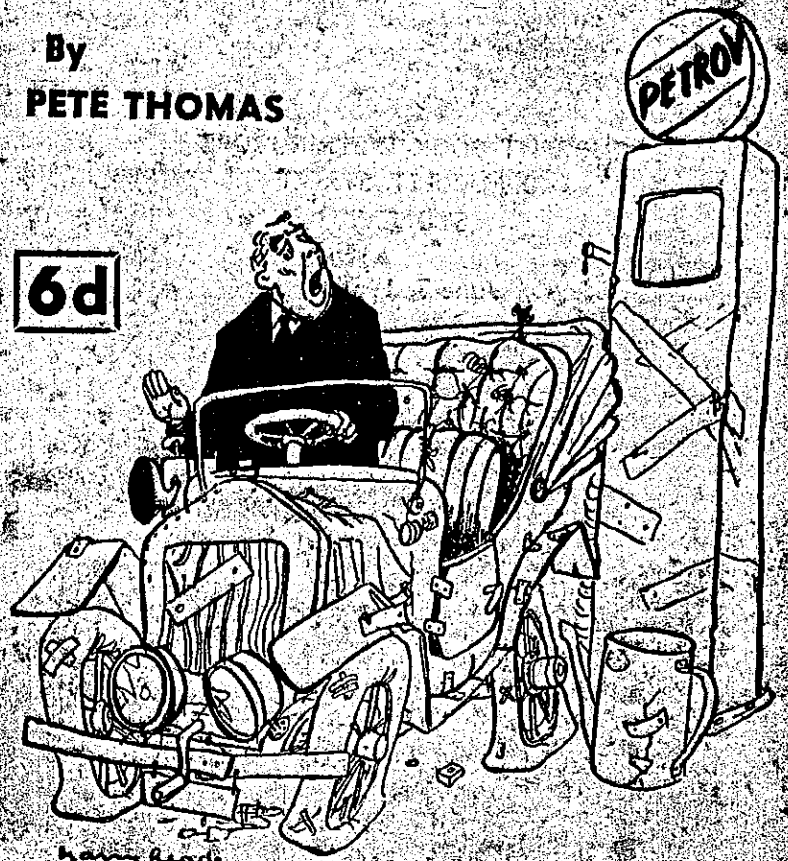


Petrov Stunt Back-fires

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Petrov document a "farrago of facts, falsity and filth"

—Sydney Daily Mirror, Page 1, May 18*

"I AM not referring in any way to the Communist Party of Australia, with which we are not concerned here."

Those 20 words are the words of Mr. Windeyer, QC. He said them on May 17 when (as counsel appointed by Menzies) he was outlining the case prepared by "Security" to the Menzies-appointed Petrov Royal Commission.

Only 20 words—but they exploded like a cheap balloon the "farrago of facts, falsity and filth" by which the Menzies-Fadden Government and the daily press had sought to turn the Petrov affair against the Communist Party of Australia (CPA).

*Farrago: Hotchpotch.

Nailed the slanders

Immediately after Menzies' first announcement on Petrov, the CPA National President (Mr. R. Dixon) answered the slanderers.

While warning of the danger of frame-ups, Mr. Dixon utterly refuted all suggestions of any connection between the Soviet Embassy and the CPA. Communist policy was neither furtive nor secret; it was open, honest, patriotic.

But politicians and press went on howling their slanders.

Now they are answered, at the Royal Commission itself. Despite all the "documents" and stories which Petrov, hidden away, is supposed to have supplied to Menzies' political police (misnamed "Security"), the Commission has, as Mr. Windeyer said, no occasion to be concerned with the CPA.

As for alleged "agents," the "Security" case itself, as given by Mr. Windeyer, admits that Petrov was not to recruit "persons whose progressive activities are known to the Australian Security Service."

Who now would dare accuse Australian Communists of being "spies"!

Branded by own words

In the light of this vindication of the CPA's position, let's go back a little. Let the Menzies men and the press condemn themselves out of their own mouths.

Menzies made his first Petrov announcement in Parliament on April 13. It was the second last day of the last sittings of Parliament before the elections.

Immediately afterwards, Menzies called the first of the "press conferences," from which the dailies were supplied with smear allegations and innuendoes.*

* On Menzies' own instructions, I was barred, as Tribune representative, from attending his press conference on Petrov on the night of April 13. Was he, even then, afraid of questions?

Regardless of the fact that they hadn't seen a word of the Petrov "documents," the dailies leapt at the chance, provided by Menzies, for an anti-Communist orgy. For instance:—

"Communist espionage in Australia."—Headline to Sydney Morning Herald' editorial, April 14.

"Secrets of spy ring: Documents reveal story."—Sydney Sun, P1 banner headline, April 14.

"Information in the documents . . . includes precise instructions to Australian Communists and their sympathisers . . ."—Sun, April 14.

"The Australian Communist Party may very well be involved."—Sun cable, April 14.

"We must, more closely than ever before, watch the Communists . . ."—Melbourne Herald editorial, April 14.

The Petrov affair "will bring to a head the recurring demand for a standing public service rule excluding active Communist sympathisers from the public service."—Melbourne Herald, April 14.

"The Royal Commission . . . should discover spies among Australians who may have been working for the Soviet."—Brisbane Courier-Mail editorial, April 14.

Vilest of all was the heading to a Sydney Daily Mirror editorial on April 20. "Take local Reds by the throat!" it said.

Did Menzies' dirty work

The dailies, fed by press conferences, were saying what Menzies wanted. He himself thus could slyly pose in a mantle of scrupulous propriety. But the SMH (May 5) blurted out: "The Prime Minister's warnings on Communism show that the Government hopes this will be a major influence on electors."

Other Ministers,* like the dailies, were troubled by no niceties of scruple.

Fadden shouted about the Petrov Commission and "Communist activity" from Menzies' policy-speech platform.

* Menzies "smears through his agents, the Faddens, Wentworths and Harrisons," Dr. Evatt recently said (SMH, 27/5/54).

Holt, by blatant innuendo, used the Petrov affair as a pretext to refuse passports to a trade union May Day delegation to China—the prelude to his subsequent refusal of passports to clergymen and others who were to have gone overseas on a mission of peace.

Wildest of all was Army Minister Francis. Even after Mr. Windeyer's vindication of the CPA on May 17, he had the staggering audacity to say at a Wynnum (Qld) election meeting on May 22: "When the Commission presents its report to Parliament and recommends certain action against Communists . . ."

"Farrago of facts, falsity and filth": that, it seems, is the creed of the Menzies crew and their daily press smear-merchants.

Why monopolists hate CPA

The Menzies-Fadden Government is directly a monopolies' Government. It is the political goon of the millionaire spider-web combines, which control also the daily press.

The monopolists hate and fear the Communist Party because, as the party of Socialism, it leads the struggle of the people against the monopoly capitalist system.

Hence the attempt by the monopolists and their politicians and press, on the eve of the elections, to turn the Petrov affair against the CPA.

Vilified unions, too

The monopolists hate and fear also genuine trade unionism. They saw in the Petrov affair a chance to smear militant unionism.

The day after the first Petrov announcement, the Melbourne Herald (centre of the Collins House monopolists' press web), under a huge Page 1 headline, "Soviet plotted trouble in industry," predicted that the Petrov inquiry would reveal "a widespread Communist spy network . . . linked with fomenting industrial trouble." Who told the Herald this? Menzies at a press conference? The Herald didn't say.

In the same issue, the Herald published a cabled comment that it would be surprising "if the trade unions or some of them had not been used by the Communists as recruiting grounds for spies."

In Sydney the same day, the Sun wrote about "precise instructions" from the Soviet for "industrial action" and "industrial sabotage" and even that "the Russians in Australia . . . on occasions have made payments to further an industrial upset."

The SMH (organ of the CSR monopoly interests) bayed with the pack. On April 15 it said that "Canberra officials" (another name for Menzies?) expected the inquiry to "give Australians a picture of a widespread industrial 'sabotage' organisation working through unions." Later, the press darkly hinted that the great 80-million-strong World Federation of Trade Unions was implicated.

All this savage union-smearing was supposed to be based on Petrov "documents" and "revelations."

But—Mr. Windeyer's address to the Royal Commission contained nothing whatsoever to justify the vile anti-union fabrications peddled by the press and its Canberra informants.

These attempts to smear the unions, like the attempts to smear the CPA, were a farrago of falsity and filth.

Mrs. Petrov and Mascot

Within a week of Menzies' first Petrov announcement, the press ran amok with anti-Soviet provocation. Their pretext was the Mascot affair on April 19, when Mrs. Petrov left Sydney with Soviet diplomatic personages as her companions.

Within the next couple of days, it was revealed by the boasts of anti-Soviet agitator Harkoff (in the April 20 Sydney Sun and the April 21 SMH) that the mob hooliganism at Mascot was prearranged, and was approved in advance by "Security." Justification was claimed in the strident assertions that Mrs. Petrov was dragged on the plane by Soviet couriers after appealing for help and that the rioters were trying to rescue her.

That's what they said. Let Mrs. Petrov's own statement speak.

"Terrified"—of the crowd

Here are points from the Mrs. Petrov statement (Daily Telegraph, May 19):—

"The moment I left the car (at Mascot) with the men, the crowd started shouting . . . I was very frightened of the crowd . . . I was terrified. I thought the crowd would harm me . . ."

"I did not speak. I did not ask for help from anyone. I did not ask to be rescued . . . The newspaper stories that I appealed for help are not true . . ."

"Both the couriers held my arms tightly. I believe they were trying to guard me from harm . . ."

So—she was afraid of the crowd (who wouldn't have been?); she didn't appeal for help or call out; the couriers were protecting her.

What the dailies said

Now let's go back. Who doesn't remember, for instance, the Daily Telegraph of April 20 and what it said—

"She called 'Help me!' 'Save me!' in English. As her guards dragged her on to the plane, she said in Russian, 'I don't want to go home.'" (Page 1 story).

"Guards drag away Mrs. Petrov. 'Help, save me,' she screamed." (P2 banner headline).

"'I do not want to go home,' shouts Mrs. Petrov." (P4 banner headline).

Those whom the Telegraph quoted as having heard Mrs. Petrov call out such things included: A Telegraph staff member; "scores of White Russians, Latvians and Estonians"; an anti-Communist "leader of the Czech community," and an "ex-policeman."

Throughout Australia, other dailies screamed the same sort of thing: Mrs. Petrov, crying for help, dragged aboard the plane by brute force.

Farrago of falsity and filth? Who could now deny it!

Make this man answer!

As well as daily press liars and the Harkoffs and hooligans, there is another character who can't be allowed to slink out of it now.

He is a person who, the Mirror said, was "prominent among the demonstrators." He is the person who was so quickly able to get a bundle of statutory declarations at Mascot that very night from persons who "heard Mrs. Petrov say in Russian 'I don't want to go back,'" and who himself (Mirror, April 20) unquestioningly quoted the allegation that it was "open and forcible abduction."

This busy anti-Sovieteer is, of course, none other than W. C. Wentworth, "Liberal" MP for Mackellar (NSW), otherwise known as the "member for McCarthy."

How does Wentworth come out of it all now?

Wentworth must be made to answer to Australia for his actions.

Australians will not let McCarthyism happen here.

Virtually alone among the non-Communist press, the Anglican (Church of England paper) denounced the daily press, the mob and the authorities over the Mascot disgrace.

The Anglican and the Communist press are vindicated before Australia. It is the daily press, the Harkoffs, Wentworths and the organised hoodlums who must answer for their deeds.

They want this forgotten!

In all their attempts to inflame anti-Communist feeling (and stop people from thinking about the real election issues) the smearers, with scarcely an exception, made no mention of an earlier Royal Commission—that conducted in Victoria in 1949-50 by Judge (now Sir Charles) Lowe into the Communist Party.

The reason for this studied reticence is easy to find. The Lowe Commission—despite the slanders to it of paid renegade Sharpley and others of like kidney—failed to

produce the type of Red Bogey findings on which those who instigated the Commission had reckoned.

Moscow gold? No.

Moscow orders? No.

Conspiring to "create misery"? No. (In fact, to the discomfiture of the redbaiters, Judge Lowe rightly found that the Party was not seeking "either to create disruption for its own sake or to create depression conditions," and that certain strikes under Communist leadership or influence had secured substantial gains for the workers concerned, thus enhancing Communist union officials' prestige).

Those whose stock-in-trade is anti-Communist fantasy and filth want the Lowe report left to the cobwebs, out of public sight.

Rightwingers help Menzies

Amid all of the Petrov provocation, where did the ALP leadership stand? With some exceptions, the ALP rightwingers vied with Menzies in their eagerness to scramble up on the tawdry, rickety Petrov pedestal.

Dr. Evatt, walking into Menzies' artfully-laid trap, gave his blessing to the Royal Commission Bill, and even anticipated prosecutions. After the Mascot riot, he failed to condemn the mob hooliganism, but instead complained that the action taken at Darwin to "release" Mrs. Petrov was "belated."

Dr. Evatt did permit himself one protest against the Menzies supporters' technique of "smear and slander" over the Petrov affair and about Menzies being over-eager to exploit the position. But thereafter he confined his protests to his strenuous assertions of his own anti-Communist fervor.

* The Darwin affair included premeditated violence by Government police against Mrs. Petrov's companions, in gross violation of their diplomatic status; the isolation of Mrs. Petrov with Government officials, and finally the announcement (by a Government official) that Mrs. Petrov would stay.

Rightwingers in Victoria, NSW and elsewhere acted as urgers of yet more vicious "anti-Communism." L. Short, Court-installed secretary of the Ironworkers' Union, returned from USA and West Germany just in time to add his piece before the elections. Such people were heedless of the fact that with the "anti-Communist" stiletto always goes the anti-labor bludgeon.

The arch-rightwing's attitude dismayed wide sections of ALP members and supporters. To honest Labor supporters, it was a disturbing revelation of affinity between the ALP rightwing and the Menzies Government, in the interests of the monopoly men.

Extreme rightwingers helped Menzies' efforts to plant a Red Bogey astride the ballot box, to obscure the real issues of peace, wages, living conditions.

The majority vote of Australians repudiated Menzies and his policies. But extreme rightwingers' tactics had helped Menzies get enough votes to scramble back into office, to renew his attacks on the labor movement.

It was one more warning to the working class that the true interests and principles of the labor movement cannot be left in the hands of rightwing leaders; they must be asserted and upheld by the labor movement itself, united and resolute.

Australians stand for truth

Australians can make up their own minds about the Petrov affair. They will form their own ideas on such things as:—

- Petrov himself, follower of Beria (executed as a traitor); deserter from his own, Socialist country.
- Petrov's documents.
- Petrov's other allegations.

Australians stand by the truth. They will look for the truth.

Who are the saboteurs?

"Sabotage" is a word with which the dailies have been very free since the first Petrov announcement. But who are the saboteurs?

The Soviet Union firmly and consistently repudiates sabotage and terrorism. The record of the Soviet is eloquent on that.

But USA has time and again boasted of sabotage and terrorist activities which it seeks, under its notorious "Operation X," to instigate in the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies. Who could question the Soviet's right to take steps to uncover foreign agents and their activities in the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies?

Australians' condemnation will be not of the Soviet but of the US and other saboteurs and assassins and their masters.

Menzies, U.S.A. and Japan

Other matters too: economic, military and political penetration into Australia by America; Japanese interests in Australia; Australian foreign policy and relations with other countries.

Would Australians object to the Soviet wanting to be informed on these? Would not Australians' indictment be, instead, against the Menzies Government, which has tried to conceal these things from nations (such as the Soviet) eager to co-operate for peaceful relationships and also from the Australian people themselves!

US penetration under the Menzies-Fadden-Casey Government has meant sellout of our oil, uranium and other resources and of industries. It places Australian armed forces and military installations virtually under foreign, US command. It surrenders Australian home and foreign policy to the authors of the Korea war and the "cold war," who would make Indo-China a new, deadlier Korea; who threaten to shatter the world with H-bombs; and who, with all this, turn McCarthyism loose.

This is no matter which we can allow to be hidden away. It is a betrayal which the Australian people must demand be uncovered—and stopped!

Reviving Japanese menace

Similarly with Japanese interests. The pre-war Menzies-Fadden "appeasement" of Japanese fascist war-makers and the wartime "Brisbane Line" strategy of surrender have now been renewed by the Menzies-Fadden Government in the form of assisting in the revival of the Japanese militarist menace, and even permission for Japanese to chart our strategic waters.

The Soviet is obviously entitled to know about Japanese influence now. Not least by the fact of the Soviet's tremendous contribution to Allied victory in World War II and of her consistent postwar stand for a peaceful and democratic Japan, instead of a fascist, militarist Japan.

What is more, the Australian people are entitled to know the truth on Japanese interests here. And they demand to know.

Conspirators against peace

Australian foreign policy, too. Australians want a foreign policy of peace and friendship. Only a guilty Government, a Government conspiring for enmity and war, would try to conceal its foreign policy.

The Menzies-Fadden Government is guilty. It is an accessory in USA's war schemes. It has collaborated with USA in trying to wreck the Geneva Conference in which abides humanity's hope for a peaceful settlement in Korea and Indo-China.

The Menzies Government even secretly offered first two and then six battalions of Australians to fight against the Indo-China people, who want only the right to rule their own country in their own way.

The real motives exposed

On April 15, CPA National President Dixon denounced the Petrov affair as an election stunt; as provocation against Communists and other patriotic Australians and against the Soviet Union; and as a McCarthyite diversion from the Menzies policies, including involvement in Indo-China.

As an election stunt, the Petrov affair proved a dud. Not Petrov but the disruptive activities of the notorious Victorian group and other rightwingers led to the return of Menzies & Co., as a minority Government.

The Australian people refused to be panicked into any Petrov hysteria. Now they will do more: they will turn Petrov-ism into a boomerang against its authors.

Can't smear the truth!

No puny creatures can smear the shining truth about the Socialist Soviet Union: the mighty nation where the working people rule; which champions the cause of peace and international co-operation; which demands outlawing of the H-bomb and other hell weapons; and which strives for a pact of Great Powers to guarantee peace.

The record of the Communist Party of Australia is similarly proof against smearers. Its program, and its deeds, are for higher wages and better conditions for all working people; for the rights of democracy for citizens and for the trade unions; for Australia's independence, and her security and well-being through friendship and useful trade with other peoples; for peace; for the triumph of Socialism.

Make the people's voice ring!

Australia's majority vote was against Menzies and his policies. But Menzies still holds power. The issues facing Australians are desperately urgent.

To all workers, to all Australians, the Communist Party issues a call—**STAND TOGETHER FOR A TRUE AUSTRALIAN POLICY!**

In the trade unions, in the labor movement—

- Raise, stronger than ever, the working class' demands: doubled wage margins, a higher basic wage, better conditions, an end to interference by Governments and Courts.

- Repudiate those whose deeds serve Menzies and his monopoly masters.

- Unite, organise, act!

From all patriotic Australians, in the unions and everywhere else—whatever your position—let the people's voice call to—

- Restore diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union—the relations ruptured by Menzies-Fadden provocation.

- Stop the infiltration of US monopoly exploiters and their McCarthyism.

- Recognise People's China, as Britain has done; foster trade, to alleviate Australia's economic plight.

- Reject US conspiracies to embroil Australia and the world in a war of extermination.

- **WORK FOR PEACE, HUMANITY'S DEEPEST NEED AND HOPE!**