

Why I am a
COMMUNIST



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Why I am a Communist

WHEN I was a young journalist, I saw the poverty and injustices people were living under in the slums of Melbourne.

I listened to reports of the Anti-Sweating League, and heard the evidence of girls who were nervous wrecks as a result of working long hours on high pressure machines for low wages.

Women told me how they were often expected to submit to the lust of unscrupulous employers before they could get white-work to take home, and earn little over a shilling for making a dozen nightgowns.

Fear of being unable to pay the rent of the miserable rooms in which they lived, of having no money to buy food and clothes for a young family and a husband, out-of-work or ill, forced desperate women sometimes to accept these terms.

I was shocked and horrified.

The city, with its stately buildings, banks, churches, Town Hall and National Art Gallery, stood in the midst of this tragedy, as if aloof from, or indifferent to, it.

To look at the shops filled with food and clothing, all manner of luxurious wares, you would never have thought there were any poor nearby.

Far from the filthy lanes and dreary warrens poverty-stricken men and women lived in, spread the beautiful homes and gardens of wealthy citizens.

What was the meaning of it?

Why did such conditions exist?

How was it that some people should have to live in fear and poverty all their days, while others, whether they worked or not, could live easily and pleasantly, squandering riches, and concerned only about their own pleasure and power?

These are the questions I asked myself.

Perhaps my mind awakened when I was a child to some awareness of a problem in life.

The story of that awakening I have told in "The Wild Oats of Han," which describes my own childhood.

We were living in Tasmania, and I was about nine years old, when, coming home from a day in the bush with my brothers, we saw the family furniture piled on carts driving along the road, and a red auctioneer's flag over the gate.

Bursting with indignation, I wanted to know why other people had taken possession of our furniture.

Mother was in tears.

She told me we were going away.

Father was ill and had no work.

The furniture had to be sold because father and she had very little money.

They were terribly worried.

I must be a good girl and try to help and not make things harder for her.

Till then, I had been "the wildest of all the little wild animals that lived in the hills": living joyously, as they did, full of mischief and with no consciousness of any trouble in the world.

Suddenly, mother's grief stirred me to a realisation of it: of some dark, mysterious trouble.

I must help her to prevent it hurting my younger brothers, baby sister, and father.

Long afterward, I learnt that the "Daily Telegraph", of which father was editor, had ceased publication.

Editors, in those days, earned only a small salary, and the anxiety of providing for his family, getting another job, caused a nervous breakdown from which father did not recover for some time.

We returned to Melbourne and lived in a house lent to us by one of mother's sisters.

Happy family

And yet, ours was a happy and united little family.

My brother and I were boon companions and our sister, much younger, a joy to us all.

During our bright times father's and mother's interests were chiefly literary and artistic.

Mother was always sewing then.

I saw her, late at night, smocking lovely little dresses for other children, or painting "illuminated addresses" which she sold to be presented to distinguished citizens.

The responsibility of earning money to feed and clothe us all depended on her, and I remember her distress when the baker called with a bill she could not pay.

She asked me to go to the door and tell him we would pay next week.

I did, and wondered why the man should speak so rudely and why mother was so upset.

When father became editor of the "Australian Mining Standard" the family fortunes improved.

Mother no longer had to bear the stress and strain of finding money to pay for food.

But my parents were never well enough off to live without anxiety as to how they were going to provide for the needs of their growing children.

Their struggle, no doubt, made me naturally sympathetic to others struggling with the same problem which casts such a dark cloud over life.

They talked to us about music, painting and poetry.

Mother played on the little Broadwood piano that was a gift to her.

She and father sang together: he often read to us in the evening, usually Australian poetry.

They were both devoutly re-

ligious, members of the Anglican Church, and conservative in their political ideas.

It disturbed them when I began to ask questions on these matters.

During our most difficult times I had persuaded my parents to let me go to a State School and try to win a scholarship. Unfortunately, I was over age for the scholarship, in the very week the examinations were held; but Mr. O'Hara, the principal of South Melbourne College, was pleased with my papers. He came to see father and mother and offered me a half-scholarship.

Mr. O'Hara was a poet, a man of joyous and buoyant personality who taught by a sort of magnetism which brought the best out of his pupils.

Some of my short stories had been published and he was interested in my writing. I had to leave school, though when I

Life, my university

I might say, as Gorky did, that life has been my university, although later I attended night lectures at the University of Melbourne, under Professor Walter Murdoch who delighted students by his witty and forthright criticisms, and sometimes, absent-mindedly, wore a red tie.

From the time I left school, my reading led me much further afield than father and mother imagined.

While still in my teens, my mind was critical of their religious beliefs.

It had always been a curious

passed the entrance examination for the university.

This was a bitter disappointment, because I wanted to do post-matriculation work and study for an exhibition to the university. Father and mother had to think of the education of my brothers and sister by then, however, and could not afford to leave me at school any longer.

Most of my friends were going to the university, and I thought I could keep up with them by reading as much as possible, and continuing my studies of French and German. Mr. O'Hara had advised me to drop Latin and concentrate on modern languages.

So I began to educate myself with books borrowed from the Melbourne Public Lending Library, father's bookshelves and the Penny Classics. I devoured the work of all the great writers I could get hold of in order to learn something of craftsmanship and values in literature.

and critical mind, it seems, seeking knowledge and refusing to be placated with unsatisfactory answers.

Father used to say I was "born asking questions."

He would not have approved, had he known, that when I was twenty-one my first vote was cast for Labor.

He was ill at the time and I could not tell him.

As I was teaching and writing by then, and my elder brother too was earning, we shared financial responsibilities for the family.

It made me happy to think I could spare mother the burden she had carried when we were children.

My interest in politics was stimulated when I met Dr. Rudolf Broda, and for the first time heard a sympathetic explanation of Socialism.

Dr. Broda was an Austrian, and editor of an international review published in French, German and English.

A reporter, interviewing him then, described him as looking like "a well-fed Christ."

Dr. Broda came to Australia to study our social legislation, which, he said, was the most progressive in the world.

The importance of adult suffrage dawned on me, of our factory acts, free, secular and compulsory education, trade unions and Labor representation in Parliament.

What Dr. Broda told me made me eager to learn more about political and economic questions.

I wanted to know how various religious and philosophical theories affected people in their forms of government and everyday lives.

Attending night lectures at the university of Melbourne, teaching during the day and writing whenever I got a chance, did not leave me much time, but I began to study orthodox economics and the history and policy of the Australian Labour Party.

Later on I discovered the Fabian Society of George Bernard Shaw and the Webbs, Guild Socialism, Syndicalism and the Anarchism of Kropotkin.

My philosophical reading led me from Christianity to Rationalism, from Plato, Socrates and Epictetus to Buddhism, Theosophy and Christian Science.

For ten years I studied these theories, taking each one in turn, discussing them with all manner of people, but committed to none, never a member of any organisation; still not satisfied that I had found the answer to the questions my mind was asking: still not convinced that any of them offered logical solution to the problem of how the poverty and injustices suffered by so many innocent people could be prevented.

rags, and suggested, at Christmas time, an "Empty Stocking Fund."

The "Star" and "Daily Chronicle" took up the idea.

The Queen gave her approval, and for two years before the outbreak of the first World War, on Christmas Eve, fleets of red cars left the newspaper offices stacked with toys.

It was said no child in the slums went without a toy for those Christmases.

But all the time I was wondering how "the sorry state of things" which deprived men, women and children of decent living conditions could be changed.

I talked to writers and politicians, millionaires and hunger marchers, attended lectures, went to meetings, almost despairing that there could even be any change in a social system designed to preserve the power and privileges of the rich and to keep the working class in subjection.

On a visit to Paris during 1908 I had met some political exiles from Russia.

They told me about the strug-

gle for a different social system in their country.

At that time I was so young and ignorant, it seemed impossible for the power of the Czar, of an autocracy and the religious superstition which supported it, to be swept away.

I looked at those first Russian friends with pity, and thought: "Poor things, how can they give their lives for such a hopeless dream?"

The first World War increased my understanding of the crimes against humanity for which a system based on the profit for a few individuals and suffering for the many, was responsible.

Both my brothers were caught up in this war.

Alan, my elder brother was killed in France.

Grief for him made me resolve to work for peace, and to oppose political and economic intrigues which foster the barbarous insanity of war.

But I did not yet know how to do this effectively.

When I left England I had achieved some success as a journalist, and my first novel won a prize.

Journalist in London

During most of this time, I was working as a journalist in London.

I had gone there in 1908, after father's death, because I thought Australian writers would not have much standing in their own country until they had proved their ability overseas.

My experiences ranged from visits to homes of the aristocracy and wealthy relations to excur-

sions into the worst slums of the great city.

I saw the extremes of wealth and poverty in brilliant receptions and children picking up food from rubbish bins.

One article I wrote, "Toys of the Children of the Slums," attracted a lot of attention.

I had seen children playing with bits of wood and bone, or an old bottle wrapped in dirty

Homecoming

It was a wonderful homecoming.

The State Cabinet of the parliament of Victoria gave a luncheon in my honour, and I was presented with a free pass for six months, over the railways of Victoria and New South Wales.

There was a gay dinner party arranged by the writers and artists of Melbourne, greetings and warm-hearted congratulations

from hundreds of unknown friends to show the Australian people were glad that a young writer belonging to them had "made good."

I felt then, that I could devote myself to the literary work for which I had been equipping my mind so long.

I could write about Australia and the realities of life for the Australian people.

But with some knowledge of art, literature, and economics, I still had only a vague humanitarian philosophy.

Then crossing Prince's Bridge in Melbourne, one evening, I saw newspaper posters about the revolution in Russia.

They were flaring against the sunset.

In a moment I remembered those Russian friends I had met in 1908, and realised their dream had come true.

Until then, despite all my wanderings and searching, I had not heard of Karl Marx or Communism.

I lost no time finding out all I could about them.

But it was not until I had read "Socialism Utopian and Scientific" by Engels, and other works by Marx and Engels that I felt firm ground under my feet.

At last, I told myself, I had found a logical explanation of the poverty and injustices in the social system under which we are living: a complete tracing of social development through the ages; a philosophy derived from scientific investigation into the nature of actual, observable material from which the earth and everything on it, evolved.

"Then felt I like some watcher of the skies when a new planet swims into his ken."

Finding this exposition of Communism was like discovering a new world: a world with a social system created by the organised workers so that they could use their hands and brains for the welfare of their country and people.

I had a vision of that new world for which the process of

social evolution had been maturing over the centuries: of feudalism, driven by revolution of the peoples against it, into Capitalism.

Of Capitalism developing the industrial forces which would inevitably lead to Socialism — although, perhaps, not without violent conflicts.

Under a system of ownership and administration by a majority of the people, the working class in any nation, I realised that one set of human beings could no longer exploit and cruelly abuse others for personal profit.

Poverty and prostitution would cease, and all the vices, crimes and disease generated by Capitalism — a vicious system of every man for himself and devil take the innocent, helpless and too-finely constituted for the desperate struggle of existence.

There would be no shameful seizure of the land and wealth of primitive peoples under Socialism.

Organisations for peace would triumph over the horrible mania for war which Capitalism uses as a profitable investment.

I was grateful for the vision and illumination which my study of Marx and Engels gave me.

The great purpose of Communism—or scientific Socialism, as Engels defines it—could not be denied.

The logic of arguments based on the processes of social evolution, and experiences of the working class through history, satisfied my common sense.

I was intellectually convinced that no better plan for directing thought and action from the decay of Capitalism to the vital growth of Socialism had been formulated.

After more than thirty-five years, my experiences and international affairs, have strengthened my belief that Communist theory and practice—education and organisation for true Socialism which is the next stage

in social progress—can and will create a new era of peace, good living and happiness, not only for Australia, but for the peoples of all countries who unite to fulfil the highest destiny of mankind.

PART II.

I visit the Soviet Union

It is amazing that, these days, so many people don't know what Communism is and what it stands for.

When friends used to say to my husband, Hugo Throssell, V.C.: "Of course, we are opposed to Communism". He would ask them: "What do you know about it?"

Finding that they knew practically nothing, he would give them a few facts, kept handy in a wallet he produced from his waist-coat pocket.

These facts usually impressed people. They were prepared to admit that the theory of Communism was reasonable enough; and that peoples of the U.S.S.R., living in accordance with these principles, had achieved better living and working conditions than they had ever known before.

When some relatives offered to pay my expenses for a visit to Europe in 1933, my husband urged me to take advantage of the opportunity. He said he would never forgive me if I did not try to go to the Soviet Union in order to see whether what we had heard about the way of life there was true.

He listened to a broadcast I made from Moscow, but circum-

stances, which he had not foreseen, so undermined his health that I never saw him again.

Only my belief in the need to work for the great ideas of Communism and world peace helped me to survive a grief so shattering. Personal sorrow, I felt, is part of the world's great sorrow, caused by war and an economic system which thrives on war and the preparations for war.

What I saw of the way men and women live and work in the Soviet Union proved to me that Marxist principles for the construction of a State which would serve the interests of a majority of the people, and promote peace between nations, were sound.

These principles are practical politics. They do insure that the natural resources of a country, and the labour power applied to them, will be used for the benefit of the workers by hand and brain who are a majority in any nation. They do prevent the amassing of riches by a few individuals at the expense of the working people. They do prevent the manufacture and sale of armaments for personal gain.

I went about as I pleased when I was in the Soviet Union.

Sometimes members of the Union of Soviet Writers asked me what I would like to do and provided an interpreter. But sometimes when I wanted to visit a factory, school, or maternity home, no interpreter was available.

"Do you think you can find your own way there?" I was asked.

With a little knowledge of the Russian language, I was able to go about by myself, talk to people in the streets and on the trains, although I always appreciated the company of an interpreter.

In this way, I met all sorts of men and women, happy friendly people who took me to their homes and told me about their work. They were working hard, but were proud of what they had accomplished in the tremendous industries, on collective farms, in the health and education services, in the theatres, recreation parks, children's clubs and institutions for sport.

Since then, even greater progress has been made, despite destruction caused by the Nazi invasion when millions of Soviet citizens perished in the heroic defence of their country.

A dream coming true

He worked for his dream, believing that someday it would come true, if not in his own lifetime, at least when the working people were ready to struggle for its realization.

That is the position of Communists today.

How wonderful it has been,

Many of the cities and collective farm villages, I saw, were reduced to ruins but have been rebuilt.

When I went with a party of foreign writers to Kuzhetstroi in Siberia, Yaroslavsky, an old Bolshevik and friend of Lenin, arrived to visit the steel plant, then considered the second largest in the world.

Yaroslavsky had been a political prisoner, during Tsarism, in the fortress of an old town, beyond a bend in the river. It was the first time he had returned to Siberia, and a crowd of one hundred and eighty thousand, with bands, and banners flying, assembled to greet him.

The foreign writers, too, were invited to say a few words of greeting.

When I spoke, I said that I wondered, while he was a prisoner in that old fortress, whether Comrade Yaroslavsky had ever despaired of seeing his dream of Socialism come true in his own lifetime. Yet here it was, the great Socialist city and the steel plant!

Yaroslavsky patted my hand and said that was just what he had been thinking.

though, to see in our own lifetime, that so many countries have adopted the Socialist way of life—a way of life based on the principles of Scientific Socialism, outlined by Marx and Engel and developed in practice by Lenin, Stalin and leaders of the Peoples' Democracies in other countries.

Already more than one third of the peoples of the world are living under social systems based on these principles.

The principles of Marxism are like the law of gravity and the laws which govern other natural processes. They apply to any country and are not the property of any one nation.

Communism cannot be exported.

It grows from the conditions of existence in Capitalist and semi-feudal countries. It grows from the injustices and suffering of masses of the people through poverty, war and repression of

the right of the people to strive for a better way of life.

It is growing in many countries because of the contradictions of Capitalism itself, which cannot expand and increase its profits without imposing heavier burdens on the working people, dragging them into wars, economic crises, and depriving them of the right to organise in their own defence.

Marx said: "Capitalism brought into being by the laws of historical evolution, will be destroyed by the inexorable working of these same laws."

What is Communism?

People often ask me:

"What is Communism?"

"What is the difference between Communism and Socialism?"

"Do Communists want bloody revolution?"

"Why are Communists abused and slandered?"

Communism is a reorganization of society on the basis of ownership by the working people of the land, mines, factories, means of transport, as well as the health, educational and cultural services required to fulfill their needs. There is a transition stage, in which various measures are adapted to the conditions in different countries, before the whole plan can be completed.

The difference between Scientific Socialism and other forms of Socialism is that other forms of Socialism propose reforms within the Capitalist system.

Scientific Socialism maintains that there can be no fundamental change in the living conditions of the people while an aggressive minority holds economic power in the natural resources of a country and in the right to exploit the majority for individual advantages.

Communists insist that the basis of exploitation—the use of men and women for personal profits and power—lie in the Capitalist system. Reforms do not remove the villain of the piece from the scene of action. While he holds economic power the people will bear the weight of any measures of partial nationalisation.

Communists believe that the fundamental basis of a true Socialist society must be change from a Capitalist system of ownership, exploitation and control to one of ownership, administration and control of the affairs of a nation by the men

and women who produce its wealth.

Communism is not something which "is made in Moscow".

Marx, who with Engels, formulated the theory and practice of Scientific Socialism, was a German; and Engels, although of German extraction, spent most of his life in England.

The first attempt to put this policy into action was made in France during 1848. The attempt failed, but understanding of the reasons for its failure helped the Russians to apply the principles of a Peoples' Government to their own conditions.

Marx said: "Our theory is not dogma but a guide to action". Thus Marxist principles have been applied differently in the various countries where a Socialist System has been established, but ownership by the working people of the natural resources of their country is recognised as the basis for progress.

Communists do not want bloody revolution.

Revolution means change. There have been revolutions in art, industry and social relations which have not caused bloodshed.

But when it is a question of changing a social system based on the assumption that a few are entitled to use the lives and labour of the many for personal profit and power, the forces of the State, based on this assumption, oppose the contention that the many have the right to organise a system of society which will provide for ownership and administration of the natural resources of the country in the interests of the many and not in the interests of the few.

Communists declare that the many have the right to organise and educate the people so that they will be able to bring about the change in the basis of the State and of our social system. By so doing Communists believe they reduce the dangers of "bloody" revolution, which do not come from us in any case.

They believe that the new system of social ownership and administration can be introduced by parliamentary measures which express the will of the people.

By these measures Czechoslovakia, and others of the Peoples' Democracies, have moved from a Capitalist to a Socialist form of society.

Lenin said: "The seeds of revolution lie in the Capitalist system."

For recognition of a revolutionary situation, he described the following conditions:

(1) "A national crisis affecting both the exploited and the exploiters."

(2) That "the ruling class should be in a state of governmental crisis which draws even the most backward masses into politics"

(3) "The rapid tenfold and even hundredfold increase in the numbers of hitherto apathetic representatives of the toiling and oppressed masses capable of waging the political struggle."

Lenin pointed out that "only when the 'lower classes' do not want the old and the 'upper classes' cannot continue in the old way, then only can the revolution be victorious". And also, that "at least a majority of the class-conscious, thinking, politically active workers should

fully understand the necessity for revolution and be ready to sacrifice their lives for it."

A few years ago I wrote in an article for "The Daily Telegraph", Sydney:

"I believe that Socialism in Australia can be introduced by constitutional means; but I believe that pro-Fascist forces in Australia will offer violent opposition to any measure of socialist reconstruction, and that the Australian people must be on their guard against this danger."

We know that throughout history whenever the people have demanded a change in social organization, the ruling class has hurled all its power against the people.

What happened in Spain when a constitutionally elected government set about making broad and democratic reforms?

The forces of the Capitalist world, through the Non-Intervention Agreement, were responsible for defeat of the Peoples' Government. They prevented the Peoples' Government from buying arms abroad while Hitler and Mussolini rushed troops, arms and airplanes to support Franco. Rather than allow the Spanish people to escape from the age-old bonds of poverty, ignorance and ruthless exploitation, the so-called "free democracies" broke the Peoples' Government, deluging the country in blood and sorrow.

Capitalism boasts of its "democratic" institutions, and that it represents the "free" world. But these are fine words used to delude the people.

There can be no real democracy while wealth weighs the scales

against the interests of the people.

Every man and woman who uses his or her commonsense knows that the high cost of living would not have been engineered had they full democratic rights. Neither would industrial monopolies, at the same time, be registering excessive profits.

It is absurd, surely, to regard as "free", a scheme of things which forces the workers to work harder and eat less in order that fabulous sums of money may be spent on atom and hydrogen bomb tests. Tests which threaten the fertility of men and women, land and animals—the whole future of the human race!

Communists believe it is their duty to stand with the people whenever they move against stupidity and official arrogance.

Communists believe they must struggle to defend the people in their just demands: that they must struggle for control and administration of the affairs of a country in the interest of the working people, and through their elected representatives, develop methods for ensuring the peace of the world instead of squandering the taxpayers' money in preparation for unnecessary and ruinous wars.

Who opposes this vision of a new social system: this plan for a social system based on justice and peace?

Ask yourselves this question.

You know that the multimillionaires, warmongers and profiteers, all who profit by ignorance and the fear of unemployment, abuse and slander Communists and Communism.

There are, also, a number of well-meaning men and women who have never heard the case for Communism, and are blinded by religious prejudices.

Why do these people abuse and slander Communists and Communism?

The answer is clear. Communists stand for the rights of

the people: in the interests of the people.

The millionaires, warmongers and profiteers describe Communists as "loathsome" and "evil" because Communists threaten their profits, their right to exploit and subjugate labour and genius to their greed for wealth and power.

Communists defend spiritual values

These predatory money-grubbers try to make ordinary, kindly-intentioned men and women believe that Communists are concerned only about material things, while they uphold spiritual values!

Nothing could be further from the truth. Communists consider it necessary to provide for material needs in order that men and women may develop their highest mental and spiritual faculties. A plant grows to its most perfect flowering and finest fruit in good soil.

It is true that Communists are materialist in the sense that their theory is derived from scientific investigation into the evolution of matter — primitive substance — and of mankind through the ages.

The way philosophers have explained the beginning of the world, and man and woman in it, is responsible for the terms Idealism and Materialism.

Idealism, Engels says, gives the explanation that Matter was created by Mind — some supernatural Mind, or God. Materialism gives the explanation, through scientific examination

of the materials from which the natural world has evolved, concluding that Mind was generated as a result of the evolution of Matter.

Thus historic materialism, or dialectical materialism is very different from "the gross materialism" of persons whose maxim is "eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die."

Communists cannot be included in this category, because they accept poverty, persecution, hardships and endless hard work, in order to struggle against all that oppresses and degrades mankind.

It has been said that: "It takes a great deal of ethical idealism to profess historical materialism."

Our opponents like to refer to Communists as "godless". Not because they are particularly god-fearing themselves, but because the word tends to create hostility among sincerely religious people.

Many good Christians, however, co-operate with the Communist Party in Australia, and in other lands, because they realise Communist theory and

practice seek to do away with poverty and war. They believe, as do Communists, that these scourges of mankind are not a manifestation of God's will upon earth.

An Australian clergyman, the Rev. A. H. Mitchell, said, not long ago: "Christ's programme is being worked out in Soviet Russia. The Bolsheviks have stolen our thunder."

And Dr. Frankwood Williams, an eminent American psychiatrist said: "Russia has done more in 15 years to raise the

moral standards of her 160 million people than America has done in 150 years, or the Christian churches in 1933 years."

He was speaking some years ago, but what Dr. Frankwood Williams said then, is more than ever true now.

There are so many different religious beliefs. Religion is often a matter of geography: whether one happens to have been born in a Mohammedan, Buddhist, Southern European, Northern, Eastern or Western country.

Religious tolerance

People who believe in one form of religion are frequently intolerant of those who believe in other forms.

Communists are tolerant of the religious convictions of others, no matter to what particular faith they may be attached.

People have never been persecuted for their religious beliefs in countries where Communist principles direct a State and its policy. Only when ministers of religion, priests, pastors or mullahs, have indulged in political activities opposed to the Peoples' Government have they been treated as political offenders.

"Love life," Tolstoy said. "Life is the only true god."

The inspiration for all Communist theory and practice is love of humanity: love for one's fellow men and women: a desire to help them to attain a social system which will provide a good life for every man, woman and child.

Birth is usually fraught with pain and struggle. We must not expect that a new social system will be achieved without conflict. Capitalism is hardly likely to retire with a bow and a blessing.

But as painless childbirth has become a reality we may hope that the birth of a Socialist system in Australia, accomplished by the will of the people, will be practically painless, as it was in Czechoslovakia, and others of the Peoples' Democracies.

Certain it is that the change from Capitalism to Socialism will be more or less a bitter struggle waged by workers understanding all that is involved by this turning of the tide in social evolution. Not only understanding, but ready to steer the ship of State into the safe harbour of Socialism with courage and wisdom.

The Australian Communist Party exists to help them and to

support all movements for improvement of the living and working conditions of the Australian people.

Capable leaders

Our opponents will sometimes admit that Communist leaders in other countries are brilliant statesmen and administrators: that they have directed the energy of their peoples to miraculous achievements. In the U.S.S.R. and China for example.

But home-grown Communists, we are asked to believe, have not the qualities for leadership which the Communists of other countries have demonstrated.

This is not true. I have met leading Communists in other countries and realise, with pride, that in the Communist Party of Australia we have men whose ability and integrity are as outstanding as these qualities are among the Communists of other countries.

Through economic crises, war and preparations for war, anti-working class legislation and attacks on the living standards of the people, the Communist Party of Australia has consistently and persistently defended the interests of the people.

It is recognized abroad that the Communist Party of Australia has capable leaders. They have worked honestly and strenuously for the welfare of the Australian working people, suffering persecution, hardships and imprisonment during

periods of anti-communist hysteria.

Over the last thirty-six years, the Party has grown from a small group until its members number many thousands, and its influence is a factor to be reckoned with in Australian affairs.

I believe in Australia: the beauty of our country, the wealth and power of its natural resources.

I believe in the Australian people: their grit and commonsense, and their will to use the potentialities of Australia for the maintenance and development of a vigorous and cultured nation.

I believe that more and more, as they understand what the Communist Party of Australia stands for, the working people will feel that they should work with it for Socialism, because Socialism recognises human welfare as the supreme good.

Only when our own and other peoples have established Socialist States will war be abolished, and a spiritual renaissance, based on love and service, unite the peoples of the world in an era of peace, and happier days than the doomed generations of Capitalism have ever known.