

AMR

Australian Marxist Review – Journal of the Communist Party of Australia



#75 September 2023

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- **The Robert Adams Story**
- **Interview with Comrade Jimmy Donovan**
- **Uluru Statement from the Heart**
- **On Authority**
- **Letter from Engels to Theodore Cuno**
- **Speech by the Representative of the UCP-CPSU**
- **Revolutionary Philosophy by Jagrup**



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Printed and published by the Communist Party of Australia
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ISSN: 2208-5238

Issue #75 – September 2023

Editorial

This issue of the *Australian Marxist Review* continues the theme of party development and contains articles that contribute to the development of the Marxist-Leninist movement. We hope this collection provides stimulus to the development of Marxism and the arming of our movement with clear and guiding ideology.

Issue 74 of the *Australian Marxist Review* stepped forward to challenge for a renewal and resurgence of our movement by touching firmly to the roots of our ideology and spreading forward to the future. In that issue we have the interviews with LC and the first part of the interview with Jim Donovan. This issue brings you the biography of LC's father and provides insight into the Communist movement in this country.

Troubled by the conclusion of the biography of Robert Adams that the party had become middle class, we believe that by being true to Marxism-Leninism we have much to learn from the experiences of Communists in this movement. The decline of the Party and its running off the rails has many factors and we should have a whole of picture approach. The contribution of generations of Communists to our movement should be embraced and we must know the history of our movement if we are to build its future. Jim Donovan is real and honest in his assessment of leading figures in our movement and brings them to life through his eyes for us to see them as real people. The board also feels the gap in our knowledge when Jim raises the Blake movement in our Party and the consequences that befell his mother. We know that the correct approach to our history is neither one that treats the development of our Party as a mistake, nor one that sees the Party in terms of the mistaken beliefs of passionate idealists; instead, the correct approach is to see our Party as an actual and real

contribution to the liberation of humanity. Our contributions are unashamedly partisan towards the future of humanity as a Socialist future leading to human liberation that is Communism.

While other histories have sought to bury our movement, the published histories in this series are designed to enlighten and enrich the readers. We are preparing more such interviews with participants in this struggle for future issues. This is a project that requires an enormous amount of work by our board and others, but it is a responsibility to build this treasure chest for the working-class movement and to restore the position of the working class as the revolutionary class.

The often quoted and correctly assessed position that our working class cannot fulfil its historic role without struggling against the oppression that capitalism has imposed puts an historic role on us to struggle to defeat the racist and colonial attacks represented by the refusal to support the moderate bourgeois reform of a voice to parliament. To amend the constitution imposed on Australia by colonialism to provide recognition of the First Nations and a voice to parliaments is a reform that must be supported by the working class and its parties. The negative campaign is relying on ignorance so we see it as important to publish the "Uluru Statement from the Heart" in full so that readers can overcome ignorance. When communists began to tackle the national question, they put forward the duality that exists on this question. The working class of the oppressing nation must unconditionally support self-determination, the working-class forces from the oppressed nation must not succumb to bourgeois nationalism. The enrichment of Marxism in this country is that this dual task is placed on us in the manner of the

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underdevelopment of national cultures that colonialism imposed on the first national people of this country. It would be a reactionary distortion of Marxism to not understand that socialism requires the free development of the national cultures that have been stopped by the colonial conquest of this continent. Our working class must oppose these colonial legacies or become entrapped in support for capitalism.

The reprint of “On Authority” by Engels is a contribution to understanding that our movement has been built on support for and development of the class struggle of the working class. There is no socialism without the conquering of state power by the workers and the imposition of the rule of the working class. The current state is the cloaked dictatorship of the big bourgeoisie; the struggle of workers and other oppressed sections of society must lead to the development of a democratic dictatorship of the working masses. The development of anarchism and its cousin reformism are denials of the enormous role of the organisation of the class as the ruling class. Reformism supports capitalism by persuading and bringing the workers to a supporting role of the bourgeoisie, anarchism and reformism are mutually dependent. Anarchism takes the abstention of workers from the political struggle to the point where the workers are disarmed and fail to build the necessary political movement against the bourgeois state.

We encourage readers to access the letters of Marx and Engels for study as they were active participants in the struggle of workers and as such provided insights into these movements that continue to present the same mistakes but in new clothes in today’s world. We have reprinted a letter from Engels to Theodore Cuno from January 24th, 1872, in follow up to and to enrich the ideas presented in “On

Authority.” Engels wrote “On Authority” in the context of a struggle to resist the disorganising and wrecking actions of Anarchists led by Bakunin within the 1st International. Engels makes insightful observations about the nature of the Anarchists and this struggle in this letter, which we believe readers will notice similarities in the movements of today.

We provide a statement for study from the Ukrainian Communist Party and the Communist Parties from the former Soviet Union republics including the Communist Party of the Russian Federation. It provides insights into the International Communist Movement and the struggle to unite and develop this movement of Communist and workers parties. It also provides an analysis of the current conflict in the Ukraine from the perspective of these parties.

The book review is of a text translated from Punjabi into English. It provides an interesting contribution to Marxist science. With all translations the contextualisation of the ideas in language can prove challenging but the development of our science requires that we can study how ideas are expressed. The Sub-continent must contend with the religious dominance of more than one religious view of the world. Some readers will be confronted by the use of soul as an interpretation of spiritual so we would welcome further contributions on philosophy. A review of Luna Oi’s recently translated philosophy text is being prepared for a future issue.

Included in this issue are two letters sent to the *AMR*. We encourage that letters be sent to the *AMR* board that deal with ideological questions.

We hope you find this issue stimulating and welcome all feedback. The *AMR* can be contacted at amr@cpa.org.au.

AMR



Robert Adams

The Robert Adams Story

(written August 1999 to February 2000)

Editors note:

This autobiography by Robert Adams was gratefully received by the *AMR* from “L” who was interviewed by the *AMR* in #74. The *AMR* editorial board is privileged to print this autobiography in the *Australian Marxist Review*, which was originally written by the author for his family. It provides a snapshot into his experiences and the upheavals that occurred in his lifetime, many of which caused workers to look towards the Communist Party for leadership, and which for some to join the Communist Party of Australia. It also covers the attacks that these members came under and how the developments that occurred in the communist movement were understood. Reading the autobiography of Robert Adams alongside the interview of L published under the title “Everyday experiences of a communist family” in *AMR* #74 provides a rich snapshot into the experiences of communists in the middle of the 20th century in Australia.

Authors note:

My daughter and my son have requested me to record my own history. The reason being that we do not know very much about my own parents and grandparents mainly because we did not ask any questions while they were still living. This became apparent when my daughter decided to trace our family history which dates back to a convict background.

Early Life

My name is Robert Joseph Adams. I was born on the 28th March, 1921 at Cunnigar, NSW [near Harden-Murrumburrah]. My parents were Margaret Shaw Ramsay and Leslie Thomas Markham Adams. My father met Margaret in Scotland while serving in the 1914-18 war. They were married in Scotland and she came to Australia as a war bride in 1919. My sister Jessie was born at Penrith NSW in 1920 and our brother Henry Lawson Adams was born at Penrith NSW during 1922.

My father was a night officer working for the NSW Railways. We were living at Lithgow during 1925 when our mother passed away. She is buried in a cemetery at Bowenfels in a joint grave with my father’s sister Lillie Bend.

After our mother’s death Dad took the three of us children to live with our grandparents Robert Smart and Elizabeth Adams on their farm on the Mulgoa Road near Penrith. We lived there for several years and Dad worked up and down the Blue Mountains on the relief staff.

The farm was about four miles from Penrith. One part was on the Mulgoa Creek where the house and dairy were on seven and a half acres. The other part was on the other side of the road and over the hill to the Nepean River. As a matter of fact the Head of the River GPS races would commence there.

We children attended the Regents Park School until early in 1929 when Dad remarried and we moved up the Blue Mountains to Newnes Junction. While we were living with our grandparents, Dad would travel up and down from the Blue Mountains on his Harley Davidson motor bike and sidecar on his days off to visit us at the farm. Grandma would drive a horse and sulky in to Penrith to buy groceries and Granddad would take the horse and dray in to buy chaff, bran and pollard at the produce store. On other occasions the horses would be taken into town to be shod at the blacksmith’s in the main street of Penrith.

Before I record the move to the mountains I should describe the lifestyle of farm life in those days. The kitchen was in a building of round timber construction with the bark of stringybark trees as the original roof covered with corrugated iron over the bark. The walls were slabs. There was a fuel stove to cook on. Kerosene lanterns and candles were the only lighting. The bedrooms were in a wattle and daub building connected to the kitchen by a roof only of half round corrugated iron. The other building, separate again, was more modern with two rooms divided by a small area in the middle. There was a bull-nosed verandah all the way around. There was a large shed where sulkies and drays were kept. The dairy and cow bails were a short distance away. A shed close by was used for housing chaff, bran, pollard, and treacle.

Dad’s brother Uncle Newton milked the 30 cows twice a day, seven days a week by hand for many years. Grandma did the washing out in the open. The clothes were boiled in a copper sitting on top of three stones and rinsed in a

round tub. This tub was used in the kitchen as a bathtub on the floor. Often water would have to be carted up from the creek in kerosene tins for the washing and non-drinking purposes.

In 1929 Dad and Pearl Ateal Burton from Sodwalls were married in Lithgow and we moved to Newnes Junction as a family. Before they were married our new Mum had a small store and post office at Sodwalls and was the owner of a 1927 Capital model Chevrolet touring car. This car was to play a big role in our lives.

The Burton family had a thousand-acre property at Sodwalls. They had sheep and cattle. Also they grew peas, potatoes and turnips and had an orchard.

Newnes Junction is about eight miles from Lithgow on the Western railway line. The old Wolgan line connected there and went about 20 miles out to the shale oil workings in the Wolgan Valley. The works had been closed down for many years but the line was still in working order and was used by a rail motor to carry chaff and other produce plus food and fuel out to the families working on the pine plantation at several spots on the way. A small engine and some of the rolling stock were in the marshalling yards at the station and more trucks and vans were out at the triangle a mile or so along the line. The trains would be reversed at the triangle. The engine would take on water at the water tower. [The water] was pumped from a nearby spring.

The people living at Newnes Junction and Clarence were railway night officers and fettlers. There were three other families living near the tunnel on the old Zig Zag railway line. The children would travel to school at Lithgow on the paper train in the morning and return on a passenger train leaving Lithgow at 2:30 pm in the afternoon. Because of leaving the school early each day we were missing out on a lot of our lessons so Dad decided it would be advantageous to have a full day's school. We would take a bus to Oakey Park and walk the rest of the way home up the hill over the Zig Zag tunnel, down along the road which was the old Zig Zag railway line down through Clarence, then up to Newnes Junction, a distance of about five miles. On other occasions we would approach the guard on a coal train going to Sydney to slow down while passing the station at Newnes Junction. We would then leave the guard's van [and] run along the station for a few yards. A lot of the guards would refuse us a lift because they considered it was too dangerous for children to jump off a moving train.

Trains played a big part in the lives of the people living there. All our food including bread, meat, groceries, kerosene, chaff, bran, pollard, and wheat for the fowls, cows etc came by train, also the mail for the district which was distributed from Mrs Larkin's small post office in her house. By the way Mr Larkin was a school teacher who taught at the Lithgow Public School.

The only way by car out of Newnes Junction was on a bush track to Bell, approximately three miles which we all kept in a state of repair. Travelling to Lithgow after leaving Bell was down through Hartley Vale over the river – get up past Hassans Wall or down through Hartley on the Western Highway over the Coxs River. Dad and the Larsens' sons Cancel and Ernie were beekeeping around 60 hives. Most of these bees were transported to Hartley Vale and Hartley for the box trees located there. We would do the extracting of the honey on site and place [it] in 60-pound tins which were sent to Sydney. [We] received a payment of one pound (20/-) per tin.

Our stepmother's sisters and brothers lived in Lithgow. We would often go to visit and stay with them there. At this stage I would like to say something about our step-mum who accepted the responsibility of rearing the three of us children – a ready-made family. She played a big role in our rearing, teaching us good values. Often of a Saturday she would walk with us to Lithgow to go to the pictures. This was a journey of five miles each way. She taught us to play tennis on the community-built tennis court. She was a very capable person and kept a very good home.

During 1934 Dad transferred to Bell. As there was no accommodation there we moved into a vacant house next door to the Larsen house at Newnes Junction while we built a house on existing foundations of a former railway house at Bell. The site was purchased from the NSW Railways and Dad received a war service loan to build a three-bedroom house with external brick walls and hardwood internal walls. All the bricks were recovered from old foundations around the district. The whole family cleaned and carried the bricks to the road and they were then carried to the site by the Barton Brothers. They also carried the logs to Lithgow for Slattery's Sawmill to cut into 4X2, 3X2 etc for the internal walls and roof of the house. Lance Larkin, who was a carpenter by trade and along with Dad assisting laid all the bricks, did all the carpentry and put the galvanised corrugated iron roof on. Mum and we children helped where possible.

Harry and myself had to travel to Katoomba High School from Bell. There was a train that left at 7 am of a morning and the only train back terminated at Mt Victoria and we still had a 7-mile distance to get home. So we dropped our bike off at Mt Victoria in the morning then in the afternoon one of us would ride the bike halfway, then walk. The other would walk to the bike and we would arrive home together.

The people living in the vicinity of the railway station at Bell were, in the main, railway workers and once again we built a tennis court similar to the one at Newnes Junction and we had visitors from around the district such as Mt Wilson, Hartley, and Mt Victoria to play social tennis with us. Also Mr and Mrs Tom O'Rourke would

hold euchre cards and dance nights at their home which was very enjoyable in those days. People made their own entertainment.

In 1936 when I was fourteen years old I left school and commenced an apprenticeship in the plastering trade at Katoomba which was 17 miles from Bell. I rode a push-bike to and fro each day leaving home at 5:30 am and arriving home at about 7:30 pm. I did this for some time [but] found it too difficult to handle so my parents decided it would be better to ride down on Monday morning and return on Friday night. Then during the week I would board in Katoomba. This board cost 17/6. As my weekly wage was only 15/7 my parents paid the difference of 2/-. I stayed at two different places. The last one my landlady gave me stewed tomatoes for breakfast and tomato sandwiches for lunch each day for a period of six months.

I stuck with the plastering trade for 12 months. By this time I had [had] a gut full of hard work such as mixing and carrying tons of concrete in kerosene tins, carrying the hod and no extra payment for camping on the job, working long hours. Imagine working like this for 15/7 a week (1937).

While working on a job in Blackheath for a builder by the name of Steve Gibbon a job became available as a carpenter and joiner apprenticeship with him. I was now 16 years of age and the money was 17/6 per week and I was 7 miles closer to home so I only had 11 miles to push my bike to work. Mr Gibbon was a decent bloke to work for, very strict but fair. He helped me get my tools together by buying me a smoothing plane which cost 10/- then deducting 2/- from my pay each week until paid for. Then a hand saw, a set of chisels etc. After a couple of years I was the proud owner of a first class toolkit. As well as this he would give some tool or other for a Xmas present to me. Some of these tools I still have to this day.

The four years I worked at the trade were very enjoyable as we did a lot of alterations and repair jobs especially during the installation of the sewerage system in the town by relief work. As a matter of fact it gave the local economy a real boost. We only built a few houses during those years so the alterations required for the installation of the sewerage to many of the houses kept us gainfully employed.

The Army and the War

At this stage I will deal with Army service. During the latter part of 1938 the federal government called for volunteers to enlist in the militia forces to bring the militia up to 80,000. So on the 22/2/1939 I enlisted in the 20/34 Infantry Battalion at the Katoomba Drill Hall 5 weeks before my 18th birthday. So I put my age up a year. In other words, instead of 1921 it was 1920, the date of my

birth. I became 522094 Private, Robert Joseph Adams, "B" Company Katoomba 2054 Battalion.

After war began in 1939, I went home to my parents' place of residence at Mullimby on final leave. Dad became very angry when he saw the Australian badges on my uniform because I had enlisted in the AIF by putting my age up to 21. He tried to get me out. When I returned to camp I had to front the Commanding Officer who asked me "Do you want to get out of going overseas?" My reply was "No sir, I do not have a yellow streak down my back."

We sailed from Sydney on the *Queen Mary* on the morning of 03/09/1941. Most of us were up on deck watching Sydney Heads fading from view with a lump in our throats and the thought "Will we see it again?" This was one of the saddest moments of my life.

After service in the Middle East and Sir Lanka (then called Ceylon in the West), we were sent to the Kokoda Track in Papua New Guinea. Our ship arrived in late September, 1942, and the next day we were rushed up to the area close to the track to prepare defensive positions in case of a Japanese breakthrough at the front. As we approached the Golden Stairs on the Kokoda Track, the Salvation Army were there with a cup of tea for the boys. As we advanced along the Track there were signs of the bitter struggle that had taken place. [At] one place there were 5 or 6 stretchers on the side of the track with the skeletons of our diggers with their rifles in the stretchers with them – a reminder of the difficulty in evacuating the seriously wounded. Little did I realise at this stage I would be in one of these stretchers myself.

There has been a lot written about the steep, slippery nature of the terrain made worse by the thousands of men of both sides marching along the narrow track. Some parts were so steep that we had to march for 10 minutes and spell in order to climb the hills. Eventually we reached Myola, where the 25th Brigade and 3rd Militia Battalion were locked in a bitter struggle with the enemy. Our brigade was preparing to relieve them. In the meantime, we had the job of retrieving the food and ammunition dropped by the biscuit bombers in the vicinity of Myola. Some of the stuff was lost in swampy areas.

Our battalion had relieved the 3rd Militia Battalion as they came down the hill past us. You could see they were weary, stressed, and very thin. As our platoon was nearing the line we saw two native carriers who had been captured at Rabaul and forced to work for the Japanese Army. Propped against trees, one was dead with blowflies passing in and out of his mouth and the other was almost dead and begging for water. I was so moved I reached for my water bottle so as just to wet his lips. At that moment a Papuan soldier alongside said "Don't give him water: he Japanese man", and I realised, had I proceeded, my action would have had serious effects on our relations with the

Papuan carriers whose loyalty and dedication played a big role in the successful campaign on the Owen Stanley Ranges.

Our Company, the Headquarters Company, moved forward to occupy a position on the left of the track to prevent the Japanese from attacking in that area. After the Battle for Templeton's Crossing, the enemy retreated to heavily prepared positions at Eora Creek. This was as far as they were prepared to be driven back. History records Eora Creek was to be held and a further advance to Port Moresby would take place. As we moved along the track the mountain gun (70mm portable artillery piece) and the 4 inch mortar [were] pounding the narrow ridge track with great accuracy and we found out later observation platforms were built high up in the trees enabling observers to pinpoint troop movement with great accuracy.

The 9-day long ferocious battle for this area cost our battalion alone 44 KIA, 88 WIA and 3 missing. When our pioneer platoon moved down to cross the 2 bridges under heavy mountain gun fire you had to race across and trust you would not be hit.

Colonel Paul Cullen was there and decided to send our platoon up the ridge to make contact with the enemy and take pressure off one of the rifle companies that were pinned down. Our section did capture a Japanese Jukl machine gun, but we were forced to withdraw as the other two sections had not turned down with us. Unfortunately, the Japanese were all around me and every attempt I made to find them I could hear talking and just before dusk I observed one of their patrols approaching from the direction of our lines. Luck was with me. There was a large tree with a large hollow in it so I hid in there. They passed within a few feet and did not see me. That night I crawled under some heavy undergrowth so as not to be observed. Light rain was falling and it was bloody cold.

Daylight the next morning the realisation [struck me] that I was in No Man's land, alone. I decided the best thing I could do was to find my way back to battalion headquarters and report. I proceeded very cautiously towards our lines. The next thing I knew a bloke stepped out from behind a tree and said "Halt! Who goes there?" I told him my name and he asked me "What is the password?" I replied "I do not know." He then marched me back to headquarters to Colonel Cullen who asked me what had happened and then decided to send me up as a forward scout with "B" Company of the 2/3 Btn to try and locate the other two sections.

We ran into enemy positions and were not able to locate our pioneer platoon sections. I remained with the 2/3 Btn until I was wounded during a Banzai attack late in the afternoon on the 26/10/1942. The explosive bullets were hitting the trees and causing a very noisy situation. Unfortunately for me, the machine gun burst that almost severed

my left [leg] through the thigh used these types of explosive bullets. When I crawled back to our lines a stretcher bearer applied a large dressing to my thigh and tied my leg to a stick. I held my own artery to prevent myself bleeding to death. Several men were killed and the walking wounded moved back. Three of us were stretcher cases and had to wait for 24 hours before we were picked [up].

The next morning the platoon moved forward and found the enemy had gone. They handed us a grenade and said "If the Japs come through, take your own lives." Then the stretcher bearers laid us on our half blanket and tied the blanket to a single pole and we were taken down to the RAP for treatment and to be carried back to [a] staging point during darkness as the Japanese would shoot the bearers. Leaving the RAP we were carried in a round pole frame tied together and the half blanket stretched over the frame. We were carried back to an evacuation point and left for the rest of the night and during daylight we would be carried back by our diggers out of range of the 4 inch mortar and the mountain gun so the "fuzzy wuzzy angels" could take over in safety in daylight. The enemy started to shell the area where the stretcher cases were. One mortar bomb landed between another bloke and me but did not explode. How lucky were we!

The bombardment continued with breaks between until we were out of range. We were carried back to Myola to the field ambulance unit. It took three days to get there. The care and attention afforded us by the local people had to be experienced to make one realise how many of us were able to survive and eventually come home.

It was now four days since I had been wounded so the doctors put me in a spiker; that is a plaster cast, from my waist to my ankle on the injured leg and gave me a blood transfusion in my right ankle direct from another soldier. Fortunately for the stretcher cases there was an American pilot flying a small plane between Myola and Wards 'Drome. He would have one patient in the cockpit and the other one (ie stretcher case) in the body of the plane. Some days he was not able to land because of the heavy fog conditions. There was not a 'drome to land on and take off from. It was a patch of land that had been cleared by hand. Our mortar officer, who had a severe mortar wound to his back, sat with the pilot and I was in the body of the plane when our turn came. We flew along the Track and to see it from the air made one wonder how we climbed some of those ridges.

We eventually finished up in 102 AGH at Tamworth towards the end of November 1942. Despite several blood transfusions and other treatment my leg was amputated on the 5th of November 1942.

While at Tamworth, wounded soldiers would be taken out to Goonoo Goonoo Station for an evening's entertainment. Being taken around the station, meeting the folk

that worked there and seeing all the working places such as the shearing shed, the blacksmith shop, carpentry shop, the slaughterhouse where they killed their own sheep and cattle, and a general store and the staff houses – it was like a small township. Then came the dinner in a magnificent dining room with the family. A three-course dinner, soup, roast beef, and roast lamb, baked vegetables, and a sweet with fresh cream. We had not eaten food like this for some considerable time as the army tucker was pretty basic. It was a delightful evening. I have passed there by car many times over the years since with my wife and children and have been tempted to go in and say “Good day” but never got around to it.

The doctor decided to transfer me to 103 AGH at Baulkham Hills, to the limbless ward there. This was “6” Ward which was to be my home for some considerable time, finally being discharged 27/6/1944 after having been hospitalised for a period of one year and eight months. There were 45 limbless soldiers in the ward, some from Malaya, [the] Middle east and the Papuan area. We became like a family. A very powerful friendship developed amongst us and we supported each other.

The World War I diggers came to visit us and gave us a lot of useful advice on how to live with our permanent disabilities. They like ourselves had lost their limbs as young men. As our wounds healed and the hospital’s surgeons considered we were ready for the fitting of artificial limbs we would be taken from 103 AGH by ambulance to the Limb Centre.

Around June of 1943 the “G” Ward Head Sister announced that a party of girls who worked at Jantzen’s Swim Suit Factory had decided to adopt our ward and come up each week to give the boys sweets such as fruit salad, cakes, cream and other delights which they paid for out of their own pocket. My wife, Lillian May Thursby, was one of these lovely ladies and we are still together to this day.

After the War

I had been fitted with an artificial limb and listed for discharge on the 27/6/1944. Farewelling our mates of “G” Ward was a very emotional occasion. It was like leaving a family and its security – a very sad moment. Leaving the Sydney Showground some 5 years and 4 months after I had as a 17-year-old volunteered my service to the militia in 1939, then at 20 years in 1941 to the 2nd AIF, I was now 23 years 3 months of age. The best years of my life, that is my youth, was gone. But a new era was beginning.

My lifelong marriage to Lillian commenced early in 1944 while [I was] still in hospital at the old “G” Ward 103 AGH Baulkham Hills. As I had some army pay and some leave before I got my discharge, Lillian and I decided we would go to The Entrance at Tuggerah Lakes. We rented

a holiday cottage for two weeks and finished up staying there for 6 or 7 weeks. These cottages were very basic, such as a fuel stove, kerosene lamps, bare floorboards, fuel copper for washing your clothes. But this was normal holiday accommodation for those times.

Being a carpenter-joiner I was offered a job of being a caretaker of several of these places at so much a week each and then when a place was vacated you would have to whitewash the brickwork around the stove, check the cooking utensils and keep the place tidy. If any of the boats needed repairing or maintenance on the houses was required, the agent would be contacted for the owner’s approval to carry out the work and you would be paid to do it. We were tempted to take it on. I was to start work in August as a trainee limb maker at the RALAC. Sometimes I feel I should have taken the caretaker’s job. The Limb Centre job had security in the public service.

Lillian and I had a flat at Darling Point which made it necessary for me to travel on two trams to work and two home again. It was very difficult with my artificial leg to handle this situation.

Later on our daughter arrived. We were not very happy with our flat and living in the City so I decided to apply to the Repat for a loan to establish a small joinery shop. This loan was to the value of £250 to buy machinery and materials. I looked around the Sydney suburbs for a suitable location to set up a small workshop. There was not a lot to choose from. My sister’s husband came home for some leave from the 9th Division and suggested that Wollongong would be worth a visit to see what the prospects were there. So we travelled down to have a look.

I decided Wollongong was the place to go to try my luck. Lillian decided she would take our daughter and stay with her sister in New Lambton until such time as it took to find some suitable accommodation for us. Eventually I was able to get a room and had to share the house with two other families, so we were able to be together again after about six weeks. I went to start in Wollongong during April of 1945. Lillian and our daughter arrived about six weeks later and then during August 1945 we were lucky to be able to rent a house on the corner of Kembla and Market streets. We lived there for 9 years.

Then in 1949 our son arrived on the scene. Also we had purchased an 8HP Anglia Ford in 1948 so we were able to move around the place. In other words we were mobile and did not have to travel by bus or trains.

The business kept us for about 7 years, with all the difficulties of materials being in short supply [thanks to] the demands for accommodation for the returning servicemen and women and the immigration of the early post-war years. At the end of 1951 the building trade was in difficulties and because the demand for windows and doors

etc was nil I was forced to close down. I found some work around the large building sites on wages, with reservations as to my disability.

Then during our visit on Mothers' Day 1952 to Lillian's sister at Homebush and returning to Wollongong late at night we had the misfortune to crash into a bus on Greens Pinch on Bulli Pass. We all survived with minor injuries with the exception of myself. The bone in my amputated leg was fractured and I was not able to wear my artificial limb for some 8 months. I had a beaten track to the Government Employment Office looking for work in the trade but was told, despite the fact that I was a good tradesman, they would not employ me because of my war disability.

This came as a shock and the words of many old First War diggers I had befriended over the years came back to me: "When the smoke blows away, son, so do the promises."

The Building Workers Industrial Union came to my assistance with a job on a house with some people associated with the left-wing movement and other jobs with the Workers Club. Also a mate and I did some fitting out of the kitchens and some shop fitting work for a sports store and a chemist shop.

I was forced to sell my wood-working machinery, which [had] cost me one thousand pounds, for the paltry sum of 250 pounds to settle a debt incurred during the business years. Eventually during 1954 we were broke trying to live on our war pension and a few bob from the Employment Office.

So we decided the best thing to do was to move out to live in a workshop that I had built on our block of land at Lake Heights. There was no electricity [to] the building and we had a builder's water supply tap outside. The only cooking utensil we had was a kerosene stove. As well we had a kerosene lamp plus candles for lighting. The building was 40 feet long and 20 feet wide. There were no internal walls.

So things were pretty tough for us. To add to our woes a visit from an official of the Govt Employment Office told me, if I did not produce a list of employers' names I tried for a job at, [on] my next visit to them they would cut out the social service payments to us. My immediate response was: "Do you expect me to walk around the industries at Port Kembla on my artificial leg looking for work?" His reply was: "That is your problem, mate."

I was able to find a job in a joinery shop at Port Kembla. We were able to do some work on our place, such as partition walls and lining the ceilings. My father paid to have the electricity connected. So things did improve for our little family. My Dad died in 1957 and the age of 63 years. No doubt his service in World War I (1914-18) was a contributing factor to his early death. My stepmother lived on

until she was 75 years old and kept on living in their home at Cook St, Sutherland.

After moving to Lake Heights, Lillian and I became involved in the Lake Heights Progress Association and the Hall Committee leading to other local government bodies such as the Smoke and Dust Abatement Committee formed by the Wollongong City Council. [There were] others such as the Combined Progress Associations [and] the Ratepayers' Action Committee. As well we were active in supporting the May Day Committee, the South Coast Labour Council and the peace movement.

No doubt all this activity earned me a black ban. Every time I applied for a job, I did not get it. Eventually (1958) the Labour Council were able to get me a job with the PMG Department, so I became active in the Amalgamated Postal Workers' Union.

After a time, I was told if I wanted to keep my job I would have to cease my active participation in the various committees. In order to survive and keep my family and finish our house off and have a reasonable living standard it was necessary to comply. During those years of involvement in the working class movement I got to know so many decent, dedicated people who gave their all to the cause.

I stayed with the PMG Dept until 1975 when I decided to retire. Myself, I had an increase to the intermediate rate in my war pension and Jessie, Harry, and I shared the money from the sale of Mum and Dad's home.

The 17 years I spent working for the PMG was very enjoyable. Pay day came round every fortnight and the three weeks annual leave was something to look forward to. Sick leave and repatriation leave because of war-caused injuries was an extra bonus. My work mates were a good bunch of blokes to be with as most of my time was spent in the telephone exchanges which in those days were staffed only by men.

Lillian and I became supporters of Port Kembla Football Club and for ten years followed the team each Sunday. We also became followers of the Warrawong Cricket Club and attended a lot of their matches. We also became members of the Illawarra Yacht Club and joined the social activities there.

Living at Lake Heights from 1954 until 1990 were some of the best years of our lives. The fishing, rowing, swimming in Lake Illawarra made life much more pleasurable and as I had built a couple of boats, one a rowing boat and the larger one with a Simplex inboard motor, we as a family were able to go anywhere fishing all over the lake and as I had done most of the building of our home there despite my disability that little home meant so much to me. There was a magnificent view across the lake and the surrounding hills in the distance and the ever-changing

surface of the lake from like a sheet of glass to great turbulence during southerly and westerly winds.

At this stage of my life, a few weeks short of my 79th birthday, after having lived with the aid of an artificial leg and a pair of crutches, I must say it is a very difficult lifestyle. But any disabled person must make the best of what you can do and not worry too much about those things you can't do. One of the difficult tasks would be to work and earn a living to support your family. Wearing an artificial leg is not an easy thing to do for long hours as I found out trying to follow the building trade plus a reluctance of employers to employ disabled people in my young days.

One occasion [was] a visit to my home in Wollongong by a person from Lysaghts in Port Kembla to offer me a menial type of job not as a skilled tradesman. His very words were: "We like to help cripples." My reply was: "I am not a cripple; I am a limbless soldier." I was offended by these remarks. I did not accept the job.

During my long life the Limbless Soldiers Association has been very much in the corner of the members. There are not many of our old mates with us now. Having been a member since 1943 I have regarded our association as the No 1 returned soldiers' support group.

As to the activities in the various organisations, this was a necessary development as I came from a very politically active family. My grandfather, Robert Adams, was active in the early Australian Shearers Union and my father was a member of the Labor Party.

My early memories of the Depression as a child going to school in Lithgow was the children coming to school without lunches and no warm clothing or shoes. In the winter time you would see several of them hanging around another child to get the core to eat from an apple the other was eating. The headmaster asked the parents who were working to bring food to the school to feed these children. They were desperate years causing a lot of suffering.

On top of this came six years of war, where money was found to pay many of these children 6/- per day to fight and die in many cases on foreign soil. The seeds were sown for change. The generation that handled these years are nearly all gone now, but those of us still living have not forgotten them.

There are two events that I have not been able to do over the years, to march with my battalion mates on ANZAC Day and my workmates on May Day.

The Communist Party

Our involvement with the Party was a period of learning about politics and the capitalist system of society, how it works and who are the people who control the state and

those who bring such misery to countless millions all over the world. Despite a big lift in living standards in recent times, capitalism does not have real solutions to world problems faced by ordinary people with the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. The contradiction[s] of the much-admired free enterprise system are becoming very apparent. With the world economy being controlled by transnational and multinational corporations, there is economic imperialism and nations are losing their identity as such and are becoming controlled by these giant corporations.

This account [is] of my experiences as a member of the Communist Party and as a supporter of a socialist system of society over a lifetime. My interest in socialism commenced during the period of the 1939-45 war. As a soldier like many others [I was] impressed by the efforts of the people of the Soviet Union in defence of their country against the armies of German fascism. Stalingrad and Leningrad come to mind as they battled against the savage onslaught of the German forces until such time as the Second Front in 1944.

When I returned to Australia from the Middle East in 1942 I did meet Labor and Communist Party members. As I had only celebrated my 21st birthday in March of that year while on active service in Ceylon, my knowledge of politics was nil. Our families had an intense hatred of the UAP and UCP parties who were in power when the war started and virtually handed the conduct of the war effort to John Curtin and the Labor Party. Many of my mates in the army who were much older than me and victims of the depression years talked a lot about socialism and politics in general. I have always been a good listener and learnt a lot from them while operating my small joinery shop in Wollongong. It was only a short walk to Crown St and I would go down the lane to watch the May Day marches passing by. They were huge, with many people marching in their party group[s] and unions and many other organisations.

During the seven years that I spent conducting my own business, most of my customers were workers and returned soldiers building their own homes or having them built for them. With the war and depression behind them, home ownership became a real issue. As well, the Housing Commission was building at a fast rate, placing a heavy demand on available materials for the building of houses and all that goes into the homes.

A lot of my customers were members of the Communist Party and when I closed my joinery shop in December of 1951 and [after] our car accident on Mothers' Day in 1952 we were in a desperate situation. The Party came to our assistance and I joined the Party. Previously, when the RSSICA decided to expel returned service people who were members of the Communist Party from membership, I was very much opposed on the basis that it was contrary

to the rule as it was non-political and non-sectarian when formed. No doubt this was a divisive move. When the expulsions took place, I was not a member of the Party. I was surprised as to the number of World Wars I and II returned people who were members of the left wing and the socialist movement. The right-wing forces became alarmed at the growth of the Party and their attack on all aspects of anything progressive was savage and caused a lot of hardship on many people.

I am going to record some of my own experiences during this period but will refrain from mentioning people's names as it would not serve any useful purpose as it is many years ago.

A limbless soldier from World War I got me a job to work in the telephone exchange at the Australian Iron and Steel office. During the day, girls operated the switchboard and at 5pm two shifts of men would operate the equipment during the night. I started on afternoon shift at 3:20pm and did office work until 5pm and then worked on the switchboard until 11:20pm. One afternoon, while working in the office, a prominent member of the Ironworkers Union walked past where I was working, looked me up and down and continued to the main office and a couple of days later I was told I was not suitable for the job and was paid off. When I asked why the answer was "We do not have to give a reason."

Later I went down to the Port Kembla Harbour and got a job on a weighbridge. I was to start in a couple of days. Then a few hours later a telegram arrived stating the job was no longer available. While working back at my trade in a joinery workshop at Port Kembla a mate of mine had the responsibility of opening up each morning [and] had to go into the office to get the keys. [One day there was] a letter written to the firm from the steelworks requesting to be told the politics of a person by the name of Robert Adams. Their reply was "We do not know, nor do we care. He is a good tradesman and a reliable worker."

Later I managed to get a job as a joiner in a workshop run by a prominent builder and a Liberal candidate (unsuccessful), and because I had failed to ring up and report that I was sick, (we did not have a telephone and the only access to a telephone was the public phone down the road and I was too unwell to walk down the hill and of course up the hill again) when I reported for work the next morning the foreman sacked me on the spot. This was the last time that I actually worked at the trade. The realisation I would not get another job [in] the trade was a bitter blow.

In my own way I became aware that now at 36 the difficulties of wearing an artificial [limb and] doing hard manual work was starting to beat me and the uncertain chances of getting work was playing hell with my family who had received a lot of nasty reactions because of my political beliefs and we were not able to eat properly and enjoy the improving living standards.

Something had to be done, so I discussed the matter with the Party leaders who approached the Labour Council about my case and they were able to get me a job with the PMG Department which gave me economic security and our living standard improved. I worked at the Port Kembla telephone exchange for a number of years. A conversation at the Port Kembla RSL Club was overheard by a relative between my boss and a representative of one of the Port Kembla industries. It went like this: "I understand you have that commo Adams working for you. Why don't you sack the bastard?" The reply was "I do not know what his politics are and I don't care. He is my right-hand man and is very reliable."

So one does have good friends when the chips are down.

At this stage, strangely enough, a relative approached me to denounce the Communist Party and come and re-join the RSL. My reply was that I could not do that because during those years as a member of the Party I had made many wonderful friends who had dedicated their lives to the cause.

The disunity and factionalism destroyed the left wing and left the working class without good leadership, once again bringing into focus the cry of the international working classes: "United we stand, divided we fall." In my opinion the Party was moving away from being a party of the working class to a party of middle-class ideas, the same as the Labor Party had developed over the years. So I left the Communist Party in the 1960s. The movement to the right was now fact of life. The left was destroyed and the way to the development of huge monopolies was now open with no organised resistance.

We can see in our own country the major parties have sold out all our assets to international capitalism such as transnational and multinational corporations. We are in the grip of imperialism with the rich getting richer and the poor becoming poorer. The Australia my generation fought for is gone and we are losing our identity as a nation.

AMMR

AMR Interview with Comrade Jimmy Donovan

Part 2

This is the second part of the interview with Comrade Jimmy Donovan with Part 1 having been previously published in *AMR* #74. Comrade Jim “Jimmy” Donovan is a lifelong member of the Communist Party of Australia where he is a member of the Maritime branch in Sydney. He is also the President of the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) Veterans Organisation. He is a retired wharfie and leader of workers in the Waterside Workers Federation (WWF) which amalgamated with other unions covering workers in the Maritime industry to form the Maritime Union of Australia.

The *Australian Marxist Review* has conducted this interview with Jimmy to bring forward some of the events and history of the party.

AMR: Did you ever visit the Soviet Union or any other socialist countries?

JD: Yes I did. I went to the Soviet Union and Ukraine in 1972, I later went back to the Soviet Union in 1984/1985. The first one I went to, I went to a youth conference, I was 32 in 1972, and I went to a youth conference in Kiev. When we finished we went back to Moscow, and we spent another week there. I went there with a bloke called Tom Morrison from the Building Workers Industrial Union; he was a couple of years older than me but nevertheless we got on well. We had a good time. I saw and questioned what was happening and, you know it wasn't all cream and cake, it was, I was pretty inquisitive. I think I was one of the few people too, you might ask me later about my trip to North Korea.

Well when I was selected to go I was over the moon. I was tickled pink. By 1972, they had weathered quite a few anti-communist, anti-Soviet stances, mainly from the western world, America. In that period, it wasn't because of the cold war, it was still there and was still pretty nasty with the anti-sovietism. Oddly enough I had a farewell down at the unions room down at the old Sussex St building, the wharfies building, and I invited a lot of my friends I grew up with at Woolloomooloo and other places, and quite a few turned up. I was very surprised. It was sort of a farewell, but you had to throw in a couple of bob for expenses for me when I went, and when I came back none of them other than Stan and Frank, quite a few of the others had very little politics. It was very frustrating when we were having a drink sometimes, you couldn't get boo out

of them! I wanted to be controversial! I would say something controversial and “oh is that right,” but the ones that were political like two of my great mates Frank Bagnado and Stanley Sted, who died a few years ago, they understood what I was trying to achieve, by inviting people to my farewell and a donation to pay the costs. On my return we had another get together, I brought back a number of gifts, I brought back hundreds of photos, and I was able to show them around. The creches there, of the schools, of the hospitals, anything that the west was, they were anti-Soviet. I wanted to make sure that the housing, I wanted to make sure that, when I went there I was taking photos of the things that the west was attacking them on. But the health costs were nothing, nothing! They had some of the best doctors and nurses and hospitals in the world! It cost them nothing. They couldn't believe it. Dentistry, hospitals, even nursing homes; all for nothing!

AMR: What are some of your experiences that you would like to recollect from when you were in the Soviet Union?

JD: Red Square, we were there for the (55th anniversary of) the October Revolution. It was bitterly, bitterly cold. They were serving hot toddies, hot wine, and we had plenty of them! It was the 7th of November, and it was freezing. Red Square you know! We went to the Kremlin, that was a highlight, but again freezing cold. Going to Lenin's tomb out the front of the Kremlin was no doubt a highlight, you know even though the man's dead his works will live on and live on, they will never die. The western world can say what they want but they are not going to be able to destroy it. It's like that with Mao, there's that many books that are written that, no one can destroy that many writings and that many books which have been published about Marx and Lenin and Mao that they, too many. And it was beautiful. That was a highlight.

We went to Kiev. We went to a hospital there, and a school. We learned quite a bit. What I learned there was that the doctors and the people that worked in the hospital, so friendly, the job they were doing they wanted to do. You could see it when they were pointing things out to you, it just wasn't a lecture, there were feelings behind it! I will never forget that, there were feelings about this patient or that patient or whatever the case may be and so they took a lot of pride in what they were doing. I don't know how far it went down the chain, what workers on the ground, wharfies or seaman, but you know it was a delight in seeing that these people loved what they were doing. I will

never forget that as long as I live. You could see it. And the doctors were pointing out things and they would say “its ok, we’re fixing it, we’re finding new things out day by day, something new is happening in the medical profession.” That’s what they were saying. And they were right, we’re talking about bionic ears now. Things have changed that much and a lot of it is due to the Soviet Union and the socialist countries, including China, of the improvements in medical science. There is no doubt about it. In the Soviet Union it was all done because it needed to be done, people enjoyed what they were doing, not like it is in capitalism you go into a hospital, and they are just about rude from the time you get in there till the time you leave. I have noticed it. They haven’t got the same feelings as when I was in the Soviet Union as what they had for their patients. I don’t know whether that still exists today. You could see the delight they were showing and doing by the things they were saying, and I will never forget that. We went into a crèche, all these babies, there were hundreds, you get one cry and then the next one and the next one. I don’t know how they put up with it, none of them had ear pieces or earphones on but they couldn’t yell at the babies. I couldn’t work there.

AMR: <Laughter>

JD: I couldn’t work there. It was a wonderful time. I was there for the October revolution, and I will never forget that, never. The only thing I got disappointed with was that at the end all the war things came out, the tanks and missiles and that was 72. I thought they would have been better off ending with the workers and the people marching then with that. They had both the civilian, the workers coming through and enjoying their day; it was the day of the great revolution, and then they had the weapons. I suppose they were saying “don’t come and fool with us because this is what we have got.” I think that’s what it is, there’s no doubt about that, I don’t know why they had to show it to us because we already knew, that if needed the Soviet Union would defend itself against anything and anyone.

AMR: Have you been to any other Socialist countries as well?

JD: Yes, I don’t know if you regard North Korea as a socialist country?

AMR: Yes, we regard the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea as a socialist country.

JD: Yeah, well their system is the Juche system right?

AMR: Yes they refer to their system of ideology as Juche.

JD: Yes, I don’t doubt that, but it doesn’t seem the same as when I was in the Soviet Union. Oddly enough I took my wife there, she had never been overseas before! I had been over a few times, and I said, “would you like to come?”

She wasn’t overly enthused but anyway she came, and I took another woman called Fae Campbell from another union, can’t remember which one, she was a lovely person, and she came along with us and gave a bit of company to my wife. I found it interesting. They definitely, definitely care about and look after their people. There’s no doubt in my mind. Especially their older people they doted over them. From what I could gather they ensured that they had food on the table, warmth in the winter, and friendship because older people you know, well I’m one of the few exceptions. I’m eighty-three, have a couple more, but a lot of people die in their 60s and 70s. But here, the older people wanted to keep on living, you could sense that because it’s all there, it’s all there for them. There’s a reason to keep living. If you are living in abject poverty and have no money...

I’m lucky, I was a wharfie, we started our retirement fund in 1967, and I have never had to want in retirement. I have been retired now for 24 years. The odd part about it is that it is capitalism that has given me what I have got. Wharfies when they retire today retire with an excess of a million dollars in their funds. I only get a part pension from the government. Originally, Jim Healy wanted a non-contributory pension scheme. Now Healy died in 1961 and Charlie Fitzgibbons came and in a couple of years they were saying “well I don’t think we can win a non-contributory fund,” but Jim Healy said we could win it and Jim Healy knows that we ain’t going to cop it, a contributory fund. In 1967 the 1st of the contracts after permanency came in on the waterfront. Charlie proposed a contribution where we had to put in, the employer put in 2.5 while we had to put in 1 into a superannuation scheme, and he convinced the majority. The 1st meeting we held at the Town Hall and it was rejected, the first of the contracts. We went to the town hall and the party; the party got to work and asked the members to vote for it and it got up. And so we went from a non-contributory to one. You see every dollar we get out of it is invested in capitalism.

AMR: That’s very much a feature of superannuation where superannuation works to tie the retirements of workers to the continuation of capitalism.

JD: Yeah, you’re right. I am a prisoner of the continuation of capitalism so that I keep getting returns and building my assets up. Now because we went through a period not long after I retired where we struck a recession the funds dropped right down. Capitalism! And now we are out of the recession, going apparently into one shortly. It has gone right up, double what I lost in the first place. I am, what would I call it, I am the fruit on the tree because of capitalism. I have matured, you know what I mean because my wealth has gone up.

AMR: So it is contradictory, that this pool of capital is one that can technically be shaped by workers themselves



May Day – Ipswich, Queensland.

through their union structures, as I understand unions often play a role in the management of these funds.

JD: Well they are funds, I joined as I said in 1967 and it was called SERF, Stevedoring employees retirement fund. Now, we remained on our own, mate I was a director of it, you know because I was an official of the Sydney branch. We were unpaid directors, I knew nothing whatsoever about superannuation funds, how they are invested, why they are invested, why this and why that. I learned as I went along. You know there were times, one of the first things that the wharfies did was that we had no money invested in Uranium! That was the first thing, no investment in Uranium. And then we went a bit further to other things. No money invested in South Africa. Now the fund got that big that we had to join another fund that was bigger than ours, a hundred times bigger than ours, so we are now talking about the process of \$250 billion. Now think of it, \$250 billion! I used to be a director of that and got paid nothing! I learned a lot being a director of the fund, it showed me more about how capitalism works.

AMR: When you went to the DPRK, which year did you go.

JD: Oh, Shirley was still alive. I retired in 1999, I went before I retired, so I went in 1996 or 1997.

I must say that what we asked for was arranged by our Interpreters. We asked to go to a hospital and a crèche and we wanted to see the metro system, and things like that. There was nothing, nothing, nothing that was hidden that we wanted to do! One of the things that impressed me there was that I never saw beggars, I never saw people sleeping in the streets. That was a big impression. There was not one, not one! I don't know if they wouldn't have cleared them just because we were there because we were a small little delegation. But when you go to a major city like that, like Seoul you would see poverty. But you don't see poverty, you don't see hardship in Pyongyang. That's what you see and it strikes you, and you see it, a city and it's so clean and you could eat your breakfast, lunch and dinner off the pavement. It was so clean! It's open, it's everything, it's new, it's something new, you know that you don't see that you don't see in major cities like Sydney. That was missing over there and it really struck me, I didn't see anyone destitute without housing. The amount of housing was wonderful. It was everywhere. And not 100 stories and 1 mile wide, it was here and there

and one over there. You know, not spiralling, not big, the tallest building there, it was the building, they had a bridge between the two of them, they go up and there's a bridge between the two of them, and right beside the bridge they gave me an office. They had an office all decked out with chairs and visitors' chairs, and I had a big leather chair to sit in. Anything, anything I wanted. Rarely I went there but you know, anything you needed, you wanted they'd be there. And it was something new. I had been to the Soviet Union, I had been to Kiev, there was a bit of a difference there's no doubt. There was a difference.

AMR: What did you think these differences were?

JD: The cleanliness of the place, really you can tell a city by the cleanliness can't you. I found it refreshing. There were no beggars, none of that. To see people going about their business, to me they didn't seem to have a care, there was nothing that they, you could really see in their eyes, they were going about their business, stopping and talking to one another in the street, doing this, and going into the stores. It was life as usual, the difference being they were living under socialism, and we were living under capitalism. I didn't see anything untowards.

AMR: In this interview you have spoken quite a bit about a range of communist figures that have impressed you, I was wondering in the many leading members of the Communist Party what were some that impressed you and what were some of the qualities that they had that impacted and influenced how you conducted your work?

JD: Top of the list would have to be Jack McPhillips. Jack was a committed communist, through and through. Not only was he a communist but he was Marxist-Leninist. To have the knowledge and to have it stored the way Jack did it and could expound it was wonderful. He was an intellect, and I am far from being an intellect, what do they call us, its an awful word and I will think of it later. Anyway, he to me was the epitome of a working Marxist-Leninist. He was a teacher, he had that ability to teach. He had the ability to mingle with people, he had the ability not to force opinions of his or Marxist-Leninist or any of that down anyone's throat. He had the ability to teach how best it could be done. I didn't know that many communists, I knew Eddie Marr he was the original party organiser looking after the waterfront. I knew Peter Symon fairly well because Peter was a wharfie from South Australia. It was hard to get close to Peter. Him and Jack used to have some set blues about Marxism-Leninism during the period, especially around the trade union movement. I really, I knew Sharky, I remember going into the EYL, the Eureka Youth League in the 1940s, late 40s early 50s in at 40 Market St to the EYL on the Saturdays, some Saturday mornings. Every second Saturday there was another, the wharfies used to have youth classes down at Sussex St, they had painting classes, one week we would go there, the other

week we would go to the union. I remember 40 Market St was the party headquarters, a big room and us young kids would get in there and, I went to a couple of camps, the 1st one I went to was at Corrimal, and I have often visited Corrimal and the first thing I think of is my time down there with the Eureka Youth League. I think we were even a bit under that, I'm not sure, if there were the youngsters and then the EYL, I'm not sure. I can always remember what a wonderful time I had at Corrimal. I went on my own, I met some people and I still keep in contact with one of them, he lives in WA at the moment. I had a wonderful time. They were always organising something, there was never a dull day. There would be swimming one day, there would be races, running races another day, something different every day. They used to take us down, we would catch a train to Sutherland, then we would catch a bus from there to Corrimal. But I remember, they were wonderful and all us young people, we would all sleep in big tents. The first one I went to was at Corrimal, the second one I went to was at Springwood, they had a swimming pool at Springwood. And down there they had the beach, and up there they had the pool. The one up at Springwood, I don't ever know what happened to it. The Party owned the land. They had big dormitories, So I don't know what happened to the one at Corrimal, or the one up at Springwood. I thoroughly enjoyed going to the EYL camps.

AMR: Did your experiences in the EYL contribute to your later decision to join the Communist Party?

JD: Yes, I would have to say it did. My mother was a member of the Communist Party. My mother died when I was 18 years of age, in 1958, and it was a really big loss. I often think, I remember we used to have dinner, Mum would do the washing up and I would do the drying up. It was my inquisitive years, I had started work the year before on the railways as an apprentice boilermaker, and had met Hughey Grant who my mother knew, he was the communist secretary of the boilermakers (union) here in Sydney at the Redfern branch, and when she washing and I was drying I started getting inquisitive, about the trade union movement, what do we do, what do they do, and I then knew then Mum was a member of the Communist Party. Then in a year of that happening she died. It was an absolute loss because I wanted to ask her that many questions. I only hope that she would be as proud of me. I was a bastard of a kid; I was always taking things that weren't mine.

AMR: You said earlier that you had met Lance Sharkey, who is a very significant leading figure in the history of the Communist Party. What was he like in terms of what you remember?

JD: He was a quite little bloke. And there was nothing at all that was too trivial that he wouldn't give you an answer. When you are 17 years of age and you have joined



Julian Assange rally.

the party you don't get to meet the General Secretary of the Party! A lot of them I suppose before Sharkey, I don't know, but they may stand aloof, but no, Lance was, I only met him on 3 or 4 occasions from 1958 on, and there was nothing that he couldn't give you an answer on if you asked him. Because every time, he would often come to the branches and see how the branch was operating. The Maritime branch was 4 branches then, and before I joined the Maritime I was in the street branch, we had 40 to 50 members, and he would often come and sit there and see how we were operating and then he'd say, "that was well done, good meeting, any questions?" Not that I was that forward in that time, but he never put anybody off, or any questions that they asked he would answer. He was never aloof; he was one of us. Some of them, I thought Peter was a bit aloof. Even though he was a wharfie and he knew me and then I got on the executive of the wharfies and then a few years later I became an official of the union. Maybe the reason he did was because he knew that I was a great friend of Jack McPhillips, and Peter and Jack clashed a fair bit. Maybe that was the reason I don't know. He seemed a bit aloof to me. Sharkey wasn't. Sharkey was, you see he

wanted to educate and cultivate young people, you know because he wanted the party to continue, now well here we are jeez that was 60 and 70 years ago, more than that 73-74 years ago in the EYL. I am getting old. When you meet people like that, that's why I had so much time for Jack. He was a great mentor, educator, and would give you the rounds of the kitchen if you weren't up to scratch on things, he would give you the rounds of the kitchen.

AMR: What would you regard as being some of your greatest achievements in your time as an active communist?

JD: Well, achieving the highest order I suppose was people knowing I was a member of the Communist Party, achieving the secretary of the Sydney branch, the national president of the wharfies, and the national president of the MUA.

AMR: The first two were the waterside workers federation and the last was the MUA?

JD: MUA, yeah that's right, exactly right. When you achieve a standing in that capacity and you have been doing it for so long, you know you haven't been wasting

your time. That's the best. I only wish that my mother was around for a bit longer so that she could see what I did achieve. And I am sure she would have said "well you have improved son from when you used to take every-one's money as a little boy." Being 18 when your mum dies, and you have learned a lot from her, and I don't think I would have gotten as far as I did, in joining the party, without my mother's influence. Mum got into a bit of strife in the party. There was a movement in the party in the 1930s, 1940s, that was led by Jack Blake, and what I heard had happened was that they started to form another party, that's what I think, and the bloke's name was Jack Blake, I don't know if you could do a survey on that would you be able to look into that and let me know?

AMR: I will and will let you know.

JD: Will you do that? I know my mum was expelled because of her involvement on this. But later on, when she was dying, Henry McCarthy, who was a leading communist came down to see my mum, and came down with the news that she had been readmitted! Wonderful, she was ecstatic, I was there when he brought the news, she was ecstatic, she wanted to die a communist! I'm sure she was involved with this bloke named Jack Blake I'm sure of it. It brought a tear to my eye. My mum was ecstatic. Henry McCarthy, was a leading communist and a writer for the *Tribune* then, and my mother's delight when he gave her the news. Anyway, so she died a communist, same as what I will do.

AMR: What do you think are some of the most important lessons that you have accumulated in your life experience that you would like to be imparted in future generations of communists to enhance and improve their work?

JD: Learning, never deny the opportunity yourself to learn. We fought by people who had the intellect to do so. I am lucky that the people who taught me didn't jam it down your throat; push it onto you. They explained in detail what the issue was, why, why we are in the party, why are we doing this and why we are doing that. Why you have become the person that you are. That's been a learning curve, nobody except for the people that, it was a traumatic time when we left the Communist Party and formed the Socialist Party. It was an opportunity for the people in the party that remained to be aggressive and vile. There was a couple in the party that I didn't get along with, and when we left and formed the Socialist Party they became absolutely vile people. The beauty of it was that I thought to myself now I know why I left the Communist Party and formed the Socialist Party, because of people like them. It taught me a lesson, a valuable lesson, don't ever do what they were doing! Don't ever do what they were doing. Do what the people that you know that helped form the party and build the party had done, take notice of them. It was really a learning curve.

AMR: In terms of those positive characteristics that you observed, how would you summarise as being the best characteristics of communists.

JD: Well, if you take what I have been saying, and what it made of me, it has made me a better person, there's no doubt about that. I am not the person that I was when I was in my teens, I was a bit of a swashbuckling youth and teenager, but that all sort of, well it didn't sort of, it stopped when I joined the party and saw how other party people in higher positions in higher places were operating, what they were doing. They weren't doing what I wanted to do, they were calm, cool, and collected. They didn't know they were teaching to me, but they did teach me because of their demeanour. Jack McPhillips was 5ft 2 inch, a little bloke, but he had a quiet persona and a quiet demeanour. He never yelled and screamed to get his point of view over, he was cool, calm and collected. A lot of the time he didn't get the full point of his view over, whatever it was. I know that he caused some divisions in the party, well not divisions in the party, he caused divisions within people within the party, but in the end what Jack was saying and what he was doing to me proved the man he was, he didn't have to yell, he didn't have to scream, he didn't have to jam it down their throat, we would have it nice and easy. I never saw Jack yell or scream. I have given Jack the kudos for making me the person that I was because I learned from him. I've never yelled or screamed, even with all of the positions that I have held within the union, and at meetings I've never yelled and screamed at people. You know, you don't get anywhere. No one learns anything by people screaming at one another. And I've never done it. I know I have made some enemies only because of my political beliefs and my political way of operating, but I've never made any enemies by being a threatening person. I have never done it because I learned of the experts none of them did it. Peter Symon was a very gentle person. I never ever saw him yell. Sharkey, never, because if you are trying to get your point of view across, and convince someone that you are right, yelling and screaming ain't going to help.

AMR: Do you have any other final comments that you wish to contribute before we finish up today?

JD: First up, Christian, I am pleased that I am recorded something for someone else to learn from, I hope. It's been, as I said my mother died a communist and I will die a communist. There is no reason for me to feel anything other than that I have made a contribution by my being a member of the party and my contributions that I have made through the positions that I have held within the union and in the community. I have been the secretary of the Woolloomooloo resident action group, we saved Woolloomooloo from high rise. In fact the party said "hang on, you cant be dividing your time" and I said "listen if I don't help they are going to pull Woolloomooloo down" which

they would have, they are going to pull the Rocks down and so I became the secretary of the Woolloomooloo resident action group. You know, and in that period of time I was a full time official of the union, I was the vice president of the Sydney branch.

AMR: What year was this?

JD: 1970 or 1971 up to 1974.

AMR: Excellent. This would be the same time as the Green Bans.

JD: Oh yeah the Green Bans, of course, that was one of the main reasons, because of Jack Munday's position. What the party couldn't deal with was that Jack Munday was thieving the thunder of the communist movement, of the virtue of the Green Bans. Now we can't have anybody thieving our thunder, so they got dirty on Jack Munday. What Jack was doing was in fact saving Sydney!

AMR: Sydney's physical appearance and many of its heritage buildings owes its continued existence to the work of communists.

JD: Yes, YES, YES! Exactly right! You know the old saying, you don't think of it first it's not a good idea. And the party didn't think of it first about the Green Bans. It started in Hunters Hill for fucks sake. Hunter's Hill, who would want to save a park in Hunter's Hill because they are all billionaires and millionaires? But he did because the woman up there asked him to put a Black Ban, not a Green Ban, a Black Ban on anything that's going to destroy that park, right at Hunter's Hill. And he said sure yeah. And sure in a short period of time we're not going to place a black ban on it, we are going to place a green ban on it and that's where the green bans came in. And the party, the party never thought of that, Jack Munday did. Of course, Jack was getting all the notoriety, good or bad, and the party wasn't. And those in the party, the hierarchy of the party jeez,

we won't have anybody stealing the party's thunder other than us.

Anyway Christian, If I can assist by this interview and what I have had to say to any young person making up their mind to join the party and join the movement, then I urge them, it's a wonderful period if you are young, get involved! There's something better than capitalism, there's something better than imperialism. There is and it's been proven. The only problem is some people, the wrong leaders at the wrong time let us down. It wasn't the system that let people down, it was the people running the system that let people down. We have very few socialist countries. We have got North Korea the DPRK, China, Cuba, Vietnam, and can't remember.

AMR: Laos.

JD: Yes Laos, I should have remembered, particularly with all the assistance we gave to the Vietnamese cause, of course China, been to China, but I have never gotten over to Vietnam. I had an opportunity to go, I had an opportunity to go to May Day in Cuba but I gave it up for another comrade to go. I only wish I had gone now. To both Vietnam and Cuba when I get the opportunity I will definitely go. I have been invited by the Vietnamese people, by the Communist Party, because of my work in the union and in the other bodies that supported the Vietnamese people and their position. I should take it up one day before I leave this planet. As they say, before you came onto this planet as a human, there has been billions of years that you weren't here for it, and when you die you will be left again with trillions and billions of years that you won't see because you are dead. It's a great adage really, to seek! You only get one go of this life. It is not even a millionth of a second in the time of the universe. Not even a millionth of a second. But if I have left something that people can grab hold of, its my love of the working class and my love of the Communist Party of Australia.

AMR

ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART

We, gathered at the 2017 National Constitutional Convention, coming from all points of the southern sky, make this statement from the heart: Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs.

This our ancestors did, according to the reckoning of our culture, from the Creation, according to the common law from “time immemorial,” and according to science more than 60,000 years ago. This sovereignty is a spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or “mother nature,” and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors.

This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty. It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown. How could it be otherwise? That peoples possessed a land for sixty millennia and this sacred link disappears from world history in merely the last two hundred years? With substantive constitutional change and structural reform, we believe this ancient sovereignty can shine through as a fuller expression of Australia’s nationhood.

Proportionally, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are aliened from their families at unprecedented

rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future.

These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our problem. This is the torment of our powerlessness.

We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a rightful place in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution. Makarrata is the culmination of our agenda: the coming together after a struggle. It captures our aspirations for a fair and truthful relationship with the people of Australia and a better future for our children based on justice and self-determination.

We seek a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making between governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history.

In 1967 we were counted, in 2017 we seek to be heard. We leave base camp and start our trek across this vast country.

We invite you to walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.



**There is no conversation
without voice**



Voice – Treaty - Truth

COMMUNIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

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On Authority

Friedrich Engels

Introductory note from the translation in *Marx Engels Collected Works, Volume 23. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1988.*

Engels wrote this article after repeated requests by Enrico Bignami to Marx and Engels to send him articles for the collection *Almanacco Repubblicano*. Bignami addressed Engels for the first time on July 31, 1872. On November 3, 1872, Bignami informed Engels that he had received his article written, apparently, in October. However, Bignami was arrested and the manuscript was lost. Bignami wrote to Engels about this loss on March 2, 1873, and asked him to send, if possible, either a copy of that article or something else for the collection planned. In March 1873 Engels sent Bignami the second version of the article "On Authority" which was published in December of that year in the *Almanacco Repubblicano per l'anno 1874*. The article was published in English for the first time in *The New Review*, No. 4, New York, 1914. p. 422

A number of socialists have latterly launched a campaign against what they call the *principle of authority*. It is sufficient for them to say that this or that act is *authoritarian* for it to be condemned. This summary mode of procedure is being abused to such an extent that it has become necessary to look into the matter somewhat more closely. Authority, in the sense in which the word is used here, means: the imposition of the will of another upon ours; on the other hand, authority presupposes subordination. Now, since these two words sound bad and the relationship which they represent is disagreeable to the subordinated party, the question is to ascertain whether there is any way of dispensing with it, whether – given the conditions of present-day society – we could not create another social system, in which this authority would be given no scope any longer and would consequently have to disappear. On examining the economic, industrial, and agricultural conditions which form the basis of present-day bourgeois society, we find that they tend more and more to replace isolated action by combined action of individuals. Modern industry with its big factories and mills, where hundreds of workers supervise complicated machines driven by steam, has superseded the small workshops of the separate producers; the carriages and wagons of the highways have been substituted by railway trains, just as the small schooners, and sailing feluccas have been by steam-boats. Even agriculture falls increasingly under the dominion of

the machine and of steam, which slowly but relentlessly put in the place of the small proprietors big capitalists, who with the aid of hired workers cultivate vast stretches of land. Everywhere combined action, the complication of processes dependent upon each other, displaces independent action by individuals. But whoever mentions combined action speaks of organisation; now, is it possible to have organisation without authority?

Supposing a social revolution dethroned the capitalists, who now exercise their authority over the production and circulation of wealth. Supposing, to adopt entirely the point of view of the anti-authoritarians, that the land and the instruments of labour had become the collective property of the workers who use them. Will authority have disappeared or will it only have changed its form? Let us see.

Let us take by way of example a cotton spinning mill. The cotton must pass through at least six successive operations before it is reduced to the state of thread, and these operations take place for the most part in different rooms. Furthermore, keeping the machines going requires an engineer to look after the steam engine, mechanics to make the current repairs, and many other labourers whose business it is to transfer the products from one room to another, and so forth. All these workers, men, women, and children, are obliged to begin and finish their work at the hours fixed by the authority of the steam, which cares nothing for individual autonomy. The workers must, therefore, first come to an understanding on the hours of work; and these hours, once they are fixed, must be observed by all, without any exception. Thereafter particular questions arise in each room and at every moment concerning the mode of production, distribution of materials, etc., which must be settled at once on pain of seeing all production immediately stopped; whether they are settled by decision of a delegate placed at the head of each branch of labour or, if possible, by a majority vote, the will of the single individual will always have to subordinate itself, which means that questions are settled in an authoritarian way. The automatic machinery of a big factory is much more despotic than the small capitalists who employ workers ever have been. At least with regard to the hours of work one may write upon the portals of these factories: *Lasciate ogni autonomia, voi che entrate!* If man, by dint of his knowledge and inventive genius, has subdued the forces of nature, the latter avenge themselves upon him by subjecting him, in so far as he employs them, to a veritable despotism independent of all social organisation. Wanting to abolish authority in large-scale industry is tantamount to wanting to abolish industry itself, to destroy the power loom in order to return to the spinning wheel.



Illustration of Marx and Engels

Let us take another example – the railway. Here, too, the co-operation of an infinite number of individuals is absolutely necessary, and this co-operation must be practised during precisely fixed hours so that no accidents may happen. Here, too, the first condition of the job is a dominant will that settles all subordinate questions, whether this will is represented by a single delegate or a committee charged with the execution of the resolutions of the majority of persons interested. In either case there is very pronounced authority. Moreover, what would happen to the first train despatched if the authority of the railway employees over the Hon. passengers were abolished?

But the necessity of authority, and of imperious authority at that, will nowhere be found more evident than on board a ship on the high seas. There, in time of danger, the lives of all depend on the instantaneous and absolute obedience of all to the will of one.

When I submitted arguments like these to the most rabid anti-authoritarians the only answer they were able to give me was the following: Yes, that's true, but here it is not a case of authority which we confer on our delegates, *but of a commission entrusted!* These gentlemen think that when they have changed the names of things they have changed the things themselves. This is how these profound thinkers mock at the whole world.

We have thus seen that, on the one hand, a certain authority, no matter how delegated, and, on the other hand, a certain subordination, are things which, independently of

all social organisation, are imposed upon us together with the material conditions under which we produce and make products circulate.

We have seen, besides, that the material conditions of production and circulation inevitably develop with large-scale industry, and large-scale agriculture, and increasingly tend to enlarge the scope of this authority. Hence it is absurd to speak of the principle of authority as being absolutely evil, and of the principle of autonomy as being absolutely good. Authority and autonomy are relative things whose spheres vary with the various phases of the development of society. If the autonomists confined themselves to saying that the social organisation of the future would restrict authority solely to the limits within which the conditions of production render it inevitable, we could understand each other; but they are blind to all facts that make the thing necessary and they passionately fight the word.

Why do the anti-authoritarians not confine themselves to crying out against political authority, the state? All socialists are agreed that the political state, and with it political authority, will disappear as a result of the coming social revolution, that is, that public functions will lose their political character and be transformed into the simple administrative functions of watching over the true interests of society. But the anti-authoritarians demand that the authoritarian political state be abolished at one stroke, even before the social conditions that gave birth to it have been destroyed. They demand that the first act

of the social revolution shall be the abolition of authority. Have these gentlemen ever seen a revolution? A revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is; it is the act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon – authoritarian means, if such there be at all; and if the victorious party does not want to have fought in vain, it must maintain this rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of this authority of the armed people against the bourgeois? Should we not, on the contrary, reproach it for not having used it freely enough?

Therefore, either one of two things: either the anti-authoritarians don't know what they are talking about, in which case they are creating nothing but confusion; or they do know, and in that case they are betraying the movement of the proletariat. In either case they serve the reaction.

Written in October 1872 and in March 1873. First published in December 1873 in the collection *Almanacco Repubblicano per Vanno 1874*.

Signed: Federico Engels 426.



Photo: Ben Sutherland – flickr.com (CC BY 2.0).

AMR

Marx-Engels Correspondence 1872

Letter from Engels to Theodore Cuno

Abstracts

Written: 24th January 1872;

Source: *Marx and Engels Correspondence*¹, International Publishers (1968); Additional text from Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Progress Publishers (1975);

First Published: *Gestamtausgabe*;

Transcribed: Sally Ryan in 1999.

24th January 1872

Dear Cuno

I have just received your letter through Becker² and gather from its contents that those blasted Mardocheans³ intercepted my detailed letter to you dated 16th December. This is the more annoying since it contained all the necessary information on the Bakuninist intrigues and you would have been apprised of everything a whole month earlier; and also since, in view of the fact that you are a foreigner and liable to deportation, I asked you in that letter that you should rather try to be somewhat more cautious in your public agitation so that you can remain there and keep your job, which meanwhile unfortunately went to blazes ...

Becker writes he will let you know about Bakunin's intrigues. However I shall not rely on that and am telling you briefly the most necessary information.

Bakunin, who up till 1868 had intrigued against the International, joined it after he had made a fiasco at the Berne Peace Conference and at once began to conspire within

1 Friedrich Theodor Cuno (1847-1934) – leader of German and international working-class movement, socialist, active member of First International, in 1872 emigrated to USA, later one of founders of Knights of Labour – Progress Publishers.

2 Johann Philipp Becker (1809-1886) – prominent figure in German and international working-class movement, brush-maker, in 1830s and 1840s took part in democratic movement in Germany and Switzerland, was active in 1848-49 revolution, after defeat of Baden-Palatinate insurrection fled from Germany, in 1860s one of outstanding figures in First International, attended all its congresses, editor of *Verbote*, friend and close associate of Marx and Engels – Progress Publishers.

3 An allusion to the police – Progress Publishers.

it against the General Council. Bakunin has a peculiar theory of his own, a medley of Proudhonism and communism, the chief point of which is in the first place that he does not regard capital, and therefore the class contradiction between capitalists and wage earners which has arisen through social development, as the main evil to be abolished – instead he regards the state as the main evil. While the great mass of the Social-Democratic workers hold our view that state power is nothing more than the organisation with which the ruling classes, landlords and capitalists have provided themselves in order to protect their social prerogatives, Bakunin maintains that it is the state which has created capital, that the capitalist has his capital only by favour of the state. As, therefore, the state is the chief evil, it is above all the state which must be done away with and then capitalism will go to hell of itself. We, on the contrary say: do away with capital, the appropriation of the whole means of production in the hands of the few, and the state will fall away of itself. The difference is an essential one. Without a previous social revolution the abolition of the state is nonsense; the abolition of capital is in itself the social revolution and involves a change in the whole method of production. Further, however, as for Bakunin the state is the main evil, nothing must be done which can maintain the existence of any state, whether it be a republic, a monarchy or whatever it may be. Hence therefore complete abstention from all politics. To perpetrate a political action, and especially to take part in an election, would be a betrayal of principle. The thing to do is to conduct propaganda, abuse the state, organise, and when all the workers are won over, i.e., the majority, depose the authorities, abolish the state and replace it by the organisation of the International. This great act, with which the millennium begins, is called social liquidation.

All this sounds extremely radical, and is so simple that it can be learnt by heart in five minutes; that is why this theory of Bakunin's has also speedily found favour in Spain and Italy, among young lawyers, doctors and other doctrinaires.

But the mass of the workers will never allow themselves to be persuaded that the public affairs of their country are not also their own affairs; they are by nature *political* and whoever tries to make out to them that they should leave politics alone will in the end get left in the lurch. To preach

that the workers should in all circumstances abstain from politics is to drive them into the arms of the priests or the bourgeois republicans.

Now as, according to Bakunin, the International is not to be formed for political struggle but in order that it may at once replace the old state organisation as soon as social liquidation takes place, it follows that it must come as near as possible to the Bakunist ideal of the society of the future. In this society there will above all be no *authority*, for authority = state = an absolute evil. (How these people propose to run a factory, work a railway or steer a ship without having in the last resort one deciding will, without a unified direction, they do not indeed tell us.) The authority of the majority over the minority also ceases. Every individual and every community is autonomous, but as to how a society, even of only two people, is possible unless each gives up some of his autonomy, Bakunin again remains silent. The International, then, must also be reorganised according to this model. Every section, and in every section every individual, is autonomous. To hell with the *Basle resolutions*, which bestowed upon the General Council a pernicious authority demoralising even to itself!

Even if this authority is *voluntarily* bestowed it must cease simply *because* it is authority.

Here you have in brief the main points of the swindle.

... But who are the originators of the *Basle resolutions*? Well, *Mr Bakunin himself* and his associates!

When these gentlemen saw at the *Basle Congress* that their plan to remove the General Council to Geneva, that is, to get it into their hands, would not succeed, they followed a different tack. They founded the *Alliance de la Démocratie Socialiste*, an international Society *within* the big International, on a pretext which you will now encounter again in the Bakunist Italian press, for instance, in the *Proletario* and *Gazzettino Rosa*: for the hot-blooded Latin races, it is claimed, a more outspoken programme is necessary than for the cool, slow-moving Northerners. This little scheme came to naught because of the resistance of the General Council, which of course could not tolerate any separate *international* organisation *within* the International. It has since reappeared in various shapes and forms in connection with the efforts of Bakunin and his crew to substitute the Bakunin programme for that of the International. On the other hand it was precisely Bakunin's empty boastful phrases that were always seized upon by the reactionaries, from Jules Favre⁴ and Bismarck to Mazzini, whenever it was a question of attacking the

International. Hence the necessity of my statement of 5th December against Mazzini and Bakunin, which was also published in the *Gazzettino Rosa*.

The nucleus of the Bakunin crowd consists of a few dozen people in the Jura whose whole following amounts to scarcely 200 workers. Their vanguard is made up of young lawyers, doctors and journalists in Italy who everywhere now pretend to act as spokesmen of the Italian workers; a few of them are in Barcelona and Madrid and every now and then you will find one – hardly ever a worker – in Lyons or Brussels; in London there is a single specimen, Robin.⁵

The conference,⁶ convoked under the pressure of circumstances in lieu of the congress that had become impossible, served them as a pretext; and since most of the French refugees in Switzerland went over to their side because they (being Proudhonists) found some kindred views among them and for personal reasons, they sallied forth on their campaign. They counted, and not without reason, on malcontent minorities and misunderstood geniuses, who may of course be found everywhere in the International.

At present their fighting strength is as follows:

1. Bakunin himself – the Napoleon of this campaign.
2. The 200 Jurassians and the 40-50 members of the French Section (refugees in Geneva).
3. In Brussels Hins,⁷ editor of the *Liberté*, who however does not come out openly for them.
4. Here, the remnants of the French Section of 1871,⁸ which we have never recognised and which has already split into three parts which are fighting with one another. Then there are about 20 Lassalleans of the type of Herr von Schweitzer,⁹ who had all been expelled from the German Section (because of their proposal to withdraw from the International en masse) and who, being advocates of extreme centralisation and rigid organisation, fit to a T into the league of Anarchists and autonomists.
5. In Spain, a few personal friends and adherents of Bakunin, who have strongly influenced the workers, particularly

5 Paul Robin (1837-?) – French teacher, Bakunist, a leader of Social-Democratic Alliance, member of General Council of International (1870-71) – Progress Publishers.

6 Engels is referring to the Conference of the First International that took place in London in 1871 – Progress Publishers.

7 Eugène Hins (1839-1923) – an organiser of Belgian Sections of First International, member of Belgian Federal Council, Proudhonist, later Bakunist – Progress Publishers.

8 The French Section of 1871 was formed by a group of French émigrés in London in September 1871. Its leadership established close contacts with the Bakuninists in Switzerland, and, acting in agreement with them, attacked the organisational principles of the International – Progress Publishers.

9 Johann Baptist Schweitzer (1833-1875) – one of Lassallean leaders in Germany, editor of *Sozial-Demokrat* (1864-67), President of General Association of German Workers (1867-71), gave support to Bismarck's policy of unification of Germany 'from above' under hegemony of Prussia, prevented German workers' affiliation to First International, fought against Social-Democratic Workers Party, expelled from Association in 1872 after his connections with Prussian authorities were exposed – Progress Publishers.

4 Jules Favre (1809-1880) – French lawyer and politician, in late 1850s became a leader of the bourgeois-republican opposition, Minister of Foreign Affairs (1870-71), hangman of Paris Commune and inspirer of struggle against International – Progress Publishers.

in Barcelona, at least theoretically. The Spaniards, on the other hand, are very keen on organisation and quick to notice any lack of it in others. How far Bakunin can count on success there will not be seen until the Spanish Congress in April, and as workers will predominate there I have no grounds for anxiety.

6. Lastly, in Italy, the Turin, Bologna and Girgenti Sections have, as far as I know, declared in favour of convening the congress ahead of time.

The Bakuninist press claims that 20 Italian sections had joined; I don't know them. At any rate, almost everywhere the leadership is in the hands of friends and adherents of Bakunin, and they are raising a terrific hubbub. But a closer examination will most likely disclose that their following is not numerous, for in the long run the bulk of the Italian workers are still Mazzinists and will remain so as long as the International is identified there with abstention from politics.

At any rate, in Italy, for the time being, it is the Bakuninist crowd that has the main say in the International. The General Council has no intention of complaining on that score; the Italians have the right to commit all the absurdities they choose and the General Council will counteract them only by way of peaceful debate. These people also have the right to declare for a congress in the Jurassian sense, although it is certainly exceedingly strange that sections which have only just affiliated and cannot be posted on anything should in such a matter at once take sides, especially before they have heard both parties to the dispute! I have told the Turin members the unvarnished truth about this matter and shall do the same with the other sections which have made similar declarations. For every such declaration of affiliation is indirectly an approval of the false accusations and lies made against the General Council in the Circular.¹⁰ Incidentally, the General Council will shortly issue a circular¹¹ of its own about this matter. If you can prevent the Milanese from making a similar declaration until the circular appears you will be fulfilling all our desires.

The funniest thing is that the same people in Turin who declare in favour of the Jurassians and therefore reproach us here with authoritarianism, now suddenly demand that the General Council should take such authoritarian meas-



Photo: William Hall – unesco.org – Wikimedia Commons (Public domain).

ures against the rival Federazione Operaia¹² of Turin as it had never taken before, should excommunicate Beghelli¹³ of the Ficcanaso, who does not even belong to the International, etc. And all that before we have even heard what the Federazione Operaia has to say!

Last Monday¹⁴ I sent you the *Révolution Sociale*¹⁵ containing the Jura Circular, one issue of the Geneva *Égalité* (unfortunately I have no copies left of the issue containing the answer of the Geneva Comité Fédéral, which represents twenty times as many workers as the Jura people do)

10 A Congress of the Bakuninist Jura Federation held in Sonvillier on 12th November 1871, adopted the "Circular to all Federations of the International Working Men's Association," which was directed against the General Council and the London Conference of 1871. The Circular opposed anarchist dogmas to the decisions of the London Conference, made slanderous attacks on the General Council and called upon all federations to demand the immediate convocation of a congress to revise the Rules of the International and to censure the actions of the General Council – Progress Publishers.

11 Engels is referring to *Les prétendues scissions dans l'Internationale (Sham Splits in the International)* – Progress Publishers. [Available on the MIA at www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1872/03/fictitious-splits.htm]

12 Federazione Operaia (Workers Federation), set up in Turin in the autumn of 1871, was under the influence of the followers of Mazzini. The proletarian members left the Federation in January 1872 and formed a new society, called the "Liberation of the Proletariat," which became a section of the International. Up to February 1872 the society was headed by Terzaghi, a secret police agent – Progress Publishers.

13 Giuseppe Beghelli (1847-1877) – Italian journalist, bourgeois democrat, participated in Garibaldi's campaigns, editor of a number of republican newspapers – Progress Publishers.

14 22nd January 1872 – Progress Publishers.

15 *La Révolution Sociale* – a daily paper which came out in Geneva from October 1871 to January 1872, from November 1871 it was the official organ of the Bakuninist Jura Federation – Progress Publishers.

and one Volksstaat which will show you what the people in Germany think about the case. The Saxon Regional Meeting – 120 delegates from 60 localities – declared unanimously for the General Council.

The Belgian Congress (25th-26th December) demands a revision of the Rules, but at the regular congress (in September). From France we are every day receiving statements expressing consent. Of course, none of these intrigues find any support here in England. And the General Council will certainly not call an extraordinary congress just to please a few intriguers and busy-bodies. So long as these gentlemen keep within legal bounds the General Council will gladly let them have their way. This coalition of the most diverse elements will soon fall apart; but as soon as they start anything against the Rules or the Congress resolutions the General Council will do its duty.

If one considers that these people have launched their conspiracy precisely at the moment when a general hue and cry is being raised against the International, one cannot help thinking that the international sleuths must have a hand in the game. And so it is. In Béziers the Geneva Bakuninists have picked the chief superintendent of police as their correspondent! Two prominent Bakuninists, Albert Richard¹⁶ from Lyons and Blanc,¹⁷ were here and told a worker named Scholl, also from Lyons, with whom they got in touch, that the only way to overthrow Thiers¹⁸ was to restore Bonaparte to the throne; and for this very reason they were travelling about on Bonaparte money to conduct propaganda among the refugees in favour of a Bonapartist restoration! That is what these gentlemen call abstaining from politics! In Berlin the Neue Sozial-Demokrat, subsidised by Bismarck, pipes the same tune. How far the Russian police is involved in this I shall leave for the present undecided, but Bakunin was deeply embroiled in the Nechayev¹⁹ affair (he denies it, of course, but we have the original Russian reports here and since

16 Albert Richard (1846-1925) – French journalist, one of leaders of Lyons Section of International, Bakuninist, Bonapartist after defeat of Paris Commune – Progress Publishers.

17 Gaspard Blanc – Progress Publishers.

18 Louis-Adolphe Thiers (1797-1877) – French historian and statesman, Prime Minister (1836, 1840), at the time of Second Republic deputy of Constituent and Legislative Assemblies, Orleanist, President of Republic (1871-73), executioner of Paris Commune – Progress Publishers.

19 Sergei Gennadyevich Nechayev (1847-1882) – Russian revolutionary, conspirator, during 1869-71 closely associated with Bakunin, founder of secret society Narodnaya Rasprava (People's Revenge), extradited by Swiss authorities to Russia, died in Peter and Paul Fortress – Progress Publishers.

Marx and I understand Russian he cannot put anything over on us). Nechayev is either a Russian agent provocateur or anyhow acted as if he were. There are moreover all kinds of suspicious characters among Bakunin's Russian friends.

I am very sorry you lost your position. I had expressly written to you asking you to avoid anything that might lead to that, stating that your presence in Milan was much more important for the International than the small effect one could produce by public utterances, and that one can also accomplish much on the quiet, etc. If I can be of assistance to you by getting you translations, etc, I shall do so with the greatest of pleasure. But please tell me from which languages and into which languages you can translate and how I can be useful to you.

So those police swine have also intercepted my photograph. I am enclosing another one for you and would ask you to send me two of yours, one of which is to serve the purpose of inducing Miss Marx to let you have a photograph of her father (she is the only one who still has a couple of good ones left).

I would also ask you to be on your guard when dealing with any of the people connected with Bakunin. It is a characteristic feature of all sects to stick together and intrigue. You can be sure that any information you give them will immediately be passed on to Bakunin. It is one of his fundamental principles that keeping promises and the like are merely bourgeois prejudices, which a true revolutionary must treat with disdain when it benefits the cause. In Russia he says this openly, in Western Europe it is an esoteric doctrine.

Write to me as soon as possible. It would be very good if we could induce the Milan Section not to join in the chorus of the other Italian sections.

Fraternal greetings

Yours

F Engels

1872 Letters | Letters Archive | Marx Engels Internet Archive

SPEECH BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UCP-CPSU AT THE 22ND INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF COMMUNIST AND WORKERS' PARTIES IN HAVANA

December 19th 2022

PEOPLE, BE VIGILANT!

Esteemed Comrades,

We have gathered here on the Island of Freedom at a difficult time. Analysis of the international situation shows that:

- The forces of international imperialism, the sharks of globalization brutally exploiting the working people and states, having trampled underfoot the principles of peaceful coexistence, resort to any methods and in fact act as instigators of the Third World War. The tragedy is that the reactionary forces make active use of Neo-Nazism and Neo-Fascism to achieve their goals.
- Radicalisation of the aggressive neo-colonial policy of imperialism has dramatically sharpened its modern contradictions in two areas:
 1. The ideological – between the US-led imperialist West and Communist China which, in the wake of the collapse of the USSR, they consider to be “an empire of evil”, as well as Vietnam, Cuba, the DPRK, and Laos where the communists preside over practical construction of socialism.
 2. The inter-imperialist –The USA seeks to preserve its hegemony and the world order under which it plays the dominant role.

It is to this end that the USA is creating new military blocs in Southeast Asia, stoking up tensions in the Middle East and North Africa, and is pursuing an aggressive policy in using Ukraine in military confrontation with Russia, and Taiwan against China.

The provocative visit of Pelosi to Yerevan and her pledges of support for Armenia inevitably lead to a widening of the conflict in the Caucasus between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The situation in Central Asia gives grounds for concern (recent conflict between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan).

These, and many other events, give us the right to declare that the former Soviet republics of Central Asia and

Afghanistan are being prepared for a strike against the RF in order to dismember it.

After the breakup of the USSR, it was the USA and Britain that set about creating a neo-Fascist state on the territory of the former Soviet Ukraine and became the main sponsors and beneficiaries of it.

The reforms they were foisting on Ukraine put capital in control of all the spheres of society's life and ensured total control of transnational corporations over the country's socioeconomic life and as a result created the material basis for the advent and establishment, as a result of an armed coup in February 2014, of the power of the most reactionary forces: the comprador bourgeoisie allied with Neo-Fascists and organized crime.

It was these forces in Ukraine that were instrumental in destroying all the socialist gains, economic sovereignty and bringing about a profound lumpenisation of society.

It is through these forces that the USA formed a puppet vertical power structure and introduced external control of the country.

It was through these forces that the USA unleashed in Ukraine a fratricidal civil war, a war against the citizens of Donbass who are upholding their constitutional rights and freedoms. It was these forces which, at the instigation of the US ruling circles, brought about a development of the civil war in Donbass into a war against Russia.

Considering that the USA, Europe, and NATO are providing the Ukrainian regime with modern weapons, military experts and mercenaries we should, on behalf of our forum, warn the world that humankind has already been effectively dragged into a new world war.

I would like to draw one of the many tragic parallels.

During the Second World War, the war against the USSR,



Ending potsdam table.

Europe was working for Hitler and was complicit in the Nazi crimes against humanity. Today, acting in the interests of the USA, Europe is supplying weapons to the pro-Fascist regime in Ukraine, is strengthening it financially and is supporting its crimes politically and information-wise.

The continuation of this policy will inevitably lead to the spread of the theatre of hostilities to the territory of the EU.

The aggressive attempts of some new European countries, notably Poland, Hungary, Romania and the Baltic states, to revise the post-World War II borders will merely speed up this process.

I urge the communist and workers' parties of Europe to conduct coordinated protest actions against the final destruction of peace in Europe achieved on the basis of the Helsinki agreements of 1975. The events involving the cynical destruction of the sovereign state of Yugoslavia should be a lesson for all of us.

The former Foreign Minister of Romania, Marga, recently said without mincing words, "Ukraine is within unnatural borders. It should cede territories: Transcarpathia to Hungary, Galicia to Poland, Bukovina to Romania. These are the territories of other countries."

US senator Lindsey Graham said cynically that with American weapons Ukraine will fight Russia to the last man.

In supporting the Fascist regime in Ukraine, the USA and

NATO are pursuing a policy whose final goal has been bluntly outlined by former US Senator Richard Blake, "We don't care how many Ukrainians will die. How many women, children, civilians, and military. We don't care. Ukraine cannot take the peace decision. The peace decision can only be taken in Washington. But for now we want to continue this war, we will fight to the last Ukrainian."

At the last meeting in Izmir I warned that the threat of a fascist onslaught is real.

Today it is obvious that the US-led collective West is using Fascism and the Fascist regime in Ukraine to dismember and destroy Russian statehood by military means, to destroy the independence and sovereignty of Belarus. The war in Ukraine is a war exclusively in the interests of the USA imperialists.

In their imperialist frenzy, the political mafiosi of Europe and the USA, cynically manipulating public consciousness, including the consciousness of the workers, funnel billions of dollars into the production of lethal weapons and ammunition. The USA and its satellites are cynically promoting the thesis that the time has come, like in 1945, to use the nuclear weapon. The former British Prime Minister Liz Truss said she would be ready to use it.

I call on the participants in the meeting to resolutely come out against the concentration of huge numbers of NATO troops and military hardware on the Ukraine-Belarus border, and to come out against NATO military exercises in order to prepare and use the nuclear weapon.

The imperialists turn a blind eye to the fact that Zelensky's pro-Fascist regime is ruthlessly doing away with political opponents. Any manifestations of free thinking are quashed by punitive units. The crimes of Hitlerite's and their accomplices during the Second World War who burned people alive in Oswiecim and who staged Gernica and Khatyn massacres are being glorified.

The monuments and graves of Soviet soldiers who gave their lives to have the flames in the furnaces of Nazi death camps doused are being destroyed.

This happens not only in Ukraine but all over Europe. The Moloch of glorification of Nazi criminals devours minds, turning homo sapiens ("the wise man") into a "mad man."

Neo-Fascists do not only hush up the verdict of the international Nuremberg Tribunal, but openly and cynically pursue the policy of having it revised and cancelled.

The process of creating a semblance of the Nazi Third Reich is under way.

The Fascist regime in Ukraine, like its prototype nurtured by transnational capital, American and British corporations, is building the Ukrainian "Reich" on the ideology of the superiority of the so-called "indigenous" race. Russians throughout the country's territory have essentially been proclaimed to be outcasts. |

Since February 2014 Ukraine, under USA tutelage, has traversed the distance from Maidan to Majdanek.

Comrades,

In view of what is happening in Ukraine, I would like, on behalf of the UCP-CPSU parties, to draw your attention to the fact that unfortunately, there is no consensus among communist and workers' parties on the nature of the armed conflict in Ukraine, its causes and consequences for the world community. Nor can we agree with the political charges levelled at the CPRF of renouncing the Marxist approach in assessing the character and causes of the military confrontation, i.e. support of an imperialist war.

This amounts to accusing the CPRF of opportunism.

The communists of Greece, like the communists of Russia, Portugal, Spain, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Germany, France, Belarus, Moldova, and many others, have voiced a resolute and principled support for the position of the UCP in the struggle against the Fascisation of Ukraine, especially after the US-initiated military coup in February 2014, and the turning of the ideology of integral nationalism into a state ideology and the formation of a Fascist state. The communists of Ukraine appreciate your solidarity.

But I cannot accept it when, in making insulting assessments of the position of the CPRF, hence the positions of

all the 20 UCP-CPSU parties, the leadership of the Communist Party of Greece, and the parties which have backed them, have ignored Lenin's behest to us to be dialecticians, have ignored the principles of party, comradely discussion, inter-party dialogue. That is, in working out a position on this pivotal issue of the modern stage of class struggle, the real threat of a Third World War, to take counsel with the comrades in the communist movement, before making these political assessments public. In publishing these assessments, to which you are fully entitled even when not only the problems of Greece are at issue, I believe that we are duty-bound to be responsible for the possible damage to the communist movement. Unfortunately, your position does not unite but divides our movement.

Personally, I am saddened that in stating their position and sticking political labels in the process, our comrades from the CPG did not bother to seek the opinion of the Communist Party of Ukraine, the communists of the rebellious DPR and LPR, did not ask the internationalist communist from Columbia, Alexis Costillo, who died on 28th October 2022, what he had been fighting for in Donbass since 2014. May his memory live forever.

Reading the text of the CPG Statement, I asked myself, how, after such assessments, the communists of Ukraine, the DPR and LPR are supposed to act. The Fascist regime of Ukraine has banned their party, stripped it of freedom of expression, democratic rights and freedoms and is physically destroying them. Where do we go from here? I did not get an answer.

I am supportive of all those who are worried about the threats of opportunism in the communist movement in all the areas of class struggle. No less dangerous for us is Trotskyism which causes great harm under drum-thumping jingoistic slogans.

Once again, on behalf of the UCP-CPSU parties I call on the CPG and the parties which have backed their assessments, to consolidate our efforts in the struggle against imperialism, the capitalist system, and their Fascist underlings.

Because any confrontation, especially a military one, has its specific features, the Marxist's prime task is to reveal their class character and give them a class-conscious assessment.

I maintain that the civil war of the people of Donbass against the Kiev regime is a national liberation struggle, essentially a war for independence from the ruling Fascist regime on issues of local government policy, for the right to a broad autonomy, for the right to one's own vision of history, for the right to speak their native (Russian) tongue and not to follow the anti-Russian course imposed by the USA.

In other words, proceeding from the Marxist theory, the military conflict between the citizens of Donbass and the Fascist regime in Kiev cannot be seen as an imperialist war. Likewise, the armed confrontation with Russia provoked by the Fascist Kiev regime on USA directive, is not an imperialist war in the direct sense of the word, it is Russia's struggle against an external threat to its national security stemming from the expansion of NATO (today Ukraine is already a de facto NATO member) and Fascism.

Eight years ago the people's militia of the Donbass republics single-handedly resisted the foreign-armed, NATO-trained many thousand-strong Ukrainian army.

For eight years Fascist shelling of peaceful Donbass cities claimed the lives of old folks, women, and children and destroyed infrastructure, deprived people of water and electricity.

Meanwhile throughout the eight years the USA, Europe, and NATO, backed the Fascist Kiev regime politically, financially, and militarily.

The so-called champions of democratic values were silent and the "free" journalists of the bourgeois press ignored the woes and suffering of Ukrainian citizens living in Donbass.

By the end of 2021 a many thousand-strong army of Ukrainian nationalists commanded by American and NATO instructors and generals from Washington had developed a detailed plan of destroying Donbass.

The implementation of that plan and the defeat of the people's militia of Donbass would have inevitably led to the total annihilation of the multinational population, the majority of whom were Russian-speaking, and many of whom had already become Russian citizens of their own accord.

One has to bear in mind that since 2011 Neo-Fascists, considering the residents of Donbass to be second-rate Ukrainians, publicly spoke about their programme of building a Ukraine without Donbass and Crimea, about the need to surround Donbass with a barbed wire fence, and about dropping an atom bomb. Such are the realities.

Throughout the eight years the USA, EUROPE and NATO covered up their aggressive and cynical policy of using Ukraine in their interests by paying lip-service to a peaceful settlement of the Donbass conflict even as the Kiev regime used the army, tanks and heavy artillery against its own citizens in violation of the Constitution.

The participants in this Meeting will know that the negotiating process in the framework of Minsk (2015) agreements approved by the UN SC was deliberately sabotaged by Kiev with the consent of and on directives from at the

USA and the European Union. Germany, France, and Poland refused to comply with their obligation to be guarantors of the implementation of peaceful settlement plans they had signed in February of 2014, 2015 (Minsk agreements) and 2019 (the Steinmeier formula).

Since 2015 the UN SC did not see it fit to demand compliance from the signatories of the Minsk agreements.

Faced with the real threat of destruction of Donbass and meeting the request of the DPR and LPR to defend Donbass, Russia delivered a pre-emptive strike, partly to ensure its national security in the face of NATO's aggressive policy.

As further developments showed, the establishment of peace in Ukraine and the preservation of Ukraine as an independent state is not part of Washington and NATO plans.

In the light of the above, the position of the CPRF, in the shared opinion of the UCP-CPSU, is quite reasonable and politically congruent with the communist party.

In supporting the draft final Declaration of our Meeting, the UCP-CPSU proceeds from the assumption that the increasingly reactionary character of modern imperialism has been made possible by a range of factors which led to the decline of the workers' movement and the weakening of communist and workers' parties.

In determining the tactics of our actions and the main areas of struggle we should proceed from the premise that the modern balance of forces in the world has shifted in favour of reaction, which is using Fascism.

I believe that this balance cannot be changed in favour of the working people without new approaches to coordinating our work, new approaches to the consolidation of the efforts of communist and workers' parties and without working out concrete proposals for the transformation of the world.

In sowing discord among the working classes, using puppet regimes, Neo-Fascists and Neo-Nazis, imperialism sharply increases exploitation of countries and peoples, and destroys the foundations of people's democracy and a just world order, diminishes the revolutionary significance of the principles of proletarian internationalism, undermines the cohesion of the working classes, including by creating a special "working" class of war which lives off the war and cannot imagine itself without it.

The sanctions policy initiated by the USA and Britain and its political satellites inevitably worsens the life of ordinary people, weakens the economic potential of states, provokes the growth of unemployment, and consequently increases social discontent and, unfortunately, divides the workers' movement.



Ending potsdam table.

What do we see today in Europe and indeed in the USA also? Prices and tariffs have grown many times over. Enterprises are shutting down, people demonstratively burn gas, electricity and water supply bills, stage protest actions against the policies of their governments, one of their demands being to stop the sanctions madness and the war in Ukraine.

I am convinced that the communist and workers' parties are duty-bound to help the working people to concentrate their efforts on the struggle for their economic and social rights on the understanding that it is impossible to change their life and get rid of slavery without the struggle for political power. Without the struggle against the threat of fascism and for a change of the social system that engenders it, that is, capitalism as such.

Today the progressive forces, let us face it, are losing the cognitive war, the war for the minds of people. It is our task to win it. This is the only way if we are to avert the catastrophe of a Third World War.

Without struggle there will be no victories.

In this connection I believe that in the context of the goals and tasks of our Meeting, considering the situation which has taken shape in the world and the need to struggle for an end to the war and establish a just world order, we, the communist and workers' parties, should concentrate our efforts on the following areas:

- The strengthening of our solidarity, solidarity with

other progressive forces in the struggle against Neo-Fascism and the instigators of a Third World War.

- Organising a system of truthful public information about what is taking place in Ukraine today on the basis of a class assessment.
- Explaining to people that the civil war in Donbass (2014-2022), is a national liberation struggle and the armed clash between Ukraine and Russia was provoked and unleashed by the pro-Fascist Ukrainian regime on the demand and in the interests of the USA in order to create a bridgehead for dismembering and destroying Russia as a geopolitical rival and to explain to people how it threatens Europe and humankind.
- Stepping up the struggle against any attempts to glorify the Nazi ideology, restoring the true history of the Second World War.
- Supporting (without going back on our ideological principles) those who come out for peace, against exploitation and the policy of neo-colonialism regardless of their political affiliation.
- Settlement and an end to the war in Ukraine regardless of their political affiliation.

I also consider it necessary to bend every effort at the level of national parliaments and the European parliament to neutralise the provocative actions of the USA and its allies in the Asia Pacific Region against China. Combined with the war in Ukraine and the possible direct clash of nuclear

powers, China and the USA, especially against the background of declarations about a Russian “nuclear threat” the worst forecasts may, unfortunately, become a reality.

Dear comrades!

The struggle to put an end to the fratricidal war in Ukraine unleashed by the transnational corporations and their stooges in the governments of European and not only European states, the war in which Washington-led NATO is a de facto side to the conflict (supply of arms, ammunition and training of Ukrainian armed forces, funding and controlling the military campaign) is the struggle for preventing a Third World War which is but a step away. We must do everything to prevent it.

Esteemed comrades,

The new tasks of our movement call for a new quality of organization of our work to coordinate and consolidate our efforts.

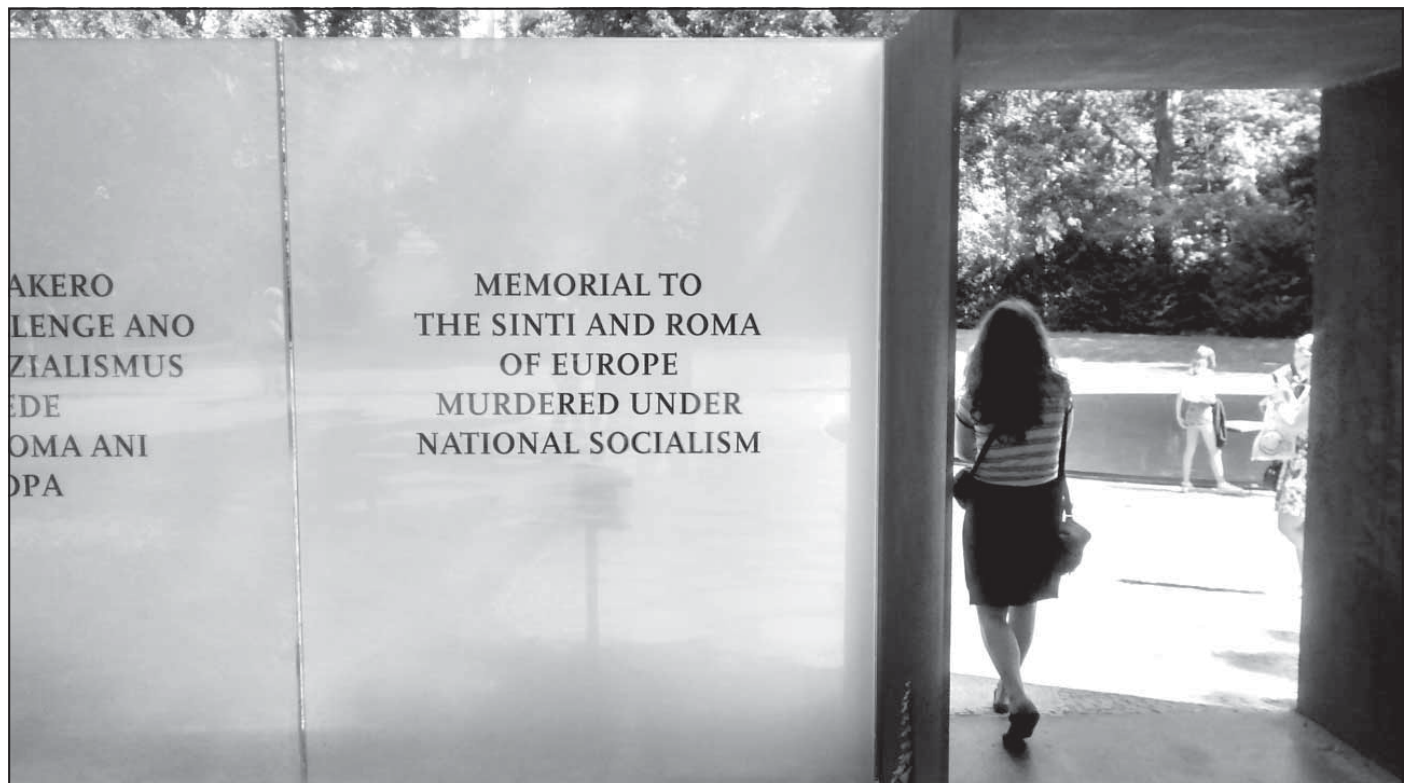
In connection with our decision on the new composition of the working group to prepare our annual international meetings, on behalf of the UCP-CPSU, I submit the following proposals:

- The permanent members of the WG should be the ruling communist parties, i.e. those of China, Vietnam, Cuba, the KDPR and Laos.

- These parties, which have corresponding institutions, can enrich our work by offering theoretical perspectives on modern problems, real achievements in building socialism, developing real aspects of counter-propaganda in the struggle against bourgeois theories.
- The relevant infrastructure of these parties could be used for the training of professional fighters, profound analysis of world problems and development of proposals concerning the coordination of our actions.
- To support the initiative on promoting an agreed candidature from parties of a concrete region, which would contribute to the working out of agreed proposals for discussion at the WG.
- To get rid of the practice of including in the WG members who “are closest to the Emperor,” let alone representatives of phantom parties.
- Including in the WG parties which are today on the cutting edge of the class struggle against imperialism and have concrete experience of such struggle.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to address the participants in this international Meeting and to wish new victories to the communists of Cuba and to express confidence of our victory.

Long live proletarian internationalism!



ALVIR

Book Review by David Matters

Revolutionary Philosophy by Jagrup

The book is dedicated to the revolutionist Karl Marx on the 200th anniversary of his birth.

From the Preface to the Conclusion the book *Revolutionary Philosophy* provides a refreshing and alive erudition of Marxism-Leninism. In its 96 pages it provides a brief but useful study text that explores and outlines the philosophical basis and links this to the development of Marxism and Leninism. Particularly valuable is the outlining and partisan defence of the revolutionary nature of the science of Marxism-Leninism.

The chapter headings provide a useful overview of the contents of this book:

- Revolutionary Philosophy
- Space and Time
- The Question of spirit and soul
- The general laws of development
- The theory of free time
- From on the significance of militant materialism
- Thesis on Feuerbach-Karl Marx
- Lenin On Dialectics

I have not seen any other Marxist work that so fully deals with modern Idealism and the capture of Science by the Bourgeois Philosophers of our Era to denigrate, confuse, and counter our Militant Materialism.

The author says:

“In the name of materialism, the propagation and practice of non-dialectical (metaphysical) concepts of materialism are posing a practical obstacle to Social development. It is helping idealism to be continued and flourished that has lost its feet of argument in the intellectual debate. Social development is not gaining momentum. The primary task before the dialectical-materialists (the disciples of the revolutionary philosophy) is to identify and abandon the path of the non-dialectical materialists. They need to inspect the divisions between the non-dialectical materialism line and the “revolutionary philosophical” category: “Material conditions give rise to ideas and ideas become material forces to create new ‘material conditions’”. In this way, the revolutionary philosophy also emphasizes the importance of ‘idea.’”

This is an important and thought-provoking contribution. The writer goes on to examine the need of modern communists to examine the ideas of Hegel, Feuerbach, and Marx. In examining the concepts of Spirit Soul and other



aspects of life Jagrup gives priority to the materialist basis of these existences. The attempts by Idealists to capture Science and thereby render it inert and safe for the service of the Bourgeoisie are discussed at length. An examination of categories is provided in an inciteful manner. The unity and struggle of opposites and the exposition of Dialectics applied from a materialist point of view.

This is a restoration of our science taken from the hands of the counter-revolution and put firmly back on a revolutionary course. All who want to change the existing order of society and to resume a revolutionary struggle against the capitalist order would benefit from a study of this book.

The translation is true to the thought and the fact that it is from an Asian language to English also provides insight into the thought processes. Many of the Soviet Publications do not place these thoughts in such a comprehensible format and examine these questions from the standpoint that does not introduce metaphysical thinking into the explanations. The book is not mechanical and hence metaphysical and is free of the western religious bias introduced into other works.

The explanations are easy to understand. I would highly recommend our party and others to study this work that provides such a useful and considered insight into our science, freeing it of the dogma and the attacks of bourgeois science.

English Translation: Varinder Khurana
 Publisher: Progress International Patiala (Punjab).
 Date of publication: 2018.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Communists must support the Uluru Statement from the Heart and campaign for the greatest possible YES vote in the referendum!

The Uluru Statement from the Heart is an open invitation to all Australians to walk together with First Nations people towards a better future. It is a moving call within the Voice, Treaty, and Truth framework, a unifying path towards changing our society. The Voice is not the end, but the beginning of a struggle to move past the colonial legacy of Australia towards principles of justice, self-determination, solidarity, and friendship between peoples.

The Uluru Statement from the Heart is a step by the most progressive forces in the First Nations communities to hold out the hand of friendship so that the working peoples in this country can unite and strengthen their struggle towards the end of slavery and oppression. In this way we should see it as the beginning of a movement against colonialism. To amend the colonial constitution is a small step away from the British occupation of this land as the dominant feature of the constitution. The fact that proletarian sections of the first nations along with the progressive forces are linking with the organised Labour movement in a united front is a progressive step.

The upcoming Referendum on the Voice is an opportunity for Australians to declare their opposition to the ongoing legacy of colonialism and acts of genocide within Australia. We must win the YES vote to open up space for progressive change in Australia and declare support for recognition and improvement of the position of First peoples in Australia. We must defeat the NO campaign. A “No” victory would create polarisation and division that will enable fascism, racism, and prejudice to be normalised in Australia. We must defeat the racist and colonial attacks represented by the refusal to support the moderate bourgeois reform of a First Nations voice to parliament.

The working class cannot rise to end the exploitation of itself as a class if it does not stand against all other forms of oppression. This struggle is a test to determine who is

on the side of progress and who is on the side of reaction in this country. There is no forward option for genuine communist and progressive forces, or for the working class than to embrace and campaign for the greatest possible YES vote in the referendum.

The defeat of the referendum for the voice to parliament would guarantee the removal of further efforts to improve the position of First Nations people in Australia from the political agenda and would be viewed as a definitive victory for reaction.

Whilst some opponents to the Voice have called for “treaty instead of voice” or “treaty before voice,” precedence shows that the defeat of a referendum removes the political question from the system for a long time to come. The defeat of the referendum around the republic in 1999 due to divisions within the Australian republican movement saw republicans vote for the continuation of the monarchy because they couldn’t get the model of republic they wanted. This has seen the question of an Australian republic recede from the political agenda for decades. The successful passage of this referendum and the establishment of a permanent voice to parliament is itself not an obstacle to the future realisation of treaty and a truth telling process. It’s defeat certainly would present a profound setback to further progress on the national question in Australia.

Those who are calling for a “progressive no” vote, or who are otherwise softening and muffling support for a YES vote should reconsider their position. They should think about what it is they are actually supporting and which side they are actually on when they are undermining the campaign to win a YES vote in the referendum for the voice to parliament. How could one be on the side of progress, justice, and even socialism(!), if your actions in practice reinforce the efforts of reaction to bury the beginnings of what could be the beginnings of a real movement for change?

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Sydney, NSW
Secretary of the CPA NSW State Committee

AMR

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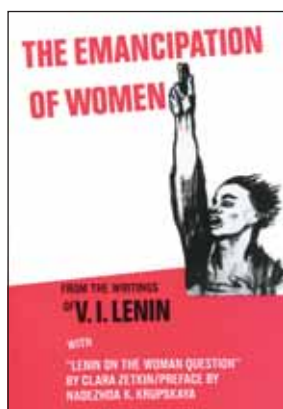


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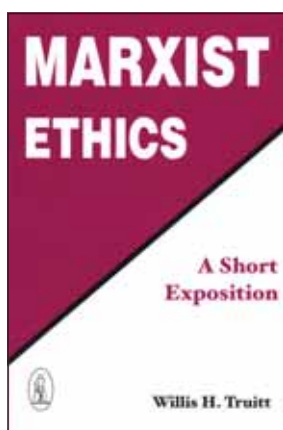
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“The Voice is a small step under bourgeois democracy but a giant leap forward in the unity of the working people of this country against the vestiges of colonialism and racism.”

D Matters Editor

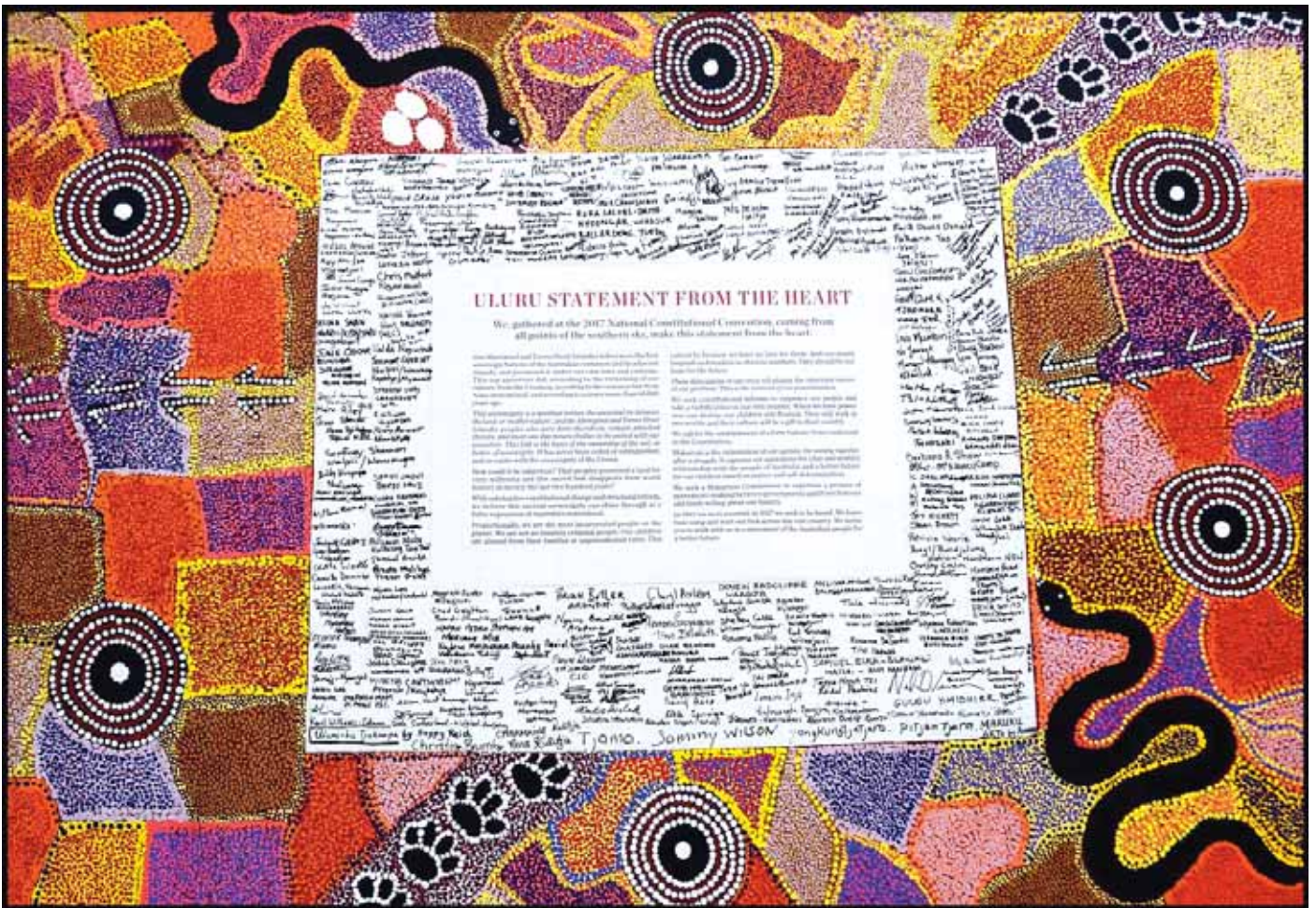


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