

Guardian Telephone Numbers  
EDITORIAL-Cen. 1909  
DESPATCH-Cen. 4739  
ADDRESS - 340 Little Collins St., Melbourne

Friday 3d  
Issue  
FRIDAY (8 PAGES) 3d  
TUESDAY (4 PAGES) 2d

No. 440.

THE GUARDIAN, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1949

Registered at the G.P.O. Melbourne, for transmission by post as a newspaper.

PRICE 3d

# 'FREE SHARKEY!' CALL BY MASS MEETING

## Crimes Act Condemned

MORE THAN 800 MELBOURNE CITIZENS, RESPONDING TO A HASTILY-CALLED MEETING, PACKED OUT UNITY HALL ON WEDNESDAY NIGHT AND UNANIMOUSLY:

★ Condemned the savage jail sentence of three year's hard labor given to the Australian Communist Party leader (Mr. Lance Sharkey):

★ Called for Mr. Sharkey's immediate release and the repeal of the Crimes Act under which he was convicted.

### Citizens' Resolution Defends Sharkey

WHEN the chairman of Wednesday night's protest meeting (Dr. G. P. C Day) called for those in favor of a resolution demanding the release of Mr. Sharkey every hand went up

The resolution in full stated:

"This meeting of Melbourne citizens condemns the Crimes Act proceedings taken against L. L. Sharkey and G. Burns, and the harsh sentences imposed on them.

"The essence of the statements for which they were prosecuted was a vigorous call to defend peace and the national independence of Australia.

"To the Labor Party leaders this is now sedition for they have tied themselves to the American warmongers.

"Therefore we demand the immediate repeal of the Crimes Act, the release of Sharkey and Burns, and we call upon all peace-lovers and democrats to redouble their efforts in defence of peace, of democratic liberties and of living standards."

Ninety-four pounds was collected to carry on the fight for Mr. Sharkey's release.

At the end of the meeting the audience gave three rousing cheers for Mr. Sharkey and the Australian Communist Party. Calling for a united stand by all democrats and lovers of peace the Victorian State Secretary of the Communist Party (Mr. E. F. Hill) said the jailing of Mr. Sharkey was a challenge to Australian democracy.

He said he was quite confident the challenge would be met and that the release of Mr. Sharkey would be won. Mr. Hill said that the comments by Mr. Justice Dwyer when he sentenced Dr. Ewart's statement in Parliament that Mr. Sharkey was not convicted a Communist but like any other citizen.

(Mr. Justice Dwyer said to Mr. Sharkey, "That you are, and were, the general secretary of the Communist Party in Australia has never been disputed. You claim to speak on behalf of that Party, and that you claim to do so has never been questioned.")

There was not the slightest doubt, continued Mr. Hill, that Mr. Sharkey was sentenced because he was the leader of the Australian Communist Party. The Crimes Act was used against Mr. Sharkey because the Communist Party was in the forefront of the fight for peace, democracy and higher living standards.

The real traitors of this country were those who stood for devaluation, higher prices, lower wages, rearmament and who were involved in a sordid conspiracy to smash the Australian trade union movement.

Those who called for the rearmament of Japan were also traitors.

Why was not the Crimes Act used against these people; people like Country Party leader Fadden who had stolen a secret document and who had said he would prefer Hitler to militant trade unionists?

Why wasn't the Crimes Act used against Lieut-General Sturdee who said that Australia would have to play second fiddle to America?

Mr. Sharkey had never said that Australia should play second fiddle to any other country. He had, stood resolutely

for the complete independence of Australia.

Mr. Justice Dwyer said Mr. Hill when sentencing Mr. Sharkey had said he had imposed such a severe penalty to act as a deterrent, but he could rest assured that this would not deter or deflect the movement for peace and democracy.

On the contrary, it would call forth a mighty mass movement against all repressive legislation which would culminate in the release of Sharkey and Burns.

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MR. L. L. SHARKEY, Australian Communist Party General Secretary, entering Central Criminal Court, Sydney, where Judge Dwyer imposed on him, for a statement, the maximum penalty of three years' jail with hard labor, under the Crimes Act.

### Free Sharkey! Repeal Crimes Act Fight For Peace!

- ★ Demand the outlawing of the atom bomb!
- ★ Demand acceptance by the United Nations of the Soviet Peace proposals!
- ★ Break the dollar grip by peaceful trade with the countries of Socialism!
- ★ Demand £10 basic wage with real price control!

Australians! Assert your freedom to fight for peace and an independent, prosperous Australia!

### YOUTH ACTION FOR PEACE CONGRESS TO-NIGHT

THE Youth Action for Peace Congress will be publicly opened tonight (Friday) at 8 p.m. at the Nicholas Hall, 148 Lansdale Street, Melbourne. Mr. Rupert Lockwood who was leader of the Australian delegation at the Paris Peace Congress and who has just returned to Australia, will be one of the speakers. Mr. J. Cairns (lecturer at Mel-

bourne University), the Rev. Victor James (Australian Peace Council) and Mr. Harry Stein (Councilor of the World Federation of Democratic Youth) will also address the congress.

During the evening national groups will give a folk dancing display and a ballet constructed around the theme of peace will be performed for the first time.

### "Sharkey Must Be Freed!" Unions Declare

TRADE Unions and other organisations are demanding that Mr. L. L. Sharkey be released and that Labor Government carry out the decision of A.L.P. general conference to repeal the Crimes Act—the one under which Mr. Sharkey was sentenced.

MINERS in eight N.S.W. pits called a one-day stoppage the day after Sharkey was sentenced.

On Tuesday morning SEAMEN at the Melbourne pick-up unanimously carried this resolution:

"This meeting of Melbourne seamen condemns the vicious sentence imposed on Sharkey and calls on the Federal Government to immediately repeal the fascist legislation embodied in the Crimes Act and instructs our Federal Executive to immediately take steps to try to secure the release of a great working class leader."

On Tuesday night the Geelong Trades Hall Council carried a resolution by a two-to-one majority condemning the sentence.

The resolution stated: "That we, members of the Geelong Trades Hall Council reaffirm that freedom of speech, Press

and assemblage are trade union policy. "While we have no desire to enter into the merits or demerits of Mr. L. Sharkey's statement, we consider it the inalienable right of all citizens to have the freedom of expression.

"We call on the Government to carry out ACTU policy to repeal the Criminal sections of the Crimes Act and further affirm that democracy should not fear most severe criticism."

### NEWPORT MASS MEETING

A mass meeting at the Newport railway workshops has sent a telegram to the Prime Minister demanding the release of Mr. Sharkey.

Newport workers shocked vicious sentence on Sharkey. For retaining Crimes Act Government held responsible.

RAILWORKERS at the 1 Street Shops unanimously demanded the "vicious sentence on a hypothetical matter."

BUTCHERS meeting of 50 at Angliss carried unanimous resolution that a telegram to Federal Government condemning the sentence and calling for the repeal of the Crimes Act.

This was endorsed by thechers' Union executive the night. The AEU shop committee, Union Can factory met at the sentence was announced unanimously carried a resolution of protest. Build the protest movement Free Sharkey!