

Australian Communists and Soviet Russia

COMMUNISTS PROVED THEIR PATRIOTISM

TODAY every petty politician of reaction and hireling of the millionaire press "accuses" the Communists of being "agents of a foreign power." At the time when Communism and the labor movement are advancing the world over at an unprecedented pace, this slander represents one of the main propaganda lines of reactionaries who oppose the people's movement and who would force the world back to the pre-war status quo.

It is necessary, then, to rebut this propagandist "big lie" once and for all.

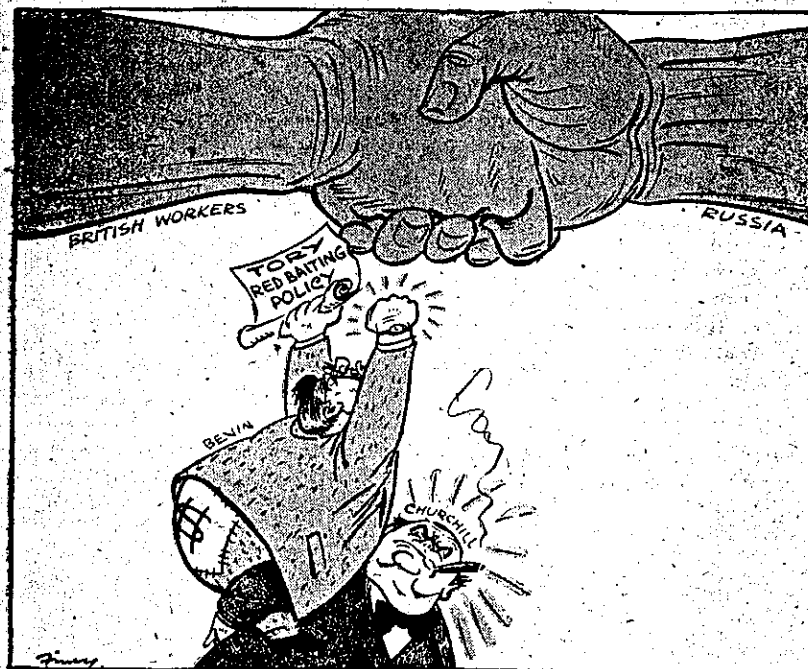
Communists are not "disloyal" to their own people. On the contrary, Communists are always foremost in the struggle of the people, i.e., the workers, farmers and urban middle-class, to improve their economic and social conditions, to broaden democracy and civil liberties in order that the toilers by hand and brain can defend their interests.

No one can deny the patriotism of the Russian Communists and their zeal to defend the interests of their people and Soviet Fatherland. Yet, in 1917, Lenin and Stalin and the Russian Communists were denounced by the reactionary politicians and press of every country as "agents of a foreign power—German spies." Lenin, in particular, was singled out for this type of abuse.

The Australian Communists, therefore, are in good company when they are similarly slandered by the "Liberal" politicians of big business and the millionaire press of Murdoch and Fairfax and Co.

In this connection it will be recalled that, on the eve of World War II, the Communists of France were placed on trial by the men of Vichy, those who sold their country to the Germans, and were "convicted" as "traitors" to the French people.

When the testing time came, it was found that the Communists were the most heroic defenders of France against the German invaders. Those who had formerly accused them were now occupying posts in the Vichy Government and acting as servants of Hitler, collaborating with the Nazis against the French people. The Communists were leading the underground resistance to the invaders, and 75,000 of the French Communists were executed or slain by the Hitlerites.



That is why the French Communist Party today is known as the Party "of the Executed," or "of the Martyrs." The people of France repudiated the verdict of the Vichy tribunal, which branded the Communists as traitors to France, by making the Communist Party the largest political party of the French people.

Again, the Australian Communists are in good company when they are called by former appeasers of Japanese fascism "traitors" to Australia.

The Chinese Communists bore the main brunt of the war against Japan for the freedom of China. So, too, did the Communists in every land prove their patriotism, not in mere words and high-sounding phrases, which now are the stock in trade of every reactionary scoundrel who wishes to conceal his real politics from the people, but in heroic deeds in the struggle against the German Nazis, Italian Fascists and Japanese Imperialists.

Four thousand Australian Communists enlisted in the fighting forces. A number of these were killed, while others were decorated for courage in face of the enemy. This, surely, is convincing evidence of the genuine patriotism of the Communists, as against that of the flag-wavers, whose main interest in the war was to make profits from it.

COMMUNISM NOT "RUSSIAN"

The principles upon which the Communist Party is founded are in no way "Russian." As many people know, these principles were first brought to the notice of the world through the publication by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels of the "Manifesto of the Communist Party" in 1848. Next year will thus mark the centenary of the first appearance of specific Communist ideas in the world.

Marx and Engels were Germans, and much of their outlook derived from study of the early industrial development, not of Russia, but of Great Britain. Certain peculiar historical circumstances brought it about that these scientific socialist ideas of Marx and Engels, which have been embraced by the bulk of the working class organisations of most countries, were first applied to Russia.

Lenin long ago explained how this came about: through the greater tyranny of Czarism, the poverty of the masses, the weakness of the capitalist system, and other features. There were Socialist ideas and parties in Australia and Britain long before Russia adopted the Socialist system in 1917. It is clear that a whole number of European countries (Poland, Yugoslavia, etc.) are marching along the road to Socialism, guided by the principles of Marx and Lenin. Communism is not in any way something peculiarly Russian; it is a world philosophy, as much British as it is Russian.

Those who pretend to believe that Communist policy in Australia "serves only the interests of Russian foreign policy" might explain why they think that our fight for a 40 hour week is a part of Russian foreign policy. They might enlighten the community on how they reach the conclusion that the demand for a wage increase, which the Communists energetically support, concerns Russian foreign policy. They might explain in what way the Australian Communist campaign for better housing conditions in this fair land of ours supports Russian diplomacy. Perhaps they can explain why the Soviet Foreign Minister is so interested in the Australian Communists' campaign for price reductions. Personally, I do not think he has ever heard of it. This technique of pretending that everything the Communists do in Australia or elsewhere is dictated by the foreign policy of the Soviet Union is all too reminiscent of Hitler's technique of the "big lie." It will be dismissed by thinking persons.

Neither the Australian, nor any other Communist Party needs orders from Moscow. It is a question of studying the philosophy, the economic and political teachings of Marxism, and applying them to Australian problems. Nor do we want any "money from Moscow." This propaganda lie has been bandied about

for the past 25 years, but never in any country has any proof been forthcoming, which fact does not discourage the professional liars from repeating it as their aim is to "smear" the Communists.

Our finances come from the Australian working class; our policies are decided at National Congresses and Central Committee meetings of the Australian Communist Party. We are a democratic Party, taking full responsibility for our decisions.

National Congress delegates are elected by the membership of the Party and the Congress in turn elects the Central Committee. Under our rules, the Central Committee or members thereof can be recalled if a majority of the membership so desires. The membership can and does criticise and discuss any and every policy. There is a thousand times more discussion and criticism within the Communist Party than in all of the other political parties put together.

Our membership is overwhelmingly Australian. Its aim is to serve the Australian people and improve their living standards, safeguard their peace, and emancipate them from exploitation, unemployment, bad housing conditions and poverty by means, ultimately, of a Socialist new order of society.

The Communist Party has no secrets from the Australian people. Our policy and views are printed for all men to read in the Communist Review, the Tribune and Guardian, and dozens of pamphlets and books.

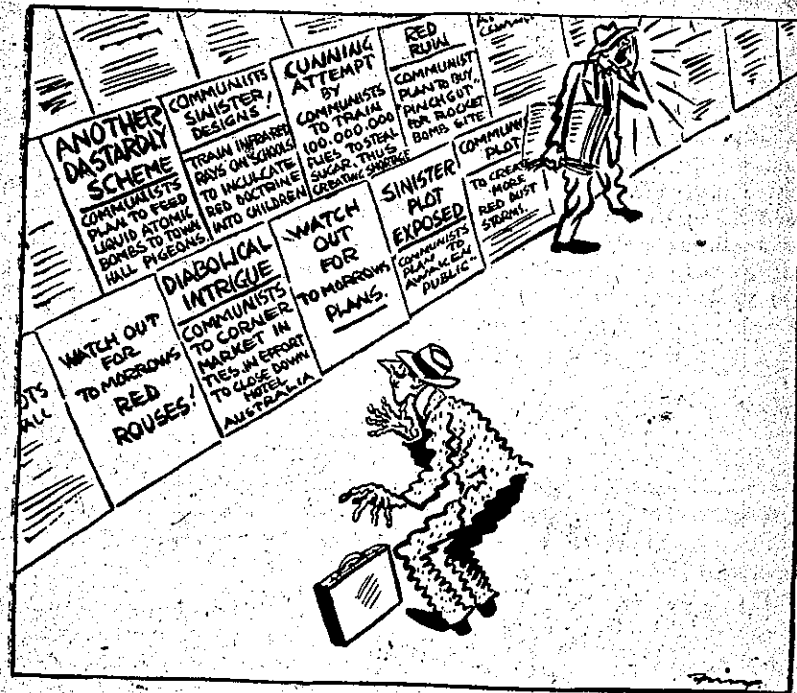
We Communists have pointed out that Socialism in the Soviet Union did not experience the pre-war depression that was a feature in all capitalist countries, nor did it have an unemployed army numbering millions—Socialism abolished unemployment.

In pre-war times, the standards of living of the Soviet people were continuously improving. Immediately war damage has been made good, we are confident that the Soviet Union in a short period will achieve the highest standard of living in the world.

Socialism has converted Russia from a backward, semi-barbarous country into a leading industrial country in a short space of 30 years. It is to these lessons that we draw the attention of the Australian working class, in order to show them that Australia, being more advanced than Russia was in 1917, will achieve Socialist society with economic prosperity in a much shorter period than could Russia.

The Soviet Union has invariably put forward a policy of peace, and opposed war. Australians heartily endorse peace. The Soviet Union never wanted a war, much as they hated the fascist governments, but, as history records, were forced into war by Hitler.

The policy of the Soviet Union, as placed before the United Nations Organisation by Mr. Molotov, calls for disarmament, outlawing of the atomic bomb and co-operation of all peace-



loving nations within U.N.O. Again we find ourselves in full agreement with this anti-war policy of the Soviet Government, and, no doubt, so will every other Australian who loves peace and cherishes goodwill towards other countries.

There is no question of subservience to a foreign power, but of workers of different countries pursuing, naturally enough, a similar or identical policy, because their common starting point is the struggle for Socialism and the application of Marxist principles to the great national and international problems as they arise.

The Australian Communist Party has no relations, official or otherwise, with the Soviet Government, nor did we ever have such relations. Formerly, there existed the Third International, now abolished, and, like the Communist Parties of every other country, the Australian Communist Party was affiliated. The Communist International had no relations with the Soviet Government, but was an independent organisation, whose officials are typified by George Dimitrov, now Prime Minister of Bulgaria, who was its General Secretary.

Such an international organisation of the working class was by no means new. The First International, founded by Karl

Marx, Frederick Engels, English Chartists and French Socialists, existed in the 1860's. It was succeeded by the Second International, of which the British Labor Party was one of the leading parties. Ramsay McDonald, afterwards Tory Prime Minister, was a prominent figure of the Second International. There is nothing "sinister" in an international organisation of the working class, nothing unnatural in the workers of all lands uniting to realise a common goal.

Today there exists no political international, but there is the World Federation of Trade Unions, which includes both the Soviet and Australian Trade Union movements, with a world membership of 70 millions.

International unity of ideas of Socialists is as old as the working class movement, and preceded the Russian Revolution by at least half a century. How can it be conceived of as some sinister "Bolshevik plot?"

What, then, is the true relation of Australian Communists to the Soviet Union? First, the Australian Communist Party fights for Socialism; Socialism is already a fact in the Soviet Union. This at once establishes a community of interest, not only between the Communists and the Soviet Union, but between the labor movement as a whole, which desires to see socialisation of industry similar to that already attained in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics established here in Australia by democratic measures.

Secondly, Australian Communists subscribe to the slogan propounded by Karl Marx, "Working men of all countries, unite." That is to say we are internationalists and believe that working people of all countries must co-operate in order to improve their living standards and achieve the goal of a Socialist society. We, therefore, have always defended the right of the working people of the Soviet Union to choose their own Socialist "way of life," and, as an international working class duty, have exposed the efforts of reactionaries to use armed force to destroy the Socialism that they hate.

The Communist Party does not propose for Australia a society the same in every detail as that the working class have already established in Russia. The Australian people will find a way to organise a new society in keeping with our own national characteristics. It will be a socialist society, in principle the same, but the institutions can, and no doubt will, be quite different.

Already there are a number of precedents for asserting this. The new democracies in Eastern Europe are marching to Socialism along quite a different road, with different institutions and methods to those which were necessary in Soviet Russia. In some respects these new type democracies also differ from one another. Therefore we can accept that which is best in the Socialist system in its Soviet form for Russia, while relying on the genius of the Aus-

tralian people to find its own road to Socialism and to set up its own institutions in keeping with the Australian temperament and ideas of freedom.

Our relation to the Soviet people can be summed up, then, as based on the Marxist principle of working class internationalism, of support for them in their struggle to establish a Communist society in their country, and of using the lessons of their experience in building Socialism, to the advantage of the Australian labor movement.

"TOTALITARIAN" LIE

The Communist Party is accused, by the reactionaries who in reality hate democracy of any kind, of a desire to establish a "totalitarian State" or "police State." Once they claimed that Communism is "totalitarian" because, in the Soviet Union, there is only one political party, the Communist Party. But these same people slander the new democracies of Europe in the same way, calling them "police states," and "totalitarian," notwithstanding the fact that in Poland, Bulgaria, etc., half a dozen parties are legal and contested the national elections to Parliament.

It will be seen then that these alleged democrats are not very clear as to what they mean when they use such terms, they do not clearly define their meaning. Let me define it for them.

What is the essential difference between the Soviet Union and such states as Poland and Yugoslavia on the one hand, and Britain, Australia and America on the other? The essential difference is this, that in the Soviet Union, industry is completely socialised. In Poland and Yugoslavia the main industries are nationalised. It will be seen that this charge boils itself down to the fact that the so-called "individual freedom," which it is claimed has been lost in these countries, is the so-called "freedom" of the capitalist to own the factories, the mines, the banks and the land and thereby exploit the masses, gain enormous wealth and live a privileged life of luxury and ease while the people sweat and large numbers live in slums.

This "individual freedom" it is true has been abolished over a large part of Europe. Socialising the means of production certainly deprives a handful of monopolists of their freedom to rob and plunder, but it establishes for the first time genuine democracy and freedom for the masses.

All the personal freedoms, religious, political, and social have been enormously strengthened in these countries. The people are guaranteed the right to work and the right to leisure, are provided with greater educational facilities and the opportunity to rise to the highest position in the land. The great mass of the people are not in any way molested by "secret police."

The people are unanimous in their support of their govern-

ments; it is only a handful of traitors and agents of foreign powers that receive the attentions of the police. The masses co-operate with the police in crushing these enemies of the people.

The Communists, far from wanting to, establish a totalitarian state, stand for the abolition of the State. Marx said that under Socialism "the State would wither away" — being no longer necessary for the suppression of the poor in the interests of the rich—and "government of persons will give way to the administration of things and the direction of the productive process." That is to say, the State, as an armed and repressive force, will cease to exist, there will only remain administrative bodies and Planning Committees.

So much for the story that the Communists want to erect a "totalitarian State."



The Communist Party, contrary to the hair-raising stories of the reactionaries, does not choose violent methods. In Europe People's Governments have been established by peaceful methods. The Communist Party desires to effect the great change in society here in Australia along peaceful and democratic lines. There is, of course, always the danger of the fascist elements wielding violence against the labor movement; that has to be taken into account by the workers.

FOR TRUE NATIONAL DEFENCE

Recently, in connection with the rocket range controversy, the Australian Communist Party was accused of wanting to sabotage Australian defence, again "in the interests of a foreign power."

The aim of the Communist Party in criticising the rocket range was directed at two things: First, to protect the interests of Australia's persecuted minority, the Aborigines, and secondly, to draw attention to the reactionary foreign policy pursued by the British and Australian Governments. This policy tends more and more to ignore the United Nations Organisation and to enter into an anti-Soviet bloc with the millionaire imperialists of Wall Street.

So far as legitimate Australian defence is concerned, let it be said once and for all that the Communists in no way wish to prevent adequate Australian defensive preparations.

On the other hand, we are opposed to excessive expenditures which are linked with a war-like foreign policy.

We oppose current foreign policy, not because it is or is not in the interests of Soviet Russia to do so, but because this policy is a menace to Australia. It helps sow the seeds of a new war, and is visibly increasing the dependence of Australia upon the Wall Street imperialists, who are rabidly anti-Soviet, anti-labor and anti-democratic, and whose aim is to crush the forces of progress in every country, subordinate every capitalist country, and thus prepare the ground for an anti-Soviet war.

To oppose this policy can by no stretch of the imagination be classed as anti-Australian. On the contrary, it is in the best interests of Australia to oppose a dangerous policy. Otherwise, the Labor Party must have been anti-Australian when it opposed Mr. Menzies' foreign policy, and Communist-hater Churchill a "pro-German" at the time he opposed Chamberlain's policy of appeasement of Hitlerite Germany.

We consider that Australia should have legitimate means of defence and knowledge of the latest weapons and military techniques. We insist, however, that these be used specifically for defence and not to back up the aggressive policy of Yankee Imperialism.

In doing this, we are no more "disloyal" to Australia than were Lenin and Stalin when they opposed the militarism, imper-

alism, and the war-mongering foreign policy of former Czarist Russia. They acted in the interests of the Russian people. So do Australian Communists, in opposing militarism and imperialism, and in the best interests of the Australian people. Those Germans who opposed the war policy of "their own," i.e., Hitler's Government, are regarded as heroic people who defended the best interests of their own people; those who supported the Hitlerite Government were guilty of a crime against not only their own people, but the human race.

The labor movement demands to know why a war is to be fought. It does not support a war merely because some particular group of reactionaries happens to control the Government and embark upon an aggressive foreign policy. We are fighting to change the foreign policy of the Australian Government, which is that of Bevin, one of "continuity" of the Tory imperialists' foreign policy, and not a labor policy at all. It is the policy of an Anglo-American bloc to dominate the world.

We are against such blocs and for co-operation of all peaceful nations through the United Nations Organisation; we are for universal disarmament, for the prohibition of the manufacture and the use of atomic weapons and against germicidal warfare.

We support the idea of the United Nations Organisation determining what military contribution the various nations shall make towards the maintenance of peace and order throughout the world.

We demand that there be an end to the arms race and the manufacture of atomic bombs.

We are against intervention in the domestic affairs of other countries, the policy which has been so brutally pursued in Greece, China, Turkey, Indonesia and elsewhere. Such intervention can sow the seeds of new wars.

We are for the freedom and independence of the great colonial countries, India, Indonesia, Burma, Malaya, Indo-China, and other countries that have reached a sufficient standard of modern development to admit of their independence. We are for genuine trusteeship for the more backward and primitive peoples, and a policy towards them that will assist them to advance rapidly to the point where they are capable of self-government. (This, too, applies to the Australian Aboriginal tribes.)

Such is the foreign policy we Communists advocate, which is one of friendship to all, anti-imperialist and peace-loving. This coincides with the best interests of Australia.

If certain groups do not like this policy, it is because they cherish sinister designs of their own with which this peaceful policy of the Communist Party conflicts; policies which they are not prepared to state openly before the Australian people, but

prefer to hide behind a maze of high-sounding platitudes about "peace," "democracy," "independence," and framed-up "spy trials" and scares, bogeys of "Russian imperialism," "the Russian menace," and so forth.

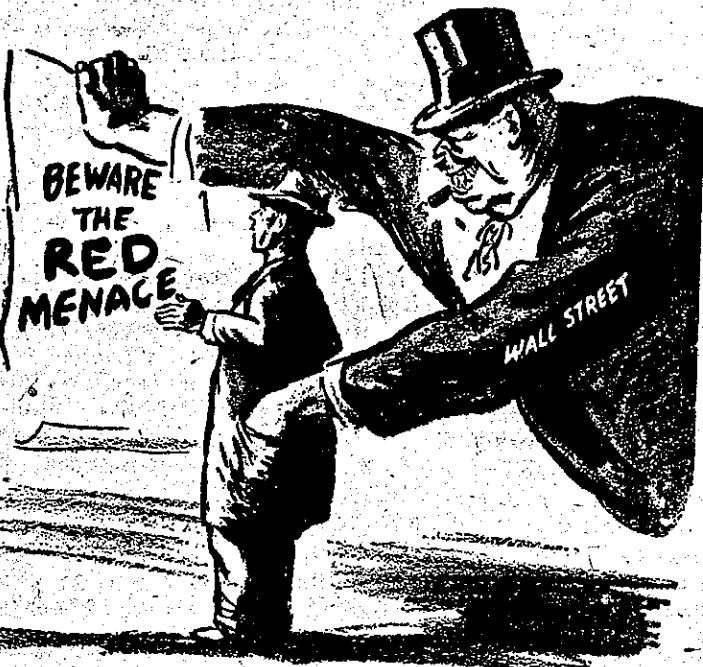
Let it be clearly understood that opposition to the manufacture of atom bombs, excessive military expenditure, aggressive imperialist policies and the like, does not mean that the Communists are opposed to legitimate defensive measures.

These things must be seen as separate if one is not to be fooled into supporting militarism disguised as genuine national defence measures.

THERE IS NO "COMMUNIST IMPERIALISM"

The anti-Communist propagandists are fond of talking about "Russian imperialism." Their bedtime story is to the effect that "the Kremlin" wants to bring the whole world under its sway.

According to them, this means that if Socialism were established tomorrow in such powerful countries as the United States,



Britain, China, France, Germany, etc., these states would at once become Russian "satellites," Russian "tools." This, too, is obviously nonsense. It would be quite impossible for Russia or anyone else to enslave such mighty peoples. Merely to state the question shows how farcical it is.

Soviet Russia is a Socialist country; imperialism is quite foreign to it. The territories that have entered the Soviet Union in recent times did not do so on an imperialist colonial basis, deprived of all rights. On the contrary, these people entered the Soviet Union on a basis of complete economic, political and social equality after referendums had disclosed an overwhelming majority of the people in favor of it. This was so in the Baltic countries and the former Polish colonies. These peoples will advance as rapidly as Russia herself.

No one could reasonably oppose this, any more than one could oppose India, when she regains her independence, freely deciding to remain within the British Commonwealth. That is not imperialism, but a free union of nations. Many thinking people, as well as the Communists, today believe that national boundaries are increasingly becoming a barrier to progress, and that there should be federations embracing a number of nations or even all nations.

That is what the Soviet Union is, a federation of Socialist states, which are equal in rights, responsibilities and liberties. There is now, then, any Russian imperialism, that is to say, the conquest and subordination of one nation by another in order to plunder it.

Other nations who are on the road to Socialism, such as Poland, declare it is not their intention to join with the Soviet Union. Such is the real position.

The American monopolists strive to put down the popular movements of China, Turkey, Greece and elsewhere and try to shield themselves from criticism and to hide their real imperialist intentions from the world by broadcasting the lie that Socialism in any country means the loss of independence and the further expansion of "Russian imperialism." It is a very convenient fable for them. They can send huge stores of military equipment to their reactionary puppets in China and Greece on the plea that these countries must be "saved." It is true they need to be saved — not from the Soviet Union, but from dollar imperialism. Wall Street, shouting about the "independence" of Greece, while converting it into a colony, even strives to reduce Britain and the Dominions to the role of her satellites.

Despite this American imperialist propaganda, and loans to anti-working class governments notwithstanding, Socialism will triumph in a whole number of countries, and these countries will not lose their independence.

Tsarist Russia was in reality in pawn to the international financiers, and was not economically and financially, and therefore not politically, fully independent. It was the Socialist Revolution that broke the grip of the international trusts on Russia. It is only the New Democracy in Yugoslavia, Poland and other