

**The relevance of
Communism in
Australia today**

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ON November 1, 1984, the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) held a public meeting in Melbourne.

The topic of the meeting was the relevance of Communism in Australia today.

The meeting was chaired by Ted Bull and the speakers were Marcus Clayton and Ted Hill.

The meeting aroused considerable interest and approximately 200 people attended.

We publish the speeches here in pamphlet form in response to many suggestions that they be circulated as widely as possible.

Australia for Australia's people

Excerpts from Ted Bull's opening remarks

We are here to discuss the relevance of Communism in Australia today. Its relevance in our opinion grows every day as capitalism's corrupt practices that flow from the exploitation of man by man become more obvious.

When it's all boiled down, extreme riches can only be accumulated at the expense of creating extreme poverty and that is why today we have got a few people that declare their wealth in hundreds of millions and yet we have approximately a million and a half to two million people under-nourished here in Australia. Overseas there are hundreds of thousands, in fact could be millions, that are starving to death whilst at the same time there are millions of tons of food-stuffs stockpiled because it cannot be sold on the market.

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There is no doubt about the fact that we are being sold lock, stock and barrel to foreign imperialism. Our resources are more and more falling into foreign hands and to show you the extent that our country is being sold, I would like to quote you a few figures that are five years old. The reason that they're five years old is because the Australian Bureau of Statistics gave up listing them in 1978-79. The Fraser government did not want the Australian people to know the penetration of foreign capital into Australia. Our mineral industry is 60% foreign owned, advertising industry 51%, manufacturing 33%, insurance 47%, motor vehicles 100%, oil refining 91%, pharmaceuticals 78%, basic chemicals 78%, tin 81%, brown coal 84%, black coal

59%, petroleum 84%, silver, lead and zinc 75%, iron ore 47%, non-bank finance 48%.

Can anyone imagine how much we are foreign owned now? Those figures were from documents five years old and as we know our politicians, our premiers, our foreign ministers have been overseas hawking Australia and hawking our goods, not even to the highest bidder, so more of our country is sure to be presently owned by foreign multinationals. What makes it easy to sell Australia is we have an Australia divided into separate States and each State sends its representatives overseas to sell our country. We are one of the most foreign-owned and foreign-controlled countries on the world.

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The capitalists keep telling us what a great system this is. Of course it's a great system for the ones who have us by the throat, who can talk in millions while our children or grandchildren are going around with the backside out of their pants. Of course it's a great system for them, but not too great for a lot of other Australians that have made Australia as great as it is today.

Just think for a while what we could do if we owned our own natural assets and had control of all the millions that are going out of our country to the foreign owners of our assets. There would be no such thing as a crisis in hospitals, lack of staff and there would be no such thing as a crisis in housing.

Just think, if we had control of those millions, what would be the first things we

would do? Wouldn't we start building hospitals, wouldn't we start building schools and kindergartens and creches? That would immediately create a demand for steel, a demand for timber and a demand for every other commodity that is necessary to erect buildings. In turn, that absorbs the unemployed. The unemployed would be earning money instead of being told they're on the dole and they're dole bludgers. They would be spending that money in our own economy, generating more money so more things can be built on behalf of the Australian people. Is that a fairy story? You know, a Rhodes Scholar may not be able to see that, but we can. It's so simple. But they try to make the simplest of things so complicated, they want to try and blind us with science. The thing is our representatives are selling us out. They are compelled to do it because they are under the domination of foreign multinationals. Our parliaments don't make policy, the foreign multinationals dictate the policy for Australia and the politicians talk about it in parliament and get it passed through. Even blind Freddy or the drover's dog that Hayden spoke about can see what is going on. We're reaching the stage that we'll be like a Third World country in a very, very short time.

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In the mid-'twenties we had a government, the Bruce Page government. At the same time

we had a wonderful national shipping line. The Bruce Page government sold us out: they sold the national shipping line to British shipping magnates and didn't even get the money. The price was about \$800,000 and then the Lord that bought the line welshed. That reminds me today that our present Federal government is now starting to sell out the national shipping line. They have already sold 11 ships. The Labor Party policy is to extend our national shipping line. Well, I can't understand how you can have a policy of extending our shipping line and at the same time selling it as quickly as you can. Those sales will be completed by the end of this year. And at the same time they're allowing private enterprise to go onto the Tasmanian run. The Gray government is going to become a partner with Brambles and they're going to take over. Of course it won't be very long until the government will conveniently allow Brambles to take over holt's bollus. With the selling of our ships, the ports of Stanley, Townsville, Hobart, Cairns and Devonport (Port Huon has already gone) will be closed and the communities will be thrown to the wolves. And the reason is, oh, they're not making a profit. When should a public utility that is there in the interests of the people be making huge profits? The profits come from the service they give to the Australian people, in this case, to get goods and services or people from one place to another.

All should deeply study Communism and its application in Australia

Marcus Clayton's speech

In 1918 on this day, November 11, the First World War ended.

For four years the world had apparently gone mad. Time and again, thousands had died over advances of a few feet in the European trenches.

About a year before the Armistice, the socialist revolution of the Russian workers and their allies had been victorious. Their slogan of 'Peace, Bread and Land' had echoed around a war-torn world.

In many countries there was social ferment. In Europe, unsuccessful socialist uprisings occurred at the end of the war. Everywhere the ruling classes were haunted by the spectre of revolution.

Australia, far though it was from the fighting, had not escaped. Of the 330,000 Australians who had taken the field, 60,000 had died. Another 150,000 were wounded.

The Russian Revolution and the close of World War I were catalysts for the formation of Communist Parties all over the world. At the end of October 1920, a Communist Party was formed in Australia. It marked the beginning of organised Communism here.

The system of ideas called Communism had been first expounded by Marx and Engels. The great Russian revolutionary Lenin had enriched Communist principle.

The classical Marxist writers had shown that the development of human society was governed by social laws which emerged from thorough investigation of history and of the

present day. Marx showed that the basic (but not the only) determinant in history was ultimately the way in which people got their living. Classes arose, waged and resolved class struggle. People's thinking did not determine their being, rather their being determined their thinking. If people became conscious of the laws which operated in society, they became a powerful factor in changing society, that is, the recognition of necessity meant freedom to act effectively.

Marxism had explained that capitalism arose from the ruins of feudal society. Capitalism was a social epoch marked by ownership of the factories, mines, etc. by a comparatively few capitalists who employed workers who owned only their capacity to labour. Commodities were produced by the co-operative labour of the workers, but were privately owned by the capitalist. To realise profit, the capitalist attempted to sell the commodities on a market for which he competed with many other capitalists. The sole source of profit was the workers' labour. So long as profit could be made, the competing capitalists frantically increased production. But because the market was finite, periodically there were more commodities than could be sold to realise profit. Production was cut back and workers were sacked. As the market included many workers, the market contracted still further. Crisis intensified. Not until the mass of unsold commodities and idle productive forces had been used up or destroyed, for example in war, would the capitalist cycle

pick up again.

Communist theory had shown that capitalism developed into monopoly capitalism and imperialism where a few major powers exploited and controlled the whole world. There was contention between the great powers to redivide amongst themselves the world's markets, sources of raw materials and spheres of influence. This contention led to imperialist war.

Marxism had taught that in capitalist society there arose a state apparatus which was primarily concerned to maintain capitalist exploitation. This apparatus consisted of the armed forces, jails, police, courts, etc.

In a world that had been devastated by war and at a time of great economic difficulty, these analyses shone like a beacon. The founders of the Communist Party in Australia answered that call. Communism showed why a leader of the Australian Labor Party would pledge support for English imperialism "to the last man and the last shilling". If Marxism did not explain the use of the Anzacs as cannon fodder, what did? What else but Marxism explained economic crisis, unemployment and want in the midst of plenty?

Not only that, but the Russian revolution had confirmed that socialism would succeed capitalism. In socialist society, the socialised, co-operative process of production which already existed in capitalism's factories was extended into socialised ownership of the major means of production. Production under socialism was for use, not monopoly profit. The causes of unemployment, poverty and war were abolished.

Socialism opened up the vision of communist society which would eventually grow out of it. Here production was of such a high level that the maxim 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs', could operate. In this classless society, the full potential of all individuals in every sphere could be achieved. With the establishment of communist society, Marx said, the pre-history of man would end.

On November 11, 1975 the English Queen's representative in Australia sacked the elected Prime Minister. It was then 55 years since the Communist Party was established here. In those 55 years, had Communism become irrelevant in Australia?

Was there no longer poverty in the midst of plenty? In the few years prior to Whitlam's sacking, unemployment had climbed to post-World War II records. The Whitlam government-appointed Henderson Inquiry reported that one in five Australians lived in poverty. Surveys on income distribution carried out by the Bureau of Statistics during the 1970s had shown that of all income received from interest, rent and share dividends, one per cent of adult Australians got 45%, 5% got 80% and 10% got 92%. This was after more than half of all share dividends and a substantial slice of interest and rent income generated in Australia had been paid to overseas interests.

Had imperialism and its wars disappeared? By the time of Kerr's action, the world had seen the rise and fall of German, Italian and Japanese imperialism in the 1930s and 'forties. The United States had emerged from the carnage of World War I as the number one imperialist power. But it soon suffered defeats at the hands of the Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese and other of the world's peoples. The tragic failure of socialism in the Soviet Union had given rise to a new imperialism which challenged U.S. imperialism on a global scale and threatened to unleash a third world war.

Had Australia broken from imperialism's hold? For the 55 years of organised Communism in Australia, Communists had pointed to Australia's domination by the great powers, primarily first by Britain and then by the U.S. They had called for Australian independence. On this day in 1975, a man using a position and powers which were relics of Britain's former possession of the Australian colonies sacked a popularly-elected Prime Minister. Kerr acted largely on behalf of U.S. imperialist interests.

Had the nature of the Australian state changed? For those 55 years, Marxism had taught that a facade of democracy cloaked the reality of monopoly capitalist rule in Australia. In the days leading up to and following Armistice Day 1975, the army was on the alert in case the people should rise. Meetings took place between Kerr and senior military and intelligence personnel. Chief Justice Barwick sanctioned the sacking.

And what of Communism's relevance today,

November 11, 1984? Australia and the rest of the capitalist world show the effects of the instability inherent in capitalism which was identified and explained by Marx and Engels. Factories close down, businesses go bankrupt and workers are sacked – in short, productive capacity goes out of commission. Stocks of unsold commodities pile up or are destroyed. At the same time, the needs of the great majority of the people are not met. There are great difficulties for the people. While some carry \$250,000 cash around with them, poverty increases.

The danger of imperialist war is very grave. All around the world, the great powers, chiefly U.S. and Soviet imperialism, jockey for position, fish in troubled waters, test new weaponry, and stockpile means of mass destruction.

Imperialist domination of Australia goes on. Most of Australia's biggest factories, mines and farms are owned by a small number of powerful monopolies. Many of these monopolies are branches of giant multinational corporations. These multinationals carry out their operations

all over the world. The hearts of our cities are dominated by skyscrapers bearing the names of these foreign corporations. Those monopolies which are locally-owned are often closely tied up with multinationals through joint ventures and interlocking directorships and shareholdings. An example is the so-called "Big Australian" BHP, which shares its oil and gas interests with the U.S. multinational Esso (a branch of Exxon) and carries out many of its other activities in partnership with other foreign monopolies.

Marxism shows that socialism *must* come about in Australia, as in all other capitalist countries. There *will* be in Australia a social system run by the people's representatives in the interests of all Australia's people other than the handful of former exploiters. Private ownership of the big factories, mines and farms will be abolished. Production will be planned around the needs of Australia's people. Proper housing, education, health care and public transport will be provided for all the people. Discrimination in all forms against women, the Aboriginal people and ethnic minorities will be done away with. Proper provision will be made for the aged, sick,



Aftermath of "The Dismissal" of the Whitlam Government Kerr in his Rolls Royce being chased by demonstrators. Finally he had to be sent out of the country.

injured and intellectually and physically handicapped. In short, society will be run by and in the interests of the overwhelming majority of Australia's people, not the tiny minority of foreign exploiters and their local henchmen and hangers-on.

Marxism shows that it will be the people of Australia themselves who will demand and bring about these changes in Australian society. Communists believe that the leading force in this movement for change is the working class, the members of which "have nothing to lose but their chains". Communism says that changes within capitalist society will compel the Australian people to act.

Australian Communists fervently want socialism to come about here. Nonetheless, it is recognised that viewed from the present, socialism appears to be a long-term objective in Australia. It may come about more quickly. It is impossible to forecast accurately. Marxism shows that various intermediate phases will be gone through prior to the dawn of a socialist Australia. The people's experience must accumulate before the demand for socialism will be effective in a mass way. In the meantime, Australian Communists take part in and support the great sweep of struggles waged by Australia's people for progressive social change.

It is those struggles of Australia's people themselves which are decisive. Communism demands that a thorough examination of Australia's history and present position be undertaken. For more than two years before he was hanged at Melbourne Jail on this day in 1880, Ned Kelly had carried out his threat to seek revenge if his people did not get justice. Kelly and his fellow Irish-Australians were poor and took the brunt of English colonial persecution. From Kelly's time until today, Australia's people have struggled against oppression and exploitation. All around the country, the Australian people are in action around their demands, be it in the trade unions, the movement of the unemployed, political parties and groups, pensioner and social service organisations, citizen and resident bodies or any of the many others.

The unity of the people in their struggles is truly precious. Differences can be handled

such that unity is maintained and the monopolists prevented from dividing and ruling. On November 11, 1854, a mass meeting of 10,000 diggers on the Ballarat goldfields joined in a reform league and pledged themselves to fight for what were then radical demands. Less than a month later, they built their stockade at Eureka. The diggers were from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds and their outlooks varied. Today there exists the basis for very broad unity around a programme to alleviate some of the worst effects of the crisis on the people and for peace. Australian Communists should encourage and be part of this unity.

A powerful movement can and should be built around a people's programme which would include such demands as:

- * Putting the burden of the present economic crisis on those best able to bear it — the rich, not the poor;
- * Support for common action by the people for the realisation of their just demands;
- * Struggle for nuclear disarmament, in the first place by the superpowers, and for world peace; and
- * Continuing efforts towards co-operation and unity amongst the progressive forces.

Communism is as relevant here today as it has been since its foundation in Australia. Communism is a system of ideas which is derived from an examination of social and natural facts and is verified by those facts. It explains the history of society and its present position. It discerns the direction of society's development, which is inexorably towards socialism. Communism reveals why Australia and the capitalist world are scourged by poverty in the midst of plenty, unemployment, threat of and actual war, oppression of all kinds, crisis, corruption. It explains how and why these plagues of humanity will pass out of being. All thinking people are concerned with these issues; all thinking people should deeply study Communism.

The Communist Party arises to attempt to apply the science of Marxism. The only reason for the existence of the Party in Australia is to serve the Australian people. The Party is truly the mind, the heart and the conscience of our era.

True revolutionary optimism is based on scientific understanding of social laws

Speech of E.F. (Ted) Hill

Communists are supreme optimists in a seemingly gloomy world. Australia itself is a mess. Its industry is run down, the monopoly miners rip up the country, dispossess the black people, export ill-gotten gains. Lack of jobs brings ill health and despair. Uranium and nuclear weapons threaten the people. The environment is poisoned. It would be possible to go on and on.

What then is there to be optimistic about? We witness a social system in the world and Australia that is coming to an end. It will certainly be replaced by a rational social order – socialism. Socialism removes the very basis for the chaos of the present social system. Socialism is derived from capitalism. This is shown by scientific analysis.

That scientific analysis shows that all social epochs come into being and pass out of being. They don't do it like pouring water on the instant coffee produces the perfect brew. It is much more difficult. There is upheaval, trouble, violence, war. It is often a protracted process.

If we get preoccupied with difficulties, and see only lack of success, setbacks, then we will despair and turn to escapism. If we get carried away by immediate successes in this or that field, we will lose our perspective. Many thought honestly and think now that Labor governments will solve all problems. Some think Labor governments will bring socialism. We respect that but we think it's not correct.

Some are afraid of nuclear destruction. Every sensible person is concerned about it.

What to do? Communism offers an explanation of how the nuclear threat came about and what to do. War itself is going on in the Middle East, in Asia, in Latin America. Why?

The Communist and progressive movement in Australia is split up. There are various groups and people who sometimes attack each other more vigorously than they attack those whom they would probably agree are common enemies. It is a problem. Should we despair at it or should we try to do something about it?

Some see failure in socialism or get preoccupied with their own idea of socialism – test everything against their own idea – if socialism doesn't conform with that idea it is not socialism. There are differing ideas about the Soviet Union. Some disagree with our assertion that it is a superpower which seeks world domination in competition with the U.S.A.

Some disagree with us in believing China is a socialist country earnestly seeking to build socialism, serve the Chinese people and mankind.

The revealing of large-scale corruption in Australia affects many. Others become cynical.

Attacks on ordinary rights such as by the many royal commissions and inquiries cause further problems.

The general pressure on real wages causes hardship and raises questions of where it will all end.

Attacks on Communism, on Communists, publicity given to events in the Communist Party of Australia and people leaving it, cause

more questions. Should there be a Communist Party?

Wherever we go, whatever newspaper we read, television or radio show, daily life pushes up problems.

Let me make one comment before I go on to try to show how Communism gives us the explanation and the answer. I stress that we Communists do not want to ram our views down people's throats. We offer explanation which we think is correct. All the evil things I have mentioned may cause gloom in some but *the most significant feature* is that *always and without fail*, people rise up to fight evil. The most inspiring thing in Australia is the Australian common people. They do not take things lying down. There is spectacular resistance and less spectacular resistance but there is resistance. People demand a proper solution of their problems. Wherever there is deprivation, and deprivation is in the nature of our social system, there is resistance. Think of our unemployed friends, our workers in the factories, the much-maligned ship painters and dockers and builders' labourers, our social service recipients, many others. Think of the resistance of the black people and the magnificence of their stand despite everything thrown at them. Think of the environment and the countless big and small people's actions in defence of nature, of health.

Australia's ordinary people are moving. They are moving because they are impelled by social forces to move. True they are not shouting out about capitalism and demanding socialism. They are not raising the banner of revolution. They do not in big numbers share our views. But they *are* questioning, weighing up, appraising, looking. They are going through the process of education and training for ultimate profound social change. There can be infinite confidence in them.

All these things do have an overall explanation. It *is* scientific. It is scientific socialism, Communism, socialism. I use these words to describe the social laws that do exist and were discovered by Marx and developed by Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao Zedong.

Contradictory though it may sound, the relevance of Communism is established by the

millions of statements about its irrelevance. If it is irrelevant, why worry about it? It is simply irrelevant and that is that. But there is semi-hysteria in denunciations of Communism.

What is Communism? Many of the denouncers create their own version of Communism and denounce that. They don't bother to read or state what the founders of Communism wrote or said. It is far easier to set up a straw man of Communism and knock that over. Another favourite device is to equate Communism with crime and denounce Communists as criminals. Another is to present Communism as some sort of conspiracy and Communists as conspirators. You are familiar with many variations on this type of theme.

It is safe to say that not a single day goes by, not a single newspaper is published, but that Communism gets a mention – none too favourable, except in the more important papers like *Vanguard*.

Then people like Mr. Santamaria and the egregious gentleman named McAdam, who writes in the Melbourne *Herald*, deplore the arising of what they call an anti-anti-Communism sentiment. They think it's very bad when there's any slackening off in the anti-Communist campaign. It should be stepped up, they say. All this actually has a side that helps Communism and those who champion it – the Communists. It raises the question of Communism in people's minds.

In one way or another Communism seeps up everywhere. The "contagion" spreads. Efforts to suppress it all raise the very question – what is it? Why does it remain? Why doesn't it go away? Why does it haunt the reactionaries? Even Mr. Hawke helped us a little when he said Fraser's advice about putting your money under the bed was no good because the "Commies" were already there. This idea is that there are Communists everywhere. And it is true – they are everywhere and if they are not yet Communists, they are on the way even though they may not realise it. People sense or know the correctness of Communism even when they sometimes denounce it. This goes for some of the very big capitalists but it *haunts* them because its realisation is the end of capitalism.

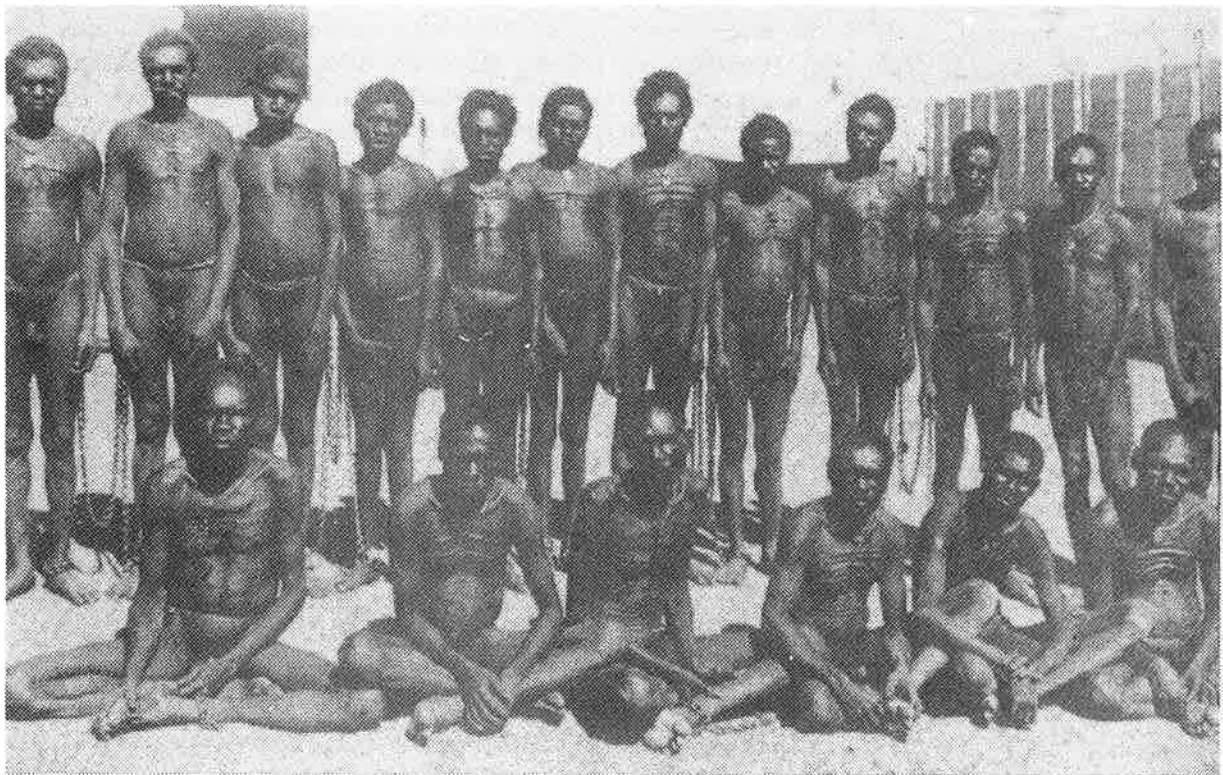
The theory of Communism is simply the revealing of the fundamental laws that govern the development of nature and society. Fundamental natural and social laws do exist. If people understand them then they can use them. If they don't understand them then they fall victim to them. When lightning strikes, either you understand that positive and negative electric charges meet and know what to do about it or you don't know and are likely to be victim of it. Advance of understanding about electricity has meant tremendous advances in mastery over its use. The need to know about electricity arose from the social compulsion of improving the getting of profit and of a living. Greater production and greater profit under capitalism have compelled great advances and greater knowledge. Necessity is the mother of invention.

Communism arose as systematic theory in the middle of last century. History had developed to a point where various social epochs could be seen to have arisen and developed and been replaced — primitive Communism of, for

example, Australian Aborigines, then slavery, feudalism, and capitalism. By the middle of last century human knowledge, experience, had developed to a degree where for the first time it was possible and necessary to look back over the whole panorama to see whether or not a pattern emerged. That knowledge accumulated, and at the same time, crisis was afflicting capitalism because the way of getting a living had advanced to the stage where it couldn't go further without severely straining the relations between people — those of the rich and poor of capitalism. The solution had to be found.

The compulsions of social and scientific development *demand* explanation so that there could be more development. It wasn't just an arbitrary whim or wish to find out but a *necessity* to find out.

The basic thing was the way in which man got a living. Well, we take the unfortunate black people in Australia, made to look like the inmates of a zoo. Their emergence in a harsh country *compelled* them to combine with each other to eke out the barest of existence, to resist



Tasmanian Aborigines in chains. This photograph was taken last century at Oyster Cove. Aboriginal people are now standing up and fighting nationally for their rights.

what to them were the blind forces of nature. As a single person – one alone – there was no hope of survival. But combined, they could hunt ant fish and collect fruit and vegetables and so on. They lived in primitive Communism, compelled to do so by their primitive method of getting a living. No slavery existed. But in other countries in the period of primitive Communism, some did better than others due to factors of better land, availability of food and so on. Differences developed. Social advance to a new epoch didn't occur among Australia's black people because along came the capitalists compelled, by the need for markets and cheap raw materials, to expand – Dutch, Portuguese, French and English – and seized the lot. In other places, slavery arose – one “superior” tribe enslaving another or people capturing others. Slavery arose under the compulsion of development, advance in the way of getting a living such as tilling the soil. Then feudalism developed also in response to advances in getting a living. Within feudalism capitalism arose and finally its superiority shattered the old feudal social relations. The English civil war of 1641 and the French Revolution of 1789 were simply dramatic episodes in the long evolution of capitalism. Primitive machinery, more substantial trading, grew up within feudalism. The old feudal social boundaries restricted the development of the market and trading. Over went the feudal boundaries. Influence of feudalism continued into capitalism. A great struggle occurred between the ideas of feudalism and the new ideas of capitalism. The superiority of capitalism gradually asserted itself. In England, right through the 19th century, the struggle was quite acute. Evolution of capitalism – change from feudalism – occupied a historical epoch.

Capitalism called into being gigantic means of production. Huge factories arose. Farming developed into large-scale farming. The modern working class took shape. The modern capitalist class took shape.

The capitalist class maintained the private ownership of the means of production – factories, mines, land – a form of ownership born of slavery and feudalism. It freed the old feudal serfs from attachment to the land. They now

had nothing to live on except what they got by selling to the capitalist their power to labour. They became wage labourers. They gathered in the great factories. Australia knows them well, BHP, CSR, ACI, General Motors, Ford. Here each worker did only a minute part on what was to be the finished product. Each was dependent on another from start to finish. That was the characteristic. The process of production is already socialised *within* capitalism, it is co-operative labour. The *form* of socialism can be seen. The great contradiction is that the products of this socialised process of production are individually owned by the factory owners. BHP owns the steel. They make it for profit. Their profit comes from labour. For wages, they buy the power of the worker to work. They pay him around about the cost of living. But they can and do work him beyond that. They make more profit the less they pay him. So the never-ceasing struggle to keep wages up. The mechanism of capitalism keeps wages down. But if we understand the process we can do something in the way of struggle to keep wages up but only round about the cost of producing the worker. The working class grew and grew. Today, even more are being forced into the working class – advances in technology turn the clerk, the professional worker, far closer to the industrial proletariat. Capitalism relentlessly advances. To make profit, the capitalist must sell the goods he produces. There must be a market. The market embraces all people and all the world. If the capitalist pays less – keeps wages down – he is restricting the market upon which he depends for profit. There are germs of economic crisis in this. Goods pile up and can't be sold. Workers are dismissed. They fall out of the market. Intermediaries go bankrupt. Capitalism too is a system of bitter competition. It ruins the lesser – again a restriction of market. Its investments increase; that decreases the margin of profit. So it strives to produce more in order to keep up the margin of profit. Technology advances. Thus at the same time, the system is keeping down wages, seeking new markets and sources of cheap raw materials, covering the whole world in competition with others. There you have economic crisis and war. It becomes an inter-

national system. Gigantic imperialisms arise. They develop unevenly. Britain arose and fell. The conflicts have caused war – World War I and World War II and many, many smaller wars. Now two great imperialisms stand out in bitter rivalry – the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union.

The facts show that crises occur periodically. They tend to be deeper and more prolonged – the wars bigger and more destructive. That is capitalism.

It cannot solve its problems. Communism says if you extend the socialised process of production into socialised ownership, you have laid the basis for solving the problem. Then the people own the means of production. Production is not now dictated by private profit but is planned. People come first. They are their own masters. The basis of economic crisis and war is abolished.

But like the evolution of capitalism from feudalism, it is a complicated process. The theory of Communism shows the way scientifically. If people know that way, then they can act accordingly. In the overall picture, they can take account of the ups and downs. For the first time in the evolution of one social system from another, the process of evolution is understood. Scientific socialism, Marx's ideas, Marxism, provide that understanding.

Understanding, knowledge, gives mastery.

The reactionaries therefore are impelled to try to confuse and destroy that understanding and the people are compelled to strive for that understanding. The people are assisted in their understanding by the very facts. Those same facts undermine the case for the capitalists.

Australia's history and development can be explained only on that basis. The primitive Communism of the black people is explained by the compulsion to combine against the forces of nature. The seizure by the British is explained by the compulsion of Britain to exploitation of workers, some workers compelled to so-called crime, its compulsion to expand, to seek new markets and sources of raw material Australia became a supplier of food and wool to Britain. It became a part of the imperialism of Britain. But Britain declined. The U.S.A. usurped its position. Japan stepped in also. War

occurred. Australians were involved in two world wars and in wars in South Africa, Korea and Vietnam. Sixty thousand Australians died for British imperialism in World War I, flung into the front lines as colonials. Now U.S. imperialism sits astride Australia. It occupies Australia's economic lifelines. It can, for example, cut off Australia's oil and Australia would come to a stop. Its bases in Australia arise because of its need to protect its world possessions. Internally they are directed against the Australian people. U.S. multinationals distort Australia's economy. This is not primarily due to the bad motives of anyone – bad motives arise from the compulsion of imperialism to expand its power, and the weakness of independent native capitalism. The Australian people, including what native capitalists there are, have a compulsion to get rid of that – to have an independent Australia. These are factors independent of what anyone thinks. They arise from socio-economic factors. Communism offers the explanation. If you understand, then you can act. Your revolt, protest, is not blind. It has a definite reason and objective. The immediate task on the way to a socialist Australia is shown to be to establish Australia's independence. There is an emotional side, if you like, to the demand for Australian bases for Australians but that demand arises from necessity – the necessity of developing Australia for Australians and towards socialism – it cannot develop as an appendage of Great Britain, U.S. or Japan. It is only socialism where Australians own the factories and land that will ultimately solve the problem. That is an advanced idea and advanced society and requires preliminary steps. At the moment, many people want the Yanks and Japanese out; only a comparatively small number want socialism. In the necessary preliminary steps as we see it, many can unite. They can put on one side differences as to the ultimate solution.

So too Australians for peace. There is again an emotional side to this. People's desires for peace have many reasons. Our analysis shows that war comes from objective socio-economic factors. Those same factors give rise to people's resistance to war although people may



Police are being used more and more directly against people's popular protests against exploitation and in defence of democratic rights.

see themselves as having various motives. In order finally to eliminate war, society requires to be changed. In the immediate threat, all who defend the peace come together, leave ultimate views for peaceful exchange of opinion. War can be prevented or postponed if all get together against the continuous conflict between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Even within that, there are degrees of united action. Every sensible person — I exclude those who profit from it — is opposed to nuclear weapons. To strike nuclear weapons from the hands of the superpowers who control 95% of them is a long step to peace. Opposition to uranium mining in Australia is good. Not only is the stuff a menace when the profit motive rules but it is another factor in the dispossession of the black people. It rallies a lot of people in opposition in struggle. While not all agree with us, we see that and all other people's struggle as part of the process in preparation for overall struggle that ultimately will lead to the end of capitalism. In passing, we support the New Zealand people in their outstanding efforts.

Let us take wages and living conditions.

The struggle to defend them arises from those socio-economic factors. The struggle is compelled on the workers. It will cease only when socialism is achieved under which the workers will determine their own conditions. But in the meantime struggle goes on. Examples abound. The heart of it lies in exploitation of Australia by multinationals. In struggling, people come to understand more of the socio-economic factors, more of the need for Australia's independence and sovereignty and ultimately socialism. Give it social consciousness and it is more effective.

Take Australia's division into States. It is the result of British imperialism's divide and rule tactics. Now it is used by others to weaken Australia as a whole. If that is *understood*, then much can be done. Unity of our country is part of the struggle for independence and ultimately socialism.

I have touched on some immediate social problems in Australia. Now there is an election. The topic of our meeting is the relevance of Communism. A good question is the relevance of the election. This election will decide which

parliamentary party constitutes the government. Will it solve any of the questions I have raised or do anything fundamental? No, it won't. But we should pay attention to it. Australia has a state apparatus — a public service, an army, a police force, courts, gaols. That is the essential state apparatus. It exists fundamentally (not only) to protect and administer the private profit making system. That state apparatus will remain essentially the same whoever wins government because Australian capitalism will remain. In the end, it will fight to preserve capitalism and its force will be met with people's force. But that is not immediate. A Labor government will, in present circumstances, administer the state a little more humanely. That has a positive side. People too must have experience that Labor governments do not stand for fundamental social changes. They are not socialist in any way. Many Labor Party members do sincerely seek socialism but they will not get it from any Labor government in Australia. We respect, as I said before, the support many progressive people give to the Labor Party, we work with them. We will help in testing Labor governments. But we must frankly say these governments administer capitalism. They strengthen capitalism. On all critical questions their actions obey capitalism's compulsions. The U.S. bases, U.S. exploitation, U.S. alliances, U.S. economic and financial interests reign. I often say it is no good saying Hawke or Cain or Wran or Bannon or Burke are bastards. It is not that at all. Each one of them is acting as all Labor leaders have. If they are bastards, all you must do to repair the situation is to get some better Labor leader with a duly wed mother and father and all will be well. But would it? No. The fault lies in socio-economic factors. The Labor Party is a product of Australia's history. It arose out of the setbacks in the Maritime Strike of the 1890s to get workers' representatives into parliament in order to achieve workers' demands. It was actually an advance. But in those circumstances it was not easy, as it isn't now, to see that parliament was not the state and was a sort of democratic deception. The evolution of the Labor Party as a parliamentary party started in that way. Its "socialism" and progressive side became a part

of the deception — even self-deception. I reflect on no-one for I am concerned to show social compulsions.

It would be much better of course if Labor leaders said frankly — we are for capitalism but we will try to offset its effects. They don't say that. They leave up in the air the question of socialism. It enables their opponents to caricature socialism and then brand the ALP as socialist. It confuses people. It is part of the necessary experience of Australian people to see the Labor Party in action.

In some ways a Labor government contains the danger of easing the way of reactionaries. When it takes straight anti-workingclass action, as it does, it enables the reaction to carry that on and say, "Well your own Labor government started it." This has been seen many times. There must be struggle against that.

Coupled with that is the promotion of a New Right, as it is called. The old strident anti-Communism is supplemented by Blainey's racism, Stone's stoneage economics, Morgan's anti-Christ.

People must be warned.

It is out of objective social developments that Communism arose. The same objective social developments called into being the Communist Party, formed in Australia in October 1920. Knowledge of socio-economic development means that that development can be influenced. In a strike struggle, the timing, the tactics, the objectives, are thought out by examining the bosses' position, the strength of the workers, the support or otherwise for them, what will assist, what will hinder. On the far larger canvas of society, a similar process must go on. Communism provides the overall guide. It gives us the means to understand. It doesn't give us a blueprint. It has the *overall* analysis, not the details. In Australia, it examines Australia's history, its similarities and differences from the history of other countries, it reveals Australia's dependent position, the need to end that, the political parties in Australia, the institutions, the world environment and a host of other things. It seeks to find the way forward. It recognises the leading decisive position of Australian workers but their close relations and community of

interest with other sections of the people. It relies upon those people. It seeks to learn from them and to show them the enlightenment of Marxism. Sooner or later socio-economic factors would in any event lead to social upheaval. Wars and economic crises are simply not going to be tolerated. But if people know how and why they occur, then they learn how to deal with it all. That is Communism. If there is a band of people highly organised and equipped to give that understanding both by practice and by spoken and written word, then the whole process is much easier. If every single working, democratic and patriotic Australian understood it all, it would make short work of the enemies of the people. However, experience shows it is not nearly as simple as that. It is a complicated process to reach the ultimate goal of socialism where the people own the means of production, produce for use and not for profit and own the state apparatus to impose their own ownership — a far closer approach to democracy — a dictatorship of the many over the tiny minority. It demands struggle on all the issues I have mentioned. Mao Zedong posed the question: "Why must there be a revolutionary party? There must be a revolutionary party because the world contains enemies who oppress the people and the people want to throw off enemy oppression. In the era of capitalism and imperialism, just such a revolutionary party as the Communist Party is needed. Without such a party it is simply impossible for the people to throw off enemy oppression". The need for a Communist Party in Australia is just that. With a Marxist Communist Party, Australian people have a concentration of devoted people armed with scientific theory constantly, day in and day out, searching and practising among the people for the correct strategy and tactics for those Australian people to own their country and ultimately build socialism. In its history, Communism in Australia has had *many* victories. It has had many shortcomings. This is because human beings have deficiencies. Communists do their best to overcome their shortcomings.

We reject entirely ideas of the irrelevance of Communism. Mistakes arise because of short-

comings in *Communists* — the human beings who are Communists. Those shortcomings should not be attributed to Communism but to the Communists who were responsible for them. It is scarcely avoidable that there will be errors and shortcomings. Far from that being a reason for abandoning the Communist Party or having no Communist Party, it is a reason for strengthening in every possible way the Communist Party and grip of Communist theory in Australia. It demands deep study of Australia and the classics written by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao Zedong.

Nor should we be fearful of the name "Communism". One hundred and thirty-six years ago, Marx and Engels proclaimed that the Communists disdain to conceal their aims. That remains true. In any event, whatever name Communists give themselves, they will be abused as Communist criminals. Why should we deprive ourselves of the help the reactionaries give us by constantly raising the question of Communism?

People say the Communist movement is all split up. Communist-led countries have fared badly. It is true there are difficulties among various Communists. That is all the more reason to work harder to overcome differences, get a deeper understanding of Communism. If the Communist Party succeeds in finding the correct course for Australia, as it will, then the Australian workers, working and other patriotic people will solve the problem of splits. As to other countries, our concern is Australia and Australian problems. The old idea that a Communist movement in Australia or any other country could attach itself to some socialist country was simply wrong. Its explanation lies in history. History has passed on. Australian people, along with what guidance Australian Communists can give, must be the masters of Australia's destiny. In the immediate scene, we stand for maximum people's action on all issues that affect them, for the struggle for world peace, for democratic rights, for adequate all-round living standards. That struggle will go on, develop greater and greater consciousness and ultimately Australia will really be owned by the Australian people both black and white.