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SWING TO THE LEFT.

Resurgent Labor Looks for Results.
Leadership Confronts Its Testing Time.

The continuing decline of the Australian economy and the failure of the Menzies "Liberal" Government to halt it, produced evidence of petty bourgeois resentment indicating a probable reduction of the Government's strength in the elections of December 9th.

A gain of 6-8 seats by the Labor Party was widely anticipated together with the loss of the Government's Senate majority, which latter would make real the perspective of forcing a double dissolution and new general elections in 1962.

Senate election results are determined by the aggregate vote in each of the six States and more accurately reflect Labor's voting strength than does the House of Representatives election, where big Labor majorities in working class electorates are wasted.

In the event, a much bigger swing to the left was demonstrated by a Labor gain of at least 16 seats at this stage and a likelihood of a dead-locked House (61-61) necessitating a further election in March or April, 1962.

In the event of the count ending in a majority of 1 or 2 for Labor in the lower house, a great danger exists in the already-canvassed right wing perspective of aiming to hold on to the reins of government in face of a hostile Senate both before and after July, when the newly-elected senators would be installed.

Menzies' advisers would be well aware that he would meet a worse fate in new elections at this stage, whereas a Labor Government may well be constrained by a strong opposition and a hostile Senate to avoid contentious legislation, and so be allowed to hang on to office.

As time dragged on (granted the economy continued to stagnate) the upshot would be that the Labor Government, eschewing initiatives aimed at seriously tackling the problems pressing on the people, would not be measuring up to the electorate's expectations, would invite an increasing scepticism as to its bona fides, and would prepare the basis for an anti-Labor ascendancy when elections finally came round.

On the other hand an early general election would inevitably increase the number of Labor gains. More of the doubtful voters will get on the winning side if Labor projects an image of determination to seriously get on with the job.

While the proportional representation set-up of the Senate may slight-

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WHAT KHRUSCHEV SAID AT THE 22ND CONGRESS

In recent weeks the Communist Party's official organ, "Tribune", has contained a number of reports regarding the 22nd Congress of the C.P.S.U.

A party of observers from the C.P. of Australia was present at that conference in Moscow. Leader of the Australian delegation was the Party's general secretary, L.L. Sharkey.

A report of the conference was cabled to "Tribune" after its conclusion. This report was printed in "Tribune" of 8th November, 1961. It contained the statement that the former C.P.S.U. leaders Molotov, Malenkov and Kaganovich had been expelled from the C.P.S.U. and that Marshall Voroshilov was "allowed to retain his membership because of the honest efforts he had made to expiate his crimes".

The "Tribune" report gave no information as to what these crimes were.

"Tribune" of November 15 contained the grisly story of Stalin's reburial following "resolutions from numerous mass-meetings" and a decision of the 22nd Congress.

Apart from the numerous vague references to "cult of the individual", there was no clue at all as to what prompted these actions. This was surprising because the capitalist press contained several apparently garbled references to revelations by Khrushchev which must have been disturbing to members of the Party.

However, we have waited in vain for "Tribune" or "Communist Review" to tell us what those revelations were.

The "Moscow News" Report.

We have now received from the Soviet Union the weekly English language periodical "Moscow News", No. 44 (567) dated November 4, 1961. Our copy was purchased at the C.P. bookshop, 40 Market St., Sydney on 4th December, 1961. It contains a supplement which gives Khrushchev's concluding speech to the 22nd Congress on 27th October, 1961.

With our limited resources, we are unable to publish this speech in full but we feel that members of the C.P. should be made aware of at least some of those portions which the C.P.A. leadership are not revealing to members and supporters. Below are some extracts from Khrushchev's speech with our comments.

Albania.

"It is no longer a secret to anyone that the Albanian leaders maintain their power by resorting to force and arbitrary rule.

"The situation in the Albanian Party of Labour has been abnormal and pernicious for a long time now. In that situation anyone whom the leadership does not favour may be subjected to cruel repression.

"Where are the Albanian Communists who founded the Party and fought against the Italian and German fascist invaders? Almost all of them have fallen victim to the bloody crimes committed by Mehmet Shehu and Enver Hoxha....."

"A few years ago the C.C., C.P.S.U., pleaded with the Albanian leaders for Liri Geger, a former member of the Political Bureau of the C.C. of the Albanian Party of Labour, who was sentenced to death together with her husband. She had for a number of years been a member of leading bodies of the Albanian Party of Labour and had taken part in the liberation struggle of the Albanian people. In appealing at that time to the Albanian leaders we were prompted by humane considerations, by the desire to prevent the shooting of a woman who, moreover, was pregnant. We considered, and still consider, that as a paternal party we had the right to express our opinion on the matter. Indeed, even in the periods of blackest reaction, the Tsarist satraps, who tortured revolutionaries, could not bring themselves to execute pregnant women. And here was a socialist country where they had sentenced to death and executed a woman who was about to become a

mother. It was an utterly unwarranted act of cruelty....."

"Comrades Liri Belishova and Koco Tashko, prominent functionaries of the Albanian Party of Labour, have been expelled from the Central Committee; furthermore they are now being openly branded as enemies of the Party and the people. This only because Liri Belishova and Koco Tashko had the courage to voice, honestly and openly, their disagreement with the policy of the Albanian leaders and called for unity between Albania and the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries."

Our Comment: Here we can only ask - is it a socialist country, a country in the first stage of communism, which can execute a pregnant woman, who is innocent of any crime and which can exterminate the whole leadership of the Communist Party which led the anti-fascist struggle in World War II?

One of the reasons why workers in advanced capitalist countries are unwilling to follow their Communist Parties is that they believe that the Communist Party definition of socialism includes such crimes as those now being committed by Shehu and Hoxha.

Does Mr. L.L. Sharkey agree with Mr. Khrushchev's definition of Albania as a socialist country?

Kirov and the Purges 1934-1939.

On this subject Khrushchev remarked:

"Mass repressions began after the assassination of Kirov (then leader of the Leningrad Communist). Considerable effort will still be required to find out who was guilty of Kirov's death. The more profoundly we study the material on Kirov's death, the greater the number of questions that crop up. There is the outstanding fact that Kirov's murderer had, before the day of the murder, been detained twice by security men in the vicinity of Smolny and a weapon had been found in his possession. But someone had ordered his release on both occasions. Then it turned out this armed man was in Smolny and in the very corridor along which Kirov passed. And somehow it happened that, at the moment of assassination, the commander of Kirov's bodyguard was far behind him, although according to the instructions, he had no right to be so far away from the man he was protecting."

Khrushchev then went on to detail how the commander of Kirov's guard had been killed in a fake automobile accident and that the two officers who killed the commander, to quote Khrushchev, "were themselves later shot. Obviously somebody had to have them killed in order to cover all traces."

Our Comment: Compare the above report with the following extract from page 3 of "How Russia Smashed Its Fifth Column", written in 1942 by L.H. Gould and W.A. Wood:-

"In December, 1934, Stalin's close colleague Kirov had been murdered in Leningrad. This atrocity came as a brutal shock to thousands of Soviet officials who had become somewhat 'dizzy with success', complacent, and inclined to believe that the enemies of Soviet power had retreated..."

"The investigations revealed an elaborate conspiracy, without mass basis, but including high officials to undermine the Soviet regime and to murder its leaders. The hand of the exiled Trotsky, whose name loomed large in 1917 as an 'ultra-revolutionary' and demagogue was clearly seen..."

"When Zinoviev and Kamenev were brought to trial in August, 1936, in open court in the presence of the entire foreign press and diplomatic corps graphic and sinister details were revealed. These showed that Trotsky, in blind hatred of Stalin and the other Soviet leaders, who were successfully providing the possibility of building a new socialist order even amidst capitalist encirclement, conspired with Nazis and other fascists against the Soviet Union."

Messrs. Gould and Wood still occupy leading positions in the C.P. of Australia. They have never publicly retracted one word of what they wrote in 1942.

Why?

The Red Army Purge in 1937.

The wholesale murder of the flower of the Soviet officer corps was the most shocking of Stalin's crimes. This is what Khrushchev said on the subject:

"Delegates have spoken here with pain in their hearts of many innocent victims among prominent Party and Government bodies.

"Such prominent army leaders as Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevich, Kork, Yegorov, Eidemann and others were victims of the repressions. These were the people who had great services to their credit, especially Tukhachevsky, Yakir, and Uborevich, who were outstanding army leaders. Later Blucher and other prominent army leaders suffered from the repressions.

"A rather curious report once found its way into the press abroad to the effect that Hitler, when he was preparing his assault on our country, fabricated and put around through his intelligence service a document showing that comrades Yakir, Tukhachevsky and others were agents of the German General Staff. This 'document', allegedly secret, fell into the hands of President Benes of Czechoslovakia and he, presumably guided by good intentions, passed it on to Stalin. Yakir, Tukhachevsky and other comrades were arrested and shot.

"Many splendid commanders and political officers of the Red Army were killed. Here among the delegates are comrades who spent many years in prison. They were 'persuaded', persuaded by the use of certain methods, that they were either German, or British or some other spies. Some of them 'confessed'. There were even cases when some of these comrades, on being told that the accusation of espionage had been withdrawn, themselves insisted on their previous depositions, for they thought it better to stick to false depositions in order the more quickly to put an end to their torment, the more quickly to go to their death."

Our Comment: We hope that the foregoing supplies part of the answer to the question which has often puzzled supporters of the Soviet Union: Why did the Red Army, which inflicted defeat after defeat on Hitler's armies after 1942 suffer such overwhelming defeats in the early part of 1941, losing over 4,000,000 as prisoners-of-war plus millions killed and wounded?

Many military commentators have suggested that the basic reason was lack of military leadership until a new leadership was tempered in the fires of war. By brutally removing the old experienced, trained and loyal leadership Stalin caused incalculable harm to the military strength of the Soviet Union.

We also hope that the foregoing quotation supplies the answer to the following extract from page 8 of "Tribune" of April 6, 1960:

"Trotsky's followers in the Soviet Union were later, on their own confessions, convicted of treasonable crimes, against the Soviet State."

Or let us consider the following extract from pages 35-36 of "W.E.A. Exposed" by L.L. Sharkey, written in 1944:

"In open court they (i.e. the defendants in the Moscow Trials 1936-38) pleaded guilty and confessed to atrocious crimes. That they were degenerate traitors, guilty of these crimes, can be gauged by comparisons with the behaviour of workers in the great trials of socialists in the past 50 years, particularly those of Georgi Dimitrov and Tom Mooney."

Of course the reason is now obvious. Dimitrov and Mooney were not tortured. Why has Sharkey not retracted what he wrote in 1944 - or what "Tribune" wrote in 1960?

Memorial to Stalin's Victims.

During the course of his speech Khrushchev dealt at some length with the forced suicide of Ordzhonikidze and the shooting of Stalin's brother-in-law Svanidze concluding with these words:

"And that is how many innocent people died."

"....Comrades, letters have been addressed to the Presidium of the Congress by veteran Bolsheviks, in which they write that, in the period of the cult of the individual outstanding leaders of the Party were done to

...for no crime whatsoever, such true Leninists as Comrades Chubar, Kosiov, Rudzutek, Potyshev, Eikhe (all disappeared about 1938 - Ed.), Voznisinsky, Kuznetsov (disappeared about 1950 - Ed.) and others.

"The comrades propose perpetuating the memory of those prominent Party and government leaders who fell victims to the unfounded repressions in the period of the cult of the individual.

"We consider this a fit and proper proposal. It would be advisable to entrust the Central Committee that will be elected by the 22nd Congress to take a positive decision on this question. Perhaps a monument should be erected in Moscow to perpetuate the memory of comrades who fell victims to arbitrary violence."

Our Comment: When this memorial is erected the leaders of the C.P.A. will hardly be able to avoid mentioning its existence in Party publications. Why do they not mention now the decision to erect it?

Khrushchev's Motives.

There has been considerable speculation as to why Khrushchev has again exposed part of the story of Stalin's purges - especially when he had such a part in them himself. A good clue to the reason is contained in the following comment made by him on Stalin:

"Stalin made curtailments of inner-Party and Soviet democracy the rule in inner-Party life and the life of the state. He grossly violated the Leninist principles of leadership and permitted arbitrariness and abuse of power.

"Stalin could look at a comrade sitting at the same table with him and say: 'There is something shifty about your eyes to-day'. After that you could rest assured that the comrade whose eyes had supposedly been shifty became a suspect."

This appears to be the authentic voice of a bureaucrat who wants to be secure in office without being subject to the brutal whims of a dictator with power of life and death.

This is why Khrushchev, since helping to kill Beria, has not killed off his opponents as Stalin did. He does not wish to establish a precedent which could claim him as a victim.

It was because the old-line Stalinists wanted a return to the Stalin dictatorship that Khrushchev has now disposed of them. The following quotations indicate this fact:

"When the anti-Party group was defeated its members thought that they would be dealt with in the same way as they had dealt with people at the time of the cult of the individual and as they would have liked to have dealt with those who favoured restoration of Leninist standards in Party life.....

"Fear of responsibility and a desire to revive the order that prevailed in the period of the cult of the individual were what united the participants of the anti-Party group."

Why is Sharkey Silent?

It will be seen from the above quotations that, for the first time, the 22nd Congress of the C.P.S.U. has openly exposed before the world a part of the true face of the Stalinist dictatorship in the Soviet Union. The question which all Australian C.P. members must now ask is - why is the leadership of the Party frightened to reveal the facts? Already a garbled version has been peddled by the capitalist press. Why does not the C.P. press publish the real truth? We suggest that they do not do so because they are so deeply infected with the virus of Stalinism to give an adequate explanation.

Khrushchev is now spelling out for all to see that Stalin's dictatorship was a grave handicap to the Soviet Union. From this conclusion there must arise another question - what policies did the Bolshevik leaders murdered by Stalin oppose to Stalin's policy? Above all, what were the policies of Leon Trotsky - Stalin's chief opponent? The world revolutionarily struggles now going on demand an adequate explanation of Marxist policies. If Stalinism caused such disasters in the Soviet Union might not the same ideology be causing disasters to the Australian working class? Khrushchev's revelations bring this fundamental question up for discussion. C.P. members should demand that this discussion take place.