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J. HENRY.

Workers Of All Lands UNITE!

THE IDEOLOGICAL-POLITICAL STRUGGLE

F. KELSO.

In our drive to lift the quality of the ideological-political leadership in the Party, there are already evidences of distortion which, unless corrected, could cause serious harm to the Party.

In some places ideological-political leadership has been interpreted to mean the neglect, or the complete dropping, of all practical activity, and a concentration on long, abstract and meaningless discussions, entirely separated from the practical work of the branch, so that the tasks of practical work are not discussed.

Where this entirely erroneous conception is applied, it results in transforming branches of the Party into mere talking shops. This interpretation of ideological-political leadership is just as great a violation of Leninist principles as "narrow practicalism"; it is a violation of the most treasured Leninist principle on the Party which insists on the unity of theory and practice.

Practice without theory is blind and gropes in the dark, while theory without practice—theory which does not lead to improved practice—is sterile and results in empty argumentation, and invariably degenerates into

the doctrinaire.

Those who take up the ideological-political struggle in the manner referred to do just as much damage to real Marxist ideology and real Marxist politics as do the narrow practicalists.

After a number of branch meetings occupied with abstract theorising and meaningless wordy journeys to various corners of the world, the members of the branch would justifiably revolt and demand an end to this empty prattling so that they could get down to some really "practical" work.

The net result as we see is to set "practical" work against ideological-political work — to counterpose theory to practice or vice versa, and hence prevent the Party finding the correct solution.

If the enemy were at work in the Party aiming to sabotage the whole drive to develop ideological-political leadership, there could be very little doubt that he would work very much along these lines. He would cover himself by making a great show of energy in the field of ideology and politics, but he would present our Marxist ideology in a completely lifeless, abstract way;

he would deal with politics in a fashion completely divorced from the tasks facing our movement.

Such methods would have the deliberate design of producing the inevitable result of a revolt among Communist Party members and a reversion to narrow practicalism. Then the concealed enemy would blame the Party members; declaring that they don't want ideology; he might well say: "We've done our best, but there you are! The whole conception of ideological-political leadership is false."

This is how the enemy would operate, and naturally we cannot tolerate our friends acting like the enemy, otherwise we shall be unable to distinguish friend from foe.

Ideological-political leadership does not mean and cannot mean a retreat from practical work; on the contrary, it means giving profound Marxist ideological content to all our practical work; it means delving into and understanding the political essence of the practical tasks facing us; it means holding fast to our perspective as a revolutionary working class party; it means a conscious understanding of the connection between our practical day-to-day work and the ultimate revolutionary objective of the Communist Party; and it means being able to reveal this

connection to the masses of the workers and the majority of the people.

The task of ideological-political leadership is to secure far more and much better practical activity, which calls for the mobilisation of a much higher proportion of our Communists in the struggle for peace based on higher understanding of the whole Party policy.

The relentless struggle which must be carried on to raise the level of ideological-political leadership in the Central Committee and in all leading committees right down to the branch executives must not be left to the leaders alone; into this struggle the whole Party membership must be drawn; all Party members have a responsibility, and they must not hesitate to call the leaders to account where it is clear that the work of such leaders does not measure up to the demands of Bolshevik leadership.

The full value of the positive contribution which every Communist can make to the work of the Party will only be realised if a healthy spirit of criticism and self-criticism pervades the Party from top to bottom, and it is the responsibility of leading committees in the first place to deliberately engender such a healthy critical and self-critical atmosphere.

Criticism and self-criticism in all circumstances advance the work of the Party, but the positive effects of criticism and self-criticism are in direct ratio to the ideological-political level of the Party membership. A Party member with a limited knowledge of Marxism-Leninism will be to that extent limited in the critical evaluation he can make of the work of the Party, whereas Party members with a good basic understanding of Marxism-Leninism will be able to make a much more profound critical evaluation of the work of the Party at all levels, and consequently a more significant contribution to advancing the work of the Party.

Therein lies the tremendous significance of the study of the *History of the C.P.S.U.*, now being conducted throughout the Party; this book is the greatest model of all time of the union of theory and practice, and this is natural because it condenses the rich experience of the mightiest political party ever known in history.

Australian Communists studying the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union will be struck by the fact that from start to finish this is a history above all of ideological-political struggle.

From the very outset the struggle for the formation of

the Party developed as a struggle against the chief ideological obstacle, blocking the road to the Party's formation — the Narodniks. Then the prolonged ideological struggle to defeat the economists was waged successfully.

After its formation the C.P.S.U. (R.S.D.L.P. in its early years) fought a consistent and prolonged ideological battle against Menshevism, including the fierce ideological-political struggle on the character and aims of the 1905 revolution.

In the period of the Stolypin reaction, the Bolsheviks provide us with a classic model of the skilful combination of illegal and legal work which resulted from an unrelenting, ideological struggle against the Menshevik liquidators on the one hand, who wanted to destroy the illegal Party, and against the Otzovists on the other, who wanted the Party to refrain from work in legal mass organisations. The line of the Otzovists would also have destroyed the Party by depriving it of legal cover for its work.

This period in the ideological struggle of the Bolshevik Party also produced Lenin's great work — *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, which dealt a shattering blow against the so-called God seekers and other enemies of Marxism. Stalin's brilliant ex-

position of Dialectical and Historical Materialism in the *History* is a further development of Marxist ideology.

During the first imperialist world war the Bolshevik Party waged a ceaseless ideological struggle against the treachery of international social democracy and in the process developed Marxist theory on imperialism, on war, the State, revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and led the first victorious Socialist revolution in history.

Under Soviet power the Bolshevik Party tirelessly waged the ideological-political struggle against the Trotskyites, Bukharinites, and other enemies of the people. The ideological-political struggle for the Stalin policy of industrialisation of the Soviet Union and the collectivisation of agriculture was fought out and won by the C.P.S.U.

To-day the ideological-political struggle is the foremost characteristic of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and no one can claim that this mighty Party has no practical results to its credit. On the contrary, it is a model of practical work and its practical results strike terror into the hearts of the imperialists the world over.

For Australian Communists there is no finer model than that provided by the great party of

Lenin and Stalin.

To-day our country and our people are in grave danger. The Menzies Government is dragging us further and further into the mire of American imperialist war policy. The welfare and the whole future of our people is seriously menaced by Menzies' shameless betrayal of Australia to American big businessmen driving towards a third world war.

The New Year editorials and feature articles in the capitalist press were full of gloomy forebodings and black forecasts about the currency racing downhill to collapse, and the economy being in danger of breaking down under the strain.

As a solution, these capitalist spokesmen advance all kinds of plans and panaccas, but their main practical demand is that the wages of the workers should be pegged.

None of them point to the real cause of the dangerous situation into which Menzies has brought our country, which is to be found in the reckless war policy of the Menzies Government; a criminal policy arising from the subservience of the Canberra Government to the moguls of Wall Street and the American State Department.

This policy of treachery and war is diverting vast sums of money and huge quantities of

materials to warlike preparations and activities. The printing presses churning out notes for war are rapidly pumping the last particle of value out of the Australian pound.

To stop the rot in the finances and the economy of the country, which places an intolerable burden on the people, the war preparations must be stopped. The crazy piling of armaments must give way to a peaceful policy of internationally negotiated general disarmament.

Money and materials cannot be consumed for war purposes and still be available for the peaceful needs of the Australian people. The way out of the impasse is clear; a heavy cut in war expenditure to make finance and materials available to expand our electric power equipment and our agriculture and to provide urgently-needed homes, hospitals and schools.

PROPAGANDA FOR A NEW WAR — GRAVEST CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

(From "Lasting Peace, Etc.," 1/12/50.)

Hundreds of millions all over the world enthusiastically welcomed the decisions of the Second World Peace Congress. The first reactions to the decisions in all countries testify to the enormous mobilising force exerted by the militant programme of the

Again the Soviet Union shows it can be done and how to do it. The Soviet Union has no fear of inflation; on the contrary, the value of the rouble is steadily rising, prices are falling, not rising, the wellbeing of the Soviet people is advancing rapidly.

Why? Because the Socialist Soviet Union is concentrating on a peaceful policy of raising the living standards of her people by the rapid development of peaceful industries to supply the needs of the people and by the transformation of agriculture for the same purpose.

With all the greater vigour will the Australian Communist Party fight for the policy of peace of the Second World Peace Congress at Warsaw—for the independence of our country and for the defeat of the Menzies Government, which is the enemy of the Australian people.

struggle for world peace worked out by the Congress. Defence of peace is now the most important task in the life of all peoples. The imperialists, pursuing their course of fomenting war, bared their fangs at the Congress decisions. The Congress

demonstrated to all mankind that people holding the most diverse views can reach agreement in order to avert the catastrophe of war and to preserve peace. It is this, more than anything else, that worries the warmongers. The Peace Congress was addressed by people of various political convictions, by exponents of the materialist world outlook and by representatives of various religious views, by people professing different ideologies. They all found a common language in the struggle for peace and unanimously recognised that the real danger to peace is contained solely in the aggressive policy of the imperialist Governments. Congress demanded a radical change in this policy, that in the capitalist countries Government policy should not be determined by the selfish interests of people who bank on waxing rich out of war. Together with the demand for prohibition of atomic, bacteriological and other weapons of mass annihilation of people, and for reduction of all types of armaments, the Congress demanded a ban on propaganda for a new war and the enactment of legislation making war propaganda a punishable offence.

As a matter of fact, in all countries, the capitalist countries included, incitement to murder, robbery and arson is punishable by law. And if incitement to

murder and robbery of individuals is a criminal offence, then how is it possible to leave unpunished calls for slaying and annihilating tens of millions of people, for plundering and laying waste entire countries? Does not war propaganda arouse the very worst instincts? Does it not set nation against nation and urge them to mutual destruction?

The answer is clear: *propaganda for a new war constitutes the gravest crime against humanity.* The warmongers do not want this propaganda banned because they need obedient soldiers ready to kill, plunder, and violate—all for the narrow selfish interests of a handful of imperialists. All human feeling must be exorcised from these soldiers; they must be deprived of conscience and honour and poisoned with the venom of race superiority. And the imperialists seek to train such soldiers by creating an atmosphere of war hysteria and calling for a war of extermination.

The spearhead of the war propaganda of the American imperialists is directed against the free Soviet people who, by their persistent struggle for peace, have won the love and gratitude of the peoples of the world, is directed against the People's Democracies, the German Democratic Republic, the new China,

ronage of villages, and trade unions helping with cultural activities, and even with such matters as the sowing plan.

The correctness of the principles that have been discussed is shown by the immense improvement in the position of the peasantry in the People's Democracies of Eastern Europe. The obsolete system of farming which bound the peasants to primitive toil, enslaved the women, drove the young folk off the land, gave no security even in times of bumper harvests, has now been ended forever. The rich landowner who once dominated the lives of the peasants by virtue of their huge feudal estates such as the 125,000 acres of the Schwarzenburgs, and the 250,000 acres of the Esterhazys, are now a thing of the past. Their castles now belong to the people, and are now holiday homes or agricultural colleges.

If the People's Democracies had done little else than those things, their existence would be justified, but they are doing far more. They are pointing out to the peasants a way of escape from the misery and degradation that has been their lot for centuries. They are pointing out the road to socialism and the elimination of the difference between town and country. At present only a comparatively

small number of producer co-operatives have been formed; in 1950 under 10 per cent. of the sowing was done by State Farms and co-operatives. But the movement is gathering momentum and is the subject of intense discussion. The spring of 1951 should see a big leap forward and within a few years we shall see the removal of the dead weight of peasant poverty from millions of human beings, with all the promises for peace, prosperity, happiness, and socialism.

The progress in the People's Democracies is in striking contrast to the desperate straits to which the peasantry is being reduced in Western Europe, where they are being forced off the land by high rents, heavy taxation, the increasing difference between agricultural and industrial prices, and the lower purchasing power of the people. They are faced with an acute crisis due to the dumping of agricultural goods by America under the Marshall Plan. This has bedevilled the whole balance of agriculture and created such fantastic anomalies as that of France, which has been compelled to import 1,000,000 tons of wheat over five years when her own agriculture can easily fill her needs and even provide an export surplus, with the result that her acreage sown to wheat has had to be reduced.

AUSTRALIA AND THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

By JOHN HOWARD. — J. HENRY

In light of the significance of the tasks that confront our Party to-day it will be necessary to subject all aspects of our work to the test of closest self critical examination.

This applies with emphasis to what might be termed the specifically Australian content in our approach to all questions, the specifically Australian content in all the fields of our activity.

It seems that on this vitally important matter we have no clear cut orientation; that our outlook is general, and that we look to outside international development with more enthusiasm than we are prepared to devote to what is our main international responsibility, the developing of the Australian section of the revolutionary movement. There is a tendency to register events rather than make our own history.

We must ask ourselves whether we have not gone even beyond the Marxist warning about what is obsolete for us not necessarily being obsolete for the masses, to a position, where in practice, our country isn't very important in our conception of things. There is not with us there is, for example, in France,

a skilful combining of our international outlook along with a deep and powerful Australian viewpoint that is positive and vital in its appeal.

In our approach to the masses we tend to prove primarily on the basis of international development that our line is correct, while largely overlooking the need to prove by our Australian outlook, policy and work that we are the most qualified to lead on international affairs. In many of its aspects our Australian outlook is a negative one. We are more concerned with opposing, with knocking down, than with the much harder and more serious task of developing a positive approach to the great national problems that confront our country. In practice we are not as Dimitrov said we must be "concerned with every important question, not only in the present and the future, but in the past of our people."

If this general proposition is correct, and if we continue to work in the old way, we will not succeed in fulfilling our obligations on the all-important issues of war and peace, while conversely, to the extent that we are able to incorporate in our

(Note references to Queensland and biggest industry - about which Henry knows)

style of work a really constructive, Australian outlook and content, to that extent will we succeed in rallying the masses of the people behind the decisions of the two world peace congresses. The solution of this problem will enable our Party to overcome the serious obstacles that have hindered our work down through the years, and which continue to hinder it to-day. Obstacles which are a legacy from our whole past.

There are some obvious reasons for such a tendency developing in our Party. The isolation of Australia, also the past relatively unimportant part Australia has played in world affairs both have a bearing here. Also it is a fact that, because of special circumstances, Australia has experienced an expanding economy during considerable periods of our Party's 30 years' existence. This has enabled the ruling class to find a bourgeois solution for many of the problems of the nation. Then, from a narrower Party viewpoint it has always been obvious that the decisive battles would be fought in Europe and Asia, this having led us to be more interested in what happened elsewhere, relying on victories outside Australia to drag us willy-nilly along the revolutionary path. It has even been posed as a serious proposition inside our Party that . . .

"what happens here doesn't matter much, anyway."

Such factors have led us over the years to something approaching an indifferent attitude towards the nation, which most likely is the fundamental reason for our inherent sectarianism from which all our shortcomings flow.

It appears that a careful examination would disclose that over the years we have responded much more enthusiastically to campaigns on issues that concern other peoples and movements than we have on Australian questions. However, we can no longer tolerate a conception of Australia as playing only a minor role in world affairs. The war plans of the imperialists, visualising this country as their major base in the Pacific enormously increases our Australian and international obligations.

It is not suggested, of course, that Australian Communists have been indifferent to the needs of the people. On the contrary, our whole history has been one of selfless struggle round the obvious issues that are a reflection of class society. But by a specifically Australian content in our work, I mean a positive orientation on all the great national issues, the line and direction of Australian advance both in view of international development and on the home

front. Without a clear Party attitude on these questions we will continue, even on such vital matters as the Warsaw decisions, to work in the old way; that is, no matter how widespread our work, it will contain the past narrowness, tend to be abstract in content and of a general nature. While this will win us many supporters, it will not result in winning millions of followers which must be the aim to-day.

We still tend to impose (or try to impose) our ideas on the masses because we are not sufficiently part-of, or in our outlook sufficiently steeped in the Australian spirit. To many people we must give the false impression of being interested in Australia primarily as a medium for furthering our international aims. Even when we do embark on some campaign that has important national aspects, the tendency is to utilise the issues as a lever for proving the correctness of our international outlook instead of the emphasis being from the viewpoint of our genuine concern for the welfare and protection of the Australian people. As Communists we are naturally very interested in what happens all over the world, but the starting point for the furtherance of our international responsibilities must always be a deep and powerful orientation

towards the advancement of our own country and the wellbeing of its people. Internationalism without a sufficiently firm home base is no satisfactory starting point for a successful appeal to the Australian people on such vital issues as confront us to-day.

We can rightly ask, "Do the masses see us as 'belonging' in this (capitalist) period, or do they regard us as some sort of insurance, as a solution for the problems of the future, as people with an overseas rather than an Australian orientation?" There can be no question of the tremendous respect in which our party is held, but it is a deferred support, something to be given in the future rather than under existing conditions, precisely because we have not convinced them yet of our ability to speak and fight as Australians in the interests of the Australia of to-day. An indication of the correctness of this estimate is given conversely by the victories we have had in the Trades Union sphere, where, to win leadership we have had to be vitally concerned about all economic conditions concerning trade unionists. It seems that on the political front there is a lopsidedness in our work that can only be corrected by our developing a positive approach to all national issues.

Shortly after Stalingrad, when "socialism" was fashionable, some journalists arranged a discussion with a few of our T.U. leaders to find out what we would do in a socialist Australia. It is a fact that our people couldn't fire a shot; they just didn't have any answers. The important point here is that we have never really considered the problems of Australia, because we have not been, and still are not, sufficiently interested in our own country. Everyone in the Party is, of course, honestly and fervently opposed to Menzies' support of Truman's war plans, because the U.S. imperialists plan war on the socialist world. But what have we done about the involving of Australia in the monstrous schemes of these madmen? What is needed is a burning nationwide indignation about the betrayal of the independence of our country, its integrity, the welfare and future of the Australian people. It must be admitted that as yet little has been achieved in this regard, which means that our own Party is not very conscious of this aspect of things. Yet in the sense of winning mass support, of really making advances in our own country, and at the same time doing something worth-while towards the defence of the socialist world, this is the decisive task.

Only by such an approach can we hope to implement the Warsaw decisions. We must emerge as the true patriots, but to do this, our Australian Communist Party must be concerned with all things Australian. We must get right out of our thinking all such conceptions as "it doesn't matter much what happens here, anyway." We must develop and foster a high pride in our own country and an indestructible faith in the ability of the Australian people to solve the problems of the nation.

There is another aspect of the question, also. It has never been Communist practice to fight for proletarian power and then begin to think of the problems that power presents. In working over these questions to-day, the class will be more fully fitting itself for the exercise of power in the future. Both in the interests of our present tasks, and for the future we must merge ourselves much more deeply in the Australian scene; we must begin to devote a lot of our energies to these questions.

If we succeed in this connection we will solve many of our problems, matters that have had no satisfactory answer in the past. It is my opinion that by directing the attention of the Party along these lines we will not be setting any new and impossible tasks that will divert the

attention of the Party from the paramount issues, but on the contrary, we will be providing the ideal basis from which the peace campaign can be developed in its broadest and most popular way. We will also be able to answer that question so often asked about what is wrong with our work in the parliamentary sphere. We will cease talking about the reformist hold on the masses, "conditions aren't ripe here" and so on. Rather we will be doing those things that will awaken the mass consciousness, instead of sitting back and waiting for spontaneity to exert itself.

We must keep in mind that the victories of the Parties overseas have been primarily on the basis of the Party solution of the national issues, and that it is very largely in this field that our future lies. Where we have worked along these lines the response has been obvious. In Queensland, for example, the examination and popularising of the programme on the sugar industry has helped considerably in the development of the Party organisation and influence throughout the countryside. At the time of writing there is a healthy response over the Glen Davis issue. We must guard against any tendency here to see Glen Davis primarily as a means of attacking the Menzies Government. The starting point should be determination to pre-serve an important Australian undertaking. In the process of doing this we can and must deal powerful blows against the traitorous authority in Canberra. In all our work we must develop our positive answer to the problems of the day. This implies that we rid ourselves of the remnants of the narrow negative thinking which continue with us as a legacy from our earlier years of the depression period.

The scope for progressive work with a specifically Australian content is boundless. The Government is spending countless millions preparing for death and destruction, but the real Australian needs are afforestation, soil conservation, the solution of the flood problems, housing, hospitals to save lives, and innumerable other social requirements. In the past we have been prone to think of these as mainly problems for socialism to solve. No doubt in the main they are, but how are we to achieve a socialist Australia except by fighting now for those things for which we stand? How are we to develop worker-farmer unity except by having an approach and a solution to these problems that corresponds to the real interests of the people? How, also, are we to overcome the disgrace of

the atom bomb petition unless, as well as all the other conclusions that have been drawn, we stop our own members appearing to be indifferent to the great national problems of the country?

On many of these issues we could begin to utilise the services of progressive people who, in some instances, have a vast scientific knowledge, people who have the answers to several of the major difficulties that hinder Australia's further development, but who are naturally frustrated to-day because of the capitalist nature of things. How much did Lenin foster and encourage Pavlov, Gorki and others long before the Russian revolution? Can we not follow in Lenin's path on this question, also?

As well as the major and more spectacular developmental matters there are hosts of issues such as the Callan Park disgrace in N.S.W., that receive little or no attention in our discussions or our Press. We should have been the initiator of the exposure of such conditions in this mental hospital, giving a class instead of

a sensational content to the matter as does the yellow press. There are hundreds of such issues in Australia to-day, which, if handled correctly, all help to turn the people's anger against bourgeois authority, while at the same time making our members more understanding of, and bringing them into closer touch with, the real needs of the people.

Naturally nothing in the above detracts in the slightest from our international standpoint. We are not narrow nationalists, but to the extent that we can take our unflinching stand as the real leaders and champions of the wellbeing of our own people and the future of the nation in this, the most vital, period in its history, to that extent will we be playing our just part alongside the peaceloving forces of progressive humanity the world over.

Ours is a great and beautiful country, with wealth unbounding. In the course of our international struggle for peace and socialism, let us make sure we win Australia for its rightful inheritors.