific method. Endeavours are made to arouse the backward, self-centred and nihilistic sentiments of the petit-bourgeoisie. Anti-black, anti-Asian and anti-semitic filth is spread around. Such things are amongst the ingredients of fascism.

By action and inaction Labor governments have helped to clear a path for the cruder side of this attack on democratic rights. Some of the worst anti-worker legislation of recent times has been introduced by Labor governments. ID cards are their doing. The Victorian Labor Premier

conspired to jail Norm Gallagher. The Federal government has sat by while 1000 workers remain sacked for opposing contract labour, while unions are fined and democratic figures persecuted.

*Fifthly, a campaign is mounted on all allies and potential allies of the workers. Again it uses dual tactics — a mixture of attack and seduction.*

Attempts are made to take small business and medium and small farmers to the bosom of the monopolies. This is not only to deny these forces to the side of the workers, but to actively throw them at the workers.

The monopolies assess that the weakest point of the working class is in factories and other establishments which employ only a small number of workers, say less than 50. Most such establishments are owned by small business which has been described as the 'soft belly of the trade union movement'. It is here that the deregulators of the labour market are making their first moves, rather than in the larger plants of the monopolies.

In the countryside there is serious impoverishment amongst small farmers. A big movement has developed. The monopolies try to stir up deep-seated prejudices against the workers and play on the contradictions between town and country. They see in the farmers' movement a mass force that can become a weapon in their own hands.

Amongst the middle forces, small business and small farmers are the targets of a wooing campaign by the monopolies. Other sections are being placed under attack, especially those that have moved closer to the working class. This includes teachers, health care workers, bank staff and public servants. Attempts are made to split them up, to belittle their professions and undermine their conditions of service. Academics, too, are put under pressure. Their terms of employment become more restrictive. Efforts are made to frighten them from speaking out in defence of democratic rights. A very small circle of rightist academics is boosted to the skies. Liberal church circles that direct themselves to some of the problems of the labouring people of the world are under fire.

Even some corners of the bourgeoisie itself are in the gun. This is because they will not fully endorse either the ACTU- government arrangement or the open reaction of Howard and Bjelke- Petersen. Some middle sized capitalists have their own independent thinking and approach to handling the workers in their employ. But even this is not permitted in Australia today. Great pressure is being put on all members of the bourgeoisie to fall into line with the general assault on the workers, led by the dominant monopolies.

In the tendency to fascism it is the workers who are the prime targets, but many in the middle forces and some in the bourgeoisie itself can also be victims.

The full pattern of the reactionary attack is being seen by the people.

Many working people sense that things are 'shaping up for a big blue'. There is pressure on trade union leaderships from the rank-and-file for more concerted action to defend rights, wages and conditions. Within the Labor Party there is increasing unrest as the gap between the aspirations of the ordinary members and the actions of the top Labor Ministers widens.

The cause of democratic rights and liberty brings many circles into action. Civil liberties organisations campaign against anti- union legislation, expansion of police powers, attempts to undermine the jury system and so on.

There is particular groundswell over the plan to introduce ID cards. This is all done in the name of 'catching tax cheats' and 'smoother delivery of government services'. In reality it is a means to more tightly exercise surveillance and regimentation over the people. The movement against ID cards is sure to grow in strength. As expansion of indirect taxation was halted by popular action this year, so the people can prevent the introduction of ID cards.

It is important to understand the main elements of the ruling class attack, to see the mix of tactics being used, to be alert to changes in tactics and to exploit any differences of approach that exist within the monopoly circles. Emphasis on workplace action, on people-based struggle, winning over the middle forces, on unity with all democratic forces are important principles in waging the fight back.

In countering the attack it is also necessary to use a mix of tactics. On some questions, such as denial of basic trade union rights, the spread of contract labour, the reversal of the onus of proof, there is widespread agreement amongst the people that these must be strongly opposed.

But the use of the accord by the monopolies to impose wage cuts and other severe measures on the workers remains more complex. The accord (and the Labor governments in general) are more tarnished in the eyes of the people than they were say two years ago. But hope remains, despite the emerging dissent.

It is important to handle such matters in a thoughtful way, taking into account popular feelings within the particular environments where one works and lives. Explanation needs to be factual and clear, confident but modest in the way it is put. If it is made from the genuine standpoint of the people's interests, rather than from 'pushing a narrow barrow', it is bound to get support.

The monopolies have come up with a 'package' of measures (to use their favourite term of late) designed to keep popular rebellion down. It has some quite sophisticated features. But the people also learn fast and see to the essence of any new manoeuvres. They become more sophisticated in their

methods of struggle. For all their wealth, power and 'cleverness' the monopolies can never find a solution to the irrepressible force of the people.

(Main features of the multi-pronged attack on the Australian working class' — *Australian Communist*, No. 131, September/October 1985)

## Patriotism and Australian independence

(May 1987)

The patriotism of Australian people should be treasured and developed. At the root of it is the working class. What could be more patriotic than the struggle to make Australia independent and to carry independence through to Australian socialism? The concept of patriotism has been soiled and abused by the capitalists. Dr. Johnson said that patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel. But there is patriotism and patriotism.

'What is good for General Motors is good for the US' expresses one form of patriotism. That is the patriotism of the exploiters. It is common in Australia. When a strike struggle occurs, particularly in an export industry, it is said by bosses that the workers are traitors. It is the 'patriotic' duty of the workers not to strike. Nothing is said of the 'patriotic' duty of exploiters not to exploit.

There is a working class and people's patriotism against the treachery of the exploiters. In the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* Marx said that it is altogether self-evident that to be able to fight at all, the working class must organise itself at home *as a class* and that its own country is the immediate arena of its struggle (Marx's emphasis). It is this fight which serves the international cause. The patriotic fight of the Australian working class and those sections of people around the working class serves the world cause of proletarian internationalism. Its arena is Australia. The arena of the Fijian, Indonesian or whatever other nationality is taken, is Fiji, Indonesia or the given country. Ultimately they will come together. Each serves the other. It is clearer still if the big imperialist powers are taken.

The patriotism of the Australian people stands in stark contrast to the treachery of sections of the Australian ruling class. What brand could be put on Murdoch other than a member of the traitor class? The traitor class (that is sections of the bourgeoisie) has everywhere and at all times been prepared to capitulate to foreign ruling class domination. Quisling served Hitler; Petain served Hitler; sections of the British ruling class were prepared to accommodate Hitler; Menzies defended Australian exports to Japan when it could be clearly seen that Japan was preparing to attack Australia. There is a long record. Very effective use was made of the idea of 'traitor class' in the struggle against war and fascism of the 'thirties and during the war.

At the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Stalin pointed out that in the then circumstances the bourgeoisie had dropped the banner of national independence and that it should be taken up by the

working class and people. Perhaps Stalin should have said that leading sections of the bourgeoisie had dropped that banner. He was certainly correct in calling on the people to take up that banner.

The Soviet leaders speak of the great patriotic war waged by the Soviet people after the Nazi invasion which began on June 22, 1941. It was indeed a great patriotic war. In their liberation struggle, the Chinese people took up the patriotic banner of struggle against Japanese imperialism. Within China, there was a traitor class. The Chinese people correctly invoked the banner of patriotism.

Australian Communists should far more actively promote the banner of patriotism in the cause of Australia's independence. There is no difficulty about this nor is there any shame. There is a hangover of reluctance to speak of patriotism. It is thought to be not quite right. Why? The British imperialist writer Kipling, for example, subtly sneered at talk of patriotism. At the same time he talked about (and not so subtly at that) 'lesser breeds beyond the law', 'East is east and west is west and never the twain shall meet', 'God of our far flung Empire' and so on. Kipling was the authentic voice of British imperialism. He didn't want the Indian people, about whom he wrote so much, getting wrong ideas about patriotism to India rather than to British imperialism. In his book *Stalky and Co.*, written of life at an exclusive school, he decried ostentation about the British flag or overt talk of patriotism. Well he might! Patriotism was not to be encouraged amongst the denizens of British dominion 'over palm and pine'. That was Kipling's conception. He made it a shameful thing to make a fuss about patriotism.

It is not necessary for Communists to make an artificial fuss about patriotism. More important, it is a serious error to fail to see the national independent content in the concept of patriotism in Australia.

It is the duty of Communists in Australia to encourage the taking up of the banner of patriotic national independence. There should be no questions or apology about it. It should be talked about freely.

Mao Zedong put it well when he said of the Chinese people's struggle against Japanese imperialism:

'Can a Communist, who is an internationalist, at the same time be a patriot? We hold that he not only can be but must be. The specific content of patriotism is determined by historical conditions. There is the "patriotism" of the Japanese aggressors and of Hitler, and there is our patriotism. Communists must resolutely oppose the "patriotism" of the Japanese aggressors and of Hitler. The Communists of Japan and Germany are defeatists with regard to the wars being waged by their countries. To bring about the defeat of Japanese aggressors and of Hitler by every possible means is in the interests of the Japanese and the German people, and the

more complete the defeat the better... For the wars launched by the Japanese aggressors and Hitler are harming the people at home as well as the people of the world. China's case, however, is different, because she is the victim of aggression. Chinese Communists must therefore combine patriotism and internationalism. We are at once internationalists and patriots, and our slogan is, "Fight to defend the motherland against the aggressors". For us defeatism is a crime and to strive for victory in the War of Resistance is an inescapable duty. For only by fighting in defence of the motherland can we defeat the aggressors and achieve national liberation. And only by achieving national liberation will it be possible for the proletariat and other working people to achieve their own emancipation. The victory of China and the defeat of the invading imperialists will help the people of other countries. Thus in wars of national liberation patriotism is applied internationalism'.

(*'Working class patriotism' — Australian Communist, No.141, May/June 1987*)

## Lesson of Cold War — broadest unity necessary to defeat fascist-like attacks

(September 1987)

September 22, 1951 marked an historic victory for the people of Australia. On that day 36 years ago, the Australian people rejected the Menzies government's request for constitutional power to pass what was called the Communist Party Dissolution Act.

This Act had far wider provisions than its title suggests. It did attempt to 'dissolve' the Communist Party. It also had far reaching provisions for 'declaring' who, after declaration, became ineligible to hold office in a trade union.

One of the greatest significances of the 'No' vote was the width of opposition to the Act.

That unity embraced people who had a reactionary political outlook, big businessmen, middle sections of the population, universities, civil libertarians, trade unionists, Communists, decisive Labor Party leaders, Labor Party rank and file and even beyond these. No doubt each section had its own reasons for opposing the Act.

But no section made it a condition that all other sections must adopt the first section's position as a condition of participation.

The Communists emphasised what it had in common with all other participants on this issue. It did not adopt the sectarian attitude of emphasising its particular distinguishing feature ('shibboleth' to use Marx's word). It explained its own position appropriately and in appropriate conditions. It participated along with opponents of Communism in the common cause of defeating a fascist-like measure.

It would simply be absurd to conceive of a group of speakers which included anti-communists and Communists who opposed the measure where the Communist gave a dissertation on Communism. The *common* cause — what was common — was to defeat the Act. That common cause was served by all participants and they included the Communists.

From a minority position at the beginning, the united strength of opposition gathered and resulted in a great victory.

There are vitally important lessons today.

By stealth, what was attempted in this Act, namely weakening of the whole working class and all the common people, is being attempted now.

Anti-communism, anti-trade unionism, anti-people, are hallmarks of *top* Labor and ACTU leaders at the bidding of the big monopolists. A critical

part of the attack is the ID card.

Again, a diversity of people unite. Who is going to get out some particular Communist shibboleth to set the Communists off from the movement?

In any case, support for Communism does not necessarily come in the name of Communism. Much of Communism is instinctively or intuitively supported. The criterion is not proclamation of Communism.

The Communists, as serving the people, are participating with all their might just as they did in 1951 (and in other campaigns) in a mighty united campaign against ID cards.

What is happening today is simply an attempt to realise, by other means, objectives attempted to be realised in 1951.

Vote 'No' rang round the nation. It resulted in action.

So today 'No to ID cards' rings round the nation and Australian people act to defeat it.

('ID card struggle recalls 1951 referendum victory' — *Vanguard*, 23.9.1987)

## Capitalism's basic economic workings

(October 1987)

The current collapse of share prices, despite all the conflicting comments of the experts, is fundamentally expressive of a crisis of over-production.

That is, there are so many commodities produced on a capitalist world scale that they cannot be sold at a profit.

This crisis will have its ups and downs. There will be 'recoveries' and deeper crises.

But the crash represents an inevitable feature of capitalism — its inevitable crisis. It is not at all necessarily the final crisis. Capitalism retains a resilience until it finally collapses.

The economy of the US which dominated the capitalist world after World War II, ran into competition with the economies particularly of Japan and West Germany. The EEC became a powerful competitor. The US economy, despite its immense size, contracted relatively.

The countries which won independence during or after World War II were still ruthlessly exploited by the big capitalist countries.

The Soviet Union, China, East European and some other countries, meant a decline in the market for the US and capitalist countries.

World War II caused enormous destruction. Rehabilitation contributed to a boom. The boom had its own ups and downs. But it continued for a couple of decades.

But now the Japanese economy is enormous. It overproduces. It competes both internationally with the US and *within* the US economy (and other economies). The EEC does the same. Excess commodities are manufactured. Surplus agricultural produce accumulates. Minerals are over-produced. Competition intensifies. This process occurs in all capitalist countries in greater or lesser degree.

Difficulties of selling at a profit are illustrated by prices for Australian coal. Those prices are forced down because coal on a world scale is over-produced. Japanese internal economy is over-producing both for its domestic and international market. Its factories slow down. Less coal is required at the very moment when more coal is, on a world scale, produced and available. The price of coal falls. Miners are put off. Mine owners lose profits. Repercussions go well beyond the mining industry. Engineering, electricity and other industries suffer.

This process goes on on a world scale. Coal is a simple current illustration.

Tariff barriers are created to protect one economy against another. It does not help. It aggravates the world problems. Trade deficits demonstrate the difficulties of economies like those of the US and its dependent Australia. Trade surpluses stifle the Japanese economy. The demand for money pushes up interest rates which makes money more difficult to get. Lack of demand causes interest rates to fall. Demand rises again as interest falls, only to contribute once more to over-production.

Over-production leads to laying off workers, producing less, the market shrinks, so goods cannot be sold. Production goes down and down, unemployment grows. Each step aggravates the next.

There is absolutely no mystery about it. Marx analysed it all long ago.

It demonstrates the chaos that is capitalism. Profit, profit and still more profit, is the only driving motive. While profit is being made, there is a mad rush of investment. That rush requires extended credit. Finance capital provides the credit. Credit costs interest. Money on which interest is payable is used in wild speculation for more profit. Over-production puts the brake on that.

Sooner or later that over-production asserts itself. Profit contracts, particularly the rate of profit as against the total investment. The borrower can't meet the interest on the loan that financed the speculative drive for profit. The borrower goes bankrupt; the lender does not recover the loan.

Speculative 'boom' in anticipation of more and bigger profits, collapses. Share prices fall. The share prices fall because capitalist over-production has asserted itself.

The new billionaires and millionaires are in danger of going bankrupt. Several are fundamentally fronts for speculative capital.

The over-production causes loss of jobs, bankruptcies, rural crisis, ruination of thousands. It involves everything and everybody. In Australia, 10 per cent are estimated to own 60 per cent of Australia's wealth, while 2,000,000 live in poverty. Capitalism means a contraction of that 10 per cent and an expansion of that 60 per cent and addition to that 2,000,000.

A rational social system plans its production to meet needs. Capitalism is irrational. Truly it is an irrational and chaotic and fragile system.

People will not put up with it forever. They are its victims. They rebel against this or that aspect of it. Before too long in the historical sense, they will rebel against the whole of it. What is happening is helping us to understand the position.

Marxist political economy alone has the explanation.

('Overproduction crisis behind world-wide share crash' — *Vanguard*, 28.10.1987)



## The Australian Labor Party and parliament

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### Has the Labor Party changed?

(August 1987)

Have there been changes in the Labor Party? — many people ask. Has the Labor Party changed from being a working class party into a conservative party? — some people ask.

These are questions that Communists and others must consider, think over and answer.

The Prime Minister has said more than once that the Labor Party must be or must become, the natural party of government in Australia.

What does this mean? It means in short, that within the parliamentary system which the Labor Party leaders consider *must* remain, the Labor Party should be accepted by all as the party that should hold government office. Particularly it means that the Labor Party must be accepted by big business. In turn, the Labor Party's traditional followers must accept this. It is a so-called consensus. Essentially, acceptance of 'consensus' is the permanence of capitalism. In truth, there is *irreconcilable* conflict between the big monopoly capitalists and the rest of the people. Historically no Labor government in Australia's history has ever done a single thing that has disturbed the essential fabric of capitalism. This is not meant as a reproach at all; it is meant as a statement of sober fact.

Nor does our statement reflect in any way whatever adversely on the working class's connection and association with the formation and development of the Labor Party. The Labor Party did arise fundamentally out of the working class struggles of the 1890s and the earlier, more sporadic struggles and its foundation *was* a historical step forward.

The idea was that *within* parliament the Labor Party could legislate for better wages and working conditions.

At the time of its formation, this *was* a radical break from the past and it represented (however primitive it may now seem) a decisive independent step forward. At that time and for decades after, from the conventional standpoint, the person who proclaimed adherence to the Labor Party was indeed a desperate radical.

As Australia developed, its parliamentary institutions developed and the Labor Party developed as an institutionalised Party within parliament.

Labor governments came and went. The 'accepted government' was the Liberal Party (variously called Conservatives, National, U.A.P.).

The Labor Party was not 'accepted' because its origins and working class adherence made it the focus for potentially 'dangerous' forces and thoughts.

Labor leaderships, and what Labor Cabinets there were, had as personnel ex-workers, ex-trade union officials and very few bourgeois intellectuals. There was a direct working class connection and content in Labor Party leadership. It was possible, and often occurred, that people direct from the working class or indirectly through trade union officialdom, became Labor parliamentarians. In parliament, particularly when Labor was in opposition, the direct voices of the working class could be heard. People like Frank Anstee, the older Cameron (Don), Eddie Ward, Clyde Cameron, are examples. There were others.

Still the Labor governments served capitalism and never sought to do anything else. It is not and never has been a socialist working class party. The search for an exact label is fruitless, although Lenin in 1913 called it a liberal bourgeois party and a 'liberal Labor Party'.

That does not mean that the workers did not maintain great faith in it and hopes for socialism from it. Its radical origin left a powerful tradition.

In World War II, the Curtin Labor government came to office through changes *within* parliament. It did a reasonably good job of uniting the people in the anti-fascist struggle. After the death of Curtin, Chifley became the Labor leader. He was an ex-engine driver. In 1948-9, the Labor government disintegrated, precisely because it *openly* participated in oppressing the workers. The 'natural party' of government (Menzies) came to office in 1949 to push home suppression of the workers begun under Chifley.

Then after Menzies came Holt, Gorton and McMahon. Whitlam emerged. By then, Whitlam and those around him, were very much more the 'intellectually' trained cadres of capitalism who had chosen a Labor political 'career'. There had been a move closer to the idea of the 'natural' party of government.

After the first euphoria, Whitlam's government attacked the people in accordance with the pressures of capitalism. Repression and attacks on wages and conditions under Whitlam tended to be concealed by the manner of his dismissal.

The process of bourgeois intellectual cadres assuming the leading Labor Party and trade union positions, accelerated. The search for the 'middle ground' became the thing. This accorded with the 'technological' compulsions of capitalism.

It also undermined the traditional radical focus that the Labor Party has been. More and more, its personnel were 'natural' (to the big bourgeoisie).

The Australian working class is *the* greatest, most magnificent class in Australia. The constant harping on the tertiary qualified Labor and ACTU officials and their superiority 'downgrades' the working class. This is no accident. It is in keeping with the elitism of capitalism and its Labor and ACTU leaders. In the end, this elitism will produce its own reaction.

Now this process of elitism has reached a very high point. The contrast is between the old worker-trade union official-leader and minister of early Labor days with bourgeois intellectuals in leading positions in Labor Cabinets and trade union leading bodies. Those bourgeois intellectuals more or less openly side with the bourgeoisie and are 'natural' to that bourgeoisie.

Last *Vanguard* issue dealt with the trinity of Labor Cabinets (composed in this way), ACTU top leadership (composed in this way) and Packer, Murdoch, Bond, Holmes a Court, Abeles.

In personnel of leadership, the Labor Party *has* changed. In service to capitalism, it has not *fundamentally* changed but its service is far more obvious and obsequious and far more 'natural' for monopoly capitalism.

In many ways this is a good thing. It helps us all to learn that the non-socialist Labor Party can never solve capitalism's problems and makes it obvious that it has no socialist objective. This helps to create the conditions where a *mass* working class socialist party will arise. It will develop from the circumstances illuminated correctly by Marxism. A new socialist working class party cannot be artificially decreed or created either by wishes for a new party and artificial moves or by protest votes.

Illusions that the Labor leaders are socialist or working class will be fundamentally ended by experience of Labor in office where in fact the true character of its leadership is steadily revealed.

(‘Has the Labor Party changed?’ — *Vanguard*, 26.8.1987)

## Looking beyond parliamentary politics

(September 1987)

The Labor Party was re-elected to parliamentary office with an increased majority of seats but with a significant decrease in electoral votes, particularly in the big industrial electorates — a matter of very great importance.

The view expressed in this journal and other Marxist-Leninist publications is that it is desirable to maintain Labor governments in office in Australia. This is not because the actions of the Labor governments have fulfilled the hopes of the people — on the contrary — but because everyone must learn from experience that in realising people's just demands, it is necessary to go beyond Labor governments in office. The process of overall learning is assisted by actual experience of Labor governments in office. If a Labor government is defeated in present circumstances, it means replacement of that government by a government of the parliamentary opposition parties. Such a government would enact even more reactionary measures and 'justify' itself by pointing to the foundation laid by Labor governments. During a possible future term of office of the now parliamentary opposition, people's hopes again build up in the Labor Party. The then effect is simply continuation of parliamentary alternation of Labor and Liberal/National Party governments.

Also at issue is the limited nature of parliamentary democracy. It is within that parliamentary democracy that this two-party system operates. The impression created by the media etc. is that parliamentary politics are the be-all and end-all of politics. This is far from true.

### There is more to politics than parliament

There are developments which show that gradually all this is being broken down even within the parliament. The emergence of issues like peace, the environment, Aboriginal rights, as decisive issues of our times gets very little parliamentary attention. Yet they command enormous interest among the people. It is expressed in the parliamentary election of a couple of people *outside* the two-party system and whose election arose fundamentally from extra-parliamentary *mass* action and struggle.

Within the Labor Party itself, and among its many electoral supporters, there is the highest degree of opposition to top Labor Party leaders in the history of Australia. By its very nature, the Labor Party in Australia carries the seeds of its own split. It is well known that there have been various splits within the Labor Party both federally and in the various States. The

most spectacular were those over the conscription issue in World War I, over the Premiers' Plan in the 'thirties economic crisis and over the industrial groups in the 'fifties. In each case, split occurred because of the Labor Party's leadership carrying out the requirements of the monopolies. The 1955 Hobart Conference had a background somewhat different from preceding splits and a somewhat different outcome. The exact details may be left on one side. Suffice it to say that the basic reasons for new splits remained. (In that case, the traditional radical expectations of members and supporters had at least an important degree of success.)

#### **Labor Party splits — a result of its origins**

The basic reasons for splits are the substantial working class origin of the Labor Party and continuing belief in that by Labor Party members and supporters. A good deal of present-day adherence comes from that type of loyalty rather than from conviction. The founders of the Labor Party and its early supporters had the conviction that a separate 'working class' party could realise in parliament objectives which could not, as they thought, be realised outside parliament. This arose as the result of the 'defeats' (in defeat, there was also victory) of struggles in the period covered by the Maritime Strike. Before the Maritime Strike, there had been, in the various States, 'labour' parliamentarians. What happened in the 'nineties was that the process was carried into the formation of an overall Labor Party. After federation, that Party assumed a more decisive Australia-wide character.

As an 'independent' action of the working class and working people and some middle sections of the population, it was an extremely important step forward in the political development of the Australian people. The general circumstances of the times also saw the rise of the Australian Natives' Association, the pro-Australianism of *The Bulletin*, the writings of Lawson, Paterson and radical sentiments among the Australian people.

The Labor Party itself saw parliament as the institution where working class and people's demands were to be realised. Alongside went the demand for arbitration to resolve and prevent industrial disputes. One can look back on the facts now and see their shortcomings, not the least of which was misconception that parliament could be used against the capitalist class. The truth was that parliament (although its origins were earlier) is the peculiar product of capitalism. It has a progressive historical background in the struggle against feudalism. It was used by the rising capitalist class to break down or compromise the feudal lords. In that process, the bourgeoisie was compelled to call the people into action against feudal barriers. When substantial victory over feudalism was achieved, people's support was no longer necessary. Still, bourgeois social science perpetuated the myth of parliament as a people's institution. That had and has a positive

side.

The early Australian Labor leaders were compelled within the parliaments to enter into this or that arrangement with the then established orthodox parliamentary parties. In its own right, Labor did not have a parliamentary majority.

As time went on, Australian parliaments saw the amalgamation of the orthodox capitalist political parliamentary parties and the assumption by the Labor Party of the position of alternative parliamentary party along lines similar to the two-party system of the United States of America. Each 'parliamentary' country has its own peculiarities.

#### **'Spark of Socialism' dwells in the hearts of Labor supporters**

The Australian Labor Party developed as Australia developed. It was *always* essentially a parliamentary party. That meant that at no stage did it ever challenge capitalism, nor, given its evolution, could it be expected to do so. Under worldwide socialist influence sparked by the October socialist revolution in Russia, the Labor Party in 1921 adopted the 'socialisation objective'. For a short period in NSW, the infant Communist Party was affiliated to the Labor Party. The socialisation objective was to be legislated for in Parliament. Again, shortcomings in this can now be seen easily enough, but for the times, it was a tremendously radical idea. It gave apparent substance to that 'spark of socialism' that dwells in the hearts of the working class. It retains a hold to this day — a hold that is very important. Its influence can be seen in the present overwhelming Labor rank-and-file opposition to so-called privatisation. Though public ownership is really capitalist state ownership, it at least carries something of the form of socialism. Hence this tradition is important even though scientific socialism, still less socialist revolution, was never in contemplation.

In the 'twenties and 'thirties, Australia's capitalist economic development proceeded fairly sedately. That was rudely interrupted by the crisis of the 'thirties. In that crisis, as in the conscription issue of World War I, the acute contradiction between the expectations and hopes of Labor Party members and supporters on the one hand, and the bourgeois parliamentary conformism of the Labor leaders on the other caused splits in the Labor Party as a whole. The avowed identified conformists were expelled from the Labor Party. It 'purified' itself. The effect of this 'purging' strengthened radical expectations among Labor Party adherents — the rats had gone, so the thinking went.

After World War II, the Labor Party did not split until 1955. But the scene for a split was set by the Chifley government's repressive measures and on the other hand, the over-reaching by the Industrial Group movement. In consequence, the split took a form different to predecessors. However,

one of its effects was to regenerate in a way different from the two preceding splits, the radical hopes of the working class and other sections.

The return of the Whitlam government in 1972 followed a long period of Labor opposition. In that period of opposition, hope of radical people's measures by the Labor Party rose again. In its initial period, the Whitlam government gave further life to radical expectations. It took a series of measures, including exchange of diplomats with People's China, that aroused people's euphoria. What it did was to put into effect the outlook of the more far-sighted sections of the bourgeoisie. This was all to the good but it should not be confused with any scientific socialist motivation.

The aggression in Vietnam, the failure of 'isolation' of China, the need for trade expansion in Asia, all played a vital part. Having achieved the policy objectives of the more realistic bourgeoisie, the Whitlam government answered the bourgeoisie's demands in a period of economic downturn. It enacted measures against the people. There were wage freeze and wage reduction, freezing of social service payments, attacks on left Labor Party members and supporters.

The Whitlam government also alienated important sections of the US ruling circles. It sought loan funds outside the established leaders of the US, it took measures against the CIA's activities in Australia. It was a government of ambivalence. Some of its measures and statements did provide important greater emphasis on Australia's independence. A consequence was a degree of maintenance and encouragement of radicalism.

The method of its dismissal by Kerr's invoking of the reserve powers of the crown certainly caused a massive resurgence of the Labor Party's traditional appeal to Australian workers' socialist and radical independent sentiments which extended to other sections of Australians. Whitlam became something of a folk hero. In some quarters, a yearning to return to something of a Whitlam era developed.

In 1983, after the Fraser administration became ineffective, the Hawke government was elected. Its winning of office was the occasion for great enthusiasm among Labor Party supporters and among wide sections of ordinary people. That government also had the support (as had all previous Labor governments) of powerful sections of the bourgeoisie. Its stopping of the building of the Tasmanian Franklin Dam was the result of mass opposition to the dam plus divisions in the bourgeoisie. It caused strengthening of hopes among the people for radical action by the Labor government.

The Hawke leadership pledged not to repeat the 'errors' of Whitlam. It pledged to make the Labor Party the 'natural party' of government. There

were plenty of errors of Whitlam from a working class standpoint. It was not these errors of which the new government leaders were talking. What they meant was that they would do nothing to offend the US leaders, their financial dealings would be orthodox and they would loyally serve monopoly capitalism. The notion of consensus was propagated. Everyone should reach agreement. The capitalists and the workers could easily reconcile their differences in 'consensus' discussions. If the workers made sacrifices, then the monopolists would respond. All this was quite contrary to the basic nature of capitalism. The capitalists do exploit the workers and are driven by profit. No amount of talk of 'consensus' overcomes that.

#### **Imperialists invade Australia — while Hawke talks 'consensus'**

The public identification of the top Labor leaders with the monopoly capitalists caused very great unrest and disquiet among the Labor Party members and supporters. World economic downturn led to an imperialist financial, economic invasion of Australia. The shrinking of the imperialist world compelled the US and Japanese imperialists particularly to force the opening up of the less developed countries, of which Australia was one. It had vast untapped resources which these imperialist countries needed.

Quite a dramatic and comparatively early illustration of this process was the BHP-Esso partnership in the development of Australian oil resources. The process extended to minerals, coal etc. At the same time, Australian financial weakness was 'cured' by US and Japanese financial institutions. The deregulation of banks, floating of currency, easing of restrictions, were the *result* of imperialist economic pressure. It was put over by the Labor leaders as beneficial to Australia simply to offset the opposition of traditional Labor supporters and sections of the more patriotic Australian bourgeoisie.

In fact, far from being a great benefit to Australia, it has resulted in greater economic and political subordination to the big imperialisms. To radical Labor Party critics, the leaders said — 'be patient, we will get round to looking after the people'. But imperialism is imperialism. They continue and will continue. Ideas that all this was inspired treasureship by the Labor treasurer are arrant nonsense. It was the Labor government's response to imperialist and monopoly capitalist compulsion. Reduced living standards of the people, speed-up, attacks on social services, repression, further victimisation of the Aborigines, caused great people's unrest.

It was all aggravated by the obvious collaboration of top Labor leaders with monopolists such as Murdoch, Abeles, Bond, etc. Whereas previous Labor leaders had shown some 'discretion' in this sort of thing, current Labor leaders have not shown similar discretion. The objective basis of this is the expansion of imperialism and its new invasion of Australia. It has reduced the room for political manoeuvre.

In consequence, in days when people's political understanding has advanced considerably, the Labor leaders are demonstrating more clearly than their predecessors their identification with monopoly capitalism. And they really cannot avoid it. Glaring example follows glaring example. Hatred of the people for the Murdochs, Abeles, Bonds is visited on obvious collaborators. From the Labor Party's historical promoting, at least in part, of ideas of Australian independence, Labor leaders now champion reduction of that independence.

#### **Capitalism demands submission of Labor leaders**

By the nature of Australian capitalism and the nature of world imperialism, the gap between the Labor leaders and their rank- and-file support is radically widened. All the potential for actual and formal split within the Labor Party is pushed along. Split in these circumstances means radical rebellion against right-wing reactionary leadership. There is already evidence of comparatively minor split but there is a threatening catastrophic split for the Labor leaders. They are in great danger of being swept into the dustbin of history. In that connection, no-one should forget the Boyer lectures of the Prime Minister nor his advocacy in the past of government by the best representatives of all sections. That idea is not far removed from recently expressed ideas of Copeman of Peko Wallsend (Japanese-financed) ill fame.

Circumstances compel a coalescence of top monopoly capitalists (despite acute contradictions) and their political agents. It widens the gap between the people and the monopoly capitalists- parliamentary politicians. The people move to the left. Monopoly capitalism and its parliamentary politicians move to the right.

#### **People's struggle alone will realise just demands**

It is a task of monumental importance for Communists to work with ever-intensifying energy among all sections of the people, which includes the Labor Party-influenced people, so that widening struggle does not simply follow the old pattern of alternating Liberal/National and Labor governments. In parliamentary terms, it remains of advantage for us all to get still more experience of Labor in office. People's representation can be widened. Perspective of learning the decisive position of people's struggle, which includes parliamentary representation for genuine champions of the people, which includes Communists, should be encouraged.

(‘Maintaining Labor in office — Looking beyond parliamentary politics’  
— *Australian Communist*, No. 143, September/October 1987)



## **Communist ideology and organisation**

### **Serve the people in all struggles, big and small**

(April 1975)

Organisation of the Communist Party is an essential part of the unity and division of ideology, politics and organisation.

The ideology and politics of the Communists cover absolutely the whole field of ideology and politics. Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought is a world outlook. Nothing escapes materialist dialectics or put the other way, materialist dialectics embrace every single thing, every single natural and social phenomenon.

The supremacy of Marxist-Leninist ideology and politics on all fields must be fought for and the Communist Party is organised for that fight.

Thus wherever there are Communists, those Communists must fight for Communist ideology and politics and the extension of Communist organisation so that in turn that extended organisation can fight in new fields for Communist ideology and politics.

Life itself has very, very many facets. Australian workers, working and patriotic people wage struggles of many different kinds. Some are big struggles, some are small struggles and in between are struggles of different dimensions.

In the last decades, Australian workers, working and patriotic people have participated in countless struggles. Some of them have been spectacular and some have not been spectacular. At all times Communists have been prepared to participate and have participated in hard day to day work, sometimes seemingly unrewarding work. Communists must participate in such work because the struggle undergoes ups and downs, ebbs and flows.

What is the source of struggle? The source of struggle is objective, it exists outside man's mind. Of course, men's minds profoundly influence it, but they do not create it. The source of struggle in Australia lies in imperialist domination of Australia, imperialist capitalist exploitation of Australian workers, working and patriotic people. No matter how brilliant the

Communists may be they cannot arbitrarily create struggle. If they could do that, then they could arbitrarily create revolution. This cannot be. A revolutionary situation arises fundamentally from the breakdown in certain conditions of capitalism plus the subjective factor of revolutionary theory and good Communist Party organisation.

There are certain views that the Communist Party in Australia should be continuously leading such spectacular struggles as the Moratorium or the O'Shea struggle. These were good and important struggles in which the Communists played a very important part. By way of example, it is necessary to comment a little upon them. Neither of these struggles was in itself a revolutionary struggle. Nothing should be said that in any way plays down the importance of such struggles. They were extremely important components in the overall anti-imperialist people's democratic direction or stream of struggle. They did not and could not resolve this struggle. They were partial struggles aimed at reforms within capitalism. A Communist attitude to them demanded a revolutionary, not a reformist approach to them. Thus the Communist attitude was that important as were the reforms involved in them, and important as were the victories involved in them, still they were not things in themselves. They were part of the overall struggle to weaken imperialism and heighten the anti-imperialist and socialist consciousness of the people. The working class was the leader of them because the working class, as an objective fact, is the class most directly attached to the most advanced means of production, most disciplined, most cohesive and most organised by the very process of production.

Communists most certainly participated in these struggles and took the leading part in them. In order to understand those struggles properly the Communists never lost sight of the objective basis of them. In the case of the Vietnamese aggression, the aggression had been going on for some years before a huge mass movement came into being. Due to consistent Communist and other political explanation, but above all due to the objective fact of US aggression and Vietnamese resistance, Australian conscription, etc. step by step a huge mass movement grew. In the case of the penal powers, capitalist exploitation and oppression constituted the objective basis for Communist work and explanation and leadership. Neither struggle was the arbitrary creation of the Communists. But by correct Communist estimation of the objective factors and correct Communist leadership spectacular struggles arose.

Even at the very time of these struggles which perhaps seemed to some to be all embracing, there were many other struggles in which Communists correctly worked. At the very flow of these movements much unspectacular, persistent dedicated work went on in these struggles themselves and in

other struggles. In all cases the objective basis had to exist. Communists know from Marxism-Leninism that even at times when the movement seems to be in deep ebb, it is inevitable that it will sooner or later flow. This knowledge is an essential factor in Communist integrity, persistence and devotion.

There are some who nostalgically dwell on experiences in such big struggles and find difficulty in adjusting to changes in the situation. Moreover their idea of Party organisation is based upon the concept that publicly proclaimed Communists publish a lot of Communist propaganda on such issues and that is an end to it. This is a very narrow and incorrect conception of Party organisation. The British revisionist 'Communists' and largely the Australian revisionist 'Communists' had such ideas. Their concept of organisation was measured in public meetings, demonstrations, written propaganda, paper sales, recruits and finance. The organisation was geared to carry this out. These things are important in a genuine revolutionary movement but they are a part and a part only of a far wider concept of organisation which operates in all times and in all circumstances. If the task of revolution could be accomplished by propaganda alone, then it has been accomplished many times over for there has been and is a vast volume of propaganda. This is correct enough provided the propaganda is properly geared to the objective situation. But certainly it is by no means the end of Party organisation. Lenin pointed out many times that the masses learn above all through experience and it is in that experience that the Communists must participate and work and draw conclusions appropriately.

Not so long ago *Australian Communist* carried an article which pointed out that participants in this or that struggle tended to see the given struggle as the be all and end all of the revolutionary struggle but that the truth was that it was but one aspect of far wider struggle. So too with propaganda and a propaganda approach to organisation.

It is necessary too to say a word on ebb and flow in the movement and the constantly changing nature of the struggle. Over the past 50 years there have been numerous highlights in the struggle. One may mention the struggle against the 1926 political amendments to the Crimes Act, the great unemployed struggles of the '30s, the von Luckner struggle, the anti-fascist war struggle, the great strikes of 1946-7, the Essential Services Act struggle, the 1949 coal strike, the 1950-1 Communist Party Dissolution Act struggle, the Petrov provocation, the Vietnamese war struggle, the O'Shea struggle. They all had spectacular features. No one of them was decisive in itself. Some were partial victories, others partial defeats. In victory, there were certain aspects of defeat and in defeat certain aspects of victory. No one of them occupied even at their height, the whole field of Communist activity

in Australia though no one can minimise them. All arose from objective conditions in capitalism. Their varying character illustrates the varying objective conditions of capitalism. Each advanced the cause of Communism. But none gave rise in itself to the victory of Communism. The process is complicated.

Of course Communist organisation must be geared to participate in and wage big struggles. It must also be geared to function all the time and in all circumstances.

The most critical question of the revolution is the question of state power and a people's army to wage the struggle for state power for the anti-imperialist people's democratic revolutionary people. None of these struggles directly involved this. Certainly lessons were learned and understanding on this matter increased. The subjective factor of propagation and organisation for such an army can never for one moment be neglected but the objective situation must yet develop to build up a large people's army. Unless this is understood, progress cannot be made. If the Party is merely geared for propaganda alone, then progress on this matter as on others is very seriously limited.

Communists must adjust themselves to all conditions and be able to lead appropriately in the ebb and in the flow. All Communists in Australia have made a wonderful contribution since revisionism broke away. They have made this contribution in conditions of spectacular struggle and in conditions of absence of spectacular struggle.

Capitalism has entered acute crisis where struggle takes different forms from those of the past. There is certain to be general flow and ebb and within particular struggles flow and ebb; there is certain to be victory and defeat. Communists must be with every ebb and every flow and every victory and every defeat at all times alert to promote the cause of Communism and never discouraged. Materialist dialectics demonstrates the infinite variation in struggle. We must be armed for all eventualities and properly disciplined for the big and small, never forgetting Mao Zedong's warning 'Some comrades, disregarding the subjective and objective conditions, suffer from the malady of revolutionary impetuosity; they will not take pains to do minute and detailed work among the masses, but, riddled with illusion, want only to do big things.' (On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party.)

('Constant struggle to maintain supremacy of Marxist-Leninist ideology'  
— *Australian Communist*, No.71, April 1975)

## The Communist Party and trade union officialdom

(September 1978)

In recent weeks, material which deals with the builders' labourers has appeared. Some of the material has been published. Criticisms and suggestions have come in about it all.

This material all discusses a very important question of politics.

Because of the discussion, we would like to offer a few comments. We do not want to pretend that these comments are the final pronouncement on the matter.

There are a number of questions to be taken into account.

The primary question of the working class movement is the building of Marxist-Leninist revolutionary influence and organisation. To that, all other questions are subordinate.

It has a certain tactical importance that progressive people are elected to leading positions in such organisations as the Builders' Labourers' Federation. It offsets Soviet social-imperialist influence in the leadership of such organisations as the Building Workers' Industrial Organisation. It should be said that the Soviet social-imperialists conceive of one aspect of seizure of a victim country that Soviet social-imperialism should seize the leadership of trade union organisations. Indeed, their whole idea in the so-called trade union movement is to seize leadership.

It is not our idea that mere winning of trade union leadership helps revolution. The primary question is the building of Marxist-Leninist influence and organisation.

It is a fact that the leadership of the Builders' Labourers' Federation is progressive and amongst it is at least one publicly-known person (N.L. Gallagher) who adopts a position of adherence to Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought.

That has its positive side if it helps to develop Marxist-Leninist influence and organisation amongst the workers, and a certain positive aspect of it is that it offsets Soviet social-imperialist seizure of the trade union structure.

As a thing in itself, as a weapon in the struggle of the workers to seize state power, it is, at the most, incidental to the struggle for the seizure of state power. Experience shows how wrong it is for the Communists to rely in revolutionary struggle upon merely having the leadership of a trade union structure.

If the case of the Builders' Labourers' is taken, then there was a certain

Marxist-Leninist influence in the leadership. There is no doubt the building workers support that leadership. That is very good. But the union is within the so-called trade union movement. It is affiliated to the ACTU and registered in the Arbitration Commission. It even had representation in the ACTU. It was even deregistered by the Arbitration Commission. Well, what happened? In the ACTU it supported wage indexation (i.e. wage cut and wage freeze). Superficially it appeared that deregistration from the Arbitration Commission liberated it. But it was apparently found that it could not function outside the Arbitration Commission and conformed to the law.

True, it was a bit lawless. But there were state-controlled ballots within it which it was in no position to resist. The whole point of state-controlled ballots in the unions is to allow the bourgeoisie greater control over the workers. In this case the state 'allowed' some Communists to 'win' leading positions within the union bureaucracy, probably influenced by the mass support for progressives, but there were other reasons. The state is the instrument of the monopoly capitalists. It can determine who 'wins'. It must be concluded as a matter of objective reality that, in the circumstances, it preferred the Communists. Why? There are various reasons. Mass support is one. Another is that the decisive monopoly capitalists want to keep the Soviet social-imperialists out of the trade union structure at the moment. Despite some State officials who are in the pocket of Soviet social-imperialism and who did their best to promote its interests, the anti-Soviet social-imperialists won.

That has its importance.

It would be very wrong, however, to believe that such a victory was a true measure of the building of genuine Communist organisation and influence among the building workers. This is the really genuine criterion of victory. It is the direction of Communist Party (M-L) work. Yes, we can participate in the 'election', win votes and win the trade union structure. It has some importance. The decisive question however is the mind and heart of the building workers. In fact the trade union structure and apparatus in Australia is designed to suppress the workers. It is impossible by 'winning' it to win revolution. It is just possible, but very difficult, even by 'winning' to assist in the critical task of winning workers for revolution.

A few people think that a great victory was won in the Builders' Labourers' Federation by the election in a state-controlled ballot of Gallagher and people who supported him in NSW. In the sense we have put, that is true. In reality it is but a small facet of struggle.

The real struggle of the workers goes on and must go on outside the trade union structure altogether. Whether that structure is controlled by

the Communists or not it will not decide the question of revolution. As a whole, the trade union structure is to suppress struggle. If the Communists should get into a dominant position it will be destroyed just as parliamentary Communist (even revisionist) representation has been destroyed.

Revolution can only be decided by the workers right outside this trade union structure (and parliament). At the best, the trade union structure in the correct hands can be but an adjunct to *mass* work among the workers themselves.

It is very dangerous to build illusions in the union apparatus and to pander to the illusion that a 'victory' of this kind can in itself promote revolution. To do so assists to build up illusions in trade unionism and parliamentarism.

The Communist Party as such does not interfere in the internal affairs of any trade union. That is true. It is an entirely different question that the Communists in a given union *must* work in that union among the workers. Their purpose is to promote revolutionary influence and organisation. They must identify themselves with the workers and the workers have a certain loyalty to the union (and also a certain cynicism). Skilful work by the Communists among the workers of varying levels of understanding will assist the workers to come step by step over a period to an understanding that the highest form of class organisation of the proletariat is the Communist Party (and not the trade union).

It is in our opinion not correct for the Communists to be *preoccupied* with the internal manoeuvrings etc. within the trade union structure. Unfortunately it is necessary for them to pay at least some attention to this. But it must be *incidental* to the main goal of winning the workers for revolutionary independence and socialism.

It is our opinion that there is no simple black-and-white answer to many of the specific problems that arise. We have made our own comments. It does not follow that they are wholly correct. Anyone who pretends he has all the answers to the problems of trade unionism and the tactics to combat them is a braggart. What is needed is careful and systematic and continuous study of experience. In the process, the truth emerges.

The direction of our activity is unquestionably to build among the workers revolutionary influence and organisation so that Australian independence and socialism can be won.

('Primary task is building Marxist-Leninist influence' — *Australian Communist*, No.91, September/October 1978)

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