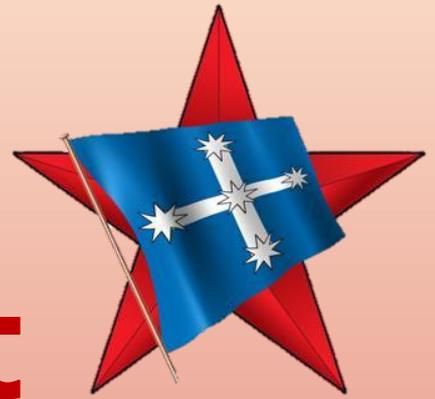


Australian Communist



JOURNAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA (MARXIST-LENINIST)
Autumn 2020 | cpaml.org | info@cpaml.org

The Role of a Revolutionary
Vanguard Party

Building a Marxist-Leninist Party
Requires Perseverance and
Commitment

The Independent Fight
of the Working Class
and more...





“If there is to be revolution, there must be a revolutionary party. Without a revolutionary party, without a party built on the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory and in the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary style, it is impossible to lead the working class and the broad masses of the people in defeating imperialism and its running dogs.”

– Mao Zedong, "Revolutionary Forces of the World Unite, Fight Against Imperialist Aggression!" (November 1948)

We are in uncertain times. The contradictions of capitalism are being exposed at a rapid pace. The COVID-19 pandemic is spreading around the world. The health crisis and the economic crisis are intertwined, impacting and strengthening each other. The response of the ruling capitalist class and their agents in the bourgeois governments are highlighting the contradictions inherent in the capitalist economic system. The period of neo-liberalism was a capitalist response to falling rates of profit. Their unceasing search for ever greater profits saw decades of the privatisation, destruction and scaling back of government-funded health services, welfare support for the poor and unemployed, and other public services. It saw the increase of ever more precarious employment standards and the destruction of workers' rights. The economy chugged along fed by what seemed to be a never-ending supply of cheap credit. Indebtedness, both household and corporate, skyrocketed. "All power to the free market" was the catchcry of the imperialist profiteers. But now all that is solid melts into air as the inevitable crisis has arrived. Record high stock markets are falling at rates greater than in the Great Depression. Trillions of dollars of tax-payers money is being dished out to corporations and businesses to try and keep them afloat. Unemployment could hit record highs as the world goes into lockdown to combat the deadly pandemic in societies with inadequate health systems to deal with the crisis. All the while, the existential threat of runaway climate change continues unabated. Capitalism has well and truly outlived its historical usefulness for the development of humanity. Now more clearly than ever the question is being posed to us – will our future be socialism or barbarism?

Capitalism might appear to be on death's door. But history shows us that it will not fall of itself. It must be consciously overthrown. It must be condemned to the dustbin of history by the working class and other working people in a revolutionary transformation of society that does away with the rule of a tiny minority of parasitic exploiters. Only then can the working class and the broad masses of the people run society to serve the needs of the majority of the people and humanity, instead of the profit margins of the imperialists and the multinational corporations.

But if there is to be a revolution, there must be a revolutionary organisation capable of expressing the revolutionary consciousness of the working class and guiding the working masses in their struggle to overthrow the capitalist ruling class. Marxist-Leninists call that organisation the revolutionary vanguard party. Building the vanguard party is a crucial task if we wish to see the end of the capitalist system that is causing misery for so many people throughout the world.

With that in mind, in this edition of *Australian Communist*, we present a collection of some recently published articles. Among them are articles examining different aspects of the task of building a revolutionary vanguard party. It is not an easy task, but it is a central one if the working masses are ever to throw off the tiny class of exploiters that dominate and rule society. We hope the reader will find them both useful and interesting.

For those that are prepared to join us in the task of building the revolutionary party, of serving the people in struggle, and fighting for an independent and socialist Australia – we welcome your enquiries for membership: info@cpaml.org



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Communist Party of
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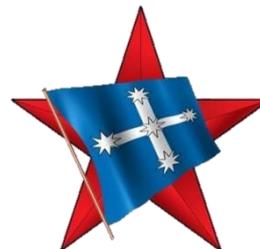
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**Comments, contributions,
and membership enquires
welcome!**



The Role of a Revolutionary Vanguard Party

by *Bill F.*

Most people who are serious about the need for revolutionary change in Australia agree that the working class is the main force, and that the working class needs its own revolutionary organisation.

The form and style of working class revolutionary organisation is a point of difference between various trends in the revolutionary movement.

Marxist-Leninists seek to build a revolutionary vanguard party as the ideological, political and organisational leadership of the working class.

Here we look at some of the characteristics of a revolutionary vanguard party and examine how these differ from other models sometimes put forward.

An organisation of revolutionaries

A key feature is Lenin's concept of a 'vanguard' party consisting of 'professional' revolutionaries dedicated to organising and leading the working class through its inevitable economic and political struggles.

Revolutionary work should be carried out in a way that steadily develops the political consciousness of the working class.

Political consciousness empowers workers to understand the economic and political features of their particular society, their class position in that society and the need to ultimately overthrow the dominant class rulers of the society, rather than merely pursuing day to day narrow economic interests.

To provide the necessary leadership for this to happen, it follows that party members must study and really grasp the essence of Marxist

ideology and philosophy. It is not enough just to be 'progressive' or 'left' or even 'militant' without a depth of understanding of Marxism.

Depth does not mean theoretical understanding alone, although familiarity with fundamental concepts is essential.

It means being able to interpret events from a class standpoint, being able to apply the Marxist method of dialectical analysis to all sorts of struggles, situations and people.

It means finding ways to advance the political awareness of workers in struggle and the class as a whole.

It means finding ways to mobilise workers into activities and actions where they can learn from their own experience the real nature of the class system that exploits and oppresses them.

It means every comrade must become an active contributor, taking responsibility and being accountable to the collective.

Some may have the time, capacity and opportunity to contribute more than others, but all play their part in advancing the Party Program.

In this revolutionary party Lenin noted, "...all distinctions as between workers and intellectuals, and certainly distinctions of trade and profession, must be utterly obliterated." (*What is to be Done*, 1902)

Most other models of revolutionary organisation do not require such high individual and collective standards from the membership.



Some put forward the concept of a ‘mass revolutionary party’ which usually means that anyone can join, whether or not they are activists or just active when they feel like it, or are merely passive supporters.

Seemingly anti-elitist, this concept ensures that the membership is quickly sorted in tiers, with the leadership dominated by a small group of wellread and articulate intellectuals rather than both workers and intellectuals working and learning alongside each other in struggle.

Mass line method of political work

An important key feature of a revolutionary vanguard party is the way in which it conducts its political work amongst the workers and the masses.

The starting point must always be investigation, both academic and practical.

Mao Zedong put it bluntly enough, “No investigation, no right to speak.”

In other words, listen to people, seek the facts and don’t just charge in with preconceived ideas.

Knowledge must be connected to practice and this demands research, study and understanding of the principal and secondary contradictions in society and situations.

After investigation, sort out the main contradiction from the secondary ones.

Sort out the strengths and weaknesses of the forces involved, the people’s forces and the enemy’s forces.

Sort out the tactics of struggle most likely to involve the mass of workers or people in struggle, and work to win support for this.

In this revolutionary party Lenin noted, “...all distinctions as between workers and intellectuals, and certainly distinctions of trade and profession, must be utterly obliterated.”

At all times, promote unity around the main demands, be where the struggle is hardest, build networks of allies and encourage natural leaders from the ranks of the masses.

In the aftermath of struggle, whether successful or not, be there to assist in summing up and drawing out the main lessons from people’s experience. In this way, comrades can move the level of political consciousness to a higher level.

This style of political work is not easy. It requires

comrades to have close and regular involvement with people over a prolonged period of time, whether in the workplace, community or in particular single-issue organisations.

In contrast to this, the style of some petty-bourgeois radical groups is to set up a headquarters and drag people away from their natural circles into a ‘left’ hothouse.

They hobnob with trade union officials and ‘left’ personalities.

Some even blow in on activities organised by others and push their newspapers, leaflets and badges promoting often completely different issues. Such behaviour only alienates people and gives a bad name to ‘socialists’ and the ‘left’ generally.

Democratic centralism

Democratic centralism is also a key feature of a vanguard party. It is characterised by a high level of self-discipline based on an understanding that the role of a Communist is to serve the people and to recognise the importance of the collective, and never to seek personal gains.

Decision-making is carried out through systems of democratic consultation and democratic voting.



Once a decision has been made, there is an obligation on all members to carry it out.

Dissenting minority views can be reserved and re-presented on a future occasion, but in the meantime, all members are expected to unite and work to implement democratically agreed decisions. It was plainly put by Mao Zedong in his article, *The Role of the Chinese Communist Party in the National War* (1938) where he stated, "We must affirm anew the discipline of the party, namely: the individual is subordinate to the organisation, the minority is subordinate to the majority, the lower level is subordinate to the higher level and the entire membership is subordinate to the Central Committee."

Mao himself was in a minority position on the Central Committee for more than ten years, but never violated democratic centralism.

In other political organisations, such discipline does not apply. Those with minority views can just walk away from any responsibility to implement the agreed policies. Factional activities are accepted and often formalised, even when the factions work to undermine and sabotage democratic decision-making.

This petty-bourgeois attitude to party discipline stems from the substitution of liberalism and trade union politics and methods over revolutionary politics and methods.

Forces of the state

Yet another key feature is the attitude to the forces of the state apparatus.

While making use of the limited scope of 'legal democratic rights' to agitate, distribute material, conduct meetings and so on, a vanguard party also takes into account the surveillance and disruption instigated by the paid agents of the state apparatus.

It should never be forgotten that many millions of dollars are pumped into spreading rumours, intercepting mail, telephone and email communications, tracking comrades, friends and acquaintances, to say nothing of outright spying, infiltrating agents and poisoning relationships, as well as blatant bribery and intimidation.

There may now be greater recognition of this with the WikiLeaks and Snowden disclosures, but that just means the revolutionary movements must exercise greater responsibility and greater care.

A revolutionary vanguard party guards its members, supporters and mass connections as much as possible.

It does not conduct all its business in public scrutiny. It does not proceed as though the ruling class in 'its' country is so 'civilized', so 'nice' as to never resort to vicious, fascist repression in defence of its wealth and power and domination of society.



Building a Marxist-Leninist Party Requires Perseverance and Commitment

by Nick G.

On our website, you can read CPA (M-L) founding Chairman Ted Hill's 1970 funeral oration for Comrade Jim Scott [See: <http://www.cpaml.org/about1.php?id=1162>] Jim Scott had a unique significance among the departed comrades that we feature on our website. He joined the Communist Party of Australia in 1920, the year it was founded. He also joined the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) when revisionism in the CPA required its reconstitution as a revolutionary organisation. Indeed, he participated in its founding Congress in March 1964.

Jim Scott made a life-long commitment to the study and application of Marxism-Leninism and to the cause of the emancipation from capitalism of the Australian working class. In his early thirties when he joined the CPA, he shared with it the first 50 years of its existence, including the six years to 1970 as a member of the CPA (M-L).

Hill described Jim Scott as "a person of revolutionary integrity and principle.... he never wavered and he passed with great credit all the tests." Hill could have been describing himself in these words.

Hill, Jim Scott and all the other veterans of our cause exemplified the perseverance and commitment required to build a genuinely Marxist-Leninist party and to extend its influence under the conditions of an advanced capitalism dominated by US imperialism and in both the highs and lows of working class struggle. We feature them in the "Our Comrades" section of our website so that we can continue to learn from them.

Those of us who may be said to be the current generation of veterans of the Party are only too well aware of our own deficiencies and of the need to model ourselves on the Hills, the Scotts

and others of previous generations. We respect and learn from our veterans' vast experiences and practice of building a Marxist-Leninist party and revolutionary movement in Australia.

Renewed interest in joining the Party

We are living at a time when the CPA (M-L) is again attracting the interest of people who want to make a commitment to ending capitalism, to developing as Marxist-Leninists to serve the people in the protracted struggle for socialism as the contradictions and extremes of capitalism are becoming increasingly clear. There is renewed interest in joining the Party, especially from young people. It is a welcome sign that we are emerging from a period of relative stagnation, from a time when the edge had been taken off working class struggle by the witting or unwitting complicity of the unions in the legal and other restrictions placed on them, and by the continuing hold of parliamentarism on otherwise quite politically aware people.

It is important that there is ease of mind on the part of those coming into the Party about what their commitment means and about the prospects for involvement in struggle.



Not anyone can or should join a revolutionary party. The Party works as a collective and there is no place for capitalist individualism, self-promotion or factionalism. We are not a debating club or a 'left bloc'. Membership requires close connections to the people, particularly in struggles of the people. Mass work and social investigation is the bed-rock of the Communist Party of Australia (M-L)'s ideology, political work and organisation.

Hill, as founding Chairperson of the CPA (M-L) said he wanted the party to be hard to join and easy to leave. He was reflecting Lenin's famous dictum "better fewer, but better" (<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1923/mar/02.htm>), written in 1923 when Lenin argued for "extraordinarily strict" conditions on the recruitment of workers into the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party).

"Hard to join" should not be misunderstood. No-one joins a revolutionary party as a ready-made Marxist-Leninist. We all develop over time. Party membership should be open to any person who agrees with the Party Program, accepts its organisational principles and rules, and is prepared to put these things into practice. For any person wishing to have a merely platonic relationship with the Party, sympathising with it or only partially agreeing with it, and not being prepared to work for it, then there should not be a readily available open door.

Likewise, "easy to leave" does not mean adopting a laissez-faire attitude towards one's responsibilities. However, all development is uneven and some people can swing from commitment to indifference and apathy, or even embrace revisionism and outright factional activity. Or they might win the lottery. With a change of social being comes a change of social consciousness.

Hill envisioned neither a tiny closed sect nor an open mass organisation. In Party building, these

two extremes constitute a unity of opposites and there is both attraction and struggle between them. What must be striven for is a balance based on the prevailing conditions of the consciousness of the working class and the level of stability or crisis in the system we are trying to abolish.

Whilst the Party is a social organisation and a community of like-minded people, there are times and circumstances when revolutionaries and communists have to work independently and be able to find their political bearings in the struggles of the people and through study. One aspect is the studying of Marxist-Leninist theory; the other is social investigation of the current circumstances and political views of working class Australians.

Learning from mistakes

It is inevitable that mistakes have been made, and continue to be made, in a permanent cycle of building the Communist Party. It is dialectical materialism. We are the first to admit that we have sometimes made mistakes. We learn from the experiences of past and present mistakes and guard against repeating these errors, or veering to the opposite extremes in rectifying them. There are times when we have not been bold enough in approaching people to join the Party – some very good people who should have been approached were not. At other times, people were brought into the Party, and then neglected, given no guidance in how to undertake work for the organisation. They subsequently left, through no fault of their own or were driven out by bad leadership decisions.

New Party members must be helped to have a realistic view of what their membership of the Party entails. At the height of the upsurge brought on by the battles against conscription and the Vietnam War, there was substantial recruitment of revolutionary workers and students. Some of those have indeed stood the



test of the times; for others, joining the Party was akin to running away to sea to join the pirates. When the great upsurge abated in the late 70s and early 80s they failed to adjust to falling away of revolutionary activity. Their romanticism foundered on the rocks of reality. The material conditions and the all-pervasive influence of social democracy took its toll on some.

Many young Australians (even some of our veterans!) have taken to the surf and will, perhaps, appreciate this analogy. You can have the healthiest physique and the best surfboard in the world, but to successfully catch a wave you need to have some experience and an appreciation of the laws of motion of the sea. Professional surfers pay close attention to this and develop from initial impressions to real knowledge. Be that as it may, any surfer will simply waste their energy, burn themselves out, and ultimately give up if the first thing they do is wildly paddle when there is no swell coming through and no wave about to break. Or if the swells are irregular and the waves are slow in forming, and the sun is weaving its soporific charms, they may doze off and be caught unawares when a wave does approach.

The key thing with surfing is to practice, practice and practice, being prepared to fall off and take reasonable risks. You can know everything about the surf but unless you keep getting out and riding waves you'll never improve. The combination of involvement in struggle, with theory developing from that and being tested and refined again and again in struggle, is essential for every party member.

The optimism of Marxist-Leninists comes from understanding the social and economic laws of capitalism and the unshakeable confidence in the collective power of the people in struggle.

Also, we need to know our limitations. We can't be involved in giant confrontations with the state if we aren't properly prepared for it.

The lesson here is that Party building will inevitably occur in periods of both social stability and social crisis, both in the absence of a revolutionary situation and under conditions of revolutionary upheaval. Objective conditions combined with the Marxism-Leninism practiced by the revolutionary organisation determine the pace of Party building in different conditions. For many of us, our Party membership will cover

more of the former period than the latter and will have to be sustained over the long haul by a more than instinctive grasp of the laws of motion of capitalism. It will be sustained by an appreciation that there is a revolutionary movement consisting of the comrades one has in the Party and

the people who follow its analyses and pronouncements, and that this revolutionary movement exists even in the quietest and most non-revolutionary times. Indeed, its existence is absolutely necessary to our ability to correctly anticipate and provide leadership when a revolutionary situation matures. The optimism of Marxist-Leninists comes from understanding the social and economic laws of capitalism and the unshakeable confidence in the collective power of the people in struggle.

Revolutionary movements prepare the way for revolutionary situations

Building a revolutionary movement in the absence of a revolutionary situation confronted the founders of Marxism-Leninism. Marx took up his study of political economy in the social nadir that followed the revolutionary situation in



1848. In 1858-9 he authored “*A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*”, advising his comrades that “Just as one does not judge an individual by what he thinks about himself, so one cannot judge such an epoch of transformation by its consciousness, but, on the contrary, this consciousness must be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social forces of production and the relations of production.”

In 1905, a democratic revolution led by striking workers and mutinous sailors broke out in Russia. Even in that period of heightened revolutionary activity, Lenin had to warn that “It must not be forgotten that the current pessimism about our ties with the masses very often serves as a screen for bourgeois ideas regarding the role of the proletariat in the revolution” (*Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*).

In January 1930, after the defeat of the Northern Expedition (First Revolutionary Civil War) and the bloody suppression of the Communists by Chiang Kai-shek in 1927, Mao Zedong had to fight Lin Biao’s pessimism regarding the development of the revolution and wrote his essay “*A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire*”.

So, there is nothing new in the ebbs and flows of protracted struggle facing a revolutionary movement. What we can learn from the lives of Comrades Scott and Hill, and from the Marxist classics, is the need for perseverance and commitment based on an understanding of the laws of motion of contemporary capitalism. Our new comrades will inherit the revolutionary style of building the Party free of both romantic impetuosity and soul-destroying pessimism. We welcome enquiries about membership and will respond as quickly as we can.



Joining a revolutionary party is not for everyone. It requires perseverance and commitment and a strong desire to serve the people in struggle



Dulcie Steffanou: A Communist Life Devoted to Serving Working People

This year marks the 56th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) in March 1964. We commemorate the anniversary with a tribute to one of the leading founding members, Dulcie Steffanou, a Marxist-Leninist and a courageous daughter of the working class. Here, we reproduce a talk given by CPA (M-L) activist **Shirley W.** dedicated to Dulcie's work and her comrades.

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"I acknowledge this meeting is taking place on the stolen lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulan Nation – never ceded, always was and always will be Aboriginal land. We stand in solidarity with the First People in their continues fight for self-determination and sovereignty.

"Dulcie Steffanou was much more than a militant working class woman fighter. She was a communist, a Marxist-Leninist, who believed that fundamental change can only be brought about by aroused and organised masses of the people, led by the working class, to end the exploitation and oppression of the entire working class – women and men. That the liberation of working women cannot be achieved without complete abolition of capitalism and winning socialism as the first step towards the classless society of communism. Dulcie had enormous love and respect for ordinary working people and an unshakeable confidence in their potential capacity to change the world when armed with the science of Marxism.

"Dulcie made an enormous contribution to Australia's working class revolutionary politics, ideology and organisation. An inspiration and a mentor to many working class women and men activists looking for fundamental change to make the world a better place for working people.

"Throughout her life she was involved in numerous battles and mass campaigns with working people. They were big and small workers' and community struggles, local health centres, environmental struggles, kindergartens, schools, small farming communities. For Dulcie,



Comrade Dulcie Steffanou

no struggle of the people was too small and unimportant.

A life of revolutionary struggle, study and changing the world

"Dulcie was born in 1916 into a working class family and grew up in the poor working class suburb of Richmond, Melbourne. She had to leave school at 14 years of age to support her family. She worked in shoe making and clothing



factories around Richmond and Brunswick, and like many young feisty working class women at that time straight away became involved in working class struggles. She joined the Young Communist League in early 1930s and then the Communist Party in mid 1930s where she, along with other young communists, threw themselves into studying Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. She was immersed in the daily working class struggles in her workplace, unions, in community blockades against home evictions, against poverty, war, repression and supporting rights and sovereignty of Australia's First People.

"Her deep practical grass roots experiences as a working class woman and her lifelong insatiable thirst for the study of scientific Marxism (throughout her life she continuously and systematically read and studied Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao) convinced Dulcie that working women's oppression was inseparably linked to the capitalist class exploitation of the working class as a whole. That as long as the means of production and profit were privately owned by a tiny handful of monopolies who extracted, and kept, the profits made from exploitation of the working class, working women will continue to be exploited and oppressed.

"Her direct experiences in class exploitation and struggle, and through the study of Marxism, made it easy for Dulcie to understand the irreconcilable contradictions of capitalism. That, and her close observations of the enormous strides made by working women in the Socialist Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s, and later in the People's Republic of China, convinced Dulcie that socialism creates the necessary conditions for the liberation of women.

"In late 1930s Dulcie, along with other communist women and men, vigorously campaigned against the rise of Fascism in Australia and Europe and against the Nazi war. She was part of the big campaign opposing slanderous attacks on the Soviet Union by imperialist powers.

"She was one of the leading Communist women organising the enormous and broad mass

campaign to stop the Menzies government banning the Communist Party in 1951-1952, aimed at crushing resistance and struggle by workers and unions. In this struggle she had direct political experience of the united front work that brought together and united ordinary people, workers, unionists, peace activists, democratic rights lawyers, and even some politicians from the ALP.

"For many years she was heavily involved in the momentous 1969 Penal Powers struggles with her fellow CPA (Marxist-Leninist) Party comrades, led by Clarrie O'Shea and including Ted Bull, Betty Oke, Norm Gallagher and Betty Little, who at different times were all Vice-Chairpersons of the CPA (M-L), immersed in mass struggles and the public face of the party.

Combining practice with theory

"Dulcie epitomises the revolutionary working class women deeply involved in class struggles and immersed in the revolutionary class politics. Dulcie's activism in workers' struggles and the Communist movement was guided by her deep knowledge and practice of Marxism and dialectical materialism. Not only was she imbued



Dulcie was exposed to communism and the reality of working class life for women in the factories in the 1930s



with the theory of Marxism, she knew how to use it in different times and circumstances, in the service to the working class. She combined her extensive practical experiences in class struggle with the science of Marxism in Australia's unique conditions. It is the combination of theory and practice in Australian conditions that placed Dulcie and other members of the CPA (M-L) in the leadership of the communist movement and in people's mass struggles in Australia.

Real change comes through people's mass struggle, not orthodox trade union and parliamentary politics

"From the mid-1950s to early 1960s she was one of a growing number of CPA members who were becoming deeply concerned with the political direction of the Soviet Union after the death of Stalin in 1952, which was being followed by the Communist Party of Australia. These differences were also evident in the international communist movement. Dulcie's knowledge of Marxism (not as a dogma) and long experience in class struggles led her and others to found the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) [CPA (M-L)] in 1964.

"Today, 15 March, is the 56th Anniversary of the founding of CPA (M-L). 56 years of uninterrupted revolutionary work.

"The differences centred on the CPA's shifting political position to embracing peaceful transition to socialism through parliament and social democratic reforms, left blocism versus mass work, capturing top union official positions instead of mass work with workers and unions, peaceful co-existence between imperialism and socialism; and organisational principles of the revolutionary communist party of the working class operating under bourgeois class dictatorship.

"Dulcie and others warned against the CPA policy and practice of working in unions for the sole purpose of capturing official union positions as a substitute for real mass work. Together with Ted Hill, the founding Chairman, and other working class leaders in the CPA (M-L) she pointed out

that there are two sides to trade unions under capitalism. On the one hand they are important mass organisations of workers in which communists must work with the rank and file members. The other side is trade unions are institutions of capitalism maintaining and enforcing exploitation of the working class. Communists and militant workers in trade unions must never forget this side of bourgeois trade unions. She insisted that communists must join and work in trade unions, do political mass work amongst the rank and file workers, raising revolutionary class consciousness, listening and learning from workers.

"In contrast, the CPA's policy and practice in unions was to capture top union official positions, embrace social democracy and work to reconcile labour and capital. Dulcie and others in the CPA (M-L) maintained that official trade union hierarchy was tied by millions of threads to bosses' courts, the ALP and capitalism.

"A small number of union leaders in the old CPA confined themselves to the upper echelons of trade unions, ultimately selling out workers (eg. Prices and Incomes Accord). They became captives of bourgeois trade union politics and bourgeois parliament and isolated from rank and file workers.

"Another area of differences that led Dulcie and others to the formation of the CPA (M-L) in 1964 was their insistence that the main arena for Australian communists' work is in the development of a revolutionary working class party and movement in Australia's conditions.

"Dulcie had enormous confidence in the capacity of Australia's working class to bring about fundamental change. She didn't look overseas for blue prints in building communist movement in Australia. Naturally, the momentous socialist revolutions in the Soviet Union and China inspired her greatly, but she deeply understood that communists in Australia have to develop our own revolutionary strategies based in Australia's reality and class struggle. That communists must have deep and thorough knowledge of Australia's specific conditions and contradictions.



“There are universal Marxist-Leninist principles and general truths but, each communist party must chart its own road to socialism in line with that country’s conditions. Based on that knowledge, Dulcie and other comrades in the CPA (M-L) turned their attention to deep investigation of Australian conditions and classes.

Dulcie’s legacy

“Dulcie strongly encouraged proper integration of communists with the people. This required the party to organise in a way as to enable the deepest integration and keep most communists away from the eyes of the state. To that end she and others in the CPA (M-L) advocated for only a very small number of publicly recognised party members, whilst the great majority of party members deeply involved in struggles of the people are unknown to the state. The party works like an iceberg, the small tip visible above water, with 90% submerged and not visible. Most non-public work is not visible, spectacular or grandstanding, but essential for building the revolutionary movement.

“Dulcie’s legacy of mass work, constant and deep study of Marxism and its application to

Australia’s conditions, and organisational principles for a revolutionary working class communist party operating under the dictatorship of the capitalist class, are still with us today.

“She had enormous revolutionary ideological, political and organisational influence on many members of the CPA (M-L), including the public leadership of working class comrades such as Betty Oke, John Cummins, Norm Gallagher, Clarrie O’Shea, Betty Little, Paddy Malone, and many others in the revolutionary movement.

“For Dulcie, her involvement in militant working class and revolutionary struggle was never about her self-importance. She never sought adulation and limelight or pushed herself forward. For her it was always mass work and learning from the working class masses. She despised bourgeois individualism, self-promotion and the know-all arrogance of some. She was humble and only saw herself as serving the working class in the anti-imperialist struggle for an independent and socialist Australia.



The Unfairness of a “Fair Day’s Pay”

by *Danny O.*

It has been the catchcry of the official trade union movement worldwide for 200 years. It’s a slogan so often heard in the labour movement that it is almost a cliché. Now we are told Australian workers have lost it and that we need to “change the rules” to get it back. It is of course “a fair day’s pay for a fair day’s work”.

On the surface, this seems like a reasonable demand. As workers we all have to work to survive and want to be suitably compensated for the work that we do. But when we take a closer look at workers’ wages and bosses’ profits and where they come from, a “fair day’s pay” just doesn’t seem as fair anymore.

What are wages?

As workers under capitalism, we have only one thing that allows us to survive – our ability or capacity to labour. That ability to labour, like almost everything under capitalism, is a commodity that is bought and sold. Karl Marx called it our ‘labour power’. We have to sell our labour power to a boss in exchange for a wage.

A wage is really the price the boss pays to use your labour power for a certain amount of time i.e. a shift at work - maybe 4 hours, maybe 8 hours, maybe more or less. So, what determines your wage? Or in other words, what determines the price of your labour power?

Like all commodities, labour power has a value. Like all commodities, that value is determined by the average time and cost it takes to produce it. Since our labour power is inseparable from ourselves as living human beings, the cost of producing and reproducing our labour power is the cost required to keep us alive and functioning

as workers for our entire life. This includes things like food, housing, clothes, transport, education etc. In other words, the basic cost of living. It also includes the cost of maintaining and raising our families and kids. The kids replace us as workers when we die, ensuring a supply of labour for the bosses well into the future.

What makes up the basket of basic necessities needed to reproduce our labour power varies with the time, place, history and societal customs of where we live. For example, in Australia in 2019 it is fairly common for a family to need two cars, owning your own home by the time you retire is a pretty standard expectation, mobile phones are a necessity to work and function socially. All these things make up our basic living costs and so must be factored in when calculating the value of our labour power and therefore our wage. In comparison, a worker in a developing country will have lower basic living costs and so will require a different basket of basic necessities, and in turn, require a lower wage to live as a worker in their country.

But there’s still a little more to it. At any given time and place, there are several important factors that impact exactly what your wage might be. One is the supply and demand of qualified workers in a given industry or field. The more workers available to do the job the lower your wage is likely to be, and vice versa. Another very important factor is the existence or non-existence of strong trade unions.

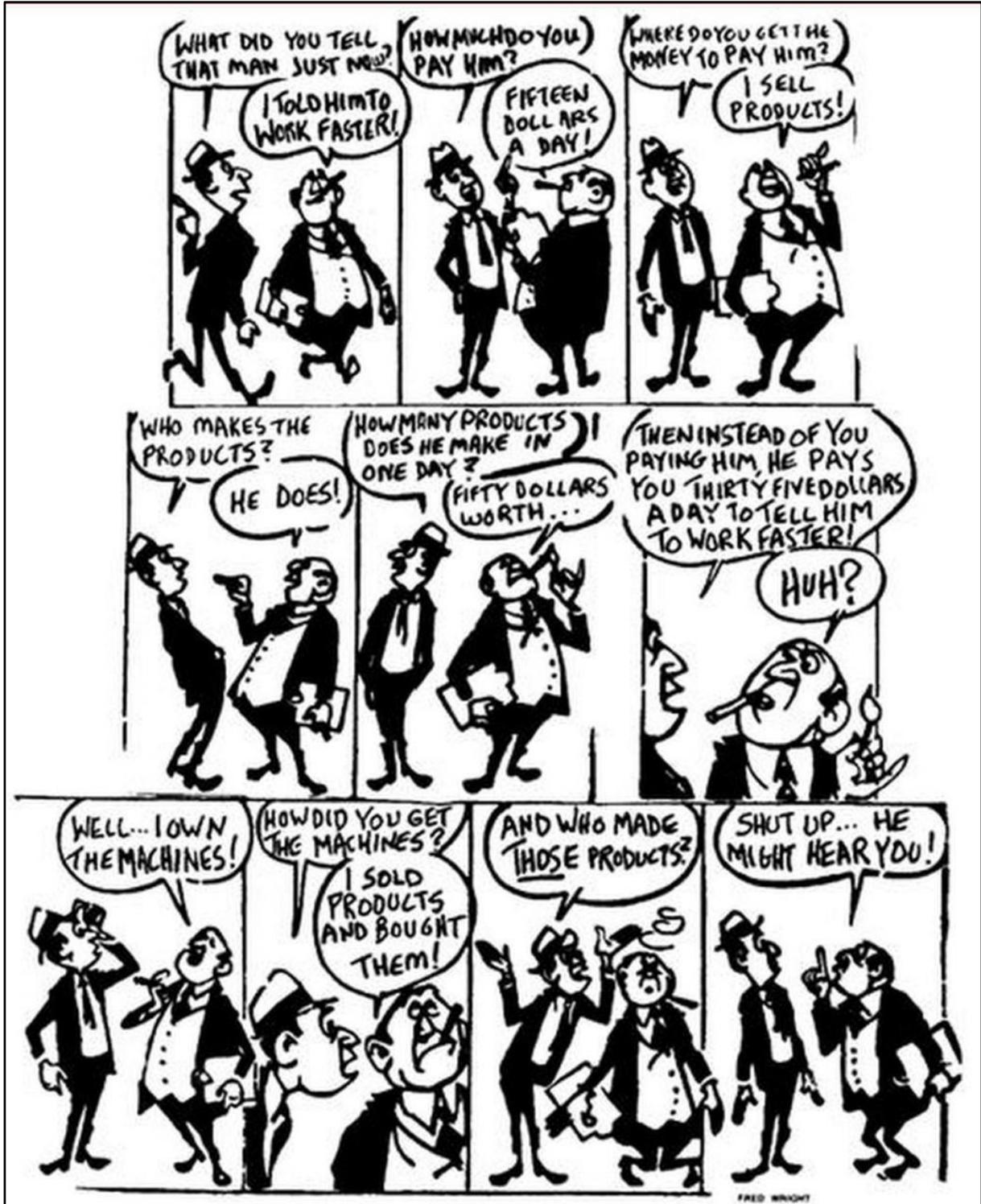
Unions reduce competition between individual workers and gives them the ability to force the boss to pay higher wages. In short, at any particular point in time, wages are determined by the relative strengths of the working class and the



capitalist class in the marketplace. When the working class is in a strong position wages will tend to be higher, and when the capitalists are in a stronger position wages will tend to be lower.

But while wages may be higher or lower at any particular point in time and place, as a rule they will fluctuate around the value of our labour power as determined by the costs of the basket

of basic necessities as described above. This rule applies to the working class in general, and not to any individual worker as such. This explains why it is that some workers may be a bit better off and some a bit worse off, but why it is impossible for the working class generally to ever become rich just from working.





What are profits?

Now that we understand wages, we can turn to the question of profits. When we sell our labour power to the boss, we agree to work for a certain amount of time in exchange for a wage that basically meets our cost of living, or in other words, is equal to the value of our labour power. For arguments sake, let's say you are lucky enough to work full time in an ice-cream factory 8 hours a day, 5 days a week and receive a wage of \$1,500 which you can live comfortably enough on. Presumably a fair day's pay for a fair day's work.

But, let's say that over the course of the working week you make ice-cream valued at \$2,500. Regardless, you still only get paid \$1,500. So, what about the \$1,000 difference? Well that's value that you created by working but don't get paid for. Karl Marx called it 'surplus value'. Once all the ice-cream you produced is sold, that surplus value is realised as profit. Some of that profit will go straight to the boss's pocket. Some of it might go as rent to a landlord who owns the land the factory is built on. A part will probably go to paying hire on machines, power bills, and other factory running costs. Some more might go to the banks as interest on any loans the boss has taken out to set up the business.

In short though, as workers we produce all the value in society but we only receive a portion of it back in the form of wages. The capitalist ruling classes of bosses, landlords, banks etc., take the rest (ie. the surplus value) and divide it up as their profits. How's that for fair?

But what about...

But what if the ice-cream workers at the factory got together and demanded to be paid the full \$2,500? Wouldn't that be fair then? Well the boss would certainly be faced with a dilemma. If he agreed to pay it and kept everything else as it was before, then there wouldn't be any surplus value

and hence no profit. Bankruptcy could result which would mean that there would be no money to keep the ice-cream factory operating.

So, to stay in business the boss would be forced to come up with a way to extract surplus value from the workers to make a profit. In other words, the workers would need to produce even more ice-cream in the same amount of time. Perhaps by making the workers work harder, or with some new machines that can make ice-cream faster. Either way, the result is that workers would be producing value that they aren't paid for (surplus value) and the boss would be getting the profit. Fair?

Can we change the rules for fairness?

The Australia Institute released a report in 2018 detailing the long-term decline of the labour share of Australia's GDP. The report reveals the economic output in the Australian economy and how much of that output goes to paying workers. It was found that in March 2018, 47.1% of GDP went to workers incomes. That's about 11% less than the historic high of 58.4% in 1975. And close to the lowest at any point in the last 70 years. This decline has been mirrored by a rise in the share going to corporate profits, which are once again nearing record highs after falling from their peak in the global financial crisis in 2008/9.

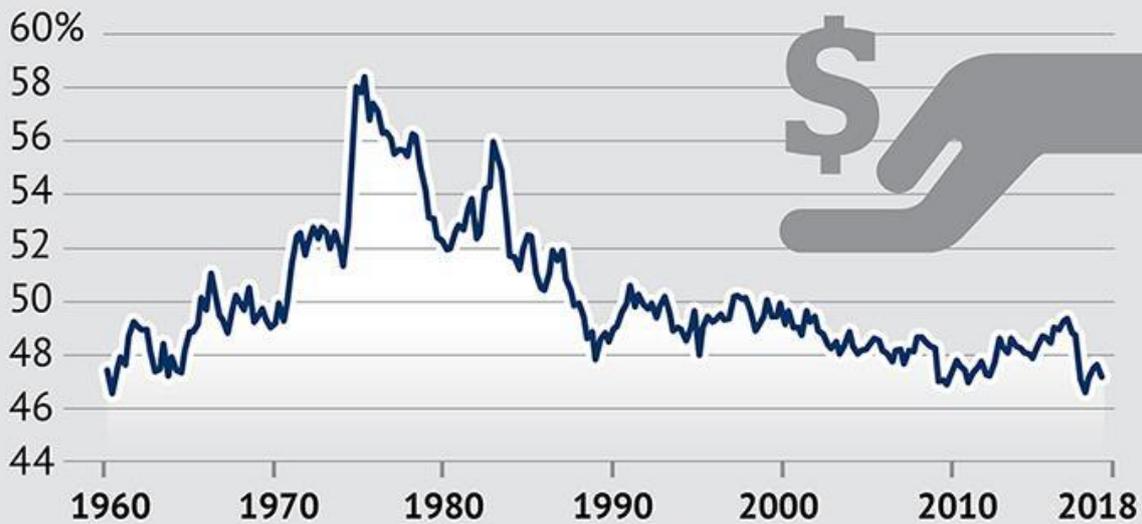
This trend is a reflection of the diminished strength of the trade union movement. Trade union strength has steadily declined since the introduction of neo-liberalism and the restructuring of Australia's economy starting in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Draconian anti-union laws restrict the ability of workers to fight for wage increases, while companies are given free rein to make as much profit as they see fit.

All of this means that Australia is experiencing some of the greatest inequality that it has ever seen. Profits are soaring and wages are declining. And the industrial laws are keeping it that way. It



The labour share

The proportion of national economic output paid to Australian workers as wages, salaries and other compensation (including superannuation)



Source: Centre for Future Work, from ABS data.

is this reality that provides fertile ground for the ACTU's campaign to 'change the rules'.

The campaign aims to change the rules to allow workers and unions to reverse the trend. It speaks of restoring balance and returning fairness to the system. But while it's obvious that the system is less fair now than what it was in 1975, is it right to say that it was ever fair? To what point do the labour share and profit share of GDP have to get to make the system fair? If wages rose 11% and profits declined 11% would we have a "fair day's pay" again?

The revolutionary alternative

The Marxist explanation of wages and profits outlined above shows that it is the workers producing value that they don't get paid for which is the source of the bosses' profits. No matter how high workers wages may be, as long as the boss is making a profit it means the workers are being exploited. Hence, there can never be a "fair day's pay" under capitalism.

The trade union demand of a "fair day's pay for a fair day's work" blinds workers to the reality of the capitalist system. It misleads us into thinking that fairness for the workers can be achieved under capitalism. Indeed, this is the role of the trade unions under capitalism. They are great organisations for the defence of workers' rights and wages against the bosses and must be supported, but ultimately, they confine workers' struggle within the bounds of capitalism rather than for its revolutionary overthrow.

The capitalist class are like parasites that live off the unpaid labour of workers. They are redundant. The working class must overthrow them and start to rule society for themselves in a socialist system. Then the surplus value that workers produce would belong, not to the parasitic bosses, but to the working class as a whole, held in common to meet the needs of the great majority of the people. Only then can we ever really start to speak of a "fair day's pay".



The Independent Fight of the Working Class

by Nick G.

Urgent questions face the workers of Australia. We have seen our defensive organisations, the unions, lose much of their freedom of action. We have seen rising unemployment disguised as precarious work: work that is irregular, at the whim of the employer, and often coupled with spurious “self-contractor” arrangements that deprive us of long and hard fought for conditions such as sick leave, long service leave and penalty rates.

There is a culture of punishing the poor. It is as if being poor, unemployed or precariously employed is the fault of the worker. It is as if the only people who are losing out in the class structure of society are those who won’t “have a go”, who won’t “make the effort” to get ahead. They need to be pushed into work by being kept on the starvation-level Newstart Allowance. They need to be regulated and controlled by having their social service benefits managed through a prohibitive income card. They need to be drug-tested and kept on the merry-go-round of applying for jobs that don’t exist or for which they are not trained.

Things are little better for workers in more secure employment.

Unions are subject to all sorts of restrictions and penalties. Many workers have given up on them and union density is at an all-time low. A promising campaign by the ACTU to “Change the Rules” was diverted into supporting the electoral campaign of the Labor Party at the last election. It appears as though, with the massive loss suffered by the ALP in the elections, the steam has gone out of the ACTU’s campaign. It has now abandoned the mass grass roots campaign for workers’ rights it had mobilized to elect the ALP.



Conditions have been stripped in enterprise bargaining, penalty rates have been removed, and wages have seen no growth.

Many workers are asking when and how things will change. They question the future of work itself given the phenomenal growth of computerisation, robotics, autonomous operations and artificial intelligence. Parents question whether their children will be even worse off than they are themselves. There is a widespread feeling of uncertainty about the future. People question whether they can have any control over what the future may hold.

This extends far beyond the world of jobs and housing to climate change and the aggressive behaviors of the world’s big powers. More people



are questioning whether the planet itself can survive under capitalism.

These questions are indeed urgent. Things can no longer go on as before. But what can be done?

Relying on others will not help

For many years, relying on politicians and on parliamentary processes were how people found answers to their questions.

The Labor Party in particular upheld the view that political action within the institution of parliament was what was required “because,” to quote a Labor Party brochure from the September 2019 climate change rallies, “in our democracy that is where policies are made”.

For over a century now, that is how many working people hoped to see their fundamental questions answered, and problems fixed.

The right to elected political representation is dear to all workers. They know it had to be fought for – it was one of the key demands, for example, of participants in the Eureka rebellion. We would resist any attempt to restrict it or remove it – as happens in countries where the ruling class opts for open, fascist dictatorship.

However, relying on parliament whether Labor, Greens or cross-bench Independents, or the courts, only results in the continuation of the status quo and repeated disappointment. This has been the history of the Labor Party and partly explains the current attraction of minor parties and Independents.

The result is a recurring cycle of:

- hope that Labor will do the right thing by its electoral base within the working class;
- frustration and anger when it gets into office and betrays those hopes;
- a resulting electoral win for the conservatives;

- an eventual return to the hope that Labor will get re-elected and can be trusted....”this time”.

This cycle cannot go on indefinitely. It is a cycle in which workers wait upon the actions of a party which will always act in the interest of big business and multinational corporations. It is a cycle in which that action is seen only or mainly in its being carried out in an institution, parliament, that will never enact legislation to curb capitalism and force it to bend to the will of the people.

We need our own agenda

We can only break out of this self-defeating cycle by finding the way to develop our own independent working class agenda – that is, things to be done and ways to do them.

The actual content of that agenda, of the things to be done, will change according to the needs of the time. Demands will be raised and prioritised, additions made and wordings changed. To that extent, the particular content of the agenda is of secondary importance.

What is of primary importance is developing the forms of struggle, the organisations, and alliances with common demands and struggles for a working class agenda, not a big business agenda of exploitation and repression.

We cannot and should not overlook the existing organisations within our workplaces and communities. Fighting for progressive leadership of unions and community groups is essential. It requires patient and skillful work at the grass roots and the development of a strong rank-and-file presence in such organisations.



These organisations are both necessary and very limited. The top officialdom of unions is more often than not beholden to the ALP electoral fortunes, are highly paid, and unlikely to enter into any struggle beyond those allowed by legislation that protects big business exploitation and profiteering. Those unions with a large asset base, property and investment portfolios are more reluctant to take any action that may risk their financial arrangements.

It must be our objective that unions and community groups have an independent capacity to act in their members' interests regardless of which party holds office in parliament. The agenda must serve the needs of the people, not an electoral cycle.

That is why the main focus of organisation must be in the workplaces and communities where our real strength resides and where there is less temptation to sell out and to go soft for the sake of one's personal or political career.

Working class demands and mass actions based in workplaces and communities, and not tied to parliamentary parties and reliance on parliament, have enormous capacity and power

to organise, unite and mobilise the working class and communities to fight back the big business assault and advance the interests of all working people.

An independent working class agenda will advance people's immediate demands for a decent standard of living for all people, workers' rights and democratic rights and job security. It will vigorously oppose austerity and promote taxing the profits of multinational corporations and big business to pay for public health, education, public transport, affordable housing, social and community services for all. It will put forward an alternative vision for our country that puts the needs of the people above the electoral fortunes of politicians and parliamentary parties, and the profit interests of big business.

The independent working class agenda will build broad unity and mobilise the working class, city and rural communities, farmers and environmentalists. It will unite people from all walks of life who are attacked by the capitalist economic crisis. This will be an independent working class movement that cannot be turned on an off when it suits the Labor Party or the ACTU.



Mass mobilisations of the working class should serve the interests of the working class, not the electoral interests of the ALP or the bourgeois trade union officials



Raise the demand widely that there be an independent agenda of the working class!

It will achieve all this so long as it is truly independent of parties and processes that prioritise “the exploitative capitalist economy” over the people.

That means a preparedness to break the rules, to act illegally, if need be, in the face of anti-union and anti-worker legislation. Only a real upsurge of rebellion and open defiance will return to workers and unions the initiative and confidence in the fighting capacity of the working class. The same applies to community organisations, organisations of the First Peoples, of environmental, heritage, public housing and transport, anti-war and other arenas of people’s struggle.

Sometimes this may require placing demands on this or that parliamentary party but it must never result in passive reliance upon them, of “waiting until they are voted in...”

We must have courage and confidence in the collective strength of the working class as a whole.

We can find the answers and solutions to the great questions troubling our people.

We will find them in struggles with the people, as we learn what can be done, and when and how.

Raise the demand widely that there be an independent agenda of the working class!

Let us define the content according to what we need and in the interests of the whole working class!

Let us bravely surmount all difficulties and obstacles and break whatever legal shackles are placed on us!



International: ICOR Resolution on the Situation of the Refugees in Turkey and Greece



INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION OF
REVOLUTIONARY PARTIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

The ICOR strongly condemns the horrendous abuse of the desperate situation and hopes of the refugees in Turkey by the Turkish and Greek governments and the EU.

This was triggered by the barbaric escalation of the war in the Syrian province of Idlib. There Russia and the Assad regime on the one side oppose Turkey and the Islamic-fascist militias on the other. In the crossfire are the people living there, especially women and children are mainly affected. 900 000 people are fleeing, 250 000 of them are children and youth. Only the democratic forces in Northern and Eastern Syria (Rojava) have welcomed and taken care of the refugees in an exemplary way.

After several military setbacks Erdogan seriously called upon NATO for an “alliance case“. This would have meant a direct military confrontation of important imperialist world powers and so possibly the start of a world war. This could not be implemented in the NATO countries in face of resistance and the outrage of the masses.

In order to exert pressure Erdogan now canceled the scandalous EU-Turkey deal, which had the goal of shutting the borders of the EU for refugees in exchange for large payments and which violates the right of flight, the right of asylum and the rights contained in the UN Refugee Convention for millions of people. Thousands of people were brought to the borders by the fascist Erdogan regime, where they were driven back from the Greek side with brutal force, including the use of tear gas and water cannons. At the same time, the Turkish police did not let them out of the border area again. In “no man's land“ women, men and children are freezing and starving.

For years, people on the Greek islands have been showing solidarity with the refugees in an exemplary manner. But their strength has come to an end. In camps set up for 8000 people there are now 42 000! When the people on the Greek islands demonstrate they are encountered with brutal special task forces of the Greek government. On the Greek islands the living conditions are also deteriorating through the imperialist refugee policy. In completely overcrowded camps refugees are forced into inhumane conditions in rain and cold. Fascists from all over Europe are trying to create a Pogrom atmosphere among the population of the islands and are driving refugees who have landed back into the sea, insulting, threatening and traumatizing them.

The EU as one of the richest imperialist confederations of states in the world has nothing better to do than to receive the refugees with tear gas, clubs, sharp ammunition and the imperialist troops for border protection Frontex. From secretly taken videos we have learned of transports from “no man's land“ back to Turkey in buses in which children and women have died miserably. In the meantime, they are also using the corona virus to expand their proto-fascist and anti-immigration policy.



In this situation broad protests against the entire failed imperialist refugee policy and against fascist terror are required. The causes of flight lie in imperialist exploitation and oppression by the imperialist countries! The fight against them must be taken up – in the self-organization of the refugees in close alliance with democratic and revolutionary forces in the respective countries.

In numerous Greek cities as well as in various large cities of the EU demonstrations against the refugee policy of the EU have already taken place. The self-organization of the refugees, hand in hand with the population in active resistance is the key to cope with the current emergency situation.

The causes can only be eliminated with the struggle against the imperialist world system. ILPS and ICOR have called up to build up an international united front against fascism and war. It is fundamentally opposed to the imperialist re-division of the world on the backs of the peoples.

Strengthen the building of the anti-imperialist united front!

The refugees are our brothers and sisters!

Struggle against the imperialist EU and its inhumane policies, which allow tens of thousands to die miserably in the Mediterranean and in the deserts.

Struggle in the EU countries against the causes of flight, for taking up the refugees in the EU countries and for their integration among the struggling masses of the respective countries!

Long live international solidarity!



Refugees are amassed on the Greece-Turkey border as a result of imperialist war and inhumane refugee policy



From the Archives:

E.F Hill on the Seventh Congress of the Albanian Party of Labour

We are publishing here for the first time a letter from the founding Chairperson of the CPA (M-L), Comrade E.F (Ted) Hill to the Party of Labour of Albania (PLA) on November 13, 1976.

The letter was written after Ted Hill had arrived in London following his attendance at the PLA's Seventh Congress. Hill outlines his differences with the Albanians over their attempts to impose a critical view of China on the parties present at the Congress. He criticises their call for a new Comintern designed to give international authority to the PLA. He rejects their negative evaluation of Comrade Mao Zedong. In passing, he talks about the proper basis for relations between Communist Parties, and attendance by parties at each other's Congresses.

The PLA and its leaders, notably Enver Hoxha, Ramiz Alia and Mehmet Shehu were well-known to members of our Party in the 1960s and 70s. Their publications were readily available in our chain of bookshops. There was good cooperation on questions of publications and personnel. Hill and Central Committee member Charlie McCaffrey met with Enver Hoxha and other Albanian comrades and had friendly and productive discussions.



Comrade Ted Hill (2nd from left) and Comrade Charlie McCaffrey (2nd from right) meet with Enver Hoxha (centre) and comrades of the Albanian Party of Labour

However, the Albanians disagreed with changes in Chinese policy towards the US and Soviet superpowers and the basis of those changes that arose from the theory of Three Worlds espoused by Mao, which they rejected.

This letter by Comrade Hill contains the genesis of his more detailed study of the history of the Communist Party in Australia, and of the Comintern which exercised considerable influence over it after 1929. That study, written between July 1980 and June 1983 became his book "Reflections on Communism in Australia".

We are pleased to have steadily growing relations with other Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations. As those ties expand, it is worth reflecting on the experience, and the principles espoused on the basis of that experience, of our founding Chairperson, Comrade Ted Hill.



(E.F. Hill's Letter to Cde. Ramiz Alia):

November 13, 1976

Dear Comrade Ramiz,

I am enclosing some comments on the 7th Congress of your Party.

I am sure you will understand the comradely spirit in which I make them.

I thought your Congress in its dealing with the building of socialism in Albania and the role of your Party in it, was outstanding.

As to the matters I raise, no doubt they can be resolved in the process of time and maybe after further study, we can exchange opinions. For I think it is indeed important that all Communists should, to use Comrade Hoxha's words, stand shoulder to shoulder. I myself did not have a great deal of discussion with fraternal delegates but I am sure you know that a considerable number of them are deeply concerned about the international communist movement.

I am having this document delivered in this way for reasons I am sure you will understand.

Please give my warmest regards to Comrade Hoxha and the other leading comrades.

With warmest Communist greetings,

(Handwritten): (and warmest personal regards)

TH

.....

London,

November 11, 1976

PRELIMINARY COMMENTS ON SOME QUESTIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT RAISED BY THE 7TH CONGRESS OF THE ALBANIAN PARTY OF LABOUR.

I indicated to the comrades of the Albanian Party of Labour that I had certain differences from the Albanian Party on some questions raised in the report to their Congress. At the time I raised these matters, I had not read the report and could therefore only give my views from the translated spoken word. In such a matter, for me at least, it is necessary to study and think over the problems. Since the Congress, I have read the English translation of the report but still I need to study it more closely. However, I deem the matter of such importance that I should set out to some extent my preliminary views. This is fortified because the Albanian comrades sought my frank views.

I do this conscious of the smallness and shortcomings of the Australian Party and conscious of my own personal shortcomings in striving to be a Marxist-Leninist. Compared with the Albanian Party of Labour, our achievements are indeed small.

In addition, I have not had the opportunity of discussing these views with my comrades nor for that matter, with anyone else. Hence they represent only my own impressions. Naturally I will discuss the whole matter with the leading comrades in Australia when the opportunity offers. At the present time, I hope to have the opportunity of conveying to your Party this document in an appropriate way.



I make these comments with ease of mind in the sense that a proper exchange of views in such a state of mind without recourse to lobbying, rancour, emotion or reprisals is an essential aspect of Marxism-Leninism.

At the reception to the foreign delegations held on October 30, 1976, Comrade Hoxha made an important statement. In that statement he was translated as saying that it was obligatory on a Party where possible to have delegations from fraternal Parties. At a similar reception at the 6th Congress, a similar statement was made. No doubt it can be said that Comrade Hoxha was expressing only the viewpoint of the Albanian Party of Labour and that he was perfectly entitled, indeed obliged, to express the view. To my mind that is not sufficient to dispose of the question. It is well known that the Communist Party of China neither invites fraternal delegates to its Congresses nor sends fraternal delegates to the Congresses of other Parties. The Communist party of China must, in the nature of things, have a right to its own views. So far as I am aware, it has not made a public declaration of its views on this matter.

But it is for each Party to make its own decision. My own view is that it is preferable not to have foreign delegations at one's own Congress. In our case, it would be possible to do so, at least to a limited extent. We do not do so. We do not follow the pattern of Party Congresses of the past which we regard as not appropriate. We set out to have close study of the Party's ideology, politics and organisation by democratic consultation in a form, as we believe, more calculated to get real opinions rather than repetition of formulae.

Apart from the Congress of the Albanian Party of Labour, we do not send delegates to other Congresses. Out of respect for the Albanian Party of Labour and because it adheres to this practice, we did on this and previous occasions send a delegation. The question of attendances at foreign Party Congresses has a history. It certainly has not been unvaried practice historically. At a certain period, a stereotype of reciprocal invitations appeared. It is doubtful how much value was derived from it. From the standpoint of the foreign delegates there are advantages. Exchanges of experience, learning of achievements, proletarian solidarity, are examples. But it also has serious disadvantages. The case of the Albanian 7th Congress is in point. It places the foreign delegation in a dilemma. For example, as I will come to later, I have a serious diversion of opinion from the Albanian Party, particularly on the views on the international communist movement. In a sense, I feel that one's Party is compromised by presence at and support of a Congress where such views are expressed, particularly without previous warning and without the opportunity to study over a period the relevant documents. What is one to do? Is one to sit mute or to stir up a controversy at a fraternal Party's Congress? Neither is desirable. There has been a good deal of previous experience of these things. I recall that at the 21st Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union at which I was present as leader of the Australian delegation, a passage of the report was sent to fraternal delegates prior to the Congress. This passage contained an appraisal of the Communist International. Objection was taken to it. (I will return to the question of the Communist International). I mention this to illustrate the difficulty. At the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, an attack was made on the Albanian Party of Labour. The Communist Party of China represented by a delegation headed by the late revered and distinguished Comrade Chou En-lai, spoke against the attack and then walked out of the Congress in protest. It is to be remembered that this was at a time when nominally at least there were fraternal relations between the two parties concerned. There are many other instances. These suffice.



So far as the host Party is concerned, it is a matter of simple observation that an enormous amount of time and effort go to looking after fraternal delegates (translation, hospitality, transport etc.) when the primary purpose of such a Congress is the work of the host Party itself.

I do not subscribe to the view that it is obligatory on any Party to invite fraternal delegates nor do I think that it is obligatory on fraternal parties to respond affirmatively to such invitations. As to the latter, I see no slight in it and I believe there are good reasons for refraining from sending fraternal delegations.

In the case of the Australian Party, had I known in advance that the Albanian party intended to make at its Congress a unilateral declaration on the international Communist movement, I should probably have had different views as to sending a delegation.

Moreover, if I may be permitted to say so, I do not view with great enthusiasm the demonstrable discrimination against the delegates from Korea, Vietnam and Laos. These were delegations invited to the Congress but yet treated in a way demonstrably different from other delegations. Nor was this the only case. This sort of thing points up the problem. I too have views different from what I understand to be the views of these Parties but I believe that if one invites them to a Congress, then there should be no discrimination. If they are held to be Marxist-Leninist, then they were and are entitled to the different views they expressed. It all illustrates the type of dilemma that arises in such invitations.

All this goes to the questions raised at the Congress in Part VI of the Report. There are features of this that intertwine with Comrade Hoxha's statement at the reception and that intertwine with Section V of the Report.

I make my starting point Section VI and will try to show what I regard as its intertwining with parts of Section V of the report. I may say that there is a great deal in each section with which I agree. Moreover, Albania's foreign policy is a matter for Albania. However, in my opinion, it is not appropriate for a party to make a unilateral statement on the international Communist movement, particularly in the detail with which it was done here. This matter I do not now analyse exhaustively but I take the opportunity of expressing some views.

There is an appraisal of the Comintern particularly on pages 248-9 of the English translation. Not only do I think it is and was inappropriate for it to be made at the Congress but I certainly disagree with aspects of it. The position of the First, Second and Third Internationals is a matter of history and appraisal. Sufficient time has elapsed since the demise of the First International to make an appraisal of it. In addition, Marx and Engels themselves commented on it. The question of the Second International is clear. Also, it was subject to close analysis by Lenin. The Third International, however, is different from these 2 cases. Materialist dialectics show that it must have had two sides and that it must have reflected the class struggle external to it. Again, Lenin himself referred to quite serious shortcomings of the Communist International. The difficulties associated with its formation, the diverse views represented by those that sought affiliation, the 21 conditions, the varied nature of the people who participated in its foundation and life, all demonstrate the existence and acuteness of class struggle within it. Some years of my membership of the Communist Party of Australia were years embraced in the affiliation of that Party with the Communist International. There is no doubt whatever that the Communist International did in fact make a tremendous contribution to the spread of Communist ideas amongst the proletariat of the world. With this I fully agree. The report says: "There are people who do not fail to say that the Comintern allegedly made mistakes" (p. 249 English



translation). I am one of them. I do not say it publicly nor will I. The clear implication of this particular statement as I have quoted it is that the Comintern made no mistakes and this implication is not mitigated by statements such as “That mistakes have been committed cannot be ruled out...” Indeed the implication is emphasised. I beg to disagree. One can take Comrade Dimitrov’s report to the 7th World Congress of the Comintern. I yield to no one in my respect for the life and work of Comrade Dimitrov. I believe that his report to the 7th World Congress contained an extremely important analysis of the then world situation and extremely important material on the struggle against war and fascism. It also contained what I regard in retrospect as important shortcomings of principle. Such for example were its preoccupation with European problems. Certainly, Europe is very important. But Lenin pointed out several times and particularly in “Better Fewer but Better”, the decisive importance of the peoples of the East. Asia, Africa and Latin America are obviously tremendously important.

A second instance is the matter of armed struggle. The violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie and through that violent overthrow the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat is a cardinal principle of Marxism-Leninism. Comrade Dimitrov’s report in my opinion had the shortcoming that it paid all too little attention to armed struggle.

It may well be asked what was the outcome in practice of this report? One may refer to France, to Italy and even to Australia. This shows that what I now regard as unclear views of the united front resulted in unprincipled compromise with social democratic parties or with other parties of the bourgeoisie. Is it entirely an accident that people like Togliatti, Thorez, Duclos, Sharkey, Pollitt, Dutt were leaders of the Comintern? In addition, I recall well that Stalin himself criticised Comrade Dimitrov after WWII for Dimitrov’s incorrect views on the dictatorship of the proletariat. Did those views just arise after WWII? Surely they had a history. These are questions that history has not yet answered. It is by no means sufficient to say the Comintern was given inaccurate or wrong information. Not only were the people previously referred to leaders of the Comintern but the Comintern in many cases sent its own representatives to the given countries. Australia was a case in point. Most certainly it was not the only one. Thus I do not believe that the things mentioned on p. 249 offer an adequate analysis. To this may be added that the Comintern itself (as for example, at its 6th Congress) recognised that in its history it had made serious errors.

There is a passage in Stalin’s “Foundations of Leninism” (to which for the moment I do not have access) which refers to the Soviet Union as the base of the world revolution. This conception has its shortcomings. It is correct that all Communists must support each other. But I think in a sense that there were some aspects where the Communist Parties at least saw themselves as representatives of the Soviet Union. With that conception I disagree and I will deal with it in another connection a little later.

There is a question in my mind as to why the Albanian Party comrades raise this question of the Communist International and multi-lateral Party discussion so sharply at this time. I draw the inference from this and from what is said on p. 250 (English translation) in espousing the case for multi-lateral inter-Party discussions and the conception “may also mature to the point that a large meeting of the representatives of all the Marxist-Leninist communist and workers’ parties can be achieved”, that the



Albanian Party wants something in the nature of a Comintern in order to underwrite what it considers to be (and repeatedly affirms) its completely correct policy. Whether its policy is correct or incorrect I would still be opposed in present circumstances to any such meeting. Equally I would be opposed to it if the initiative came from the Communist Party of China to underwrite what I regard as its correct line and policy.

But there is an undercurrent in the Albanian material by necessary implication and sometimes by express statement of opposition to the Communist Party of China. I therefore draw the inference that the Albanian comrades have in mind that at such a meeting the Communist Party of China would be “called to order”. This “calling to order” is on the footing that the Communist Party of China has elements of revisionism and has made unprincipled deals with the imperialists. This appears to me to be the inference, or, if you like, implication. It is to be noted that this inference could be drawn or implication observed before the death of Chairman Mao Tsetung. It therefore cannot be said to be complicated by the recent changes in China.

The Albanian comrades’ opinion of the Chinese Communist Party and of Chairman Mao Tsetung is a matter for them. Nor is it for me to defend the Communist Party of China. Relations between the Parties are important and it is very important to have a correct analysis of them and a correct approach to them.

In all essentials, my party and I personally for what we regard as good reasons, agree with the analysis and line of the Communist Party of China. I believe it to be in very strict accord with Marxist-Leninist principle. In my opinion, as I wrote earlier, there is a necessary connection between Sections V and VI of the report. Examples of the allegations against the Communist Party of China lie in the rejection of the Chinese Communists’ emphasis on the contention and struggle between the superpowers; their relations with US imperialism and their warning of the greater danger of Soviet social-imperialism; rejection of the Chinese concept of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd World; rejection of the Chinese approach to the EEC. On each of these questions, my belief is that the Chinese Communists are correct, subject to the qualification that I have never liked the terms 1st and 2nd Worlds but I accept the correctness of the analysis. I believe the Chinese Communists are correct in defining the main enemy as the two superpowers with the main emphasis on the greater danger of Soviet social-imperialism and seeking to unite all who can be united against that enemy. Nor do I believe that the Chinese communists abet US imperialism. The question of the EEC, the relations with US imperialism, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Worlds are exploitation of the contradictions amongst the imperialists and as between the imperialists and the Third World in the overall struggle for the complete overthrow of capitalism and victory of socialism.

Lenin’s article on the united states of Europe slogan, in my opinion, deals with a question different from the exploitation of these contradictions. The Communist attitude towards such contradictions was very well dealt with by Lenin in “Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder”. The principle of these matters is dealt with by Comrade Chou En-lai’s report to the 10th Congress of the Communist Party of China and as to it, I say no more than that I agree with the principles of that report.

It must also be said that the mere fact of principled agreement between States, socialist and capitalist, does not and should not inhibit the struggle of the working people in the capitalist state concerned. On the contrary.



The question for all Marxist-Leninists is what are the facts and what conclusions do the facts compel? The accuracy of the reflection of the facts and the conclusions compelled by them are the hallmark of the quality of Communists. In the respect, it seems to me the Chinese Communists accurately reflect the facts and the conclusions compelled by them and act accordingly.

This all raises the question of relations among the Marxist-Leninist Parties. There is an expression that is commonly used that the Communist Party of China or the Albanian Party of Labour recognises “this or that” Marxist-Leninist Party (or group). To me it is not a matter of “recognition” at all. “Recognition” in this sense implies a superior and an inferior, a father and son relationship. So far as the Communist Party of Australia (M.L.) is concerned, it has fraternal relations with both the Communist Party of China and the Albanian Party of Labour and for that matter, with other Marxist-Leninist Parties and groups. It fervently wants to see the development of Marxism-Leninism throughout the world. It is interested in all who genuinely aspire to and struggle for Marxism-Leninism.

But it is only the Australian proletariat which can create and test our Party as a genuine Marxist-Leninist Party. No “recognition” by any other Party however great or small, no posturing, no claims to Marxism-Leninism, in themselves make the Communist Party of Australia (M.L.) or any other Party or person Marxist-Leninist.

Whether or not they are Marxist-Leninist is objective fact. It does not turn on arbitrary “recognition”. “Recognition” in the true sense can only arise from accurate reflection of objective fact. It is too early in a number of cases to say that this or that Party, group or person is Marxist-Leninist. One may say it where the objective fact compels it. The objective fact lies in adherence to Marxist-Leninist principle and practice. There are people, and they were not absent from the fraternal delegations at the Albanian Party of Labour Congress who posture and proclaim, who seek and crave “recognition”, who fawn and flatter, about whom it has yet to be determined whether or not they are Marxist-Leninist as I believe it has yet to be determined whether the Communist Party of Australia (M.L.) and I personally measure up to the required standards. Certainly I reject any idea whatever that “recognition” establishes the fact. Authority on the proletariat of a given country can only be earned in struggle by the Communists. It cannot be conferred nor can “nice” words establish it.

There is another danger in this idea, and I believe in the whole way Section VI of the report is put. That is the danger that those who strive to Marxism-Leninism will see the decisions of such Parties as that of China and Albania as some sort of “holy writ” which automatically and mechanically solves their problems. These decisions no matter how great one’s respect for each Party may be, are not in the nature of “holy writ”. Yet it seems to me that there is that danger and particularly when in the case of this Congress Section VI has the appearance at least of laying down a line for the whole international Communist movement.

This simply cannot be. Such ideas in the past have done very great damage. The worship of the foreign is a well-known disease. It is only the correct integration of Marxism-Leninism into the actual conditions of a given country that constitutes the revolutionary struggle in that country. No one can do it through “recognition”, nor can the Communist Party of China nor the Albanian Party of Labour. Any talk or notion that feeds such an idea in my opinion is dangerously wrong. In the initial history of the Communist Party of Australia (M.L.) there was this tendency to worship the foreign “holy writ”.



Only when the Party got down the proper study of the facts of Australia, integration of the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism with them, did real progress begin to be made. One can see a similar thing in other cases. There is a generality and a particularity and they interpenetrate each other, are dependent on each other. The particularity of Australia (or any other place) can only be effectively studied, understood and accurately reflected by Australian Marxist-Leninists. Australian particularity goes to enlarge and prove the generality. It is a never-ending process. I very much doubt if this fundamental truth was sufficiently realised by some of the leaders of the Comintern. It is difficult enough to arrive at a good grasp of the universal (general) truths of Marxism-Leninism. For my part, I have, I hope, never claimed to be other than striving to be a Marxist-Leninist. The formulation “the great, glorious and correct” Communist Party of China is taken from Chairman Mao Tsetung; in the same passage, he says that the Communist Party of China also has shortcomings. This to me is genuine Marxism-Leninism. From my understanding of Marxism-Leninism I would question a number of statements in the Albanian report. For example, it appears to me that the reference to the crisis of capitalism on p. 162 (English translation) is not in strict accord with Lenin’s analysis of the general crisis of capitalism nor Marx’s characterisation of cyclical crises as crises of overproduction. It appears to me that the present crisis occurs when the general crisis has greatly intensified, within that general crisis the present crisis is fundamentally a crisis of overproduction aggravated by inflation which itself arises from capitalism. I mention this matter particularly because the bourgeoisie confuses it endlessly. Another example is the tendency on p. 244 (English translation) to counterpose, in a not wholly correct way, legal and illegal struggle. It seems to me that a general truth of Marxism-Leninism is the unity and division of legal and illegal struggle. Lenin dealt with this matter brilliantly in “Left-Wing ‘Communism’, an Infantile Disorder”. Dimitrov in the 7th World Congress report already referred to, pointed out that even in Nazi Germany the Communists must avail themselves of all opportunities of “legal” work. If what is meant in the Albanian report is the correct integration of legal and illegal work and open and secret work, then I have no quarrel with it. At least in the English translation, there is confusion in it. Another example, it is said on p. 80 (English translation) “Our Party has not allowed and will never allow the existence of factions within its ranks. It has had and has one line only, the Marxist-Leninist line, which it has loyally defended and resolutely implemented.”

Whether or not this is aimed at the concept of struggle between two lines within the Marxist-Leninist Party, I do not know. However, it is an objective fact that there is struggle between two lines in all Parties. This is of the nature of capitalism. It would be a denial of materialist dialectics to deny it. The supremacy of Marxism-Leninism emerges in struggle and the resolution of contradictions within the Party.

Mention is made of such matters to show that even on seemingly non-controversial questions, there is controversy. How then on obviously controversial questions is the controversy to be resolved? By majority vote at a multi-level meeting? By proclamations from a party Congress? Or how otherwise? Who is going to call such meetings? And who pronounce the “decision”? Who is going to discipline the dissident? And how? To pose these questions is to show that there is something not quite right with raising the question.



When I spoke in Tirana with Comrade Sadik Bocaj, I said that I had reservations about the report on 3 questions namely (1) some aspects of the international situation, (2) the international Communist movement and 3) the question of the evaluation of Chairman Mao Tsetung.

On the first two questions, the foregoing indicates sufficiently the general trend of my views; it does not exhaust them. But I require further time to study the matter and think it over. Another reason I have deemed it necessary to set out my views at this early stage is because my presence at the Congress and what I said in praise of it may be taken as endorsement of all the views expressed there. I have, as I have said, the utmost respect and love for the Albanian Party, its leaders and Comrade Enver Hoxha. It has and they have a record of astounding success. Its building of socialism, as the Congress showed, is inspiring and achieved in the face of enormous difficulty.

As to the third question, had I myself not raised it in Albania, I should not refer to it here. I have been conscious of the existence of a difference between the Albanian Party of Labour and our Party on this matter. When in Albania, I have refrained from referring to Chairman Mao in the way in which we refer to him in Australia. I have done this to avoid possible embarrassment to the Albanian comrades. Moreover it is a matter upon which differing opinions are open as on other questions.

However, having myself initiated the matter, I deem it necessary to refer to it briefly. The great theoreticians of Communism are recognised to have been Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Of these, in my opinion, Marx and Lenin stand out. Engels dealt with the situation as between himself and Marx. Engels was, in my view, a giant of Marxism but not of the stature of Marx. He made certain mistakes (it seems presumptuous even to refer to it here but it is a fact). Lenin undoubtedly inherited, defended and developed Marxism in a qualitative way. Stalin was a great Marxist and he inherited, defended and developed Leninism. But he made certain serious errors (and again it seems presumptuous to refer to them). It is a simple fact of Stalin's thought and writings that, for example, he confused the question of class struggle under socialism, a matter which had been dealt with in principle by Marx and Lenin. This confusion has been reflected in our Party and in other Parties. It was very dangerous. In my opinion, there is a certain weakness in Stalin's grasp of materialist dialectics. On other specific matters, he was not wholly correct.

My opinion is, and I do not seek to impose it on others, that Chairman Mao Tsetung was of the stature of Marx and Lenin. He truly inherited, defended and developed the general truths of Marxism-Leninism. It is correct to call it Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. His work on the class struggle both before and after the achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat is of classic quality. It is drawn upon to a degree in the Albanian report. His work on materialist dialectics is of classic quality; it includes a comprehensive analysis of the nature of contradictions among the people again drawn upon to a degree in the Albanian report. His work on the integration of Marxism-Leninism into the actual conditions of China is the revelation and development of a general truth of Marxism-Leninism. His work on the ideological, political and organisational development of the Party is of classic quality. Likewise his work on military science, on literature and art, on the nature of politics, on political economy. In my opinion, Chairman Mao in an all-round way greatly developed Marxism-Leninism. In keeping with this, he was of necessity in the practice of revolution, a master. I may say that I have no personal doubt whatsoever about this matter. Others have other opinions. That is a matter for them. History alone will test the truth. I myself believe that history has already done that.

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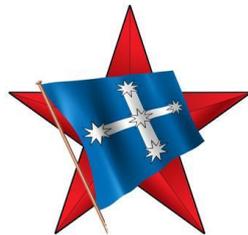
I had several discussions with Chairman Mao. These I cherish. No man of our time had such a grasp of Marxism-Leninism, such capacity yet at the same time was so modest, so understanding, so condemnatory of the cult of his own personality. I well recall being alongside him at one of his receptions to the Red Guards when hundreds and thousands were shouting in unison “Long live Chairman Mao”. I said to him “It is very good”. He replied “Yes, but down there (pointing to the crowd) there are also some very bad people”. Chairman Mao gave me a far-sighted picture of the struggle against revisionism and even as early as 1956, Comrade Chou En-lai, under the leadership of Chairman Mao, systematically analysed Khrushchov’s position. I must say that my conclusion about Chairman Mao’s contribution to Marxism-Leninism has not come lightly nor merely from my personal contact with him but in the course of my experiences in the actual revolutionary struggle.

Though I have said I express these views with ease of mind, I repeat that I am quite conscious of the incomparably greater contribution to the cause of revolution by the Albanian Party of Labour and Comrade Enver Hoxha than our small contributions. The matters I have referred to, trouble the minds of others who strive to Marxism-Leninism. I am certain that I express sentiments held by comrades other than I. The existence of differences amongst Communists is natural. But I do not think an attempt to resolve them should be made unilaterally at a Congress of a Party particularly a Party at the head of a proletariat in power. I subscribe to the view that only bilateral Party discussions can be useful in such a matter and only then in a careful and painstaking way.

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Comrade Ted Hill meeting with Chairman Mao Zedong



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