



HISTORY OF THE LEFT-WING OF THE  
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN LABOR MOVEMENT, 1908-36.

A Thesis for the degree of Bachelor of Arts with  
Honours in History.

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PREFACE

Any person engaged in research on the left-wing of the Labor movement in South Australia will rapidly become aware of the paucity of source material.

The official records and most of the published propaganda of socialist organizations have disappeared. After the Industrial Workers of the World had been declared an illegal body in 1916, members and sympathisers destroyed much printed material, fearing that ownership would invite prosecution by the authorities. Material seized by the police was rarely returned and may be assumed to have perished. A similar situation occurred when the Communist Party became illegal in 1940. As the Industrial Workers of the World and the Communist Party have dominated the militant wing of the Labor movement, the painstaking activities of the authorities have made the task of the researcher correspondingly more difficult, in so far as they have resulted in the removal of radical publications from circulation.

Until quite recently libraries have been reluctant to file permanently radical newspapers and leaflets. Even when donated by the publishers, most of the material

was afterwards destroyed. Furthermore, little effort was ever made to obtain publications which had not been deposited under the Copyright Act.

In my thesis, I have had to rely, in the main, on four sources: (1) South Australian newspapers, usually conservative, which were often guilty of suppressing vital facts when reporting important incidents. Official Labor Party publications indicated only slight interest in the activities of organizations to the Left of the Labor Party. Indeed, events of interest were usually given more prominence in the anti-Labor press. (2) Reports from South Australian correspondents appearing in the Melbourne and Sydney Left-wing press, most of which was consulted at the Mitchell Library, Sydney; (3) the occasional pamphlet or leaflet which escaped the police raids during the two World Wars; (4) the memories of militants who participated in the events described. A considerable portion of my thesis is based on evidence obtained from these men and has not been identified in footnotes. I am deeply indebted to members of the Labor movement - too numerous to mention individually - who have given generous assistance.



Chapter I. THE BIRTH OF REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM, 1903-20.

In 1905 a Liberal-Labor coalition came to power under the leadership of the first Labor premier of South Australia, Thomas Price, who occupies a place in the mainstream of the Labor movement comparable to that held by Keir Hardie in England. The existing platform of the Labor Party was an essentially radical document: its sole reference to public ownership being the clause "state ownership of all railways", which had become a reality by 1905. But, although the Labor Party was not committed officially to the implementation of socialism, many of its parliamentary representatives claimed to be socialists. Not that their interpretations coincided: the one factor common to all was vagueness. According to the definition of Tom Price: "when monopoly crushes the general taxpayer, the State should intervene. He would not go any further than that." <sup>1.</sup> Advocating the imposition of land taxes and assistance to small scale settlers, Labor policy was virtually the same as that of radical Kingstonian Liberals.<sup>2.</sup>

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1. J. I. Craig, History of the South Australian Labor Party to 1917 (M.A. thesis, University of Adelaide, 1940, p. 114.)

2. Alfred Deakin claimed that "in Victoria and South Australia the Labor Party was an offshoot of the Liberal Party", Advertiser, 30 March, 1906 (quoted by Craig, op. cit., p. 114)

The spirit of co-operation culminated in the 1905-09 administration which passed much legislation of a reformist nature but exhibited a marked disinclination to attack private enterprise. Previously, in 1900, Tom Price had claimed that his "presence in politics was not so much destined to alter the trend of politics as to better the status, and condition of ... the workers"<sup>1</sup>. Referring to the parliamentary record of the Labor Party in South Australia, Coghlan observed that "the peculiar note of its struggle is, without question, compromise"<sup>2</sup>.

Acutely sensitive to public opinion and unimaginatively cautious, the Labor Party found itself at loggerheads with a small but vociferous group of enthusiastic socialists who began to regard "gradualism" as being too gradual and deprecated the lack of any comprehensive guiding theory. One general comment by the Marxist historian, Robin Gollan, is especially applicable to South Australia: "The tendency was for Labor policy to be no more and no less than a complex of radical, democratic and nationalist aims that were acceptable to the majority of the Australian people"<sup>3</sup>.

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1. T. H. Smeaton, From Stone Cutter to Premier and Minister of Education, Adelaide, 1924, p. 76.
  2. T. A. Coghlan, Labour and Industry in Australia, London, 1918, Vol. IV, p. 1908.
  3. R. A. Gollan, Radicalism and Socialism in Eastern Australia, 1850-1910. (Ph.D thesis, Univ. of London 1950)p.246

Simultaneously militant trade unionists dissatisfied at the apparent failure of political action, State socialism and arbitration turned their eyes towards industrial action. Thus a gulf was created between the militant wing of the Labor movement and the reformist mainstream, a division and conflict which has endured to the present day.

Eventually, the rebellious elements united as the Socialist Party of South Australia (S.P.) during the visit of Tom Mann to Adelaide on 10-13 January, 1908. Mann, an influential English socialist who had led the great London dock strike of 1889, was residing in Melbourne as organizer of the Victorian Socialist Party. Since his previous visit to Adelaide in October-November, 1902, his hopes of the Labor Party evolving into a socialist party had been shaken.<sup>1</sup> Mann said that "South Australia needs and must have socialism of the right type as much as any other State or nation"<sup>2</sup> and expressed the wish that the new organization would "do something to relieve the Holy City of some of its feeble Religio-Liberalo-Laboro

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1. In 1907 Mann insisted that Labor parliamentarians "behaved in no way superior to capitalist members", Flame, Broken Hill, July 1907. (Quoted by Gollan, op. cit., p. 251)

2. Socialist, 18 January, 1908, p. 4.

attitude which would fail to achieve a revolution in a thousand years and most of whom would rather go to a prayer-meeting than to a socialist demonstration".<sup>1</sup> Not encouraging words, but the small membership were well aware of the difficulties confronting them. The S.P. immediately affiliated with the Socialist Federation of Australasia (S.F.A.), founded in 1907 and deeply critical of the Labor Party. After some delay rooms were secured at 158a Rundle Street and Sunday evening lectures initiated.

At the first annual conference of the S.F.A. held in Melbourne, June 1908, the S.P. was represented by E.H. Gray and O.W. Jorgensen. Gray informed the conference that "the revolutionary socialist movement in South Australia was only a nucleus but doing much effective work" and went on to denounce the Labor Party which had "in every way revealed itself as an absolutely middle-class body".<sup>2</sup> Subsequently at the Fifth Annual State Conference of the Labor Party in 1908 left-wing delegates unsuccessfully moved that a socialist objective be adopted.

The outdoor speaking of the S.P. fell on the shoulders of a few stalwarts, notably Oswald Bennett, the first secretary; Hugh R. Gillespie, a carpenter who had studied

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<sup>1</sup>. Ibid, 22 February, 1908, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>. International Socialist Review, 20 June 1908, p. 4.



at Ruskin College, Oxford; Jack Walker; Fred Riley, Jnr.; and Jack Gunn, later to become Labor premier. Interstate socialists continually passing through Adelaide eased the shortage of speakers and provided a stimulus to local activity. Botanic Park meetings were addressed by Bob Ross, editor of Socialist; Harry Holland, editor of International Socialist Review who eventually became leader of the New Zealand Labor Party; and Frank Hyett, leading Victorian socialist and brother-in-law of Jack Gunn. In late 1908 meetings were planned in connection with the proposed visit of the American author, Jack London, whose ill-health resulted in the trip being cancelled. However, the absence of interstate figures always resulted in a decline in activity; Harry Scott-Bennett, M.L.A., the rationalist, commented in 1909 that "things are quiet in Adelaide".<sup>1</sup>

Against the unflinching criticism of the S.P., the Labor Party retaliated by restricting its freedom whenever practicable and excluding all reports concerning the S.P. from the Herald, official organ of the Labor Party. Strenuous efforts were made by the authorities to prevent Harry Holland speaking in early 1909. Many halls were refused before the Workers' Hall, Port Adelaide was finally obtained. The socialists

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<sup>1</sup>. Socialist, 15 January, 1909, p. 3.

suspected that the representations of certain Labor politicians had been largely responsible for the action of the government. Some months later, Tom Mann was refused permission to speak in the Central Market. In rejecting the application of the S.P., the Mayor of Adelaide stated that "he would not mind the Labor Party having the market but would not under any consideration allow it to be used for the purpose of socialist propaganda".<sup>1.</sup>

Bitter industrial unrest existed in Broken Hill throughout 1908-09, culminating in a prolonged lock-out of the miners. A S.P. meeting in the Botanic Park carried a resolution "expressing sympathy with them in their struggle and condemning the cowardly inaction of the Labor Parties both Federal and State".<sup>2.</sup> A copy was forwarded to the Herald which refused publication, commenting that the latter portion of the resolution was unjustified. For several months the energies of the S.P. were directed towards presenting the miners' case and raising funds.

The second conference of the S.F.A. took place at Broken Hill in June, 1909. No members being able to undertake the long journey, the S.P. chose as delegates Tom Mann and Percy Laidler, a prominent Melbourne socialist. Several months later "for the first time the Red Flag was unfurled in South Australia on a recent Sunday in the Botanic Park".<sup>3.</sup>

1. International Socialist Review, 31 July, 1909, p. 14  
3. Socialist, 5 November 1909, p. 4

2. International Socialist Review, 13 February 1909.

International Socialist Review, 21 January 1911, p. 4

Following a visit to Port Pirie by Harry Holland in November 1909, a branch of the S.F.A. was formed with Harry Clark as secretary. Over a year later it was reported that virtually every member had been blacklisted out of Port Pirie by the business interests and the branch had ceased to function.<sup>1</sup> Returning through Adelaide Holland addressed a meeting which passed a resolution protesting against the imprisonment of two Broken Hill miners, Stokes and May. An attempt was then made to join forces with the Labor Party in a joint demonstration against the convictions, and, although such a course was favoured by the Council of the Labor Party, it was quashed by the refusal of the Labor Regulation League to allow the Botanic Park ring to be used for a meeting calling for the men's release.

The infusion of new blood enlivened activities:- Harry Clark from Port Pirie, who became organizer of the United Laborers' Union (U.L.U.); Hugh Swindley from Broken Hill; Ted Moyle from England; and Miss Ethel Barringer, the noted painter and silversmith. It now became possible to hold both an economics and a speakers' class. Large quantities of literature representing all shades of socialist thought - Marxist, reformist and syndicalist - were distributed, most

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<sup>1</sup> International Socialist,  
1. [redacted] 21 January, 1911, p. 4.

of it from the Kerr Press, Chicago. Socialist literature could also be obtained from Mrs. BATTERY's newsagency in Franklin Street. Her father-in-law, Mr. BATTERY, a cabinet maker, had attended meetings of the First International and was an acquaintance of Karl Marx; he had "a great influence in forming the basic principles of the industrial and political movement in South Australia".<sup>1</sup> Gunn and Clark played an important role in the bitterly fought Drivers' strike of 1910. In 1911 Gunn became secretary of the Drivers' Union, after which his views steadily moderated. Fred Riley and Harry Denford were selected to attend the S.F.A. Conference in Melbourne, June 1910. Denford had achieved notoriety in the previous month as the sole delegate at the Trades and Labor Council (T.L.C.) to oppose the motion expressing condolences on the death of King Edward VII.<sup>2</sup> He was a prominent figure in the U.L.U. formed in 1908 and the most militant union in Adelaide. After the conference both men proceeded to the outback districts of Queensland carrying swags and propagating socialism. They formed a union branch at Mt. Morgan and both were later jailed during a fight for free speech at Wollongong, N.S.W., before the Great War.

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1. Fred J. Riley to John Playford, 1958.

2. Daily Herald, 14 May 1910, p. 5. Subsequently the editor of the Daily Herald was made to apologize for deprecating Denford's action.

When Joseph McCabe, the noted Rationalist lecturer, spent some days in Adelaide in August, 1910, the S.P. was active in organizing and supporting his meetings. Shortly afterwards 'Monty' Miller, the last survivor of Eureka, passed through en route ~~from~~<sup>to</sup> West Australia and addressed several functions. Late in September Harry Clark and George Madgwick had their names taken by police for speaking in Grote Street on a Saturday evening without a permit. Yet nearby, religious bodies, also without permits, continued unmolested. George Madgwick was re-elected secretary and Arthur Wallace became President at the A.G.M. of the S.P. during January, 1911. Wallace had arrived recently from Broken Hill and his wife, the former Lizzie Ahern, had spoken at Adelaide meetings some years previously. Headquarters were now situated in Wakefield Street and a Socialist Sunday school formed to instruct members' children. Madgwick vacated the secretaryship on 13 April, 1911, intending to take a trip abroad. Four days later he collapsed and died. The funeral service was conducted by Hugh Gillespie and concluded with the singing of the 'Red Flag'. Jim Bryan acted as secretary for a short time and was succeeded by Robert L. Barringer, another member of the well-known family of artists. A large meeting was convened at the Botanic Park on the first Sunday in May to

celebrate May Day. Radical opinion at the time was bitterly opposed to the Defence Act, 1911, and the S.P. was prominent in forming the Anti-Militarist League in Adelaide on 7 November 1911, Bob Barringer being elected joint-secretary. A stir was created in the S.P. when J. W. Davies, the Literary Secretary, was expelled on 14 December on a charge of expropriating £15. The Port Pirie branch was resuscitated with Charles Cesare as secretary and Frank Price, secretary of the Combined Unions of Port Pirie, as President.

Adelaide was the venue of the last and largest S.F.A. conference in Easter, 1912, at which the title of the organization was altered to the Australasian Socialist Party (A.S.P.). Denford and Riley attended as N.S.W. delegates, the latter being elected chairman. A strongly worded motion opposing militarism was passed while the Labor Party and craft unions received bitter condemnation. However, the party had seen its best days and it remained only for the A.S.P. to call together a conference in 1920 out of which emerged the Communist Party. In 1914, Adelaide secretary Jim Bryan reported that the party had been dissolved<sup>1</sup> and commented on the "fair progress" being achieved by the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.), of which body Bryan later became a leading

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1. International Socialist, 28 June 1914, p. 4.

speaker. As the driving force among Adelaide militants the A.S.P. had been displaced by the I.W.W.

The I.W.W. originated in America in 1905. Preaching industrial unionism, i.e. the organization of workers according to industry rather than craft, it had grown at a spectacular rate. Socialism was to be realized through the education of workers in I.W.W. policy. The preamble to the 1905 constitution began defiantly: "The working class and the employing class have nothing in common ..." Scorn was poured on talk of arbitration and co-operation between Labor and Capital. A split occurred in the organization in 1908 because one section believed that industrial unionism was not being propagated sufficiently. The Chicago I.W.W., or syndicalist wing, claimed that the organization should not be tied to any political party and drew up a new constitution deleting all references to political action. The Detroit I.W.W. retained affiliation with the Socialist Labor Party (S.L.P.) and deep hostility developed between the two groups.

I.W.W. clubs had existed in several Australian centres since 1907 and were subordinated to the S.L.P. Writing in 1923, the Marxist historian Gordon Childe, called their establishment "the most momentous event in the political and industrial history of Australian labour since the historic decision

in favour of political action in 1890".<sup>1</sup> Ted Moyle contacted Chicago and succeeded in forming the first direct-actionist "local", or club, in May 1911. Henceforth Adelaide became the Continental Administration in Australia. Initially there were only eight members and headquarters were secured at the Socialist Hall, Wakefield Street, which also housed the S.P. D. Mallon was elected secretary but left for work in the country the following day and was never seen again. His successor Moyle was empowered to issue charters to new locals.<sup>2</sup> Immediately, the secretary of the Detroit I.W.W. clubs in Australia, H. J. Hawkins of Sydney, challenged the constitution and condemned the move as "insane". Writing to Moyle he claimed that "one of the conditions of a successful revolutionary union is the existence of a proletariat awakened to a very considerable degree of class consciousness".<sup>3</sup> Evidently he considered Adelaide had not yet attained such a stage of development and directed a steady stream of invective towards the new local. The relationship between the I.W.W. and S.P.

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1. V.G. Childe, How Labour Governs, London 1923, p. 147.

2. I.W.W. locals did not elect a President. A chairman was elected at the beginning of each meeting.

3. V.G. Childe, op. cit., p. 147.



was cordial: both Moyle and the new organizer E. A. Giffney, continued to support the S.P. actively. Periodically trouble was encountered with the police, usually over permits to speak. Giffney, Harry Clark and others had their names taken at Saturday evening propaganda meetings in Victoria Square. A local in Sydney secured a charter with Harry Denford as first secretary, but it was not until January 1913 that the direct-actionists were strong enough to remove the Continental Administration to Sydney. There the famous I.W.W. weekly, Direct Action, commenced publication on 31 January, 1914, under the editorship of Tom Barker who visited Adelaide the same year. Through the high circulation of Direct Action the influence of the I.W.W. was entirely disproportionate to its numerical strength.

In June 1914 Port Pirie was the scene of the first large scale "free-speech" fights in South Australia. The Secretary of the Sydney I.W.W., Charlie Reeve, who was temporarily engaged in organizing, was sentenced to ten days imprisonment on 19 June for refusing to move on while addressing a large street meeting. Convicted under an Act passed for the discouragement of gambling, Reeve termed the verdict "an outrage of British justice"<sup>1</sup>. which led to the S.M. threatening him with contempt of court. On a similar charge, five of his

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1. Register, 22 June 1914, p. 14.

comrades were sentenced to twenty-one days imprisonment on 24 June; one of the defendants, Thomas Cherrington, local I.W.W. secretary, protested that "speakers for the I.W.W. had addressed meetings all over Australia but when they came to a town like Port Pirie, which was nothing more than a hovel, they were stopped."<sup>1</sup>. However, religious groups continued undisturbed.<sup>2</sup> The Labor Party abandoned its meeting on 20 June for fear of prosecution. Large numbers of 'Wobblies'<sup>3</sup> arrived by rail, boat, bike and foot from Broken Hill, Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney, all prepared to suffer imprisonment for advocating freedom of speech. Prosecutions continued until the Gladstone Gaol was choking. Protests poured in from the Amalgamated Miners Association, the Russian Club at Port Pirie and other bodies. Port Pirie T.L.C. condemned the action of the municipal authorities on 26 June, while the Daily Herald termed it "totally unjustified".<sup>4</sup> Until police reinforcements arrived on 25 June, the local constabulary were

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1. Ibid, 26 June, 1914, p. 12.

2. "Salvation Army ranters and fanatical sky pilots are allowed to make night hideous" commented Direct Action, 1 July, 1914, p. 1.

3. General term for I.W.W. members.

4. Daily Herald, 26 June 1914, p. 4.

unable to disperse the meetings which attracted crowds of up to 3,000 people, even when assisted by mounted troopers. Finally, pressure on the limited prison accommodation caused the prosecutions to be dropped and the council unwillingly granted a speaking permit to the I.W.W. The authorities had been forced to retract in the face of a group of dauntless militants, one of whom, Thomas McMillan, wrote: "they can gaol us or trample our faces in the dirty streets of Port Pirie but they can never take away from us the militant spirit that permeates the breast of every member of the I.W.W. We will fight this fight with passionate devotion to our principles and we mean to win, irrespective of the sacrifices to be made".<sup>1</sup> A correspondent commented that "the stir created by the visit of Reeve to this dead hole far surpassed our expectations."<sup>2</sup> Both I.W.W. membership and the circulation of Direct Action rapidly increased. Reeve proceeded to Adelaide where he conducted a successful series of meetings among the waterside workers before continuing to Broken Hill.

With the rumblings of war growing louder the authorities began to subject the Adelaide I.W.W. to much closer scrutiny.

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1. Direct Action, 15 July, 1914, p. 1.

2. Ibid, 1 July, 1914, p. 4.

After one meeting it was reported that "some half dozen detectives have recently been in attendance".<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile H. T. Kelly had resigned the secretaryship and was succeeded by Harry Clark. War against Germany was declared on 4 August, 1914, and the Adelaide local passed the following motion on 2 September: "That every member of the I.W.W. who joins the Military Forces be expelled from the organisation and that the organisation brands every member who joins the Military Forces as a scab and traitor to the working class".<sup>2</sup> The war stimulated militants to form new locals, which sprang up in Fremantle, Boulder City and Brisbane. Itinerant "foot-loose Wobblies", who were always readily available when the need arose, played an important part in forming new locals. Stan G. Drummond was appointed secretary of the Adelaide local in 1915 and retained the position until the organisation was dissolved by governmental action.

The Australian Peace Alliance (A.P.A.) was formed in Melbourne in early 1915 with Fred Riley, formerly of Adelaide, as secretary. A South Australian branch was

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1. Ibid, 1 August, 1914, p. 4.

2. From a leaflet Some of the Anti's, National Referendum Council, Adelaide 1917. Copy located in Guardbook of Anti-Conscription Leaflets, Public Library of S.A.

created at the Friends' Meeting House on 5 June, 1915, at which Bob Ross of Melbourne explained the work of the organization. Most of the supporters were either Quakers or international Socialists who believed the war to be the result of imperialist-capitalist conflict. Among the active supporters were John Hills; Miss Ethel Barringer; Miss Katherine Hodson, a young school teacher; and Mrs. Sidney Partridge, a well-known Adelaide writer. A meeting was held at the Botanic Park on the following day. From the outset, interjections filled the air but when a speaker complained of the boycott imposed by trade unions on members of German descent who had helped to build and maintain them, the crowd became unruly and drowned the speaker with "Rule Britannia". Prompt action by the police in dispersing the meeting prevented violence. "Nothing could be done in forming a Socialist Party", reported Ross, "The best thing to do was to help the movement for peace".<sup>1</sup> Large audiences, usually about a thousand strong, continued to attend the A.P.A. ring and the police had instructions to arrest Hills if any disturbance arose. Resentment towards Hills was steadily mounting in ultra-patriotic circles and on 15 August, 1915, he was rushed by a group of soldiers at the Botanic Park. The aid of Fred Riley and the intervention of the police averted bloodshed. Throughout the

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1. Socialist, 18 June, 1915, p. 2.

war, packs of soldiers and larrikins attempted to break up peace meetings and inflict injury on the supporters. Shortly before the incident, Harry Denford, speaking from past experience, declared that Botanic Park audiences were "the most ignorant one could meet in the cities of Australia".<sup>1</sup> On 16 August, an A.P.A. deputation called on the Chief Secretary to protest against the intolerance shown towards their organization by some sections of the community. The Chief Secretary simply warned them of the risks they were taking. Shortly afterwards, Hills was suspended from the Education Department.

During the early stages of the war the Labor Party enthusiastically threw its weight behind the war effort. This did not surprise the militants, since before the war Labor had championed the Defence Acts and compulsory military training. A visitor wrote in 1915: "From a Socialist viewpoint Adelaide is indeed behind the times ... The Herald is rather more jingoistic and after more gore than the conservative Register".<sup>2</sup> However, the State Labor conference of 1915 unanimously opposed the introduction of

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1. Ibid, 13 August, 1915, p. 2.

2. Ibid, 29 October, 1915, p. 2.

conscription which the conservatives were advocating. At this stage W. M. Hughes maintained that "in no circumstances would he agree to send men out of the country to fight against their will".<sup>1</sup> Within a year he had reversed his views and begun the first conscription campaign which split the country into two great camps at a time when unity was essential.

At first many people had optimistically imagined that the war would be short-lived. However, the rank and file of the Labor Party began to lose enthusiasm due to war-weariness, isolationism and other factors. Supporting conscription were the conservative and business classes, the Right-wing Labor parliamentarians and, with few exceptions, the leaders of the Protestant churches,<sup>2</sup> whose frequent pronouncements were invariably couched in a jingoistic style which surpassed the efforts of secular politicians.

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1. L. C. Jauncey, Story of Conscription in Australia, London 1935, p. 118.

2. The following prominent South Australian clerics advocated conscription: the Bishop of Adelaide; the President of the Methodist Conference; the Chairman of the Congregational Union; and the Moderator of the Presbyterian Assembly. The executive committee of the Methodist Church passed a motion urging Methodists to vote for conscription. Rev. Albert Morris, a Methodist minister who publicly supported the anti-conscriptionists, was deprived of his pulpit.

Ranged on the other side were the great majority of the rank and file of the Labor Party; the radical intelligentsia, numerically a small group in South Australia but one which played an important role in speaking and pamphleteering; and a high proportion of Catholics. The statements of Dr. Norton, Catholic Bishop of Port Augusta, contained anti-conscriptionist sentiments while Archbishop Mannix, a key anti-conscriptionist figure during the campaign, "had a big following in South Australia, both inside and outside his church".<sup>1</sup> Events in Dublin during Easter 1916 had profoundly influenced Irish-Australians. Moreover, small farmers were usually sympathetic to anti-conscription propaganda, fearing that conscription would take away their labour.

Opposition to conscription in South Australia was mainly divided into two groups, the Anti-Conscription Council, allied with the Labor Party; and the Anti-Conscription League (A.C.L.), composed of international socialists, religious pacifists, Catholics and Single Taxers. Both groups co-operated closely. Most of the leading A.P.A. personalities came to the forefront in the A.C.L. which concentrated on distributing literature. In this task it was hindered by the delaying tactics of the censor, Major T. H. Smeaton, Labor M.H.A. The industrial wing

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1. L. C. Jauncey, op. cit., p. 232.



of the Labor Party had always been hostile to the Vaughan Government - termed "the black-coated brigade" on account of its predominantly non-industrial composition - and they used the conscription issue to whip up opposition to the Cabinet.

Most conscriptionists failed to make the elementary distinction between support for I.W.W. principles and opposition to Hughes' proposals. In their propaganda they directed their abuse towards the Catholics whom they termed "disloyal Sinn Feiners" and the alleged I.W.W. threat which was inter-mixed with charges of "German gold". However, the I.W.W. was of little importance in deciding the issue in South Australia, unlike its counterparts in the Eastern States. Indeed, the Adelaide local ceased activities in August, 1916. One of the major factors causing its death was the shortage of competent orators. Many of its leading supporters had moved to Broken Hill and the repressive actions of the authorities were sufficient to eliminate the I.W.W. However, it must be remembered that "before 'No Conscription' became a popular catchword ... the I.W.W. steadily and unflinchingly denounced the curse (of militarism) and prepared the field where the Labor Party afterwards reaped".<sup>1</sup>

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1. V. G. Childe, op. cit., p. 154.

The final outcome of the South Australian campaign was a sizeable majority of 31,312 for the anti-conscriptionists. Excluding the votes of the armed forces, <sup>1</sup>. South Australia had the highest proportion of anti-conscriptionist votes in the Commonwealth.<sup>2</sup> It is well-known that the majority of Catholics were anti-conscriptionist but the percentage of Catholics in South Australia was lower than in the other states. Thus, the unusually high 'No' vote in this state cannot be explained in terms of the Catholic vote. It would appear that the principal determining factor was the voters of German extraction who were numerically stronger here than elsewhere. In districts where these people were concentrated, high anti-conscriptionist votes were recorded. "It was natural for most German-Australians to vote 'No', when so many of their ancestors had left Germany to escape the tyranny of conscription".<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that the opposition to conscription in South Australia was based on a broader political front than in Victoria where anti-conscriptionist and radical forces were more closely connected.

The results inevitably led to a split in the Labor Party. On 22 February, 1917, twenty two of the thirty two State Labor

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1. The proportion of soldiers voting 'No' from South Australia was, by far, the lowest in the Commonwealth.
  2. Three states returned anti-conscriptionist majorities - South Australia, N.S.W. and Queensland, where the percentage of 'No' votes were 57.6, 57.1 and 52.3 respectively.
  3. L. C. Jauncey, op. cit., p. 217

parliamentarians seceded and formed the National Labor Party, among their number many of the founders of the Labor Party<sup>1</sup>. However, most of them paid the penalty of political extinction at the next general election. It was left to comparatively younger men - Jack Gunn and Lionel Hill - to rebuild the party as a political force. The Federal Parliamentary Labor Party was not so adversely affected, Hughes taking twenty three out of sixty five Labor members with him.<sup>2</sup>

During November, 1916, twelve prominent Sydney members of the I.W.W. were arrested under somewhat melodramatic circumstances and charged with sedition and arson before Mr. Justice Pring, who had acquired a reputation among militants for the severity of his sentences. The defendants were sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from five to fifteen years. However, none fully served his term as a Royal Commission appointed by the N.S.W. Government in 1920 found, inter alia, that four of the key crown witnesses were guilty of perjury.

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1. Poynton, Archibald, McGillivray, Smeaton and John Verran. All the secessionists were Protestants with the exception of one Catholic. Two of the remaining faithful members were Catholics. Catholic influence was extremely weak in the Labor Party until the conscription issue. Only a handful of sub-branches and a couple of small unions disaffiliated from the Labor Party.
  2. Seven of the nine South Australian Labor members in the Federal parliament seceded, indicating that the relative strength of the conscriptionist Labor parliamentarians was most powerful among the South Australian representatives. All the secessionists were Protestants and one of the two who remained faithful to the Labor Party was a Catholic.

Immediately after the pronouncement of the verdict protests arose, particularly from trade unions. The A.C.L. passed the following resolution: "That this meeting enters its emphatic protest against the unjust sentences meted out to the members of the I.W.W. ... by a class-biassed and vindictive judge, and that we do our utmost to obtain their immediate release".<sup>1</sup> A branch of the Workers' Defence and Release League was formed in Adelaide in which I.W.W. supporters figured prominently. Dr. Harry Clark-Nikola was elected President and Bert Wall secretary,<sup>2</sup> while Ted Moyle served on the committee. Later Perce Cowham succeeded Wall as secretary. Meetings were held at which collections were taken to assist the imprisoned men and their families. On one occasion, after Moyle and Hans Christopherson had spoken in Victoria Square, police charged and smashed the stand before Cowham could rise to speak. In early 1917 the weekly sales of Direct Action rose to over twelve dozen. 'Monty' Miller arrived in April and addressed a Botanic Park meeting for an hour and a half, in spite of being 85 years of age.

The Unlawful Associations Act was passed by Federal Parliament in December, 1916. At first the Labor opposition claimed the terms of the Bill were so wide that it could be

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1. Direct Action, 10 February, 1917, p. 1.

2. Wall was in Adelaide as the relieving executive officer at the local branch of a Melbourne business. He was dismissed upon returning to Melbourne.

used to proscribe trade unions, but an amendment was passed excepting registered trades unions. The Act, in its preamble, specifically declared the I.W.W. to be an unlawful association. However membership of the organization was not made an offence. Such limitations were overcome by the amended Unlawful Associations Act, 1917, which provided that members of proscribed organizations were liable to six months imprisonment and, if born outside Australia, could be deported. Thus, the authorities were able to suppress the I.W.W., yet "long after the I.W.W. locals had closed and the leaders gaoled, the influence of I.W.W. ideas persisted".<sup>1</sup> Former members of the I.W.W. were behind the End the War Committee established during June, 1917; Moyle became secretary but the organization quietly disappeared. The Adelaide local was temporarily reorganized shortly afterwards. Jim Gilligan was appointed organizer and premises were obtained in a small shop in Pitt Street with the words "Get Wise to the One Big Union" painted on the window. Open air meetings were held in Victoria Square and the Botanic Park. However, on 7 September police raids were made on the homes of leading members and a large quantity of literature confiscated.

A bitter conflict developed between the I.W.W. and the

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1. B. C. FitzPatrick, Short History of the Australian Labor Movement, Melbourne 1940. p. 115.

authorities at Port Pirie, following some industrial upheaval on the wharves. Thomas Cherrington was charged with being a member of the I.W.W. and sentenced to six months imprisonment on 7 September. Similar sentences were meted out to Robert Smyth, Walter Hatswell, Jim Gilligan and John Flynn on the 13, 14, 14 and 17 September respectively. Smyth, a 19 year old laborer, denied being a member but was local secretary of the Workers' Defence and Release League, an organization which the prosecution treated as synonymous with the I.W.W. Gilligan had come from Adelaide to help organize. Evidence produced during the trials established that detectives had been trailing I.W.W. members and keeping the Port Pirie and Adelaide headquarters under constant surveillance. One could be convicted without being a member of the I.W.W. simply by reading Direct Action or having a copy on the premises, associating with prominent members or visiting I.W.W. headquarters. The organization was successfully quashed at Port Pirie by the prompt implementation of the Unlawful Associations Act.

Meanwhile Moyle and Christopherson had been charged in Adelaide on 12 September, with refusing to move on while addressing a street meeting on the dangers confronting free speech. Permission to speak had been obtained from the Mayor of Adelaide but it transpired in court that he had no power to issue permits. Nevertheless, both were fined £6, in default one month imprisonment.

Moyle was again brought to court and charged with being an I.W.W. member. He denied this accusation and claimed that the considerable quantity of old I.W.W. literature found at his home was used for shaving purposes. However, the S.M. concluded by saying that Moyle had clearly been a member of the I.W.W. at one time and that he could see no ground for supposing that Moyle was not still a member. The defendant was sentenced to four months imprisonment with hard labour on 24 November. After five weeks in Yatala Gaol, Moyle was transferred to Long Bay Gaol, N.S.W., where he remained until July, 1918, with the threat of deportation hanging over his head. A condition of release was the signing of a good behaviour bond to the value of £400 for the duration of the war. Moyle believes his deportation was prevented by a demonstration of twenty unions at Botanic Park on 11 April, 1918. Fellow prisoners, such as Tom Barker, were less fortunate.

The second conscription campaign in late 1917 was fought more bitterly than its predecessor. A well-known Melbourne socialist and capable public-speaker, Alf Wilson, was imported as organizer of the A.C.L. He had formerly been a member of the Melbourne I.W.W. local, and spoke at the final monster 'No' rally in the Exhibition Building on 18 December, 1917. Well-

known interstate figures spoke throughout the campaign, notably Adela Pankhurst, John Curtin, Rev. Frank Sinclaire and many politicians. Conscription was again rejected. The 'No' vote increased in all states except South Australia<sup>1</sup>. where the absolute anti-conscription vote actually fell. A contributing factor to the decline was that naturalized British subjects born in Germany were disqualified from voting. South Australia was affected more than any other state by these regulations. The federal electorate of Angas, containing a high proportion of German-Australians, and previously a safe anti-Labor seat, turned Labor at the 1917 elections and remained as such until 1931.

While opposed to conscription, the Labor Party looked upon unpatriotic sentiments with disfavour. Percy Brookfield, Independent Labor M.L.A. (N.S.W.) had stated on 24 March, 1917, at Broken Hill that "The Red Flag is the only Flag I'll spill my blood for. As for the British flag ... I'll never spill a drop of blood for it",<sup>2</sup> whereupon Adelaide T.L.C. officials declared such views to be opposed to those of the Labor Party.

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1. The percentage of 'No' votes in S.A., N.S.W. and Queensland was 55.1, 58.8 and 55.9 respectively. Also, Victoria just managed to record a 'No' majority.

2. Register, 27 March, 1917, p. 4.



Furthermore The Joint House Committee of the S.A. Parliament refused to extend him the usual privilege to use the parliamentary buildings until he repudiated his statement.<sup>1.</sup>

A new Socialist Party was formed on 27 January, 1917, at the A.W.U. Hall, Flinders Street. Founder members included Mrs. Norman Smith, President of the A.C.L.; Miss Katherine Hodson; and a number of future Labor parliamentarians. Within a few months the name was altered to Social Democratic League (S.D.L.) with the objective: "the realization of a system of society based on socialist principles", which it enumerated to include "the class struggle, industrial unionism, internationalism and anti-militarism".<sup>2.</sup> Members were free to support any party whose interests coincided with those of the working class. In March 1918, the S.D.L. markedly increased its membership by amalgamating with the A.C.L. Alf Wilson was appointed organizer of the reorganized S.D.L. He was able to report at the half-yearly general meeting on 7 August, 1918, that sales of the International Socialist had risen to

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1. Col. S. Price Weir, D.S.O., of Adelaide claimed that Brookfield "should be interned and never allowed to see the light of day again" (Daily Herald, 28 March, 1917, p. 4.) Brookfield's career was tragically terminated in South Australia. He was mortally wounded by a deranged Russian on the Riverton Railway station on 22 March, 1921, while travelling to Adelaide.

2. Social Democrat, 8 September, 1917, p. 4.

twenty dozen a week and membership had increased by 140 in the previous six months. He continued: "some of those who were instrumental in forming the League have left it for an opportunity to get into Parliament as Labor men, but they are not missed".<sup>1</sup> Wilson debated with E. J. Craigie of the Single Tax League "That Marxism will emancipate the Workers" on the evening of 23 September. Herbert Heaton<sup>2</sup> occupied the chair and 600 people packed the A.W.U. Hall, indicating the amount of interest in serious political discussion.

A revised constitution was adopted on 28 September in which all connection with members of the Labor Party was severed. Thus the way was paved for absorption into the A.S.P., agreed to at the federal conference of that body on 27 December, 1918. Wilson became the organizer of the Adelaide branch of the A.S.P. and again reported excellent progress at the general meeting on 12 February, 1919, with 100 new members enrolled and 162 meetings addressed during the previous six months. Circulation of the International Socialist rose to almost 500 copies a week. However Wilson refused nomination for a further term due to

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1. International Socialist, 31 August, 1918, p. 4.
  2. Director of Tutorial Classes, University of Adelaide. Heaton was a Fabian socialist who was actively interested in working-class education for many years.

overwork and H. Spencer Jones of N.S.W. was appointed organizer at a salary of £4 a week. He failed to arrive and Dr. Clark-Nikola agreed to become Hon. Secretary with Mick Sawtell as organizer. Every Friday evening Hans Christopherson and Bill Cathcart propagated socialism at Port Adelaide. The Anniversary of the Paris Commune was celebrated at a social on 18 March, 1918 and a similar function was held on May Day followed by a large meeting at the Botanic Park on 4 May. Following the Seaman's Strike of 1918, the Mayor of Adelaide refused to allow street meetings under the auspices of the A.S.P., Single Tax League or One Big Union.

Moses Baritz, a prominent member of the Socialist Party of Great Britain, arrived in Australia in December, 1918, to lecture extensively for the A.S.P. An able debater and gifted with a keen intelligence, his arrogant manner made few friends in Adelaide. Miss Kathleen Hodson courageously debated with Baritz but he scored an easy, if unpopular, victory.

In Sydney, during 1916, the Workers' International Industrial Union (W.I.I.U.) had been established by the remaining supporters of the Detroit I.W.W., then under the control of the S.L.P. Very close links existed between the S.L.P. and the W.I.I.U., while the latter body also co-operated with the A.S.P.

However Baritz persuaded the A.S.P. Conference on 27 December, 1918, to sever all connection with the W.I.I.U. and concentrate exclusively on political propaganda. Mick Sawtell, organizer of the Adelaide A.S.P., was an industrial unionist and was largely responsible for the Adelaide branch withdrawing from the parent body on 3 September, and renaming itself the International Industrial Workers (I.I.W.). Those present voted unanimously but a few members led by Harry Crittenden<sup>1</sup> took exception to the action. The dissentients claimed that the only honourable course open to Sawtell was to have resigned from the A.S.P. and then founded a new organization. Dr. Clark-Nikola gave reasons for the secession: "(1) the membership are dissatisfied with the political camouflage of the A.S.P. favouring rather a straight-out revolutionary industrial platform and policy; (2) the International Socialist is unsatisfactory as a working-class paper being too academic, too political, etc.; (3) serious dissatisfaction with the attitude of indifference manifested by the paper and party on the jailing of the twelve I.W.W. men".<sup>2</sup> Political activity was pronounced

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1. Crittenden, also a prominent Adelaide rationalist, left for Canada in 1920.

2. Socialist, 24 October, 1919, p. 1.

outdated and the I.I.W. became a pure industrial organization. In February, 1920, publication began of a monthly Industrial Solidarity, the editor being Dr. Clark-Nikola. 500 copies of each issue were printed. Virulent anti-political diatribes were contributed by Mick Sawtell and others.

Meanwhile, Wilson had been appointed Australian organizer of the A.S.P. in mid-1919, but it was reported in 1920 that he had been expelled allegedly for "making lying statements concerning the Party from the platform".<sup>1</sup> Wilson, who had taken a dislike to Baritz, had been growing increasingly disturbed at the tendency to submerge industrial unionist propaganda which eventually led to his expulsion. Later his antagonism to political action abated. Linking up with the W.I.I.U., Wilson became Australian organizer. Since early 1920, the W.I.I.U. had existed in Adelaide. It was known as Local No. 9, and headquarters were situated at Unity Hall, Bray Street, and afterwards 223 Flinders Street. E. Moran, Jack Zwolsman and Fred Sparkman were the successive secretaries, and meetings took place at the Botanic Park on Sunday afternoons. The organisation was also termed the Industrial Recruiting Union, and was strongly antipathetic towards the Australian Workers' Union (A.W.U.)

After the conscription campaigns the One Big Union (O.B.U.)

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1. O.B.U. Herald, September, 1920, p. 4.

movement had been growing in the Eastern states. Finally in 1918, it developed into the Workers' Industrial Union of Australia (W.I.U. of A.), which advocated the abolition of craft unions and the reorganization of unions along industrial lines. Cyril Hasse became secretary of the S.A. branch, later to be succeeded by Perce Cowham. Hasse unsuccessfully moved for the adoption of the O.B.U. platform at the Labor Party conference on 18 September, 1919. Instead the A.W.U. amendment regarding the form of industrial consolidation was adopted, with the support of craft union delegations.

Following the report of a strike by grape pickers on the River Murray Settlements in August, 1920, and the subsequent employment of 'scab' labour with little protest from the A.W.U., Hasse and Sawtell visited the area endeavouring to persuade the workers to transfer to the W.I.U. of A. Speaking at Glossop on 10 August, Hasse was seized by a group of returned soldiers and thrown into the channel. The Superintendent of Soldier Settlements sent a report to the Minister of Repatriation claiming that Hasse had "expounded his views which were of a pronouncedly Bolshevik and republican nature to the effect that Australia would not be any good until we had a 'revolution'" and that the returned soldiers had resorted to violence as

"the very thought of revolution was sufficient to overthrow their balance".<sup>1</sup> Labor parliamentarians objected to what Mr. Gunn termed a "very biased report".<sup>2</sup> The strikers returned to work upon being guaranteed award rates of pay.

The largest strike led by the W.I.U.A. occurred at Dunstan's Quarries in early October, 1920. The management had been granting preferential treatment to A.W.U. workers, although the majority of employees belonged to the W.I.U. of A. The strike engulfed the complete quarry industry and lasted several weeks, during which A.W.U. members were escorted to work in special transport and protected by police. Eventually, the W.I.U. of A. members were reinstated and award anomalies rectified. Other smaller strikes were successfully led by the W.I.U. of A. The final issue of Industrial Solidarity in December, 1920, announced that the I.I.W. had merged with the W.I.U. of A., the culmination of previous co-operative activity. Mick Sawtell was appointed organizer. An active

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1. Parliamentary Debates, 1920, Vol. I, p. 316.

2. Ibid. Many years later the officer-in-charge of the Glossoop Camp in 1920 claimed that "Hasse spoke with my permission and ... spoke not one word that any person could take exception to. Of the treatment he received, the least said the better for it was disgraceful". See letter from J. J. Nixon, a non-Labor voter, Advertiser, 18 December, 1931, p. 28.

branch was established at Port Pirie with Charles Hathaway as Secretary. In mid-1921 abortive attempts were made to unite the W.I.U. of A. and W.I.I.U. Eventually the W.I.U. of A. disappeared in 1922. Its downfall can be ascribed to the apathy of the workers; the spirited opposition of A.W.U. officials anxious to maintain the industrial status quo, who had ordered their members not to work with W.I.U. of A. men after initially losing a number of members to the latter body; and misrepresentation by Labor Party leaders and the press. Jim Cullen, No. 1 member of the W.I.U. of A. claimed that the militants withdrew because of "the contrast between the successful seizure of power by the Russian workers and the failure of the anarcho-syndicalist occupation of the factories in Italy".<sup>1</sup>

It has been shown that the general condition of revolutionary socialist organizations in South Australia was one of disorganized confusion which reflected itself not only in the disunity of the Left but also in the constant regrouping of the existing forces. Such an atmosphere was disillusioning to militants and unlikely to entice new blood into the Left. It was a phenomenon by no means exclusive to this State, and was Australia-wide. But the consolidation of the Left proceeded at a slower pace in South Australia than in other states.

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<sup>1</sup>. A.H.Finger, "Notes on South Australian Labour History", Communist Review, December, 1945, p. 695.



Chapter II. The Failure of the Communist Party and the Survival of American Influence, 1920 - 29.

The Communist Party of Australia (C.P.) was formed at a conference of socialist groups convened by the A.S.P. in Sydney, 30 October, 1920. However conflict developed between the provisional executive and the A.S.P. which led the latter body to withdraw its delegates and establish a rival C.P. It was not until 1922 that substantial unity was achieved when most members of the party sponsored by the A.S.P. broke away. From the outset, the C.P. outstripped other left groupings in N.S.W., both in membership and influence.

Despite geographical isolation, Adelaide socialists were stimulated by news of the October Revolution in Russia. Information was culled from interstate socialist papers and overseas seamen in port. A temporary spirit of vague approval also infiltrated the Labor Party, particularly during the wars of intervention. At the Labor Party Council meeting in December, 1918, a motion was carried calling upon the British Government "to withdraw their troops from Russia as the declared object of the Allies entering this war [i.e. the Great War] was for the right of self-determination for all nations".<sup>1</sup> The motion was introduced by T. P. Howard, later to become

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<sup>1</sup>. Labor Party Council Minutes, 12 December, 1918.

secretary of the T.L.C. and an inveterate opponent of the militants. A subsequent Council meeting in August 1920, passed a motion declaring that "if Great Britain or any of her allies declared war upon Soviet Russia on account of the admittedly unjustifiable invasion of Russian territory by Poland, it would be an intolerable crime".<sup>1</sup> However, while the Labor Party was prepared to express qualified enthusiasm towards the application of Marxism within Russia, it had no wish to encourage its growth in South Australia where it would present a threat to the Labor Party. Thus, in early 1921, the editor of the Daily Herald prevented 'Marxian' continuing his popular weekly contribution entitled "Proletarian Study Circle", the sole Marxist column in the paper.

At the beginning of January, 1921, Fred Wilkinson, a member of the W.I.U. of A., wrote to W. P. Earsman, secretary of the C.P., regarding the procedure for establishing a branch in South Australia. Wilkinson mentioned that sympathizers of the Third International planned to capture the Propaganda Section of the W.I.U. of A., the assets of which were valued at £50. However, the visit of an American industrial unionist had confused the minds of some militants and he added that

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1. Ibid, 12 August, 1920.

"a word from Glynn<sup>1</sup> will be timely". The conspiratorial romanticism of the early Communists was portrayed in Wilkinson's boast that "he and his supporters are going to succeed even if we have to employ Third International tactics - force and terror, etc. to hurry it through". He concluded with a request for 10 dozen copies of the Australian Communist.

According to plan, the Propaganda Section was captured but Hasse, who had been opposed to the move from the outset, refused recognition. The incoming librarian Jim Cullen could not obtain the keys, so the militants forcibly entered the Hall on the following Sunday and transferred the property of the Propaganda Section elsewhere. Until the demise of the organization, deep hostility existed between the two sections.

A State branch of the C.P. was formed on 26 January, 1921, after some preliminary meetings attended by 20-30 persons. On the following day Hans Christopherson wrote to Earsman predicting that "we shall be able to get a strong C.P. going here"<sup>2</sup>. and requesting fifty application forms. During February the following officers were elected:- Secretary-Treasurer: H. Christopherson; Trustees: F. Wilkinson and Solly Marks;

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1. Tom Glynn, one of the twelve I.W.W. men imprisoned in 1916, was a member of the first executive of the C.P.

2. See Appendix A: letter from H. Christopherson.

Literature Secretary: F. Wilkinson; Librarian: J. Cullen. At first rooms were obtained at Unity Hall, Bray Street, the home of the W.I.U. of A., but soon afterwards a transfer took place to Industrial Hall, Molton Street, at the rear of the A.W.U. Hall. The propaganda section of the W.I.U. of A. remained a separate entity although closely co-operating with the C.P. on all occasions. Joint propaganda meetings were held in Victoria Square on Friday nights and at the Botanic Park on Sunday afternoons. Ted Moyle tutored an economics class. Dr. Clark-Nikola and Bill Gormlie began to lecture extensively, the latter gaining a wide public by frequently writing Marxist letters to the press under the pseudonym 'J. Cameron Porter'.

Paul Freeman, an ex-I.W.W. member who had been deported in 1919, returned to Australia from Russia in 1921 arranging delegates to the first Red International of Labour Union (R.I.L.U.) Conference in Moscow. While in Adelaide he spoke to a small gathering of militants and persuaded Fred Wilkinson and Fred Bowers, an English-born bricklayer, to make the journey. Delegates were obliged to journey to Moscow unassisted and after some delay both worked their passage to England, where Bowers disembarked. Wilkinson remained in Russia several months, working on the Moscow Labour News and also with the American

Relief Committee on the Volga. He also managed to have a brief interview with Lenin. However on his return he confided to friends that what he saw had not impressed him - Russia having been in the throes of the Great Famine. He gave a few lectures to small groups.

Professor W. T. Goode, M.A., had visited Russia in Czarist times and was sent on a special mission to Russia in 1918 by the Manchester Guardian. He was arrested by the British Mission to Esthonia and detained on a warship for several weeks after reporting sympathy towards the Bolsheviks.<sup>1</sup> His principal meeting in Adelaide occurred on 31 December, 1921, at the W.I.I.U. Hall, Flinders Street, following the refusal of larger halls. Over 200 people heard him speak on "The Revolutionary Party in Russia". He also addressed a meeting at the Trades Hall, the chairman being Ted Moyle, but the influence of his visit was slight compared with that made in Victoria and N.S.W.

The buoyant hopes of Wilkinson for a growing C.P. did not eventuate. As the local correspondent of the Communist was to explain: "Adelaide not having any large industries there is very little class-consciousness manifested by workers. It is impossible at present to get the A.W.U. Hall for Communist

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1. Goode was not uncritical of the Bolsheviks. Also he never tired of comparing the October Revolution with the English Revolution of 1640.

meetings. There is no Labor College in Adelaide as in Melbourne and Sydney". He went on to rebuke "the industrialists in Adelaide who are still possessed by the Utopian idea that workers can bring about the Revolution through industrial organization by itself. Alf Wilson loudly expresses this superstition ..." <sup>1</sup>.

Militants were stimulated by the visit of the Victorian rationalist, Harry Scott-Bennett, who challenged any minister of religion to a four-night debate at the Central Theatre, Wakefield Street on 8, 11, 16 and 18 May, 1922. Only one volunteer came forward - the Rev. Robert Harkness, of the Church of Christ.

A former Church of Christ minister, Jock Garden, Secretary of the Sydney Labor Council and the foremost Australian Communist, passed through Adelaide in late August while returning from the R.I.L.U. Conference. The C.P. attempted to hire the Trades Hall but permission was refused. Commented Mr. Sampson, secretary of the Trades Hall Management Committee: "it is a matter of opinion whether a lecture by Mr. Garden is of more importance to the workers than jazz dancing".<sup>2</sup> Dances were

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1. Communist, 4 August, 1922, p. 4.

2. Ibid, 8 September, 1922, p. 3.

held almost every night of the week in the Hall but few educational meetings were held. Militants were continually pressing for "less jazzing". However Garden addressed a large Botanic Park audience along with Donald Grant and Harry Clark. All protested against Sampson's decision which the Communist termed "an insult to the militant workers of Australia".<sup>1</sup>.

On the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the Russian Revolution, E. King of the Building Trades Federation sent a message to the Communist claiming that the Revolution was "the most glorious, magnificent and complete expression of a country's aspiration for economic emancipation that the world has yet seen ..."<sup>2</sup>. The event had been commemorated the previous year by a small gathering of militants at the Trades Hall, when the purpose of the booking had not been disclosed to the Management Committee lest the lease be withheld.

All but one of the 12 I.W.W. prisoners were released from Long Bay Gaol in August, 1920, after a Royal Commission had decided they had been sufficiently punished. Two of them arrived in Adelaide on 8 October, 1920. They were Peter Larkin,<sup>3</sup> and Tom Glynn, who was elected to the first

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1. Ibid, 22 September, 1922, p. 3.

2. Ibid, 7 November, 1922, p. 5.

3. Brother of the famous Irish Labour leader, Jim Larkin.

executive of the C.P. in Sydney on 30 October. Larkin stated that their mission to Adelaide was "to stir up in the minds of the working-class a spirit of enquiry regarding their true position in society and to endeavour to bring about a closer organization through the O.B.U. ..."<sup>1</sup>. A meeting in the Exhibition Building was refused them by the authorities but they spoke to a large crowd at the Botanic Park on 10 October.

Another of the released men, Donald Grant, came to reside in Adelaide some time later. In 1916 he had received the most severe sentence - 15 years - for uttering 15 words.<sup>2</sup> A magnificent, silvery tongued orator, Grant was supported financially by Bill Cathcart, and also assisted by the W.I.I.U., an organization greatly admired by Grant. His residence in Adelaide was rather intermittent until his departure for Sydney on 13 December, 1922; in mid-1922 he unsuccessfully contested the N.S.W. State seat of Sturt at a by-election as an independent Labor candidate. Grant belonged to the Industrial Union Propaganda League (I.U.P.L.), a post-war 'wobbly' organization founded in Sydney in December, 1921, after Tom Glynn and J. B. King had been expelled from the C.P. on

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1. Advertiser, 9 October, 1920, p. 11.

2. The words spoken were:- "For every day Barker is in gaol it will cost the capitalist ten thousand pounds."



charges of syndicalism. The aim of the I.U.P.L. was "the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a working-class Dictatorship to protect the workers in their task of reconstructing society ...",<sup>1</sup> but it never achieved nationwide success. Harry Clark was secretary of the Adelaide branch; other prominent members were Solly Marks and Ted Moyle. Meetings were held jointly with the C.P.

The first strike against a wage reduction occurred among Adelaide women garment workers in 1922. Don Grant and other militants presented their case in the Botanic Park. Displaying commendable solidarity the strikers were eventually victorious after many weeks of demonstrating in Adelaide streets. Communists were advised "to keep in touch with these girls and carry on the propaganda for Communism in their midst".<sup>2</sup>

Grant undoubtedly was the leading figure among Adelaide militants; and his departure was caused primarily by the arrival of Charles Reeve in December, 1922. They were incompatible spirits and Adelaide was not big enough to hold both. (Reeve had been the last of the 12 I.W.W. men to be released on 27 November, 1921; he had then gone to Perth as an I.U.P.L. organizer. Rapidly becoming the dominant personality in the

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1. Direct Action, January, 1922, p. 4.

2. Communist, 22 September, 1922, p. 3.

Adelaide branch he refused to co-operate with the C.P. which he termed the "Comical Party". He slandered local Communists as "Tinpot Lenins" and described Christopherson as "The ghost of Lenin". Most militants were persuaded to leave the C.P. Lacking forceful speakers, the C.P. was now powerless to counteract his magnetic histrionics, and it eventually collapsed in 1923.<sup>1</sup> Another reason for the failure of the C.P. was the lack of influence in the unions which led the organization to confine itself to educational activity. A collection of over 200 Marxist works had been assembled in the Builders Laborers' room at the Trades Hall. As the maximum membership was only about forty little opposition was encountered from the solid citizenry of Adelaide - most of it came from Wilson and later Reeve.

The Builders Laborers' Federation (B.L.F.) was an extremely militant union whose object was "to propagate the principal of industrial unionism". It had staged a 17 week strike advocating a 40 hour - 5 day week which started on 4 October, 1919. The strike failed, and its objective was not achieved until 1948.

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1. See Appendix B: letter from H. Christopherson.

Furthermore, it had held the first May Day celebration at the Trades Hall in 1920 when it had recommended that Labor Day should be observed on 1 May, and reiterated the objectives of the unsuccessful strike.

In addition to being secretary of the I.U.P.L., Harry Clark held the same position in the B.L.F. Moreover, the I.U.P.L. spoke from the B.L.F. ring at the Botanic Park.

Reeve first achieved notoriety at the Park on 12 February 1923 by referring to the newly born son of the Princess Royal as a "little blue-eyed snoozer", a remark which so enraged the League of Loyal Women that they protested to the Park authorities. Accordingly before the following meeting, Clarke received a letter from the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Botanic Gardens which stated that "acting on police reports" the permit had been revoked and if meetings continued it would lead to the arrest of speakers. However, the meeting was held with a large body of police and a 'Black Maria' in attendance. When Reeve was requested to move on he asked the advice of the crowd, which in the face of such a formidable display of force cautiously decided to disband the meeting. Clark protested that "the police with the assistance of the Board of Governors can dictate to hundreds of men and women of the working-class what opinions they shall listen to in what

is alleged to be their own park".<sup>1</sup> Later, several meetings took place, accompanied by strong contingents of police who were given a hostile reception, but the permit was not restored until the fall of the Barwell Government in 1924. Reeve returned interstate for about a year and during his absence, I.U.P.L. meetings lost their vitality although occasionally, interstate visitors such as the Victorian, Miss Jean Daly of the Labor Party, attracted large audiences.

Lenin died on 21 January, 1924. At the following meeting of the Labor Party Council a motion moved by Fred Wilkinson, was carried unanimously: "That the S.A. branch of the Labor Party place on record our deep sympathy in the loss sustained by the workers of Russia in the death of Lenin, the leader of the Soviet Workers' Republic, and the secretary write and inform them of the resolution".<sup>2</sup> This action was described by the C.P. as "a genuine tribute to a great Labor leader".<sup>3</sup>

The Labor Party enjoyed a decisive victory at the State elections on 5 April, 1924. After the liquidation of the local C.P., some of its members retained individual membership

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1. Communist, 9 March, 1923, p. 1.

2. Labor Party Council Minutes, 14 February, 1924.

3. Workers' Weekly, 28 March, 1924, p. 1.

of the C.P. and joined the Labor Party.<sup>1.</sup> On the eve of the poll the Central Committee of the C.P. issued a manifesto to the workers of South Australia which concluded: "We call upon all militant and class-conscious workers to vote for the Labor Party ... Forward to the Labor Government!"<sup>2.</sup> It was subsequently claimed that "the success of Labor ... was due to the united front of all sections of the Labor movement being put into effect",<sup>3.</sup> a claim scarcely justified by the limited strength of the militant wing. "Every worker a Labourite! must be the slogan now".<sup>4.</sup> Concerning the incoming Premier, it was reported that "since the days of the drivers' strike, Mr. Gunn's views have been modified by experience and he now believes in adopting strictly constitutional methods for redressing grievances".<sup>5.</sup> Against the strenuous opposition

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1. Of this group, some played an active role: Dr. Clark-Nikola became President of the Thebarton Local Committee; Cathcart, Vice President of the Unley Local Committee; and Cullen, President of the East Adelaide Local Committee.
  2. Workers' Weekly, 28 March, 1924, p. 1.
  3. Ibid, 18 April, 1924, p. 2. Later one Adelaide militant bitterly charged the C.P. with "assisting the 'Bourgeois Borers' onto the backs of the S.A. workers" (Ibid, 27 June, 1924, p.2.)
  4. Ibid, 18 April, 1924, p. 2.
  5. Advertiser, 16 April, 1924, p. 13.

of left-wing members, the Daily Herald closed down shortly afterwards in the face of rising costs. It was observed that the Daily Herald was "not a revolutionary newspaper - it is not even a good Labor paper, but as a means of giving expression to the Trades Union movement in its struggle against the lying propaganda of the capitalist press these newspapers can play an important part".<sup>1</sup>.

Communists were admitted to the Labor Party until the Federal Conference during October, 1924, when it was decided that the C.P. could not affiliate with the Labor Party and that individual Communists could not retain their membership.<sup>2</sup>. The motion was moved by H. J. George of South Australia.<sup>3</sup>. The State Council of the Labor Party later congratulated the British Labor Party in following the above decision.<sup>4</sup>.

Unemployment increased in 1924 and a committee, including Harry Kneebone, M.H.A., Bill Cathcart and Cecil Skitch was formed to relieve distress. J. L. Price, M.H.A., accused militants of "using the unemployed as a lever against the Labor

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1. Workers' Weekly, 27 June, 1924, p. 2.

2. It is interesting to note that Tom Price had stated during a speech to the Junior Reform Club in London, 1908: "I do not mind being called a Labor man, provided it is understood to be not a Russian but an Australian Socialist ..."  
(T. H. Smeaton, op. cit., p. 206)

3. Subsequently Labor M.H.A. for Adelaide.

4. Labor Party Council minutes, 8 October, 1925.

Party so as to further their own ends".<sup>1</sup>.

Adelaide militants advocated that Labor Day be held on 1 May, as it is observed overseas, and trenchantly criticized the T.L.C. organizers for devoting the greater part of the 1924 Labor Day procession to "advertising the bosses goods".<sup>2</sup> Union officials were opposed to any alteration of the celebration. Militants also urged the establishment of a Labor College in Adelaide but a motion to this effect was rejected by the 1924 State Labor Party conference because similar institutions in the eastern states had fallen under Marxist influence. Inspired by the success of a similar organization in England, a short-lived Plebs League was established in 1924. Fred Wilkinson conducted an economics class and a library was established. Among the lecturers were Harry Kneebone and Sid O'Flaherty of the Labor Party. However, the leadership of the Labor Party looked upon the new organization with distrust. At the conclusion of the Labor Party meeting in the Park on 28 December, the Chairman (Fred Ward) called upon the police to prevent Jack Nolan announcing a meeting of the Plebs League. Ward claimed that Nolan was a Communist, and at a later meeting ordered police to remove Bill Cathcart for making a similar announcement.

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1. South Australian Worker, 29 August, 1924, p. 5.

2. Workers' Weekly, 31 October, 1924, p. 4.

Some months previously, the executive of the Labor Party had requested the East Adelaide Local Committee to expel Nolan, who was their auditor, because it was claimed that he was a Communist. However the Local Committee passed a motion expressing full confidence in Nolan, and on the day following Ward's allegation in the Park, a motion expressing disgust at the action and complete lack of confidence in Ward was carried. At the conclusion of the latter meeting the 'Red Flag' was sung. Later the executive attempted to expel Bill Gormlie, a member of the Hilton Local Committee. Gormlie, though not a Communist, was a Marxist and critical of the leadership of the Labor Party. Following a lengthy correspondence, the Labor Party Council on 12 August, 1926, decided not to expel Gormlie on a motion of Fred Wilkinson. Fred Ward's<sup>1</sup> hatred of militants developed into a fixation and he proceeded to prevent Bill Cathcart selling copies of the Workers Weekly at the Labor Party ring,<sup>2</sup> although the privilege was extended to the independent South Australian Worker, owned by the Bardolph Brothers.

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1. Ward was secretary of the Labor Party, 1923-44, but as he grew older his approach to militants softened. Upon his election to the Senate, Tribune described him as "still a battler" (11 July, 1947, p.7.) and at the time of his death in 1954 Ward had drifted to the far Left of the Labor Party.

2. Cathcart and fellow militants steadily increased the circulation of the Workers' Weekly, until it reached fifty dozen per week in 1927.



The B.L.F. reapplied for a Botanic Park permit when Labor was returned to power. At first it was refused but this decision was revoked after a B.L.F. delegation had called on the Premier, and threatened to embarrass the government with a 'free speech' fight. Meetings did not attract large audiences until the Sunday before Anzac Day, 1925 - 19 April - when Reeve, the master stump-orator, lectured on 'The Horrors of War'. Returned soldiers threatened to break up the next meeting at which Reeve delivered the same address. Fighting was prevented by the presence of the police. Protests from patriotic organizations resulted in the permit being cancelled. The Seaman's Union protested against the action of the Gunn Government "in denying the workers of this State the right to ventilate their grievances and refute the lies and distortions of the capitalist press"<sup>1</sup>. Similar protests came from Thebarton and East Adelaide Local Committees of the Labor Party. However, a meeting was held on 3 May according to plan. The first speaker, Hugh McKie, a seaman, was pulled off the box, and the audience began to voice its disapproval of the interference with free speech. Sensing the mounting hostility of the crowd the police decided to abandon forceful methods and contented themselves with taking 17 names. Reeve was escorted from the Park after

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1. Workers' Weekly, 15 May, 1925, p. 4.

referring to the police as "mountains of beef and ignorance". A deputation from the Combined Building Trade Unions called upon Gunn the following day and persuaded him to restore the permit. Reeve appeared in court on a number of charges, including "insulting language". Complete with pince-nez and suitable theatricals Reeve conducted his own case, calling as chief witnesses Sid Hibbens and a militant taxidriver, Stanley Baldwin. The S.M. dismissed the charge of "insulting language" adding that it was Reeve, rather than the returned soldiers, who had been insulted. On two other charges he was fined £12, paid by his Defence Committee. Furthermore, he was dismissed from his work. During this period Reeve, quick to take advantage of a situation, had attracted large audiences at the Park, partly at the expense of the Labor Ring who only retained the 'old faithfuls'.

The I.W.W. was revived in Perth and Melbourne during late 1924 and in Adelaide and Sydney in 1925. Prime mover was Reeve who, until he left S.A. in 1926, travelled extensively visiting the locals. Jock Garden claimed that the organization would "put a little ginger into the Labor movement",<sup>1</sup> although he warned that "conditions in this country do not favour ... the I.W.W."<sup>2</sup>. However, the moderate Labor politicians

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1. Argus, 28 July, p. 12.

2. Ibid, 31 July, p. 6.

viewed the development with displeasure and Jack Lang (N.S.W.) termed the I.W.W. "99% criminal".<sup>1</sup> In Perth, Melbourne and Sydney, the I.W.W. never became prominent, as the initiative had already been wrested by the C.P. But in Adelaide it achieved success, quickly becoming the principal militant group until the advent of the reformed C.P. in 1929. Rooms were secured at the corner of Pirie and Pulteney Streets and study classes commenced. During the Overseas Seamen's Strike in August, 1925, £150 was collected at the Botanic Park. Desiring greater freedom, Reeve completely took over the B.L.F. ring, the permit of which expired on 4 December, 1925. A brilliant red banner, complete with I.W.W. inscription, was hung between two trees overlooking the ring. On charges of speaking without a permit Reeve and Sam Fox were sentenced on 16 December to 14 days and 7 days imprisonment respectively. In 1925, the Government appointed Arthur McArthur to the Board of Governors of the Botanic Gardens.<sup>2</sup> After a disturbance at the B.L.F. ring in early 1925, McArthur, speaking from the Labor Party ring, had declared: "Charles Reeve will never speak again at the park as long as I am on the board. The I.W.W. will never get a permit while I am on the board".<sup>3</sup> The Botanic Gardens Act was amended in 1925 so that "no person shall, without the consent in writing of the Board, speak publicly in the Park, or address any meeting in the Park".

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1. Ibid, 29 July, p. 19.

2. McArthur remained on the Board of Governors until 1936. He was a Labor M.H.A., 1930-33.

3. Advertiser, 22 November, 1926, p. 18.

"These amendments", says the present Director, "arose from trouble which took place in the Park during the post-war years".<sup>1</sup> The new regulations proved to be so restrictive that free speech fights became a regular occurrence.

John Gunn resigned the Premiership on 26 August, 1926.<sup>2</sup> His successor Lionel Hill was introduced to readers of the Workers' Weekly under the heading "Hill a Shade Better Only".<sup>3</sup> Militants were shortly to revise their hasty verdict.

The I.W.W. permit expired on 20 June, 1926, and an extension was refused. For thirteen weeks meetings continued unmolested, after which the authorities began a determined onslaught. On 6 October, Reeve and Jack Zwolsman were each sentenced to 42 days imprisonment while Ted O'Reilly, Cecil Skitch and Mick Fox received 14 days each. All were charged with having addressed a large crowd - estimated at about 6,000 people - without written permission. A Free Speech Defence Committee was established<sup>4</sup> and among the largest contributors

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1. T.R.N. Lothian (Director of the Botanic Gardens) to John Playford, 27 March, 1958.
  2. He had accepted an appointment with the Federal Development and Migration Commission at a higher salary.
  3. Workers' Weekly, 3 September, 1926, p. 3.
  4. F. H. Hardie was President and Skitch secretary, while Reeve, Sam Fox and G. H. Thompson constituted the executive. An uncommitted militant, Geo. Beilby, provided valuable financial assistance. Beilby was the brother of S.O. Beilby, the founder of the well-known chain-store groceries.

were:- Broken Hill Miners' Union £102:2:-; Sydney Bricklayers' Union, Postal Workers' Union, Plasterers' Union, £10 each; B.L.F. £5; I.W.W. £4:10:-. Four men appeared on similar charges on 22 October. Reeve was sentenced to two months imprisonment, Sam Fox and Zwolsman to one month each, while Edward Scollan received a fortnight on account of no previous conviction. Under cross examination Fred Ward stated that he took exception to the display of the I.W.W. banner because the organization had been declared illegal during the Great War. Reeve admitted to having called Lionel Hill a "bald headed old liar". Upon receiving sentence Fox said: "I thank your Worship for your cooperation. In a few words you have shown more clearly than I could do by months of propaganda what a myth and a delusion British freedom is".<sup>1</sup> The verdicts being greeted with hooting, the court was cleared. Counsel for the defence, Dr. Donald Kerr, LL.D., a man of radical convictions, unsuccessfully appealed against the sentences to the Supreme Court to test the validity of the Act. In reply to a Liberal M.H.A. who demanded that more severe action be taken against Reeve, the Attorney-General replied that "it was impossible for the Government to do more than they were doing to see that persons did not allow liberty to degenerate into license".<sup>2</sup>

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1. Workers' Weekly, 5 November, 1926, p. 3.

2. Advertiser, 21 October, 1926, p. 12.

During October the Labor Conference carried a motion urging the abolition of the permit system. Hill released Reeve from gaol on 31 November, whereupon he returned to Sydney and was succeeded as secretary of the Adelaide I.W.W. by Jack Zwolsman<sup>1</sup>.

On 28 October, Charles Hathaway, a member of the Labor Party, was sentenced to 14 days imprisonment. During evidence he stated that "some men in the Labor Party had instituted proceedings. They had done so because they had no message to give the workers".<sup>2</sup> In early 1927 Hathaway was removed by police from the Labor Party ring on the instructions of Fred Ward, for distributing a Communist pamphlet, "Hands off China". The question of China was uppermost in the minds of militants due to the fear of foreign intervention during the Kuomintang's drive for unification. Jim Cavanagh and Harry Kneebone were the only speakers to mention China at the Labor Party ring. About 5,000 people attended the I.W.W. meeting on 31 October at which Miss Miriam Roberts and Mrs. Skitch were arrested and later fined £1 each. Mrs. Skitch accused the Judge of having permitted himself "to be used to fulfil the wishes of certain political tricksters".<sup>3</sup>

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1. A foreman linesman, Zwolsman was dismissed from the P.M.G. following the free speech trials. He was also asked to resign from the Henley and Grange Swimming Club in which he had figured prominently.

2. Advertiser, 29 October, 1926, p. 22.

3. Workers' Weekly, 5 November, 1926, p. 3.

Since 1920 Alf Wilson had continued as organizer of the W.I.I.U. The S.L.P. existed in the eastern states but was a numerically weaker organization than the W.I.I.U. However, as the aims of the two groups were identical, a union was forged in 1925, following a similar amalgamation in the U.S. Only a couple of Adelaide workers, led by Harry Lynch, objected to the reorganization. Alf Wilson remained as organizer while Otto Glaeski, a Pole, became secretary. The S.L.P. had a smaller membership than the rival I.W.W. and specialized in study classes and distributing socialist literature since "The Brains went to Detroit; the Guts stayed in Chicago".<sup>1.</sup> Tension always existed between the two organizations. Both believed in the inevitable collapse of capitalism as predicted by Marx but the I.W.W. believed in using "go slow" methods to make the capitalist system unworkable.

Before the amalgamation elections had not been held for Federal positions. The intolerant general secretary, Ernest Judd, was well aware that Wilson enjoyed wide support both in Adelaide and Melbourne and was consequently a contender for the throne. Accordingly he caused Wilson to be expelled at the federal executive meeting on 21 November, 1926, for "acting contrary to the principles, methods and policy of the S.L.P."<sup>2.</sup>

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1. Gilbert Roper to John Playford, 1958.

2. Revolutionary Socialist, November-December, 1926, p. 2.

Wilson was accused of failing to produce satisfactory balance sheets and of continuing to sell literature prohibited by the S.L.P., viz. the 'Communist Manifesto' - a strange regulation for a Marxist organization but an integral part of Judd's plan. On 8 January, 1927, the executive expelled eight of Wilson's supporters in Adelaide, followed by further expulsions in Melbourne. Chaos reigned supreme when the S.L.P. executive in the U.S. expelled Judd and recognized Wilson as Federal Secretary.

Numerically the Wilson faction was scarcely affected by the split. It enjoyed a financial advantage by retaining the lease of the S.L.P. Hall, Flinders Street, at which popular weekly dances were held. The smaller Judd faction was led by Bob Kent; Gilbert Roper, secretary at the time of the schism; and Dick Ellis, secretary from 1927 onwards. On 24 April, 1927, the Sunday before the arrival in Adelaide of the Duke and Duchess of York, Kent claimed that the "Duck and the Drake were royal parasites".<sup>1</sup> Patriotic elements rushed the speaker and mounted troopers invaded the ring, trampling pamphlets into the dust. I.W.W. supporters came across and repressed the attackers who retreated in disorder singing 'Rule Britannia'. Earlier the Sydney Labor Council

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1. Ibid, 6 May, 1927, p. 5.



had declared "black" all celebrations in connection with the visit which it claimed was "anti-working class and imperialist".<sup>1</sup> However, one Adelaide union official said Garden's utterances "carry little weight with saner men in the movement".<sup>2</sup> In charging Kent, the police prosecutor said: "this man blows off poisonous gas and tries to influence the minds of the people",<sup>3</sup> after which a fine was imposed.

No members of the Judd Faction attended the funeral of Nikolai Evert, a Wilson supporter, in 1927. Newspapers all over the Commonwealth termed it "the Red Funeral", owing to the predominance of the colour. Wilson officiated at the graveside reading extracts from the works of William Morris.

Often supporters of the two groups came to blows after hot exchanges in the Botanic Park. Charges of fighting were laid against Wilson and Kent on 25 May, 1928. Kent had accused Wilson of being unable to account for £300. Yet a few years before Wilson had written "with a few more like Bob Kent we shall be well supplied".<sup>4</sup> Both were fined £1:15:--. Internecine warfare continued until scarcely any organization remained, with Wilson and Kent as virtual 'lone wolves'. Yet, at its height, the S.L.P. contained over 100 members.

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1. Workers' Weekly, 4 March, 1927, p. 4.

2. Ibid, 4 March, 1927, p. 4.

3. Ibid, 27 May, 1927, p. 3.

4. Revolutionary Socialist, May, 1925, p. 3.

Presenting no threat to the authorities, the two factions were left alone by the police while Wilson and Kent vilified each other, usually to the trees and empty benches.

At the State elections on 26 March, 1927, the Hill Government suffered a crippling defeat: Labor representation in the Assembly declined from 27 to 16. During May militants agitated on behalf of Sacco and Vanzetti, two American anarchists who had been sentenced to death. Protests were sent to the American Government by the Hotel and Restaurant Union, Plasterers' Union, Meat Industry Employees' Union, Carpenters' Union, B.L.F., Bricklayers' Union and Furnishing Trades' Union. A motion of protest came before the T.L.C. but was defeated, mainly on the strength of a speech by G. Yates, M.H.R.

The disunity of the Left led the Workers' Weekly to comment: "the alleged revolutionaries are divided and inefficient..... unattached militants are either disgusted or confused with the whole affair. It is time the class conscious workers considered the formation of a strong Communist group."<sup>1</sup> Later it observed of the I.W.W.: "while we can cross swords with them over many questions of policy at least we can work together on the basis of the class struggle in S.A. where the Labor politicians are thoroughly discredited in the eyes of thinking workers".<sup>2</sup>

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1. Workers' Weekly, 11 March, 1927, p. 3.

2. Ibid, 1 April, 1927, p. 3.

A dose of Labor rule had destroyed the hopes of militants.

Sam Fox resigned from the I.W.W. and addressed a letter, calling for unity of the Left, dated 1 June, 1927, to the following groups:- I.W.W., S.L.P., C.P., Socialist Party of Australia, and Socialist Party of Victoria. Attached was a manifesto which stated that "the resulting confusion is keeping many workers from our ranks ... in our present state of dismemberment we are small impotent groups of propagandists wildly beating air".<sup>1</sup> He suggested a conference in Melbourne to draft a constitution to which all militants could subscribe. Only the C.P. favoured such a conference, on the basis of the appeal for unity issued by the Communist International. Judd of the S.L.P. claimed the manifesto contained "a lot of unsound thinking and incorrect implications".<sup>2</sup> Thus the idea failed to materialize and Fox rejoined the I.W.W.

Demonstrations of the unemployed reached serious proportions during July, 1927. Led by Zwolsman, 400 men marched to see the Lord Mayor, who refused permission for a meeting in Victoria Square. Previously they had obtained a guarantee from the General Manager of the Electricity Trust that labour in future would be sought through the T.L.C. As originally planned the

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1. Sam Fox to C.P., Sydney, 1 June, 1927.

2. Revolutionary Socialist, September-October, 1927, p. 3.

demonstration occurred on 20 July. Mounted troopers assisted by foot police with batons had difficulty in dispersing the crowd, which reassembled outside the Trades Hall, from the steps of which they were addressed by militants. Police entered the Trades Hall by the side door with the permission of a union secretary and swept through to get their victims. Mr. Rankin, the union secretary concerned, justified his action by stating that "a dance was in progress and that was more important".<sup>1</sup> Subsequent demonstrations took place during the week. By now the police were well prepared although the Advertiser once reported that the position at times "looked ugly".<sup>2</sup> Large scale prosecutions were initiated involving Zwolsman and the secretary of the Unemployed Committee, Alex McDonald who having been knocked unconscious in a baton charge was charged with "resisting the police".<sup>3</sup>

Meanwhile similar scenes had been witnessed at Port Adelaide. Nineteen unemployed had been arrested on 23 July, after which an angry crowd stoned the Police Station until dispersed by mounted troopers. Six militants were charged in court on 25 July, all of them returned soldiers;<sup>4</sup> Zwolsman, Sam Fox and two others

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1. Workers' Weekly, 5 August, 1927, p. 3.

2. Advertiser, 25 July, 1927, p. 9.

3. Workers' Weekly, 5 August, 1927, p. 3.

4. Two of them were decorated: Zwolsman had been awarded the M.M., and H. S. Cook the D.C.M.

received 14 days imprisonment. Commented the Workers' Weekly: "Gunn, Hill and Butler seem to be of the one mind in refusing to allow militants to voice the grievances of workers".<sup>1</sup>

Another series of free speech fights flared up in late 1927. Fox and Zwolsman were each fined £6 on 9 October, for speaking without permission. Subsequently both were imprisoned for a month on 27 October and a small fine inflicted on 29 November. Many of the religious bodies speaking at the Park did not possess permits but were not prosecuted. A deputation from the T.L.C. interviewed the Board of Governors of the Botanic Gardens and advocated that a system of permits be issued to organizations, rather than individuals, who would take the responsibility for the proper conduct of the persons speaking under their auspices.

With their leading speakers in gaol, the I.W.W. appealed for assistance to the Melbourne branch. Accordingly, Ted Dickinson and Jim McNeill, were given £10 and despatched to Adelaide, arriving in November, 1927. Dickinson had first achieved fame by leading, with Noel Lyons, the 'Ham and Egg Strike' (over the food issue) on the 'S.S. Wanganella' in the Tasman Sea during 1925. Lyons had been deported to Australia and both joined the I.W.W. after hearing Reeve speak

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<sup>1</sup>. Workers' Weekly, 29 July, 1927, p. 2.

in the Sydney Domain. Possessing a strong personality and being a vigorous and able speaker, Dickinson quickly became prominent in the organization, paying a short visit to Adelaide in 1925. Soon after their arrival, both Dickinson and McNeill<sup>1</sup> were among 14 men fined on 8 December for speaking without a permit. Cross-examining Constable Walsh, Dickinson asked: "Can you say why we are prosecuted and they [other bodies] are not?" Walsh replied: "Yes, because you are members of a particular organization".<sup>2</sup> Very quickly Dickinson became "the 'I' in this particular I.W.W.".<sup>3</sup>

Shortly afterwards an organizing committee - Zwolsman, McNeill and Dickinson - was formed to revive Direct Action. Eventually funds were obtained, the largest contribution coming from the Broken Hill Miners' Union. An old printing press was acquired from a Lutheran Church and set up at the printery of F. A. Holland. Dickinson was appointed editor and the first issue appeared in May, 1928. Originally issues were planned to be fortnightly but longer intervals frequently occurred. Approximately 2,000 copies were usually printed. The motto of the paper was "Education. Organization. Agitation"

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1. McNeill became Assistant Secretary of the Adelaide I.W.W.

2. Advertiser, 9 December, 1927, p. 26.

3. Workers' Weekly, 24 August, 1928, p. 3.

and it gained a reputation for its violent denunciation both of the R.I.L.U. and the A.C.T.U. Sales were hindered by a by-law of the Botanic Gardens Act which stated that "no person shall offer for sale within the Park any article unless with the written permission of the Board". For failing to observe this regulation, four members, including Mick O'Callaghan and Bill Francis were fined 2/6 on 6 July, 1928. Giving evidence, the Director of the Botanic Gardens admitted that the I.W.W. had applied for permission to sell the paper and he "did not know why proceedings had been directed against the I.W.W."<sup>1</sup>. For some years interstate socialist papers had been sold without permission and no action had been taken by the authorities. Another batch of six sellers, including Dickinson, were fined 2/6 on 16 July while a single defendant incurred the same fine on 23 July.

On 17 September, 1928, an Australia wide maritime strike began in protest against the terms of the Beeby Award which required wharf laborers to attend two pick-ups a day, instead of the customary one. Heavy fines were inflicted upon the Waterside Workers' Federation and volunteer wharf labour introduced. Captain A. S. Blackburn, V.C.<sup>2</sup> raised a corps of

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1. Advertiser, 7 July, 1928, p. 11

2. Liberal M.H.A., 1918-21.

special police, mainly composed of warehouse clerks and unofficially known as "Blackburn's Black and Tans", to protect the volunteers at Port Adelaide. Wearing military jackets they paraded the wharves carrying rifles with bolts drawn and bayonets fixed. By early October the strike was broken; its failure, commented Direct Action, "will go down in history as a gigantic object lesson of lack of organization, cowardice of trades union officialdom and a definite trend towards rank and file control".<sup>1</sup> The occasion was used by Alf Woodsford, the secretary of the Seaman's Union, to urge his members to "cleanse the union" of Communists who aimed at the "disruption of national life and institutions".<sup>2</sup>

Serious riots occurred frequently during the strike. Alf Wilson of the S.L.P. was captain of the strike picket. Direct Action advocated a general strike, and the authorities accused the I.W.W. of playing a dominant role in the conflict. However, the I.W.W. was not involved in the origins of the strike and had few members among the wharf laborers. Dickinson, the leading speaker during the demonstrations, was charged on 2 October under the Crimes Act with being a "wicked, malicious, seditious and ill-disposed person" who "endeavoured to excite

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1. Direct Action, 3 October, 1928, p. 1.

2. Advertiser, 7 November, 1928, p. 14.



discontent and sedition among His Majesty's Subjects and to promote feelings of ill-will and hostility between different classes of such subjects" by publishing an article in Direct Action which stated: "There's a revolution looming up ... We hope it will be bloodless ... Fellow workers, be prepared at all times to use the weapon of the day".<sup>1</sup> After a lengthy trial Dickinson was imprisoned for nine months and a substantial fine imposed. He was defended by J. W. Nelligan.<sup>2</sup> Perce Lands succeeded Dickinson as editor of Direct Action. A Workers' Defence and Release League was immediately formed with Syd Hibbens as President and Perce Cowham as secretary. The largest contribution came from the Broken Hill Miners' Union. Sydney Labor Council protested against the "savage and vindictive sentence"<sup>3</sup> passed upon Dickinson, while the T.L.C. in conjunction with the Release League drew up a petition to the Governor signed by 3,700 people. At the T.L.C. meeting on 17 May, 1929, militants alleged that the T.L.C. executive had provided little assistance in securing signatures. They attributed this state of affairs to "Howard, Bardolph and Co. who had absolutely sabotaged the petition"<sup>4</sup>. Howard was quite open about his disapproval of Dickinson. Dickinson was

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1. Direct Action, 3 October, 1928, p. 1.
  2. An office bearer in the Unley Sub-branch of the Labor Party. Subsequently J. W. Nelligan, Q.C.
  3. Workers' Weekly, 21 December, 1928, p. 1.
  4. Ibid, 31 May, 1929, p. 4.

kept in the Adelaide gaol where it was unusual to keep prisoners serving sentences of more than two months. Larger sentences were usually served at the Yatala Labor Prison which offered better food. Upon his release, Dickinson left for England in 1930 as agent for two Adelaide concerns, financed largely by militants. One was Russian Imports Ltd., in which Dickinson and Zwolsman each had 2,000 shares and the other was the Russian Oil Company, formed to import oil from Russia.<sup>1</sup> However both ventures failed due to insufficient finance.

During August, 1928, the formation of the Marx-Engels Club was announced.<sup>2</sup> It was composed of militants, including left-wing members of the Labor Party who met to discuss the teachings of Marx-Engels. The membership remained small. Headquarters were obtained in the rooms of the B.L.F., 11 Franklin Street,<sup>3</sup> and a good collection of Marxist works built up. Tom Garland delivered the initial club lecture on 9 December and Saturday evening lectures became a regular feature. Throughout its existence the club confined its activities to discussions and debates. Tony McGillick, a left-wing Labor Party member, served as Secretary while other active members included Moyle, Cullen, Cathcart, Zwolsman, Hibbens and Arthur Stainthorpe (Wilson S.L.P.).

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1. Peter McCarthy, a barrister, was deeply involved in both.
  2. Workers' Weekly, 24 August, 1928, p. 3.
  3. Directly above the offices of the Bardolph Brothers South Australian Worker.

Over 1,000 unemployed marched to the Trades Hall to request a room and found the building guarded by foot and mounted police. Although they were willing to pay the rent, their application was refused by Len Sampson (Secretary of the Management Committee). Previously, the unemployed had the use of a room at the Government Unemployed Bureau in Kintore Avenue, which proved unsuitable due to the presence of uniformed and plain-clothes police who gained full knowledge of planned activities. The Marx-Engels Club gave the unemployed the use of the hall on 21 March, 1929. Over 300 attended and the following resolution was carried: "That this sectional meeting of the world's unemployed views with disgust the attitude of the State authorities in their adoption of a policy of pauperization, a policy wholly in keeping with capitalist domination ... It further notes the complete docility of official unionism upon the question".<sup>1</sup> Police dispersed a demonstration of unemployed outside the Trades Hall on 26 March after F. F. Ward had been shouted down attempting to pacify them. Eventually left-wing delegates were successful at the T.L.C. meeting of 3 May, in carrying a motion, with a majority of 30 votes, instructing T.L.C. delegates on the Management Committee to vote in favour of the unemployed being granted a room one

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<sup>1</sup>. Workers' Weekly, 3 May, 1929, p. 6.

day per week. Tom Howard (Secretary of the T.L.C.) and Mr. Angell (Drivers' Union) led opposition to the motion; Howard attacked violently the Workers' Weekly for its criticism both of him and other T.L.C. officials.

A motion to remove the T.L.C. solicitor, J. J. Daly,<sup>1.</sup> for having defended Tom Walsh's unregistered Seaman's Union, came before a T.L.C. meeting in March. Police were present in the Hall until they were obliged to leave after a motion moved by Fred Walsh, had been carried. Although the attempt failed, Daly attributed the opposition to the "intrigue and petty jealousy of members of the Marx-Engels Club".<sup>2.</sup>

During April the President of the W.E.A. was present at a meeting of the Marx-Engels Club. His presence was attributed, by the Workers' Weekly correspondent, to the poor response of workers to W.E.A. classes, in spite of frequent press advertisements. On 29 April customs officials at Port Adelaide seized I.W.W. literature, printed in German, on the ground that it was a prohibited import.

Another unemployed demonstration occurred on May Day when a procession of 700, many wearing red flowers and ribbons, marched

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1. J. J. Daly, Labor Senator for South Australia, 1929-35.

2. Workers' Weekly, 26 April, 1929, p. 4.

through Adelaide streets singing rebel songs. A large crowd attended the joint May Day meeting, arranged by the I.W.W., S.L.P. and the Marx-Engels Club. In contrast there was a meagre attendance at the Labor Party ring. Celebrations were continued in the evening at the Marx-Engels Club room with speeches by representatives of the I.W.W. and the Club. The growing spirit of militancy was attributed "in no small way to the activity of the Marx-Engels Club".<sup>1</sup>

An indication of such a trend was shown at the T.L.C. meeting on 30 May, which appointed a committee "to spread propaganda against war and to cooperate with the A.C.T.U. and the Pan-Pacific Trades Union Secretariat in its organization against war in the Pacific". Moreover a recommendation was sent to the A.C.T.U. that "it endorse the action of Russia in proposing complete disarmament".<sup>2</sup> Militants were warned not to allow the above committee to be used for propagating "treacherous pacifist ideas"; "workers must continue to fight capitalism which is the cause of war and by fighting capitalism we are fighting war".<sup>3</sup>

Restiveness among the unemployed led the authorities to remove

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1. Ibid, 3 May, 1929, p. 6.

2. Ibid, 14 June, 1929, p. 1.

3. Ibid, 14 June 1929, p. 1.

one of their leaders, John Brady. On 29 May he was charged with having uttered profane language <sup>1.</sup> and sentenced to two months' imprisonment. Released on 31 July, he was charged with a similar offence the following day and received the same penalty.

Unemployed men rushed the Trades Hall on 29 August, 1929, during a meeting of the Labor Party Council, but were repulsed by police with batons. Subsequently permission was granted to a deputation to address delegates,<sup>2.</sup> and the Council agreed to participate in a demonstration on 4 September. Over 1,500, including 38 union officials, marched, but of the Labor parliamentarians only A. A. Edwards and J. D. Jonas participated. The first placard carried the slogan "We are the products of Capitalism", and the march was called "the finest working-class demonstration ever held in South Australia".<sup>3.</sup> Halting outside the Treasury Buildings a deputation, including parliamentarians Hill, McInnes and Blackwell, all of whom had refused to march, called upon the Chief Secretary and demanded full maintenance for the unemployed. Two of the deputation, Dickinson and Zwolsman were denied admittance because both had been convicted of sedition. The other unemployed delegates then withdrew.

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1. Bryan had stated: "By Christ Almighty, I'll sacrifice my liberty and let that spineless jelly-fish, the King, keep me for the rest of my life". (Advertiser, 30 May, 1929, p. 12.)
  2. The delegation was composed of Dickinson, Zwolsman, Moyle, Ted O'Reilly and Bill Hampshire.
  3. Workers' Weekly, 15 September, 1929, p. 1.

The action of the government in dictating the composition of deputations was attacked by another member, Ken Bardolph, in contrast to Hill's acquiescent attitude.<sup>1.</sup> Bardolph claimed the T.L.C. did not want "wishy washy soup kitchens". Afterwards, 2,500 unemployed in Victoria Square carried a motion of censure regarding the failure of Hill, McInnes and Blackwell to participate in the demonstration. The T.L.C. adopted a similar motion on 6 September. Nevertheless, Hill's uncompromising hostility to militants found some support in the Labor Party. Plympton Local Committee passed the following motion on 3 September: "that delegates to the A.L.P. Council be instructed to take no part in unemployed demonstrations so long as members of the I.W.W. and Communists are connected with them".<sup>2.</sup> Some disillusioned left wing members of the Labor Party made an abortive attempt to launch an Independent Labor Party.

The strength of militants was shown at the T.L.C. elections on 8 August. Tom Howard retained the secretaryship, receiving 29 votes to 28 for Tom Garland. However, the latter was elected onto the executive. Six of the eight persons elected to the Organizing Committee were militants, one of whom, Tony

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1. Bardolph was chairman of the Trades Hall Management Committee and he questioned the eligibility of Hill to speak for the unemployed whereupon the Chief Secretary asked: "Is this a deputation or a fight among yourselves?" (Advertiser, 5 September, 1929, p. 18).

2. Advertiser, 5 September, 1929, p. 6.

McGillick also became an executive member. McGillick had been forced by the Labor Party executive early in 1929 to relinquish his post as Secretary of the West Torrens Electorate Committee.<sup>1</sup> Subsequently, Lionel Hill alleged that "certain members who were alleged Communists are at present masquerading as genuine Labourites". "The ranks of Labor", he continued, "must and would be purged of that undesirable element".<sup>2</sup>

Three A.C.T.U. representatives attended the Pan-Pacific Trades Union Conference at Moscow and Vladivostok during August, 1929, one of whom, Fred Walsh<sup>3</sup> was a South Australian. Explaining the Australian scene, Walsh declared that "the class struggle and any revolutionary talk are foreign to all States of the Commonwealth with the exception of N.S.W. and Queensland".<sup>4</sup> Later he signed a resolution proclaiming that "on the banner of the Australian trade union movement must be inscribed the slogan 'Not Race but Class War'. Under **this** banner it is necessary to ... rally the Australian movement to joint struggle with the international proletariat against the national and international bourgeoisie".<sup>5</sup> The following

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1. McGillick had appealed to Council following his initial suspension by 34 votes to 24.
  2. Advertiser, 9 September, 1929, p. 11.
  3. Fred Walsh was an organizer of the Liquor Trades Union and a left-wing member of the Labor Party. M.H.A. since 1942.
  4. M. H. Ellis, The Garden Path, Sydney, 1949, p. 233.
  5. Ibid, p. 234.



motion had been rejected at the 1929 State Labor Party Conference: "That the Pan-Pacific Secretariat be a policy of the Labor platform". Returning in December, 1929, Walsh gave sympathetic yet critical lectures on the Soviet Union, although his statements were distorted and mis-reported by the press. On 20 July, 1930, he addressed a C.P. meeting in the Liquor Trades Hall.

A conference of trade unions established a Council of Action in late 1929 to make arrangements for mass meetings protesting against the rising problem of unemployment. The first demonstration occurred in Adelaide on 15 December, at which the chairman was P. A. Elliott (President of the T.L.C.). All the speakers - Moyle, Cullen, Garland and Zwolsman - were militants. P. A. Elliott was opposed for the Presidency of the T.L.C. by Zwolsman (B.L.F.) at the T.L.C. elections on 6 February, 1930. When Elliott declared the nomination invalid on the ground that the B.L.F. was unfinancial, there was uproar. A returning officer, Sid Hibbens, flung the ballot papers in Elliott's face. Amid the singing of the 'Red Flag' the meeting was adjourned to 10 February, when Tom Howard refused visitors permission to enter. Nevertheless, the visitors forced an entrance and Fred Walsh was elected President with the support of left-wing delegates.

In 1930 the Left was still disunited, although less so than in 1920. Deep mistrust of the revolutionary purity of rival groupings was still prevalent. It appeared that sectarianism suited the temperament of South Australian militants. The Communists claimed that I.W.W. members were "living in the past traditions and represent the dying phase of militant I.W.W.'s and are merely a nuisance to effective revolutionaries".<sup>1</sup> However, the I.W.W. played a dominant role in the struggle against convictions and the denial of free speech. In the opinion of a prominent participant, such activities reached "a much higher level than in other capitals at the same period, only equalled much later, 1931-32, in Melbourne and Sydney with C.P. in the leading role".<sup>2</sup> The isolated and temporary revival of the I.W.W. in South Australia must be contrasted with the sharp decline in its strength elsewhere, especially in the former stronghold, the U.S. One Communist has commented that "anarcho-syndicalist and socialist sectarian theory and practice penetrated deeply and remained strong for longer than elsewhere ... It would seem that these trends bore out Lenin's statement that "the error of anarchism is often a kind of punishment for the opportunist sins of the Labour movement".<sup>3</sup> Other militant groups tended

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1. Workers' Weekly, 24 August, 1928, p. 3.

2. Jim McNeill to John Playford, 1958.

3. L. Aarons, "Recent Developments in the Labor Movement in South Australia", Communist Review, January, 1947, p. 399.

to survive longest in South Australia. The O.B.U. movement collapsed in N.S.W. in July, 1919, yet the height of its influence in this state occurred during the following two years. Likewise the S.L.P. was strongest in Adelaide until the 1926 schism. Referring to the revolutionary socialist movement outside South Australia, the Marxist historian Lloyd Churchward says: "Long before 1928 the American influence ... had been superseded by the Russian for the simple reason that Bolshevik theory was a more mature and comprehensive recipe for revolutionary action than the earlier American syndicalism".<sup>1.</sup> Jock Garden had warned: "My experience is that the I.W.W. is composed of young men who ... believe that ... the I.W.W. will be able to accomplish reform quicker than is being done by the present trades union movement. The majority of adherents in the I.W.W. never remain long behind its banners".<sup>2.</sup>

Eschewing political action and lacking international links the I.W.W. was destined not to survive permanently. The C.P. possessed an inestimable advantage - the Soviet Union, where theory was transformed into practice.

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1. L. G. Churchward, "The American influence on the Australian Labour Movement", Historical Studies, 5 (1952), p. 274.

2. Argus, 31 July, 1925, p. 6.

CHAPTER III. THE SUPREMACY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY, 1929-36.

A letter from Jim Cullen requesting that an organizer be sent to South Australia to establish the C.P. was read at the Presidium of the C.P. in Sydney on 20 August, 1928. Eventually H. J. Moxon was offered the post but he refused stating that "from the economic point of view Adelaide holds no attractions" as he would be obliged to work as a laborer, "an occupation that has always been repugnant to me".<sup>1.</sup> Shortly afterwards at a meeting of the Marx-Engels Club, Bill Cathcart successfully moved that the organization be liquidated and a C.P. formed in its place. The Marx-Engels Club had succeeded in acting as a conveyor belt in bringing militants to see the need for a C.P. Cullen was elected as first President and Art Stainthorpe (formerly of the Wilson S.L.P.) became secretary. However, the latter was shortly succeeded by Gilbert Roper, who had termed Communists "reactionaries" some time previously.<sup>2.</sup> Roper had left the Judd S.L.P. after quarrelling with Kent, and became the first South Australian member of the Central Committee of the C.P. Membership at first was "not more than twenty".<sup>3.</sup> Number 5 District of the C.P. was created consisting of all South

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1. H. J. Moxon to General Secretary, C.P., 31 May, 1929.
  2. Workers' Weekly, 29 July, 1927, p. 2.
  3. Evidence by T. C. McGillick, before the Royal Commission into Communism, Victoria, 1949, p. 5200.

Australia and that portion of N.W. Victoria north of a line from Euston to Pooncarrie, but not including these towns, and all west of the Darling River to Wilcannia.<sup>1</sup> Headquarters were retained at the B.L.F. Hall, Flinders Street. Gilbert Roper gave the first Sunday evening lecture on 25 August on "War Clouds". From the outset police were stationed outside the hall during meetings and this drove out the more respectable element. Apart from the leadership the C.P. was destined to have a fast-changing membership.

10,000 anti-war leaflets were distributed on 3 August, 1929, many to members of the Citizens forces. On the following day 200 marched from the Trades Hall to the Botanic Park to celebrate 'International Day Against Imperial War'. Representatives of the I.W.W., C.P. and the unemployed spoke. Previously the Wilson S.L.P. and the T.L.C. had refused to co-operate. Ted Dickinson was enthusiastically welcomed by the crowd of 2,000, following his release. Other speakers were Roper, Stainthorpe, Zwolsman, and Mrs. Westbrook from N.S.W.

The C.P. proposed a unity conference with the I.W.W. and the S.L.P. shortly afterwards. The proposals were well

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1. Previous districts were:- No. 1. - Sydney; No. 2. - Northern Coalfields; No. 3. - Brisbane; and No. 4. - Melbourne. Perth became No. 6. district.

received by the I.W.W. but Wilson violently objected to Roper being elected conference chairman. He threatened to throw Roper through the window, over twenty feet from the ground, and the unity attempt failed. However, the I.W.W. and C.P. cooperated on International Unemployment Day, 25 February, 1930, when 600 marched through Adelaide streets to the Botanic Park to hear Ted Moyle and Jack Kavanagh (C.P.), and Zwolsman and Alf Lowcock (I.W.W.).

Two C.P. candidates were nominated for the State elections, held on 5 April, 1930. Originally Tony McGillick intended to stand for Adelaide but instructions came from the Central Committee that he was to nominate for West Torrens. For years McGillick had worked with a group of militants within the Labor Party<sup>1</sup> which had consistently supported the Soviet Union, the Chinese Communists and so forth. Dissatisfied with the failure of the Federal Labor Government to provide full employment McGillick resigned both from the Labor Party and as secretary of the Thebarton Local Branch. He addressed

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1. Included in this "ginger group" had been Garland, Cullen, William Gormlie, Fred Wilkinson, Jack Williams, Dr. Clark-Nikola, Hugh Giles and A.J.L. Wilson (later secretary of the S.A. Railway Officers Association). Some were individual members of the C.P. previously referred to by Roper as "half a dozen reformist worms wriggling in the Labor Party .. some of the most arrogant and ignorant scum that has ever pretended to be revolutionary". (Revolutionary Socialist, September-October, 1927, p. 4.)

a C.P. meeting on 15 December, 1929, on "Why Workers Should Leave the A.L.P." Cullen, who had been jailed for 14 days during the October 1926 free speech fights, was selected as candidate for Adelaide. His task of capturing the militant vote was hindered by the intervention of Alf Wilson as S.L.P. candidate.

Deposits were introduced at the 1930 elections and each candidate had to contribute £50. The Labor Party was a party to the Act which created financial embarrassment for the C.P. A small defence corps was organized to protect speakers as the recent Victorian State elections had provided numerous examples of disruptive tactics at Communist meetings. Jack Kavanagh was sent across from Sydney as Campaign Director, and being out of favour with the central leadership, remained to organize for some months.<sup>1</sup> The Labor Party was termed "one of the parties of capitalism",<sup>2</sup> and Communists were instructed to vote informal where there was no C.P. candidate. One of the four great issues highlighted by Liberal leader R. Butler was "the maintenance of law and order". The electorate voted the Labor Party into power with a considerable

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1. General Secretary until 1929, Kavanagh had disobeyed Comintern instructions, whereupon the "reliable" Sharkey-Moxon forces had organized opposition and ousted him. Failing to overcome his deviations, Kavanagh was expelled in July, 1934; subsequently becoming a leading Sydney Trotskyite.

majority and Hill resumed the premiership. McGillick secured 360 votes and Cullen 336. Wilson returned a vote of 401, remarkable since the S.L.P. did virtually no campaigning. Nevertheless the results were declared "satisfactory". Due to its relative weakness the C.P. encountered little hostility from the capitalist press.

Shortly afterwards Bill Leonard and W. Bretton were expelled for "political unreliability".<sup>1</sup> Doctrinal error was rarely forgiven but members expelled on account of moral laxity were permitted readmittance.<sup>2</sup> About 100 militants marched on Parliament House and the Treasury during May Day, 1930, after which a large crowd assembled in the Victoria Square unemployed shed to listen to speakers. Whilst addressing a crowd in the same shed John Bryan called Adelaide police the "most vicious and fiercest men ever born",<sup>3</sup> for which he was imprisoned on 18 July. Three days later three men including Ted Moyle were sentenced to 7 days imprisonment for speaking in the streets without a permit. Motions of protest were carried by the Unemployed in Adelaide and Port Adelaide and the T.L.C., which sent a deputation to the Chief Secretary. Attacking the Hill

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1. Workers' Weekly, 18 April, 1930, p. 4.  
Leonard, a Scotsman, later became Secretary of the S.L.P.
  2. Ted O'Reilly, a former secretary, was expelled in 1933 for drunkenness but subsequently readmitted.
  3. Advertiser, 19 July, 1930, p. 17.



Government, the Workers' Weekly claimed that "under the late Butler Government we were allowed to speak without a permit".<sup>1.</sup> In the face of mounting protest the government reissued the permit.

The Premier's Plan provided for a ten per cent reduction in wages. Over 5,000 people assembled at the I.W.W. ring in the Botanic Park to hear Zwolsman, McGillick, Hibbens and others protest at the wage cuts and the rising unemployment. Afterwards the crowd approached the Labor Party ring in an ugly mood and counted out Sid McHugh, M.P. The Chairman (Arthur McArthur, M.P.) and Fred Ward required police protection to leave the Park, amid jeering.

Upon instructions from the Comintern the C.P. celebrated International Red Day on 1 August, 1930. McGillick, Roper and Rule acted as marshals and a reserve State Committee was appointed to function in the event of arrests. A combined force of 500 Adelaide and Port Adelaide demonstrators marched to the Treasury Building to demand that Hill disarm volunteers on the waterfront. Later, moving to Rundle Street, McGillick addressed a crowd but was isolated and arrested. The crowd was then dispersed by mounted troopers with batons. Reforming, the crowd demonstrated elsewhere. Police were unable to cope

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1. Workers' Weekly, 1 August, 1930, p. 5.

with the situation. 5,000 assembled outside C.P. headquarters to listen to speeches from the second floor windows. No trade union officials participated in the march and the marchers were not allowed to eat in the Trades Hall. Charged with refusing to move on and resisting the police McGillick was tried on 6 August. In summing up, the Judge said he preferred the evidence of the police to that of defence witnesses and fined McGillick £6, in default 35 days imprisonment.

The first State Conference of the C.P. occurred on 25 August at the Liquor Trades Hall. Delegates were elected from locality and factory branches and the secretary and president were chosen from among the executive. Membership was reported to be only 26 due to an over-zealous concern to create an 'elite' party.<sup>1</sup> Ted Tripp attended as Central Committee representative to guide the Conference in its deliberations.

Waterside workers at Port Adelaide came out on strike in early September against the retention of volunteer labor which had continued to work on the waterfront since the 1928 strike. Industrial peace could never be achieved while volunteers remained, and the Labor Party had promised in its election

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<sup>1</sup>. Advertiser, 28 October, 1930, p. 9.

campaign to remove them, if returned to power. The newly-formed Port Adelaide branch of the C.P. was unprepared for the strike and McGillick, who was in charge of industrial work, took up residence at the home of the local secretary, Pat Fanning. On the morning of 4 September, police raided the headquarters of the local C.P. and the homes of militants in an unsuccessful search for the roneo-machine, which produced the Port Beacon. According to R.I.L.U. policy a Rank and File Council was established, comprising representatives from the unions involved. Initially it contained a majority of Communists including Edward Mitchell (Secretary), and Cullen. Zwolsman and Garland were also members. Described as "principally a political strike against the Social-Fascist Hill Government",<sup>1</sup> the conflict was heralded as "the beginning of the counter-offensive of the whole working class against the onslaught on capitalism".<sup>2</sup> The Central Committee of the C.P. described the event as "the most inspiring we have received since the announcement of the shearers' strike".<sup>3</sup> The organizers succeeded in considerably widening the strike.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Workers' Weekly, 31 October, 1930, p. 6.

2. Ibid, 19 December, 1930, p. 3.

3. Advertiser, 28 October, 1930, p. 9.

4. Timberworkers, storemen and packers, transport workers, seamen, carters and drivers, and the unemployed were brought in. Subsequently the carters and drivers withdrew and attempted to expel Cullen from the union.

Violent rioting broke out between strikers, volunteers and police.<sup>1.</sup> In an exuberant moment, McGillick declared that "the only thing to solve the present difficulty was revolution".<sup>2.</sup> For a week the strike was controlled by the Communists but due to a number of factors, including the broadening of the strike, the statements of Labor politicians, trade union officials and the press, control was wrested from their hands and the men returned to work within a fortnight. Roper claimed that "the weaknesses of the strike were first and last the weaknesses of the party itself",<sup>3.</sup> which Wallis explicitly referred to as "the weakness of leadership".<sup>4.</sup>

"For the express purpose of smashing Communism"<sup>5.</sup> Hill introduced the Public Safety Preservation Act on 4 September. He alleged that the waterfront strike was "only an excuse for a certain organization to get a fast hold on South Australia. I refer to the Communistic movement".<sup>6.</sup> The legislation provided that the government could proclaim a state of emergency if public safety was considered to be imperilled. Persons obstructing the restoration of order at Port Adelaide were liable to a fine of £200 and six months imprisonment. Gordon Brown, a Communist, was sentenced during November to 8 months imprisonment for

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1. As in the 1928 strike, Blackburn organized volunteers. He was assisted by International cricketer Vic Richardson.
  2. Advertiser, 5 September, 1930, p. 19.
  3. Workers' Weekly, 28 November, 1930, p. 5.
  4. Ibid, 19 December, 1930, p. 3.
  5. Letter from Hon. C.R. Cudmore, M.L.C.; Advertiser, 17 December, 1931
  6. Parliamentary Debates, 1930, Vol. I, p. 881. p. 18.

participating in a riot at Rosewater on 2 September. The Act was re-introduced on 26 November, 1931, and passed with the support of the majority of Labor members.<sup>1.</sup> On the following day the T.L.C. condemned the Act as "the most iniquitous piece of capitalistic legislation ever brought forward in the name of capitalist democracy. The attempt to distract working-class attention from their sordid plight by fastening attention upon Communists deceives nobody but the introducers of the Bill".<sup>2.</sup>

The temporary threat to the established order led to six long articles by Frank Russell entitled "Communism in Our Midst" appearing in the Advertiser. The author concluded by recommending "the exclusion of Communists from union membership and simultaneously Governmental enactment declaring the C.P. an illegal organization on lines similar to those adopted some years ago with regard to the I.W.W."<sup>3.</sup> He had been informed by a highly-placed Federal Intelligence Officer that the work of the C.P. would "do credit to the General Staff of an army on active service",<sup>4.</sup> but this view conflicted with Sid Wallis' claim of "organizational weaknesses".<sup>5.</sup>

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1. The following opposed the Bill:- Collaton, Craigie, Dale, Jonas, Thompson and Dawes. The latter based his objections on the assumption that the Communists were incapable of carrying out their aims in view of the efficiency of the police force. Moreover the Commissioner of Police had power to swear-in special constables.

2. Advertiser, 17 December, 1931, p. 18.

3. Ibid, 21 October, 1930, p. 9.

4. Ibid, 21 October, 1930, p. 9.

5. Workers' Weekly, 19 December, 1930, p. 3.

Another outcome was the formation of the Citizens' League which amalgamated with the Empire Loyalty League. Captain E. D. A. Bagot<sup>1</sup> was appointed organizer of this extreme Right-wing organization which advocated at a meeting on 27 July, 1931, that the C.P. be declared illegal. To protect Communist speakers, a Workers' Defence Corps was formed with Herbert Reimann and Dick Sheridan<sup>2</sup> as instructors. Port Adelaide Communists spent Lenin Night, 21 January, 1931, in breaking up a Citizens League meeting. Neither the Chairman (the Mayor of Port Adelaide) nor Bagot could make himself heard.

The 13th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution was celebrated in Adelaide with a dance. A similar function at Port Adelaide was prevented by the cancellation of the lease of the Waterside Workers' Hall. Yet, two nights previously, the hall had been presented, free of charge, to the Rev. T. P. Willason of the Methodist Mission who intended to expound the dangers of Communism. However, militants captured the meeting and proceedings concluded with the 'Red Flag'.

Edward Mitchell and Pat Fanning contested East and West Ward respectively at the Port Adelaide Municipal elections held

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1. Subsequently Bagot became a Liberal M.L.C., 1938-41.

2. Sheridan had fought in the Irish Republican Army.

on 6 December. During the early stages of the campaign the Mayor of Port Adelaide stated that he was "not going to allow Bolshevism to be preached on the streets of Port Adelaide".<sup>1</sup> Later, he ruled that only citizens of Port Adelaide could speak and that discussion must be confined to municipal matters. This action was designed to prevent Tony McGillick speaking but it was defied by the C.P. Only freeholders who had fully paid their rates were eligible to vote, resulting in an abnormally low total poll and an artificially low Communist poll. Mitchell received 35 votes and Fanning 30 or approximately one-third of the Labor Party vote in both wards. During the campaign, McGillick was sentenced to 1 month's imprisonment on 28 November and Mitchell to 2 months imprisonment on 4 December. Both had described the police as "uniformed thugs". In defiance of the Mayor's ruling that no meeting be held within 48 hours of polling day, 2,000 people assembled on 5 December to demand the release of the two men. For a similar offence Fanning was sentenced to 1 month's imprisonment on 22 December.

The most dramatic event in the history of the militant wing of the S.A. Labor movement occurred on 9 January, 1931 - the celebrated 'Beef Riot'. The spark which set the smouldering resentment of the unemployed ablaze was the action of the Hon. John McInnes, Minister of Labour, who ordered the withdrawal

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1. Workers' Weekly, 21 November, 1930, p. 1.

of beef from rations. Organized by Jack Ferguson, over 2,000 Adelaide and Port Adelaide unemployed marched up King William Street to interview the Premier. As the vanguard of the procession turned the corner into Victoria Square, police poured out of the Treasury Building and began using batons with the utmost ferocity. The unemployed retaliated with wooden spikes, banner poles, half-bricks and fists.<sup>1.</sup> Ten of the seventeen persons admitted to the Royal Adelaide Hospital were policemen. A peaceful demonstration had been transformed into a riot. The outcome was termed "a mighty victory for the workers".<sup>2.</sup> Hill, watching the melée from his window, claimed that "the police were not the aggressors ... the whole thing was organized by the Communist Party",<sup>3.</sup> while the Hon. S. R. Whitford said that "the police were to be commended for the action they took and behaved excellently".<sup>4.</sup> Twelve men, of whom six were Communists, were arrested on charges of "participating in a riot". An Unemployed Prisoners' Relief Committee was set up,<sup>5.</sup> and J. W. Nelligan engaged as defence counsel. On the evening of 9 January, the unemployed locked in delegates at a T.L.C.

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1. The Port Adelaide Young Communist League (Y.C.L.) were prominent in the Beef Riot. Formed in late 1930, the Y.C.L. was described by a parliamentarian as "a set of young hooligans!" (Workers' Weekly, 21 November, 1930, p. 6.) In spite of its initial success the organization perished in 1932.

2. Workers' Weekly, 16 January, 1931, p. 1.

3. Advertiser, 10 January, 1931, p. 9.

4. Ibid, 10 January, 1931, p. 9.

5. Zwolsman was elected President, Garland (Secretary), Bill Morcom (Assistant Secretary) while the committee included John Brady, Bill Hampshire and Mick McCoy. The Tramways Union contributed £25 to the fund and other unions subscribed generously.



meeting in the Trades Hall until 5 a.m. the following morning, demanding that a general strike be called for the release of those arrested. Fred Ward and G. Yates, M.H.R. were shouted down by militants at the Botanic Park on 11 January.

A riot, involving 2,000 people occurred at Port Adelaide on 9 January. Three people including 2 policemen, were admitted to hospital. H. S. Cook, Edward McLean and Pat Mahoney were arrested on charges of "common assault" and sentenced to 14 days imprisonment on 24 March.

All but one of the men arrested during the 'Beef Riot' were committed for trial on 16 January. Witnesses for the defence included Harry Kneebone (President of the Labor Party), Mick Collaton (Secretary of the Ironworkers' Union) and F. K. Nieass, M.H.A. Nieass had been entering the Treasury Building on business when the procession arrived and while remonstrating with an inspector he had been struck down by a policeman. One of the jurymen wore the Citizens' League badge. On 31 March, three defendants received sentence. Herbert Reimann, whose German name had been commented upon by the prosecutor, was sentenced to fifteen months imprisonment, including six months hard labour. W. J. Bundick and R. Kuman both received twelve months imprisonment, including three months hard labour. Immediately the T.L.C. appointed a committee to

press for the release of the men. The remaining eight defendants were found not guilty during April. On the day of his release, Reimann was declared a prohibited immigrant,<sup>1.</sup> and placed on a vessel for his native-town of Danzig. The Federal Minister for the Interior ordered the deportation not to be disclosed until the vessel was clear of Australia. Following the subsequent outcry by the Left, the Minister claimed that every country had "the right to rid itself of undesirables who after entering the country become a menace to social order".<sup>2.</sup>

Charged with being an "idle and disorderly person" and distributing Communist propaganda, Joseph Stewart was sentenced to two months' imprisonment on 15 January, 1931. Following his release, he was fined £3:1:- for a similar offence on 26 March at which Mr. Hall, S.M., commented: "There is no room in Australia for members of the Communist Party and the sooner they get out the quicker things will settle down here".<sup>3.</sup>

During February the I.W.W. was liquidated. Its demise was attributed to "the failure to make any provision for organizing the unemployed and the farmers ... and the smashing of the illusion that Capitalism can be overthrown by pure and simple industrial methods".<sup>4.</sup> Some members joined the C.P., notably

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1. Although Reimann could speak German and French fluently, he was given a language test in Spanish.

2. Advertiser, 12 May, 1932, p. 10.

3. Ibid., 27 March, 1931, p. 23.

4. Workers' Weekly,  
13 February, 1931, p. 6.

Zwolsman,<sup>1</sup> Ted and Bill O'Reilly, and Bill Hampshire, which led to "an unprecedented stimulation of activity".<sup>2</sup> Others linked up with the diminutive S.L.P.,<sup>3</sup> and it was recorded that "those radical elements who still remain outside the Communist Party are now few".<sup>4</sup> The S.L.P. was frequently reminded of Lenin's dictum that the revolutionary movement is not a debating society. Alf Wilson was fined £6 on 16 August, 1932, for speaking in the Botanic Park without permission, his permit having been inexplicably withdrawn by the Board of Governors. In 1933 he returned to Melbourne.

McGillick and Mick McCoy<sup>5</sup> represented their respective unions at the important A.C.T.U. Congress in Sydney during February, 1931, which met to discuss the action of the Federal Government in reducing wages and pensions. The Communist faction unsuccessfully moved for the adoption of a general strike.

George Bourne<sup>6</sup> and Tom Day were charged on 17 February with having called the police "thugs". Bourne and other militants had stormed out of the Port Adelaide T.L.C. following the action

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1. Secretary of the Australian Administration of the I.W.W. and the last editor of Direct Action.
  2. Workers' Weekly, 13 February, 1931, p. 6.
  3. Notably Alf Lowcock, Percy Lands, Percy Cowham and Mick Callaghan.
  4. Workers' Weekly, 13 February, 1931, p. 6.
  5. McCoy had left the Labor Party in 1930 and joined the C.P.
  6. Bourne was secretary of the Port Adelaide Y.C.L. and an U.W.M. delegate to the local T.L.C.

of the President (J. S. Verran)<sup>1</sup>. in having police stationed at the meeting. Both defendants were sentenced to one month's imprisonment. Bourne commented: "It is no more than I expected from this Capitalistic Court of Justice",<sup>2</sup> whereupon he received an extra 14 days imprisonment for contempt of court.

Five prominent Port Adelaide Communists - Pat Fanning, H. S. Cook, Joseph Shaw, Jim Higgins and T. J. Allen - were arrested on 10 March and charged with "store breaking". Police alleged that revolvers, ammunition, gelignite and communist literature were found on the Fanning's premises. Higgins received a minor fine,<sup>3</sup> but Shaw was sentenced to eight months imprisonment after Fanning had turned King's Evidence while awaiting trial. Fanning had been converted to Methodism by the Rev. T. P. Willason who had once observed that "all the Communists are nothing but a lot of Russian Jews".<sup>4</sup> Commented the Advertiser: "It was the leisure for reflection afforded by his last term of imprisonment ... which led to his restoration to economic sanity," and continued, "To a person of intelligence, such as Mr. Fanning appears to be, such leisure whether compulsory or voluntary is all that is really needed to bring the seekers

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1. J. S. Verran was Labor M.H.A., 1924-27 and 1925-27.

2. Advertiser, 18 February, 1931, p. 8.

3. Higgins subsequently moved to Victoria where he was elected to the State Committee of the C.P. He was expelled in 1932 for failing to expose the Labor Party as "social fascist".

4. Workers' Weekly, 31 October, 1930, p. 3.

after economic truth to where Mr. Fanning now stands".<sup>1</sup> Willason received £10 from a Sydney woman who promised similar payment for subsequent converts from Communism. He was able to oblige on 31 July, 1932, when a minor member of the Y.C.L., W. A. Rankin, announced his resignation.

Uproar ruled at the Exhibition Building meeting of J. T. Lang on 16 April, 1931. While the orchestra played "Song of Australia", sections of the audience sang the conflicting words of "God Save the King" and the 'Red Flag'. The chairman (T. P. Howard) called upon police to remove interjectors. Later the T.L.C. carried the following motion: "That this Council condemns Mr. Lang and his hybrid political cubs as an incipient Fascisti. We further denounce him as a political mountebank whose opportunist tendencies reveal him as a definite traitor to the workers".<sup>2</sup>

When Lord Baden-Powell passed through Adelaide on 20 April and publicly attacked the C.P. and Y.C.L., he was classified as "a notorious militarist",<sup>3</sup>. Communists alleged that the Scout's uniforms savoured of fascism.

Labor Party ushers and police fought Communist hecklers during the Exhibition Building meeting of Mr. E. Theodore

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1. Advertiser, 30 June, 1931, p. 6.

2. Workers' Weekly, 17 April, 1932, p. 2. Lang Labor received the support of a number of prominent South Australian Labor Party men in the early 1930's, including Tom Howard, M. Collaton, R. A. Dale and the Bardolph brothers.

3. Workers' Weekly, 8 May, 1931, p. 3.

(Federal Treasurer) on 27 April. McGillick was thrown down the stairs by six policemen and three detectives. On the following day, Laurie Henkel was charged with indecent language and resisting arrest and fined £4:2:--. He had considered it his duty as a "class-conscious worker"<sup>1</sup>. to expose the politicians.

Police prevented a march through the city streets on 1 May and dispersed a crowd in front of the Town Hall. Men were not permitted to fall into line. The Commissioner of Police (Brig. Gen. R. L. Leane) and six inspectors directed operations. Afterwards the Botanic Park meeting was abandoned in heavy rain. A demonstration was dispersed at Port Adelaide, after which eight men, including McGillick and Edward Mitchell, were each fined £1:12:3 for participating in a procession which did not possess a permit. The same men were sentenced to 14 days imprisonment on 4 May for "riotous behaviour". The zenith of C.P. influence was reached during the 'Beef Riot' and the unsuccessful May Day demonstrations marked the beginning of the decline in the fortunes of the organization.

A. A. Edwards, Labor M.H.A. for Adelaide and City Councillor, was forced to vacate both seats after being convicted on 17 February, 1931, of committing a homosexual offence. He was sentenced to five years imprisonment with hard labour. The

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<sup>1</sup>. Advertiser, 29 April, 1931, p. 14.



Assembly seat was contested by Jack Ferguson whose policy included a ten per-cent rise in wages, increased unemployment benefits and an end to evictions. Before polling day he experienced an eviction personally. Alf Wilson stood as S.L.P. candidate. Only one third of those eligible to vote exercised their rights on 25 July. Ferguson and Wilson received 268 and 114 votes respectively. The aggregate C.P. - S.L.P. vote had decreased absolutely but increased relatively as compared with the 1930 general election figures, and the victory of the Lang Labor candidate indicated that "Langism" was receiving the support of most disillusioned Labor voters. Bill O'Reilly received 22 votes at the Grey Ward by-election for the City Council on 29 July.

After the C.P. had been refused permission to organize a demonstration on 1 August, McGillick addressed a meeting during which he told detectives present that "we spit on your laws".<sup>1</sup> For this offence he was sentenced to 7 days imprisonment on 29 July.

Meanwhile an unbridgeable rift had been growing between the industrial wing of the Labor Party and the supporters of the Premier's Plan. The Tramway Employees' Union had adopted a motion calling for the resignation of Hill on the ground that

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1. Ibid, 30 July, 1931, p. 12.

"he has broken every connection as a representative of the working class", and added, "this association views his actions with disgust and contempt and avers that he is a tool of the master class".<sup>1</sup> An attempt to expel Hill, Whitford, and Denny failed at the State Labor Party Conference in March, 1931, due to the poor presentation of the case. However, Hill and his followers were expelled at a Council meeting on 13 August, on the motion of Cecil Skitch. Voting was 107 to 86 and the expulsion was upheld by State Conference on 16 September. Hill claimed that "Communists are dominating the Labor Party,"<sup>2</sup> in contradiction to his earlier statement that "no member of the Labor Party is a member of the Communist Party".<sup>3</sup> He also accused Fred Ward of "favouring the English type of Communism", and added that "the socialization of industry was impracticable under the present democratic system".<sup>4</sup> Upon hearing the result of the British elections Hill said he was delighted at the defeat of the Labor Party and exclaimed "Bravo, MacDonald".<sup>5</sup> Whitford who was also expelled, had once been praised by a correspondent of the Socialist as one "who never misses an opportunity of using his Parliamentary privilege to propagate Labor's objective",<sup>6</sup>

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1. Workers' Weekly, 13 February, 1931, p. 6.

2. Argus, 23 November, 1931, p. 31.

3. Parliamentary Debates, 4 September, 1930, Vol. I, p. 881.

4. Advertiser, 23 November, 1931, p. 9.

5. News, 28 October, 1931, p. 1.

6. Socialist, 8 November, 1922, p. 3.



and had later said that he was "in favour of Communists being in the Labor Party".<sup>1</sup>

Police restored order after a demonstration involving 2,000 outside the Labor Bureau on 6 October. The Unemployed Workers' Movement (U.W.M.) had disrupted a meeting addressed by Mr. Lazzarini, M.H.R., and convened by the General Unemployed Committee which supported the Lang Plan. The U.W.M. programme had been adopted by the Adelaide unemployed on 7 October, 1930, and branches established in the suburbs. Ted O'Reilly was chairman and Zwolsman organizer. A room, popularly designated "The Little Soviet Republic", was secured in the Exhibition Buildings. Over 70 delegates attended the first U.W.M. State Conference at the Liquor Trades Hall on 13 March, 1931. Realizing the strong power of the U.W.M. the Labor Party unsuccessfully attempted to undermine this influence by sponsoring a rival organization - the Unemployed Relief Council.

An increase in membership<sup>2</sup> was reported at The Second State Conference of the C.P. which extended over two days during October, 1931. It was urged by an observer from Mildura that an organizer be sent to his district. Broken Hill was represented

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1. Workers' Weekly, 19 December, 1924, p. 3.

2. Membership figures were 175 and 300 in May, 1931, and December 1931 respectively. However these figures include a high number of unfinancial members. The weekly sales of the Workers' Weekly during May and July, 1931 were 1050 and 1302 respectively.

for the last time; it later came under District No. 4.

"because of the weaknesses and neglect of the Adelaide section".<sup>1.</sup> Edward Tripp<sup>2.</sup> who represented the Central Committee, remained for several weeks to lecture in the Empire Theatre. Each lecture attracted a capacity audience approaching 1,000 and his visit provided a powerful stimulus to the infant Friends of the Soviet Union (F.O.S.U.)<sup>3.</sup>

Tripp and McGillick went to Mildura to form branches of the C.P. and U.W.M. The success of their venture alarmed the local fruitgrowers and business men, many of whom determined to smash the organizations with force. On 27 October the U.W.M. meeting was broken up by hundreds who smashed the speaker's table, threw rotten eggs and crackers and burnt Communist literature. "The crowd went wild in a happy mood from the success that had attended the first organized display of solidarity for constitutional government as against revolutionary propaganda".<sup>4.</sup> A more serious outbreak of violence occurred on 1 November when a hostile crowd of 500 people attacked a meeting of militants who numbered about forty. The attackers used iron bars, bicycle chains, and hollow wooden batons filled with lead. Militants

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1. Workers' Weekly, 5 August, 1932, p. 2.

2. Adelaide was the first port of call for Tripp on his return from the Soviet Union. He was National Secretary of F.O.S.U., 1930-33 but was expelled from the C.P. in August, 1932.

3. F.O.S.U. membership stood at 190 in June, 1931, and the circulation of its organ Soviets Today had risen to 650 in November, 1932.

4. Sunraysia Daily, 28 October, 1931, p. 4.

were bashed into insensibility and their faces pushed into the Murray. Nine men were admitted to hospital, McGillick with a broken nose.<sup>1</sup> Police had watched the fighting but had not intervened. The Sunraysia Daily commented that "this action leaves no doubt where Mildura citizens stand in regard to the menace that is threatening the nation", but admitted the breach of the peace was "extremely regrettable ... for mob law is always dangerous law".<sup>2</sup> The local C.P. secretary was dismissed from his job and the organization almost collapsed, membership falling to two. However, Mildura was transferred to District No. 4 in January, 1932 and membership had risen to 48 by March, 1932.

Three Communists nominated for the Federal elections on 19 December, 1931. Zwolsman, Ferguson and McGillick were candidates for Adelaide, Hindmarsh and the Senate respectively; but because of lack of finance the two latter candidates were withdrawn. One feature of the bitter campaign was the controversy concerning Labor Party candidate, Cecil Skitch, over his past associations with militants. Two days before polling day, Gilbert Roper was fined £7:10:0 for quoting, almost a month previously, some words by H. J. Moxon<sup>3</sup> to the effect

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1. McGillick, unfit for work, dropped out of C.P. activity until 1933. After 1935 he became prominent in F.O.S.U.
  2. Sunraysia Daily, 2 November, 1931, p.2.
  3. Moxon was General Secretary of the C.P. until 1931 and was subsequently expelled.

that police in the Northern Territory "were in the habit of going out on Sundays and shooting aborigines like wild dogs".<sup>1.</sup> Zwolsman received 655 votes.

In January, 1932, the government ordered the police to prepare a report on the activities of the C.P.<sup>2.</sup> Police were able to prevent a Communist meeting at Port Adelaide on 8 January. Under the Public Safety Preservation Act, Communist literature was seized at the Botanic Park early in the afternoon of 7 February when only about 30 people were present.<sup>3.</sup> All the publications had been printed in Sydney and declared banned by the P.M.G. Department in the previous week. The following Sunday, Zwolsman demanded that the C.P. enjoy freedom to distribute literature and a motion was carried declaring the legislation "an act of class violence" which "perpetuates the very thing it assumes to prevent".<sup>4.</sup> A copy of the resolution was sent to Hill by the C.P.

In reply to A. Grenfell Price's<sup>5.</sup> pamphlet "Progress of Communism", Tom Garland, a recent convert to the C.P., published

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1. Advertiser, 18 December, 1931, p. 26.
  2. In the intervening years the report has been mislaid.
  3. Among the confiscated literature were 6 dozen Workers' Weekly, 60 pamphlets and dozens of copies of the Red Leader and Pan-Pacific Worker.
  4. Workers' Weekly, 4 March, 1932, p. 3.
  5. A.G. Price became U.A.P. M.H.R., 1941-43. At the 1931 Federal elections he had stated that Mr. Lyons stood "to suppress Communism and inflation". (Advertiser, 19 December, 1931, p.13)

"Contrasts" in February, 1932. Shortly afterwards Bill Hampshire, secretary of the U.W.M. was expelled from the C.P. on a charge of "misappropriating funds".

The Liquor Trades Hall was the venue of the Third State Conference of the C.P. on 8 and 9 July, 1932, attended by 28 delegates and Tom Wright of the Central Committee.<sup>1</sup> The importance of underground existence under illegal conditions was discussed at some length. Many weaknesses were reported, including failure to establish collective leadership, ignorance of Party organization, unco-ordinated operations and neglect of agrarian activities. "The conference was noted for its unanimity on all important questions of Party policy".<sup>2</sup>

Six men, including Zwolsman, McCoy, Wallis and L. T. Brown were arrested on 29 September for failing to move on while addressing a Minority Movement (M.M.) meeting at the S.A. Gas Works, Brompton, which had to be dispersed by police with batons. A permit had been refused two months previously but meetings had continued. However, the defendants were convicted without penalty or costs and a permit issued. Formed in 1931, the M.M. had established strong groups among the tramwaymen and gas workers.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Tom Wright had been general secretary of the C.P., 1924-29 and Secretary of the Sheet Metal Workers' Union since 1936.
  2. Workers' Weekly, 5 August, 1932, p. 2.
  3. Originally formed in Sydney in 1926 the M.M. aimed at extending militant influence within the trade unions.

Newsheets were regularly printed by the industrial groups. National organizer Bill Orr visited South Australia in 1932 and Adelaide was commended as the only section to have elected Councils of Action to meet emergencies. The State C.P. was reprimanded by the Central Committee in 1933 for its "glaring underestimation" of the M.M. and it was disclosed that only 35 of the 145 members of the C.P. had joined the M.M.

During the early 1930's some leading Communists were elected as delegates to the Trades Hall. McGillick's credentials were reluctantly accepted in 1930 but only after unemployed men had forcefully entered the meeting and created a disturbance. Other Communist delegates included Zwolsman, Hampshire, McCoy, Wallis, Arthur O'Neill, Joe Flannagan, Jack Glynn and Garland.<sup>1.</sup>

As the first move in an attempt to outlaw the C.P. the Federal authorities instituted proceedings under the Crimes Act, against Harold Devanny<sup>2.</sup> for soliciting funds for an 'unlawful association', viz. the C.P. A meeting in the Botanic Park was called by the C.P. on 21 August, 1932, to protest against the action. Eventually the High Court quashed the conviction.

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1. In 1937 Garland became the first Communist trade union secretary in South Australia. He was followed by Charles J. McCaffrey, imported from N.S.W. during the war to become secretary of the Ironworkers' Union.

2. Devanny was publisher of the Workers' Weekly.

Noted authoress Jean Devanny<sup>1</sup> spoke at the celebrations of the 15th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution in the Trades Hall on 7 November. The Management Committee had ruled previously that the Hall was not to be used for Communist propaganda but F.O.S.U. overcame the ban by organizing a dance. Prior to the dance over 300 assembled in Franklin Street exploding crackers, after permission to hold a street meeting had been withheld by the City Council until the previous day.

Obstacles were frequently placed in the path of the C.P. and ancillary organizations. F.O.S.U. was refused permission to hold street meetings by the Thebarton and Mitcham Council in November, 1932, and March, 1933 respectively. A similar ruling by the Kensington and Norwood Council excluded the C.P. However, in October, 1932, Hindmarsh Council rescinded a previous resolution preventing Communists speaking in the streets; one approving Councillor remarked: "give them plenty of rope and they will hang themselves".<sup>2</sup>

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1. Mrs. Jean Devanny was married to Harold Devanny, and had been imprisoned in Sydney during 1930. As National Secretary of Workers' International Relief (W.I.R.) she had just returned from a visit to the Soviet Union. W.I.R. was established in Adelaide in August, 1932. Under the leadership of Jack Ferguson, five branches and 90 members were reported at the State conference on 8 February, 1933. Relief work included providing soup for the unemployed and milk to children in slum schools.
  2. Advertiser, 25 October, 1932, p. 12.

L. T. Brown contested the Hindmarsh Municipal Election on 3 December. Ratepayers in arrears were disfranchised. The Brompton Local Committee of the Labor Party did not run a candidate and urged support for Brown. While passing through Adelaide, Harold Devanny spoke on the last night of the campaign. Only 25 per cent of the electorate voted and Brown received 64 votes which the Communists declared "highly satisfactory".<sup>1</sup> Another Communist, Robert Powning, contested the Woodville Council by-election on 4 February, 1933, and polled 33 votes.

South Australia neglected to send delegates to the 3rd Plenary Session of the C.P. in Sydney during January, 1933. The Central Committee demanded that "District No. 5 Committee must immediately criticize itself through the columns of the Workers' Weekly and make it perfectly clear that irresponsibility will not eventuate in the future".<sup>2</sup> Complying with the ultimatum, District No. 5 Committee claimed that "for a considerable period Right opportunism has been evident ... and also a total lack of responsible and collective leadership".<sup>3</sup> Later it was observed that "anarcho-syndicalist traditions and hangovers have played an important part in bringing about this state of affairs".<sup>4</sup>

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1. Workers' Weekly, 16 December, 1932, p.1.

2. Ibid, 6 January, 1933, p.3.

3. Ibid, 3 March, 1933, p.2.

4. Ibid, 5 May, 1933, p.2.



15,000 leaflets outlining Communist policy were distributed during the State elections on 8 April. Garland, Zwolsman and McGillick stood as candidates for Adelaide, Port Adelaide and West Torrens respectively. Garland claimed that "when our party goes into a place to address electors we have the police watching us and not protecting us".<sup>1</sup> Garland received 307 votes, Zwolsman 897 and McGillick 704. All deposits were retained. Compared with the State election figures of 1930 the Adelaide vote declined although it doubled in West Torrens. The Liberal party recorded a landslide victory while the representation of the official Labor Party fell to six.<sup>2</sup>

At the 1933 State Conference of the C.P. attended by Central Committee member Edward Docker,<sup>3</sup> it was decided to approach the Labor Party on the question of unity. Accordingly a letter, dated 12 May, 1933, was forwarded mentioning as a basis for discussion the organization of mass resistance to the Federal and State governments and the building of workers' defence units to protect strikers and demonstrations. The Labor Party Council meeting of 15 June evaded a definite answer by referring the matter to the 1933 Federal Conference. An outright refusal

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1. Advertiser, 29 March, 1933, p. 16.

2. The Parliamentary Labor Party, which supported the Premier's Plan, obtained four seats, and the Lang Labor Party three seats.

3. Edward J. Docker, a foundation member of the C.P. was a member of the executive of the M.M. and Workers' International Relief.

would have been met by Communist charges that the Labor Party lacked sincerity in its desire to assist the workers and unemployed.

Communists led an intense campaign against evictions. In the presence of about forty policemen, Jack Ferguson was evicted on 31 May, 1931, and later had a number of similar experiences. He was sentenced to 14 days imprisonment on 28 July, 1933, for publicly referring to "dirty brutal policemen",<sup>1</sup> after an eviction. While Ferguson was in gaol, friends replaced the furniture in the house which afterwards led to his receiving one month's imprisonment for being in a dwelling without lawful excuse. Another prominent Communist, Bill O'Reilly, was sentenced to 14 days imprisonment on 30 April, 1934, for refusing to obey an eviction order.

The Lord Mayor of Adelaide refused F.O.S.U. the use of Victoria Square in 1933 to commemorate the 16th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution and a considerable body of police prevented a demonstration. Instead, activities were confined to dances at Port Adelaide and the Trades Hall, Adelaide. The first issue of Struggle, official fortnightly organ of District No. 5 of the C.P., appeared on the same day. Roneod newsheets previously issued had not proved completely satisfactory.

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1. Advertiser, 29 July, 1933, p. 7.

Edited by Fred Herkleman, the venture survived six issues. 200 copies of each issue were printed but a large number had to be distributed free of charge because workers were short of money. A Press Fund indicated the most active branches to be Port Adelaide, Norwood and Westbourne Park. There were only two factory units. Struggle was described as "technically quite an attractive production", but the length of the articles was criticized. "The comrades have now ... to learn how to present their material in much fewer words".<sup>1</sup>

In view of the alleged menacing war situation the T.L.C. called a meeting in May, 1933, attended by 21 organizations including the Labor Party and the C.P., from which emerged the Anti-War Council. Garland was elected secretary and Frank Goring<sup>2</sup> president. Former Premier J. H. Vaughan (League of Nations Union), Rev. E. H. Giles and the two abovementioned officers spoke from the platform of the first public meeting in the Port Adelaide Town Hall. Three South Australian trade unions sent representatives to the National Congress Against War in Sydney during September, 1933. 96 delegates, representing 51 organizations,<sup>3</sup> were present at the First Annual State Conference

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1. Workers' Weekly, 24 November, 1933, p. 2.

2. Goring was Past President of the T.L.C.

3. Among the organizations represented were the Y.M.C.A., the League of Nations Union, Labor Party and C.P.

Against War on 28 and 29 July, 1934. Despite the opposition of the Secretary of the League of Nations Union and the President of the Labor Party, the conference decided, with only 14 dissentients, to oppose fascism as well as war, and the name of the organization was altered to the Council Against War and Fascism (C.A.W.F.). South Australian delegates attended the All-Australia Congress Against War and Fascism in Sydney in November, 1934, along with representatives from the Central Council of Unemployed, F.O.S.U., the Yugoslav Cultural Club and several trade unions. A highlight of the conference was the appearance of Egon Kisch whom the Federal authorities had attempted to exclude from Australia.<sup>1</sup> The Kisch-Griffin Protest Committee held a meeting in Adelaide on 7 January, 1935, at which Kisch was invited to this state. Subsequently he was able to speak at the Empire Theatre.

At the Federal elections on 15 September, 1934, Garland contested Hindmarsh while Moyle was the Senate candidate. Moyle's campaign was very limited although he addressed the first Communist meeting at Port Pirie on 27 July. Factory gate meetings in

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1. Kisch, a noted Czech writer, had just been released from a Nazi concentration camp. He and an Irishman, Gerald Griffin, had been refused permission to enter Australia after being given dictation tests in Gaelic and declared prohibited immigrants. This action was deprecated by Principal Kiek of Parkin Theological College, Adelaide (Advertiser, 12 November, 1934, p. 18). However, on appeal, the High Court ruled that Gaelic was not a European language and both were admitted. In 1947 Kisch became Minister of Education in Czechoslovakia.

Adelaide were sparse and only a few booths were manned on polling day. Garland received 1,011 votes and Moyle 4,872. Both candidates lost their deposits.

Central Committee representative Edward Docker strongly criticized the condition of the C.P. at the Fifth State Conference on 5 December, 1934. An audience of 600 heard L. T. Brown (U.W.M. organizer), Jack Ferguson, A. W. Lacey (Leader of the Labor opposition), H. Hills (Society of Friends) and other speakers denounce the inadequate unemployed rations in the Adelaide Town Hall on 16 February, 1935.

The Federal Government announced its intention to prosecute F.O.S.U. under the Amended Crimes Act on 22 August, 1935. A subsequent postal ban on Soviets Today brought protest from many organizations.<sup>1</sup> During September speakers from the Waterside Workers' Federation, F.O.S.U., T.L.C., C.A.W.F., Social Credit Association and the University Politics Club protested at the Botanic Park against the implementation of the Crimes Act and a resolution to that effect was forwarded to the Prime Minister and the Attorney-General.

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1. Including the T.L.C., Port Adelaide Workingmen's Association, Waterside Workers' Federation (Port Adelaide branch), Transport Workers' Union, Tramway Employees' Union and the Gas Workers' Union.

Following the 5th State Conference of the C.P. in 1935, at which the Central Committee was represented by Ralph Gibson,<sup>1.</sup> District No. 5 Committee again had to submit to a spate of public self-criticism. One member referred to "our snail-like progress towards strengthening our connections and influence within the trade unions ... caused by incorrect methods of work and a sectarian approach to the whole problem, particularly trade union officialdom".<sup>2.</sup> An earlier Central Committee statement had advised that "the Party must proceed at once to the task of planting its roots in industry".<sup>3.</sup> However pre-occupation with the unemployed had assumed a bear-like grip on the C.P., and retarded its development. A preoccupation with poverty and unemployment does not lead towards a virile organization but tends to result in stagnation. "The lifting of the depression and the decline in the unemployed struggles left the Party weak. It had little organization in the factories. Its members going into the factories were very poorly trained in Communist theory".<sup>4.</sup> Furthermore, some members regaining em-

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1. Ralph Gibson, M.A. (Melbourne) later became President of the Victorian State Committee of the C.P. He was a son of Professor W. R. Boyce Gibson, and again visited Adelaide on the occasion of the 19th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution (1936) after attending the Brussels Peace Conference.

2. Workers' Weekly, 1 November, 1935, p.2.

3. Ibid, 5 May, 1933, p. 2.

4. A. H. Finger, "Notes on Australian Communist Party History in South Australia", Tribune, 18 April, 1947, p. 4.

ployment lost interest in revolutionary activity. A political party must have a stable base to ensure a continuous existence or else it will disappear like the British Liberal Party. To date the C.P. has not enjoyed political success but its continuity is the result of having sunk strong roots in the trade union movement.

Dr. Alan Finger arrived from Victoria in February, 1936, and found the C.P. in a state of near-collapse with about twenty active members.<sup>1</sup> However, activity was revived by the rising awareness of sections of the middle-class to the dangers of war and fascism. On 14 April, 1934, Garland had debated with a Liberal at Adelaide University, "That in the opinion of this house Communism, so far from being a menace, is a necessity to any civilized country"; the well attended meeting defeated the motion by the surprisingly narrow margin of 7 votes. Progressives were aroused by the Spanish Civil War and a number of men associated with the Labor movement in South Australia fought in the International Brigade - Ted Dickinson, Jim McNeill, Bill Morcom, Charles Walters and Jack Newman. At a joint meeting of the executives of the Labor Party, T.L.C. and C.A.W.F. in February, 1936, a motion was adopted calling upon trade unions,

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1. Dr. Finger was destined to play a leading role in the awakening of middle-class sympathy. His future wife, Joan Hunter, became secretary of C.A.W.F. and a frequent contributor to the official Labor Party organ Workers' Weekly Herald.

local committees of the Labor Party and other sympathetic bodies to affiliate with the C.A.W.F. A successful State Centenary Congress Against War and Fascism was held in the Trades Hall on 13 and 14 July, 1936, followed by a long torchlight procession on 1 August. Under the presidency of R. Brewster-Jones a branch of the Left Book Club (L.B.C.) was launched in 1937, eventually growing to about 400 members. Although leadership was predominantly middle-class, trade unionists played an active part, notably E. H. Crimes, J. L. Cavanagh and A. Thompson. Progressive plays were staged by the Left Theatre. F.O.S.U. became a flourishing concern.<sup>1</sup> The composition of the membership of the C.P. and ancillary organizations altered throughout Australia during this period; propaganda being aimed at the middle-class intelligentsia rather than the unemployed. But alongside such a movement, C.P. influence in the trade unions grew as members returned to industry.

The threat of illegality appeared again in late 1936.

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1. Into the Adelaide branches of L.B.C. and F.O.S.U. came lawyers, union officials, teachers, musicians, doctors and students, prominent amongst whom were Miss Mary Symon; G.L. Morris, solicitor and later secretary of the State Committee of the Australian Council of Civil Liberties; Laurence Kiek, now secretary of the S.A. Institute of Teachers; L. Krantz, now secretary of the Clerks Union; and Miss Ada Bromham and Miss Isabel McCorkindale of the W.C.T.U.



J. B. Miles<sup>1</sup> toured Australia speaking against the Crimes Act and the Transport Workers' Act under the slogan 'Defend Democratic Rights'. He was helped by many trade unions and Labor Party branches and spoke at the Botanic Gardens on 11 October, later at Port Adelaide and Port Pirie. A large number of organizations carried motions deploring the action of the Federal Government.<sup>2</sup> The founders of South Australia had insisted that all had an equal right to civil freedom yet during centenary year one political party was under the imminent threat of illegality.

A mass May Day Unity Rally was held at the Botanic Park on 4 April, 1936, with speakers from the Labor Party, C.P., T.L.C. and Port Adelaide T.L.C. Subsequently the C.P. wrote to the Labor Party on 5 March, 1937, requesting affiliation but a decision was deferred to the following Council meeting, at which affiliation was rejected by a small majority. Fraternal greetings were sent to the Labor Party State Conference in September 1937 in which the C.P. stated that they would do all in their power to help bring about the election of Federal and State Labor Governments.

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1. Miles had been appointed general secretary of the C.P. in 1931.
  2. Resolutions came from the T.L.C., Port Adelaide T.L.C., Labor Party, Central Council of Unemployed, Port Adelaide unemployed and a number of trade unions.

Compared with the I.W.W., the C.P. was a better organized body with much tighter discipline. However, it lacked the more exotic personalities of the I.W.W. Indirectly linked to the Comintern, C.P. policy was subject to rapid change. After 1930 believing that capitalism was crumbling, the Communists replaced their qualified support of the Labor Party with a relentless attack upon "social fascists".<sup>1</sup> Promoting turmoil at every opportunity the C.P. organized the unemployed and led them in demonstrations. They benefitted from the economic depression, the inability of State and Federal Labor governments to cope with rising unemployment, schisms within the Labor Party followed by the disillusionment of many of its supporters. However, the record of the Labor Party was not sufficiently unfavourable to shake the loyalty of the majority of its working-class supporters who felt that the depression was outside the control of the Labor Party. Moreover the defection of Hill and other Premiers' Planners only increased the solidarity of the rank and file. While the Labor Party did not gain the support of many socialist intellectuals in the 1930's who were alarmed at the international situation and attracted by Marxist theory, these problems did not concern the great majority of Labor voters. Thus, the C.P. failed to become more than a body of agitators in spite of considerable membership gains. The

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1. Communist historian E. W. Campbell in commenting upon the use of this term admits that "sectarian mistakes were made... by not differentiating between the leaders and the rank and file of the Labor Party". (History of the Australian Labor Movement, Sydney 1945, p. 140.)

upward swing of the business cycle coincided with activists returning to work or losing interest. However, the revised Comintern policy advocating the United Front against war and fascism led to renewed activity.

"The rival philosophy to Labor reformism that developed during the depression years was not supplied by the I.W.W. but by the Communist Party".<sup>1</sup> At last, South Australian militants had fallen into line with their counterparts in the Eastern states.

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1. L. G. Churchward, op. cit. p. 274.

CHAPTER IV.

CONCLUSION.

Until 1930 the strongest influence upon the militant wing of the South Australian Labor movement came via America. Subsequently the Russian influence has been predominant. At no stage has the influence of the militants determined the direction of the mainstream of the Labor movement, but they have left their imprint on important sections of it.

Apart from the waterfront strikes of 1928-30 and the 'Beef Riot', the militants never presented a threat to the authorities, who remained fully aware that the whole apparatus of the police and armed forces could be called upon to quell serious disturbances. However, the "Bolshevik Bogy" was trotted out periodically and was undoubtedly successful in serving as a propaganda weapon. Although Communist support exceeded party membership, the difference was never sufficient to justify the claim of Bishop Nutter Thomas that "it is now a struggle between Lenin and Jesus Christ".<sup>1</sup> Militants were often amused to discover that the police went to extraordinary lengths to ensnare the mythical "master-mind" behind demonstrations and other activities. Such fear as did exist was either imaginary or unwarranted by the facts.

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1. Workers' Weekly, 11 September, 1931, p. 3.

Left groupings in the Eastern states exerted considerably stronger power, especially in the control of unions and the leadership of strikes. South Australia was predominantly an agricultural state and industry consisted mainly of small-scale enterprises. Industrial workers tend to be more militant than either members of craft unions or agricultural laborers. The predominance of the latter groups ensured that South Australia lacked a basis for the growth of revolutionary socialism. The history of the militants was almost wholly confined to Adelaide as population was concentrated in the capital. Spasmodic outbursts of activity occurred at Port Pirie, the only other industrial centre.

South Australia lacked the appeal of a revolutionary tradition supplied in the Eastern states by convicts, Irish rebels, Dorchester Laborers, gold diggings, Eureka and William Lane. The dominant bourgeois values of the nonconformist individualists who founded South Australia filtered down through successive generations anaesthetizing the majority of the working class so far as revolutionary action was concerned. As in England, Methodism was strong among the politically conscious working-class. Nonconformist influence ensured that grievances would be redressed by constitutional means. South Australia was able to survive the depression with the minimum of disturbances. Yet unemployment was relatively the most severe of all the states due to the economy having an agrarian basis. The percentage of trade union members registered as

unemployed being recorded as follows:- 1929 - 15.7; 1930 - 23.3; 1931 - 32.5; 1932 - 34.0; 1933 - 29.9%.

Militant organizations had to contend with many privations. Police were placed outside the offices of the C.P. from its inception to report movements and question people entering the building. Moreover headquarters had to be constantly vacated as the authorities applied pressure on the landlord to terminate the lease. Similar intimidatory action was experienced by F.O.S.U. Occasionally District No. 5 Committee of the C.P. were forced to hold meetings in the Parklands either because of the lack of premises or fear of police raids. Correspondence had to be guarded by cover addresses to ensure the safe arrival of documents. Thus, although the C.P. was operating openly as a legal organization, much of the work had to be conducted under semi-illegal conditions.

One crucial determinant of the fluctuating fortunes of revolutionary socialism was the presence of a "great man". When such a figure disappeared from the scene the strength of Left groupings would fall appreciably. Although the absence of an organized C.P. helped, the isolated revival of the I.W.W. was due largely to the efforts of Reeve, Dickinson, Zwolsman and O'Reilly. Moreover, the failure of the initial C.P. in 1923 was mainly due to its inability to attract dominant personalities. Most of these "great men", particularly Reeve and Wilson, were bigotted, arrogant

and egotistical, never submitting to second place, quick to destroy threats to their position and intolerant of dissenting opinion. They stipulated time limits on all Botanic Park speakers except themselves. However, we must not overestimate their undoubted importance. Every member is essential in small organizations and it would be dishonest to decry the contribution of the rank and file who turned out week after week braving all weathers and police prosecution to preach revolutionary socialism.

'The cult of the individual' did not seriously affect the C.P. in South Australia, which praised the virtues of 'collective leadership'. Forceful personalities tend to dominate small groups and the danger also arises when a political party develops into a mass organization, e.g. the C.P. in the Soviet Union. The State C.P. fell into an intermediate category where the likelihood of such a trend would appear to be least. Nevertheless, dominant figures were important in the C.P. and activity declined abruptly when Roper was transferred interstate and McGillick was recovering from the bashing he received at Mildura.

With their powers of oratory and organizational ability men such as Reeve, Dickinson and Wilson would have risen high in the Labor Party if they had been able to wed their picturesque

individualism to the requirements of the Party machine. Terms of imprisonment may have inflated the egos of these men but they suffered discrimination and poverty. Some of them enjoyed their isolation from the mainstream of the Labor movement, being content to remain 'big frogs in little pools'. It is noteworthy that many of the leaders of revolutionary socialism in South Australia were imported from interstate, e.g. Wilson, Grant, Reeve, Dickinson, McNeill and Finger.

Almost invariably the membership of Left organizations tends to divide into the evangelists and the theoreticians. The latter were never strongly represented in South Australia during the period 1908-36, although they achieved some influence in both the pre-Great War Socialist Party and the C.P. after the mid-Thirties. Solly Marks, a self-educated theoretician who eschewed active propaganda activity was termed a "spittoon philosopher" by the I.W.W. The great majority of militants were content to agree with the sentiments alleged to have been expressed by William Morris who, upon being asked whether he accepted Marx's theory of value, replied: "To speak quite frankly, I do not know what Marx's theory of value is, and I'm damned if I want to know ... I have tried to understand Marx's theory, but political economy is not in my line, and much of it appears to be dreary rubbish. But I am, I hope, a Socialist none the less. It is enough political economy for me to know



that the idle class is rich and the working class is poor, and that the rich are rich because they rob the poor. That I know because I see it with my eyes. I need read no book to convince me of it".<sup>1.</sup>

To maintain or extend influence it was essential for Left groupings to avoid a quiet existence. The downfall of the S.L.P. can be partly ascribed to passivity. Roper claimed that the C.P. "after every important working-class event ... had an influx of new members - a successful demonstration, an election campaign, a strike, an attack on the boss, a free speech fight always brings along recruits".<sup>2.</sup>

During the period 1908-36 there were four Labor governments, all of which attempted to curtail the activities of militant organizations. The Gunn and Hill administrations adopted more repressive measures than those exercised by Liberal administrations while the Vaughan administration controlled a rigorously efficient censorship during which Hill and Gunn, President and Secretary respectively of the Anti-Conscription campaign, personally experienced the denial of civil liberties. Gunn once stirred

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1. J. B. Glasier, William Morris and the Early Days of the Socialist Movement, London, 1921, p. 32. Recent research by the Marxist historian, E. P. Thompson, has cast doubts on the accuracy of some of Bruce Glasier's observations (see E.P. Thompson, William Morris, London 1955).

2. Workers' Weekly, 28 November, 1930, p.5.

the streets of Adelaide with the message of socialism; Hill was later termed by militants "a strike-breaker, a betrayer of the unemployed and a scab herder".<sup>1</sup> Like the German Social Democrats in 1919 the Labor Party pursued repressive policies because of the fear of shedding its left-wing and hyper-sensitivity to the violent criticism of the militants. The ability of militant orators to win away hundreds of spectators from the Labor Party ring rankled deep. Marxist phraseology was confused with advocacy of Communism, and opposition to the leadership was equated with disloyalty. In a bitter attack on militants at the Botanic Park on 24 August, 1924, J. L. Price, M.H.A., claimed that "by their actions and utterances they appeared to be in the pay of the Conservative Party and endeavouring to disrupt the Labor movement".<sup>2</sup> Previously Tom Butterfield, M.H.A., had described the W.I.U. of A. as "antagonistic to the Labor movement in this state",<sup>3</sup> implying that the Labor Party was completely synonymous with the Labor movement. The timid record of the Labor Party in office disillusioned many of its left-wing supporters. Why did these people fail to seek Left alternatives, or at best progress no further than a brief flirtation with Langism? The loyalty of many left-wingers to the Labor Party was so deep-seated

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1. Advertiser, 28 October, 1930, p.9.

2. South Australian Worker, 29 August, 1924, p.5. Note the similarity to H.M. Hyndman's celebrated acceptance of "Tory gold" during the first election contested by candidates of the Social Democratic Party in England, 1885.

3. Parliamentary Debates, 1920, Vol. I, p. 316.

that secession would seem tantamount to treachery. It was virtually impossible for a third party to intrude into the two-party system unless the reformist Labor Party committed serious mistakes and lost mass support. Such a situation had been recognized by the Socialist Party in 1910 when a correspondent observed that "the Labor Party and ... other matters are in our way and it will be necessary to get them removed before we can progress much further".<sup>1</sup> Large and appreciative Botanic Park audiences were never reflected in electoral support.

Although numerically small, militant groups made important contributions to the Labor movement. In contrast to the parochial attitude of the Labor Party they laid stress on international working-class activity, e.g. the Hands Off China campaign in the late 1920's; support for the release of Sacco and Vanzetti; criticism of imperialism, especially in India; the Spanish Civil War and the threat of fascism. Through ceaseless activity, the thinking of left-wing members of the Labor Party was profoundly influenced. Militants consistently opposed the White Australia Policy, officially supported by the Labor Party. The I.W.W. aimed to build an organization "big enough to take the black man and the white man; big enough to take in all nationalities - an organization that will be strong enough

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1. Socialist, 25 February, 1910, p.1.

to obliterate state boundaries, obliterate national boundaries and become the great industrial force of the working classes of the world".<sup>1</sup> After discussing the revised constitution of the A.W.U., a meeting of the W.I.U. of A. on 14 March, 1921, passed the following resolution: "That as it is a fundamental principle of industrial unionists that all wage earners should be admitted irrespective of creed or colour this branch of the O.B.U. repudiates any constitution that does not give effect to the same".<sup>2</sup>

Disregarding the erratic policy of the Comintern and internal developments within the Soviet Union, the Communists fought strenuously in the interests of the unemployed in resisting dismissals, wage-cuts and evictions. Militants had to contend with discrimination, both by employers and by trade unions, personal hardship, the constant attention of the police, and the intermittent attention of patriot-toughs. They secured the right - although the concessions could never be assumed permanent - to sell literature and to speak in the Botanic Park and the streets simply by defying regulations and demonstrating their willingness to be imprisoned so as to achieve their aims.

Alongside the more worthy attributes must be set the

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1. H. Heaton, Modern Economic History, Adelaide 1917-18, Lecture 33, p. 8.

2. Australian Communist, 25 March, 1921, p. 5.

deficiencies of the militants. They often preferred to abuse each other rather than cooperate. The vices of sectarianism manifested themselves when Leslie Tozer was expelled from the I.W.W. in 1928 and a full physical description of him was forwarded to all branches so that he would be prevented from rejoining if he moved interstate. "The I.W.W. deals drastically with defaulters in its own ranks".<sup>1</sup> Cullen was suspected of Trotskyite sympathies because he had carried on correspondence with Jack Kavanagh who was expelled from the C.P. as a Trotskyite. Garland had to indulge in self-criticism for deviating from the party line at a T.L.C. meeting when he successfully proposed an amendment regarding the eviction of unemployed people. Subsequently Garland apologized for his "error of judgement" and accepted "the correct approach to the subject".<sup>2</sup> Moreover a criminal element had infiltrated the C.P. during the early 1930's and antagonised the more sensitive supporters. Earlier, Gordon Childe had written of the I.W.W.: "it must not be thought for an instant that the members ... were even largely recruited from loafers, cowards or criminals. They displayed energy and unflinching courage. Members were entirely careless of their personal safety".<sup>3</sup>

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1. Direct Action, 20 October, 1928, p. 1.

2. Workers' Weekly, 12 May, 1933, p. 2.

3. V. G. Childe, op. cit. p. 153.

The revolutionary socialists had their deficiencies but many of the causes for which they fought were just. The worthy traditions of the militant movement are strong enough to outweigh the unworthy without undue distortion.

APPENDIX A.

Adelaide.

27 - 1 - 21

W. P. Earsman,  
General Secretary,  
C.P.A.

Fellow Worker,

At a meeting of persons interested in Communist propaganda held last night it was decided to form a Communist Party here in Adelaide and to apply to your executive for affiliation with your party. The matter has been discussed at two meetings here and there were between twenty and thirty present at each meeting. I think we shall be able to start off with a membership of about thirty class-conscious members, who have all for some time been attached to rebel movements. If your executive accepts us as a branch of your party, you might send along fifty application forms and fifty rules and constitutions for a start. Your rules and constitution were read at our meeting last night and seemed to meet with the approval of those present. Fellow Worker Wilkinson has already been in communication with you on this matter. But no officials have yet been appointed, and until a meeting can be held and officials appointed I am acting as secretary pro tem. I think we shall be able to get a strong Communist Party going here. We have plenty of supporters; but just now we are a bit short of effective speakers.

Yours for a Communist Revolution,

H. Christopherson,

Unity Hall,  
Bray Street,  
Adelaide, S.A.

APPENDIX B.

Adelaide.

7-5-23.

General Secretary,  
C.P. of A.,  
Sydney, N.S.W.

Dear Comrade,

I regret to say that in spite of my efforts to keep the branch of the party going here, I have found it impossible to get a sufficient number to take an interest in it. The branch here has really not existed since January. But I have kept the matter of its dissolution in abeyance, thinking that someone who had more time to take on active propaganda and organizing would come along and make an offer to revive it. I especially awaited the return of one of our former comrades. But I have found that there is no one here at present prepared to organize the branch. I and a couple of members who then remained met some time ago and we decided to dissolve the branch. I have wound up the branch accordingly and at present there are no members here. I am sending you the balance of the party funds which I had on hand at the time the branch was dissolved, 2/8.

Yours truly,

H. Christopherson.

2 Leigh Chambers,  
Leigh Street,  
Adelaide.  
S.A.



APPENDIX C.

C.P. SECRETARIES, 1929-36. (In chronological order.)

Arthur Stainthorpe

Gilbert Roper

Tony McGillick

J. H. Ferguson

W. R. O'Reilly

E. O'Neill

A. O'Neill,

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Information recorded below was obtained from a number of sources including the individuals concerned, friends and relatives, and newspaper reports.

BROWN, Leslie Thomas. Born 1908. Communist candidate in Hindmarsh Municipal elections, 1932: in charge of C.P. unit at Brompton Gas Works. Active in U.W.M., eventually becoming State organizer.

CALLAGHAN, Michael. Born in Ireland where his father was a school-teacher. Educated for the priesthood at Rockville College, Ireland. Joined I.W.W., Adelaide, in 1928. A prolific reader he represented the typical Bohemian type of I.W.W. philosopher. Moved to Melbourne in early 1930's and spoke for S.L.P. on the Yarra bank.

CATHCART, William Steele. Born in South Australia. Insurance agent, with a tendency to preach Marxism to his clients rather than sell insurance. Returned to Adelaide from Perth in 1928 where he had been prominent in C.P. for a few years. During the late 1920's his sales of the Workers' Weekly were among the highest in Australia.

CHRISTOPHERSON, Hans. Born in Denmark and originally a house-painter. Although lacking private means he worked himself through Sydney University graduating B.A. in 1914 and B.Ec. in 1916. Came to Adelaide in 1917 and became South Australian correspondent of Truth. Secretary, Adelaide branch of C.P., 1921-23. In the mid-1920's he returned to Europe to allow his wife to continue singing lessons.

CLARK, Harry. Appointed organizer of U.L.U. in 1910. After the Great War became secretary of the B.L.F. Left for Sydney in mid-1920's.

CLARK-NIKOLA, Harry John. Ps.D., L.L.C. Born at Norwood, S.A. Herbalist and naturopath; proprietor of the Institute of Nature Cure, Mile End. Educated at Christian Brothers' College, Adelaide, and at a naturopathic training institution in Chicago, U.S.A., where he obtained the degree of Doctor of Psychology. Editor of Nature Cure and Medical Freedom. Onetime President of the Thebarton Electoral Committee of the A.L.P. His wife, Mrs. Elkah Clark-Nikola, was born at Lotz, Poland, and also was an enthusiastic socialist. Both were leading spiritualists. He was accidentally killed on 27 February, 1926, aged 50.

COOK, Horace Stanley. Born 1894. Luggage porter on wharves at Outer Harbour. Served in the Great War and awarded D.C.M. Secretary of the Port Adelaide Unemployed in the early 1930's, and a member of the C.P. Later moved to Sydney.

COWHAM, Percival Tinsley. Born in South Australia, 1887. Builder's laborer. Joined I.W.W., Adelaide, in 1914. Delegate to T.L.C., initially for Government Workers' Union and later for B.L.F. Joined S.L.P. after liquidation of I.W.W., 1931, and became Treasurer; later resigned.

CULLEN, James. Born at North Adelaide, 30 September, 1876. His father was a printer and a Catholic. Lorry driver. Served on the committee of the Carters and Drivers' Union for many years. Contested (Communist) 1930 State election. Died 5 February, 1951.

DENFORD, Henry Leigh Dustin. Born at Kent Town, S.A., 4 May, 1887. After leaving S.A. became Secretary of the Sydney I.W.W., but resigned and was appointed secretary of the A.S.P. in Sydney. At the Unity Conference of the C.P. in 1922 he was appointed General Secretary and remained as such until 1924; also editor of Workers' Weekly. Left the C.P. with Jock Garden in the mid-1920's. Became secretary of the Ironworkers Federation of N.S.W. and later industrial advocate; also member of both the N.S.W. Milk Board and the central executive of A.L.P. in N.S.W. Expelled from A.L.P. in October 1955 for actively supporting Communist candidates in the Ironworkers' Ballot.

DICKINSON, Edward Alexander. Born at Grimsby, England on 21 April, 1903. His father was a fish merchant. Left England in 1907 upon death of father. Educated at Coburg State primary school. Varied occupations from farm laborer and lift attendant to factory hand and salesman. Delegate to Sydney T.L.C., 1926-27. Returning to England became one of founders of International Freedom League, formed to fight Fascism and the followers of Sir Oswald Mosley. Joined International Brigade in November, 1936, and became second in command of the Number 2 Company, British Battalion. Taken prisoner by Fascists at Jarama, 13 February, 1937. Shouting to his captors: "If I had 40,000 Australian bushmen, we'd drive you ---- murderers into the Mediterranean", he was summarily executed; British newspapers commented upon his bravery. His brother, Rev. J. F. Dickinson is the Congregational minister at Victor Harbour, S.A.

EVERT, Nikolai. Born in Russia, 50 miles S.W. of Leningrad. Gassed during the Great War. Member of S.L.P. Died 29 May, 1927. *Obituary notices; Argus 31-5-1927, p. 19 and Advertiser 31-5-1927, p. 13.*

FANNING, Patrick. Born in Ireland, 1892. Rigger on wharves at Port Adelaide. First secretary, Port Adelaide branch of C.P. Assistant secretary, Port Adelaide branch of U.W.M. Left C.P., 1931.

FERGUSON, James Hartley. Born at Gawler, S.A., 1891. Originally a miner. During the Great War rose to the rank of Lieutenant and was awarded the M.M. Obtained employment in railways until the depression. Contested (Communist), Adelaide by-election, 1931.

FINGER, Alan Henry, M.B., B.S. Born 1909. His father was a small farmer. A graduate of Melbourne University where he took a leading part in the Labor Club (President). Joined C.P. in 1933 as an undergraduate. Superintendent of the Infectious Diseases Hospital, Northfield, 1936-47. Member of the S.A. State Committee since 1937; former President of the same body. Contested (Communist) Federal elections of 1943, 1946, 1951, 1954, 1955 and the State elections of 1944, 1947, 1950, 1953 and 1956.

FLANNAGAN, J. H. (JOE). Served in the Great War. Resigned from A.L.P. and joined C.P., 1932. Elected President of Tramways' Union in 1947 having been union delegate to T.L.C. since 1935; also represented his union at A.C.T.U. congresses. Died December, 1950, aged 54.

FOX, Samuel Bayly. Born in England. Spent some years as a seaman in the U.S.A., where he joined the I.W.W. Served in the Great War. Arrived at Adelaide in the early 1920's and became a timber stacker. Union delegate to T.L.C. Moved to Sydney, February, 1928. Joined C.P., 1932, but expelled shortly afterwards as a Trotskyite.

FRANCIS, William. Born in Adelaide. Fitter. Joined I.W.W. 1928 and became Literature Secretary. In Sydney 1929-30 after which he drifted out of politics.

GAPPA, Miss Caroline. Secretary of F.O.S.U. in mid and late 1930's. Member of C.P. Later married Mr. Ian Keith, a leading Communist who played an active role in the R.S.L. Mr. Keith died at the Repatriation Hospital in 1949.

GARLAND, Thomas. Born in Glasgow of Catholic parentage. Prior to emigrating to Australia he was a member of British Labour Party. Member of Council of Amalgamated Society of Engineers and A.L.P. in late 1920's. Secretary, Gasworkers' Union, 1937-46. Secretary, Adelaide T.L.C., 1946-49; also member of Federal executive of A.C.T.U. President, T.L.C., 1936, 1944 and 1945. Fined £50 on 21 October, 1940, for criticising war effort and comparing Menzies to Petain. Communist candidate 1933 State election. Independent Socialist candidate, 1940, Federal election and 1941 State election (both during period of C.P. illegality). Left C.P. in October, 1945, over a question of "tactics", but never ceased to be a militant. Died 14 February, 1952, aged 58. The Advertiser referred to him as "one of the most prominent trade union leaders in South Australia for nearly two decades".

GILES, Hugh. Born in Yass district of N.S.W., 1863. Shearer until 1886 when he moved to Broken Hill; miner for 33 years. Foundation member of Amalgamated Miners' Association, formed at Broken Hill in 1889. Died in Adelaide, 2 September, 1929.  
*See obituary: Advertiser, 4-9-1929, p.4*

GORMLIE, William Martin. Born in Scotland. Bricklayer. Frequently wrote letters to press expounding Marxism under pseudonym of 'J. Cameron Porter'. Died 9 January, 1936, aged 80.

HAMPSHIRE, William Henry Patrick. Born at Tiparra, South Australia, 20 March, 1890. Painter. Left C.P., 1932. Joined A.L.P. and unsuccessfully contested several Labour plebiscites for both State and Federal seats. Appointed Assistant Secretary, Vehicle Builders' Union, 28 January, 1948. Killed in road accident, 30 July, 1948.

HASSE, Cyril Trevor. Born at Torrensville, S.A., 1894. Commercial traveller. Member of A.L.P. until W.I.U. of A. formed; rejoined A.L.P. after collapse of latter body and unsuccessfully contested many seats at State elections.

HIBBENS, Sydney G. Joined the Amalgamated Miners' Association at age of 16 while working in the Australian Alps. Served in Great War. President of S.A. Branch of B.L.F. for many years.

HILLS, John Francis, M.A. (London). Schoolteacher, Quaker, and socialist. After the Great War he moved to Victoria and in 1940 was Vice-President of the Australian Council for Civil Liberties. Now deceased.

HOLLAND, Frederick Austin. Son of Harry Holland, Leader of Labor Opposition in New Zealand Parliament. Printer. Secretary of the No Conscription Fellowship in Victoria during the Great War. Published Direct Action, 1928-30. Left-wing delegate to Labor-Party Council.

JAMES, George. Secretary of F.O.S.U., Adelaide, in early 1930's. Formerly a minister. Moved to Melbourne to manage a photographic concern and later to Sydney where today he is an actor on stage, radio and screen under the name of George Simpson-Little. Played a leading role in film "Jedda" and is prominent in Actors' Equity, Sydney.

KENT, Robert. Born Basle, Switzerland. Builders' Laborer.

KIWETT, William. Born Tiflis, Georgia in Russia. Member of C.P. and active in U.W.M. Later went to Sydney.

LANDS, Percival S. Served in the Great War. A former lay-preacher. Joined I.W.W. in 1928 and upon its liquidation in 1931, transferred to S.L.P.

LAWLER, Leslie. Succeeded George James as Secretary of F.O.S.U. City of Adelaide rat-catcher. Member of C.P.

LYNCH, Harry F. Born at Borken Hill, 1887. Shoe repairer. Became secretary and organizer of S.L.P. in 1934 at a salary of £1 per week.

McCOY, Michael Oliver. Born at Port Augusta, S.A., 29 May, 1901. Left wing member of A.L.P. and delegate to Council until 1930 when he joined C.P. Tramdriver. Left C.P. in mid-1930's and became a racehorse trainer and later an hotel licensee.

McGILLICK, Thomas ("Tony") Claudius Steele. Born at Terowie, S.A., 17 November, 1901, of Catholic parentage. Woolclasser. Prominent in athletic circles, both as a runner and secretary of the Underdale Athletic Club. Contested (Communist) State elections of 1930 and 1933 and Federal election, 1934. He led the last pre-war F.O.S.U. delegation to the U.S.S.R. in 1938. Left C.P., 1941. In recent years a full-time organizer for 'People's Union', an extreme Right-wing organization.

McNEILL, James. Born at Redfern, Sydney, 8 January, 1900. His father was a Catholic Irishman. After 1917 associated with onetime I.W.W. members. Joined the revived I.W.W., Sydney, July, 1927. Worked as a wire-worker in Adelaide. Returned to Sydney from Adelaide in early 1929; active in Sydney I.W.W. for a few months but joined C.P. in mid-1930. For a short time served on No. 1 District Committee of C.P. Left for Spain in October, 1937, and joined International Brigade.

MADGWICK, George. Born at Swindon, England, and active in the Social Democratic Federation for many years. Emigrated to N.Z. in 1900; later moved to Victoria and S.A. Secretary, S.P. 1909-11. Died 17 April, 1911.

MARKS, Solomon. Born in London. Cabinet-maker. An opponent of conscription, 1916-17. A self-educated theoretician who eschewed active propaganda. He was the only Jew prominently identified with the militant wing of the Labor movement during the period covered. Died 30 December, 1957, aged 71.

MELLOW, Clifford. Supporter of Wilson faction of S.L.P. Afterwards became secretary of the Federated Union of Locomotive Enginemen. Brother of Harry F. Lynch.

MITCHELL, Edward George. Born at Rosewater, S.A., 21 November, 1901. Secretary, Council of Action, Port Adelaide strike during September, 1930. Drafted to N.S.W. by the C.P. along with fellow Communist waterside workers, Gordon Brown, Peter McCormack and Ted McLean as part of a shock-troops brigade designed to increase Communist strength on the waterfront.

MOOD, Walter. Born 1885. Secretary of the Meat Industry Employees' Union in the 1920's. An unattached Marxist, who opposed political action. He had heard Eugene Debs speaking in Chicago during the great railway strike of 1916.

MORCOM, William ("Pop") A. Born in England. Wireless operator on a ship before he settled in South Australia. Political organizer and assistant Secretary of C.P. in Adelaide during early 1930's. Transferred to Melbourne and later Sydney where he became a member of the N.S.W. State Committee of the C.P. and N.S.W. Treasurer. Joined the International Brigade and was killed at Gandisa, Spain, on 1 August, 1938.

MOYLE, Edward. Born in England, 1876. Onetime secretary of the St. Helen's, Lancashire, branch of I.L.P. Arrived in S.A., 1910. Carpenter. Executive member of Carpenters' Union (became President) and Union delegate to T.L.C. Contested (Communist) 1934 Federal election.

NEWMAN, Jack. Born in Australia and served with the Canadian Artillery during the Great War. Returned to Australia and became a seaman at Port Adelaide. With his close friend, Ron Hurd, (now secretary of Seaman's Union in W.A.) he went to Spain in December, 1937, and joined the International Brigade. Killed at Jarama, 26 February, 1937.

O'NEILL, Arthur. Born in Victoria, 18 September, 1901. Joined C.P., 1933. Secretary, Central Council of Unemployed, 1933-34. Secretary, State Committee of C.P., 1935-40.

O'NEILL, Edward. Born in Victoria, 1894. His father was a wharf laborer. Active anti-conscriptionist, 1916-17. Joined C.P. 1931. Secretary of Anti-Eviction Committee during the depression years. Brother of Arthur O'Neill.

O'REILLY, Edward George. Born at Dimboola, Victoria. Miner at Broken Hill for many years. Moved to Adelaide and became a builder's laborer. As late as 1950 he was chairing C.P. meetings in the Botanic Park. Died 4 June, 1951, aged 67.

O'REILLY, William Richard. Originally a Broken Hill miner. Bricklayer in Adelaide. For a short time served as secretary of State committee of C.P. Brother of Ted O'Reilly.

REEVE, Charles Thomas. Born in London, 20 November, 1876. Prior to his imprisonment in 1916 he had been the secretary of I.W.W. locals in Auckland, N.Z. and Sydney. While in Adelaide worked as bricklayer (a trade he learned in gaol). After leaving Adelaide he became a Bricklayers' Union delegate to Sydney T.L.C. and was elected to T.L.C. Disputes Committee; arrested with other members of Disputes Committee during the important Timbersorkers' Strike of October, 1928, but was later acquitted. Opened a radical bookshop in Sydney, 1929. Gave up speaking in Sydney Domain in 1932 resulting in demise of I.W.W. Took prominent part in Workers' Art Club, forerunner of the New Theatre, and regularly acted in anti-Fascist plays. After 1932 his violent opposition to Communism abated considerably although he never became a member of the C.P. Died in Sydney, 30 May, 1942; the funeral oration was delivered by veteran Communist Norman Jeffery.

REIMANN, Herbert. Born at Danzig, Germany, 1905. Entered Australia in 1928 by deserting from a German ship, and immediately joined C.P. Deported to Danzig, May, 1932.

RILEY, Frederick John. Born at Stirling East, S.A., 18 May, 1886. His father, Fred Riley Snr., was a scaffolding inspector who became President of T.L.C., President of the Labor Party, President of Eight-Hours Committee and Secretary of the B.L.F. Educated at Hindmarsh State primary school. Blacksmith striker, later miner. Secretary of the Manufacturing Grocers' Union, Victoria, since 1923. President, Melbourne Trades Hall Council, 1931. Victorian delegate to Hobart conference of the ~~Manufacturing Grocers' Union~~ of the A.L.P. in 1955; subsequently joined the Democratic Labor Party.



ROPER, Gilbert Giles. Born at Mt. Gambier, 17 March, 1905. Great grandson of William Giles, an early Mayor of Adelaide. Compositor on staff of Advertiser. Moved to Victoria in late 1932, later to Sydney where he worked at C.P. Printing Press. Married Edna Lorence, formerly a leading member of Port Adelaide Y.C.L., whose father, Martin Lorence, was a prominent Communist waterside worker. Both were expelled from C.P. as Trotskyites and formed a section of the Fourth International in Sydney; subsequently joined A.L.P. Roper has been a delegate to Sydney T.L.C. for many years while his wife is today a member of the N.S.W. Hospital Board and a Labor member of the Legislative Council.

RULE, Robert. Born in Adelaide of Syrian descent. While a seaman, joined I.W.W. on coast of U.S.A. Joined Adelaide I.W.W. in 1928.

SAWTELL, Michael. His father was a leading Adelaide optician. Educated at St. Peter's College, Adelaide. Became secretary of the Boulder City I.W.W. local in 1915; later imprisoned in Perth. Sentenced to six months' imprisonment at Broken Hill in 1917 under the Unlawful Associations Act. Left Adelaide in mid-1920's and moved to Sydney and today manages a health-food centre.

SCOLLAN, Edward. Born Scotland. Aged 17 at beginning of the Great War; he enlisted and was badly wounded. Claiming that it was an "imperialist war", he deserted and escaped to the U.S.A., whence he came to Australia. Joined the revived I.W.W.

SKITCH, Cecil Ernest Lee. Born 6 March, 1894. His father was a schoolmaster. Served in Great War for three years. Skitch held various occupations, including that of correspondence schoolteacher. Awarded a W.E.A. Scholarship at the University of Adelaide in 1927, he gained a Diploma in Economics and Political Science in 1929. Author of "Women's Destiny and Birth Control", published in Adelaide, 1928. Contested 1924 State election as an Independent Labor candidate. Joined Labor Party 1927, and contested 1931 Federal and subsequent elections in the Labor interest. His wife, Mrs. Marie Elizabeth Skitch, became President of the Housewives Association.

STAINTHORPE, Arthur. Born in England. Member of Wilson section of S.L.P. First secretary of revived C.P., Adelaide 1929. Later joined the Royal Australian Navy.

STEWART, Joseph. Born at Glasgow, 1909. Member of C.P., but drifted out of political arena in mid-1930's.

SYMON, Miss Mary. Daughter of Hon. Sir Josiah Symon, K.C.M.G., K.C., a distinguished conservative parliamentarian. Proprietor of a progressive kindergarten at Mitcham. Prominent in F.O.S.U. in 1930's. A distant relative, Eric D. Symon, became Secretary of the Left Book Club in the late 1930's; subsequently established the first left-wing Bookshop in Adelaide - the Anvil Bookshop in Pirie Street - and later managed the People's Bookshop, Hindley Street when it opened in 1943. Mr. Symon died on 11 July, 1948.

WALLACE, Arthur Knight. Born at Yack, S.A., where his father was storekeeper. Married leading Broken Hill socialist, Miss Elizabeth Ahern, in 1908. M.L.A. (Albert Park, Victoria), 1919-27 and 1929-32. Labor member of the South Melbourne City Council 1928-37 (Mayor 1933-34). Died in Melbourne, 21 August, 1952 aged 71.

WALLIS, Sylvester ("Sid") David. Born in South Australia, 2 January, 1900. Served in the Great War as a member of A.I.F. Carpenter in S.A. Railways; Union delegate to T.L.C. Dismissed because of C.P. membership. Served in R.A.A.F. in Second World War.

WALTERS, Charles E. Born in Tasmania. Prominent in Movement Against War and Fascism in Adelaide. Unable to find work in the city, he went to Myponga as a rabbit trapper saving sufficient money to reach the U.S.S.R. However, on the voyage to England he heard of the Spanish Civil War and enlisted in the International Brigade.

WILKINSON, Frederick W. His father was a chemist. He married daughter of Mrs. Elkah Clark-Nikola by a former marriage. Left-wing delegate to Labor Party Council in 1920's. Insurance inspector.

WILLIAMS, Jack. Son of Mrs. Elkah Clark-Nikola by a former marriage. Left-wing delegate to Labor Party Council in 1920's. Civil Servant.

WILSON, Alfred William. Born at Sandford, Victoria, 1878. His father was a school-teacher. Studied for the Church of England ministry but was never ordained; while a young man engaged in lay-preaching in mining towns where he worked. Before the Great War visited the U.S.A. and met Jack London and joined I.W.W. A waterside worker while in S.A. Wrote a pamphlet, "Robbery Under Arms", published by Labour Press, Keswick, S.A. As a S.L.P. candidate he contested 1930 State election and Adelaide by-election, 1931. Returned to Melbourne, 1933. Died at Benalla, Victoria, 1937.

WOODING, Bert. Born 1892. Early member of revived I.W.W., Adelaide. Farmer at Paruna, later became a motor mechanic. Secretary of I.W.W. branch, Paruna, in late 1920's. Subsequently took up farming in W.A.

ZWOLSMAN, John Francis. Born at Amsterdam, Holland, in June, 1891. Became a Sgt. Major in the Great War and was awarded M.M. for bravery near Jeancourt, 18 September, 1918. Boxed under the title of "Jack English"; also a prominent life-saver and a champion breast-stroke swimmer. Contested (Communist) 1931 Federal election and 1933 State election. Settled in Sydney, 1933. Served as Sgt. Major in Second World War and became prominent in the R.S.L. from which body he was expelled on 10 January, 1950, on the grounds of C.P. membership.

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IV. NEWSPAPERS

- Australian Communist (C.P. weekly, Sydney, 1920-21).  
Communist, (C.P. weekly, Sydney, 1921-23).  
Communist Review, (C.P. monthly, Sydney, 1934-40, 1941 -).  
Direct Action, (I.W.W. weekly, Sydney, 1914-17).  
Direct Action, (Industrial Union Propaganda League monthly, Sydney, 1921-22).  
Direct Action, (I.W.W. fortnightly, Adelaide, 1928-30).  
Industrial Solidarity, (I.W.W. monthly, Adelaide, 1920).  
International Communist, (weekly, Sydney, 1921-22).  
International Socialist, (A.S.P. weekly, Sydney, 1910-20).  
International Socialist Review (S.F.A. weekly, Sydney, 1907-10).  
O.B.U. Herald, (W.I.I.U. monthly, Melbourne, 1918-25).  
People, (S.L.P. weekly, Sydney, 1897-1919).  
Red Leader, (Minority Movement weekly, Sydney, 1931-35).  
Revolutionary Socialist, (S.L.P. weekly, later monthly and bi-monthly, Sydney, 1919-30).  
Social Democrat, (Social Democratic League of N.S.W., Sydney, 1917-18).  
Socialist, (weekly, Melbourne, 1906-23).  
Solidarity, (Industrial Labor Party fortnightly, Sydney, 1917-18).  
Soviets Today, (F.O.S.U. monthly, Sydney, 1931-40).  
Struggle, (C.P. fortnightly, Adelaide, 1933-34).  
Workers' Weekly, (C.P. weekly, Sydney, 1923-40).

In addition the following South Australian newspapers were consulted:- Advertiser, Daily Herald, Herald, Mail, News, Observer, Register, South Australian Worker, Workers' Weekly Herald.

V. MISCELLANEOUS

- Australian Labor Party: Council Reports, 1918-36.  
McGillick, T.C., Evidence given before Royal Commission into Communism, Victoria, 1949, pp. 4980-5124, 5197-5257, 5357-5364.



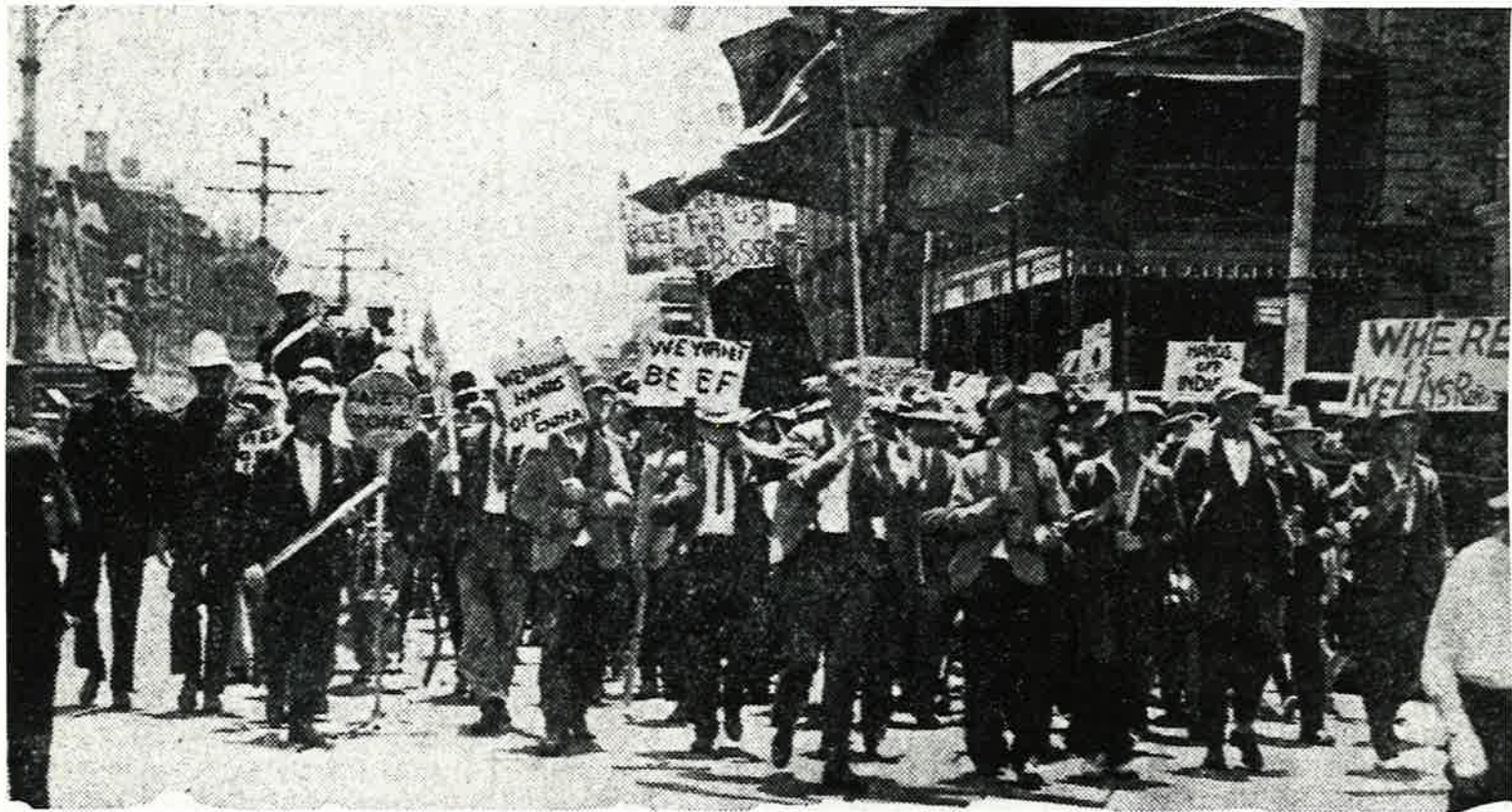
DEMONSTRATORS FLANKED BY TROOPERS MARCHING ALONG KING WILLIAM STREET-

Source: News, 9 January 1931, p.1.



Foot police and mounted troopers attack the vanguard of unemployed demonstrators outside the Treasury Building, 'Beef Riot', January 1931.

Source: Register News Pictorial, 10 January 1931, pp. 14-15.



Vanguard of unemployed demonstrators marching up King William St., Adelaide, prior to the celebrated 'Beef Riot', January 1931.

Source : Advertiser, 10 January 1931, p. 16.

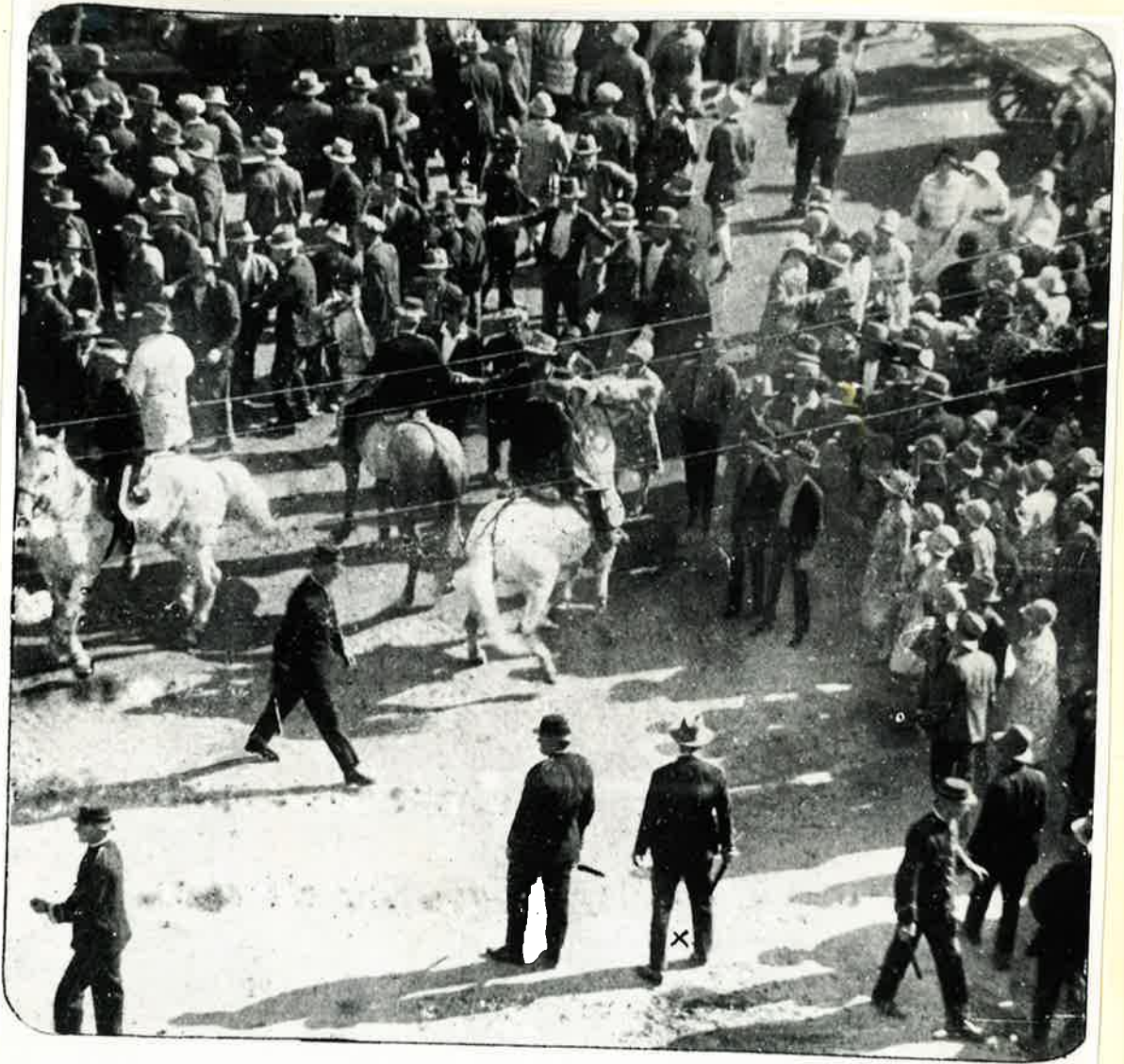


IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ATTEMPT TO ENTER THE TREASURY BUILDING—Policemen, still with drawn batons, dispersing the demonstrators. Lying on the road and in the gutter are the weapons which the rioters used against the police. Some of the crowd are assisting comrades to their feet, while others are moving away. On the extreme right the man without a hat is bleeding from wounds.

'BEEF RIOT', JANUARY 1931.

Source: News, 9 January 1931, p. 1.





MOUNTED POLICE CHARGING PORT ADELAIDE RIOTERS: An exclusive picture by a staff photographer of The Register of mounted troopers pushing back the unruly mob of unionists near the corner of Commercial road and North parade, Port Adelaide. In the foreground Brig-Gen Leane, Commissioner of Police (indicated by x) is seen with his baton drawn. Three of his officers also have their batons ready for service.

Source : Register News-Pictorial, 2 February 1929.



JIM CULLEN

Source: Advertiser, 21 March 1930, p. 22.



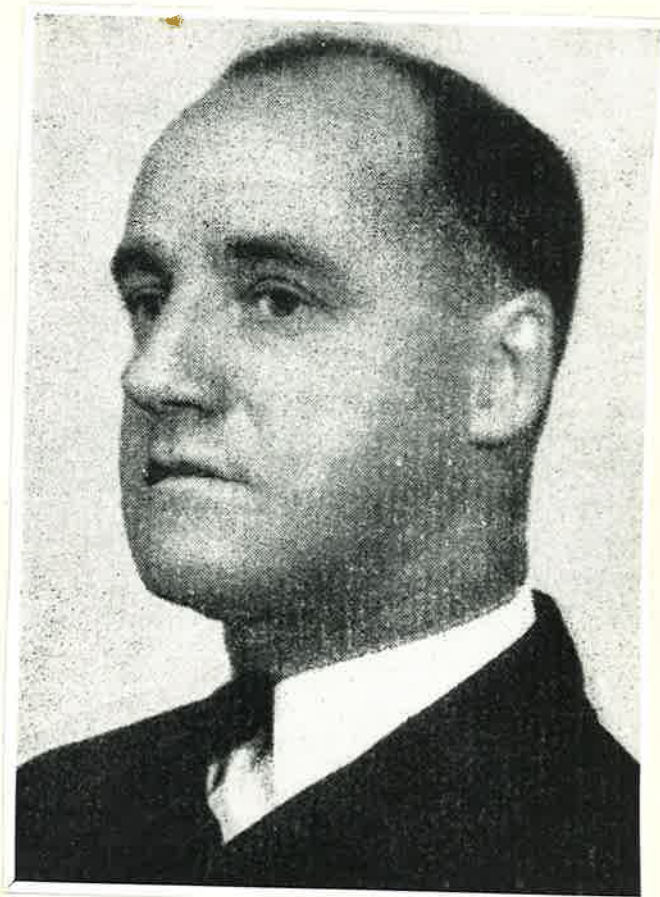
ALF WILSON

Source: Advertiser, 25 March 1930, p. 16



DR. HARRY CLARK-NIKOLA.

Source : Daily Herald, 9 November 1920, p. 1



TONY MCGILLICK.

# STRUGGLE

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE NO. 5 DISTRICT OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

No. 1

ADELAIDE, TUESDAY NOVEMBER 7th, 1933.

ONE PENNY

## GREETINGS TO THE PAPER CROWDED OUT

As the material for the paper is sent to the press for the first issue we are reluctantly compelled to offer our apologies to all those organisations that have sent words of greeting and welcome upon the advent into the fighting arena of the party paper "Struggle."

Both from the Party organs and from other sources the need for this South Australian publication is expressed in no uncertain manner.

It is indeed appropriate, as one greeting remarks, "That the first issue synchronises with the anniversary of the glorious 7th of November, that historic day when the workers in a sixth of the world's surface inflicted such a crushing defeat to the brutal forces of Imperialism," whilst another says "Hail, 'Struggle,' another mighty weapon in the defence of the Soviet Union and one that can be relied upon to fling back the Anti-Soviet lies into the teeth of the liars that use them." The words of welcome, the good wishes, and the unstated support that is offered is very helpful.

It was intended to show appreciation of the greetings received by presenting them in the original in this portion of the first issue, but already there is a demand upon available space and so other material is appearing where the Greetings were to have been displayed.

### EVICTIIONS INCREASING.

#### COURT CHARGES DEVELOPING OUT OF THEM.

#### A PROMINENT MEMBER OF THE PARTY EVICTED FOR THE FOURTH TIME.

That the present Government is intent on carrying a stage further the inhuman practice of evicting the unemployed is already apparent at the present time. Following on the recent removal of the furniture from a home in Norwood where the mother with her six children, turned on to the street, was forced eventually to find a shelter in a prison cell for herself and family, another eviction has taken place. This is succeeded by the throwing into the street the belongings of J. H. Ferguson, who, with his wife and three children, aged 12, 9, and 7 years respectively were residing in Russell Street, City. This has been carried out at the instigation of the owner, Maalin, of Wilmington, and F. W. Hullock, the agent. For the fourth time in a little over two years he has been compelled to battle with the fiends who stoop to such low down work as forcibly ejecting families from their homes. It is little wonder that the children are now terror-stricken at the sight of a policeman, who is supposed to be their protector, and that the mother is breaking up under the heavy strain of such a brutal experience.

On May 31st, 1931, he was evicted from a house in New Mile End, and his furniture was on the street for 23 days in the heaviest of rains, before, under a subterfuge, another house could be secured. In addition to the eviction, as a public speaker fighting the class against class battle of the workers he was sentenced to seven days' imprisonment for a remark taken from a speech in the Botanic Park. In June of this year he was again deprived of his home, but after 24 hours he put his furniture back in the same house, but again another fourteen days was his lot, this time for his remarks regarding the police assisting in the eviction. August 24th saw another raid upon his property without any warning, his children, coming from school, being the first to be acquainted of what was happening. On this occasion the house was placed under constant guard by a police patrol, and two mock tenants taken from the degenerate under-world, were paid to live on the premises. After eleven days on the street with no other house in view, he was forced off the streets with thirty-six police in attendance. Let it be said of the carrier engaged that he refused to touch the furniture and stood firm to his decision until he got the sanction of Comrade Ferguson that the goods might be taken away.

Receiving a fortnight's rent from the Government another house was found. When four days' rent was owing a week's notice to quit was received and a fortnight's back rent, 30/-, brought the twelve days' notice of eviction. Four days after this the eviction took place and the furniture up to the present, is spread out in front of the whole row of houses, fully exposed to the weather.

Had his wife not have had occasion to go to the house, both of them at the time being engaged, along with others, in the voluntary labor of preparing and supplying soup to the children at one of the schools by the Workers' International Relief, nothing would have been known until the job had been completed. During the whole of the eleven days of the third occasion, Comrade Ferguson was compelled to sleep with his furniture, on the street.

(Continued on page four)

## PROGRESS IN THE SOVIET UNION.

### On The Slogan Of The Five Year Plan In Four Years.

A bold task? A hard road? But our Party is called the Leninist Party because it has no right to fear difficulties. Moreover, the conviction of the Party of the feasibility of the Five-Year Plan and its faith in the forces of the working class were so strong, that it found it possible to set the task of

creating this magnificent work not in five years, as the Five-Year Plan demanded, but in four years, or more exactly speaking, in four years and three months if we add the special quarter.

On this basis there arose the famous slogan: "Five-Year Plan in four years." And what happened? The facts showed that the Party was right. The facts showed that without this boldness and without belief in the forces of the working class, the Party would have never been able to achieve this success, or when we rightly boast.

What are the results of the Five-Year Plan in four years in the sphere of industry? Have we achieved a victory in this sphere? Yes, indeed. We have not only achieved victories, but also done more than we ourselves expected, than even the most sanguine members of our Party expected. Even our enemies cannot deny this now. They therefore can only admit that this

We had no smelting industry on the basis of the industrialism of our country. Now we possess one.

We had no tractor industry. Now we possess one.

We had no automobile industry. Now we possess one.

We had no considerable modern chemical industry. Now we possess one.

We had no real industry of any importance for the production of agricultural machines. Now we have one.

We had no aircraft-construction industry. Now we have one.

As regards the production of electrical energy, we advanced the last place. Now we have advanced to one of the first positions. With regard to the output of oil products and coal, we occupied the last place. Now we have advanced to one of the first positions.

And all this has resulted in the capitalist elements being finally eradicated from industry for good, and the socialist industry becoming the sole form of industry in the Soviet Union.

Thus one of the most important achievements of the Five-Year Plan in four years consists in the fact that in the Soviet Union we have liquidated unemployment and freed the workers from its terrors.

**WHAT TO READ—**  
**NATIONALISATION OF BANKING,**  
A Critical Analysis of the Policy of the Labor Party.  
Price 3d., Posted 4d.

**MARXISM-LENINISM,**  
A Great Historical Document.  
Price 3d., Posted 4d.

## DECAY IN THE CAPITALIST WORLD. One-Third of the Proletariat Are Unemployed

The International Labor Office of the League of Nations has published a report on the subject "The Length of the Working Day and Unemployment." The report is full of statistics on the position of the unemployed. Naturally, with all this abundance of statistics, it is far from showing reality and does not give the possibility of judging the real extent of unemployment which extends to all capitalist countries. It is all the more significant that even this document arrives at the conclusion that in most capitalist countries at the present time one-quarter and in some cases one-third of the working class are deprived of the possibility of finding work. The report states that it can probably be boldly affirmed that the number of unemployed throughout the world is now at least 30 millions (in reality the figure is much higher, not to speak of the families of the unemployed workers).

According to the figures of the Office, the total amount of lost wages in 20 countries last year was 21 billion dollars. This figure was calculated on the basis of the wages of 24 million unemployed. We can judge how much this figure is reduced below reality by the fact that in the report presented recently by the President of the reactionary American Federation of Labor, Green, to the Congress of the Federation, it was shown that in the U.S.A. alone the workers last year lost 25 billion dollars in wages.

The International Labor Office sees a way out of the situation in the reduction of the working day, and also in the reduction of the number of working days in a week. As we know, under this hypocritical formula is hidden a project to convert fresh millions of workers into semi-unemployed. The authors of the report give an evasive answer to the basic question of how the reduction of the working day and the reduction of the number of working days in a week will affect the wages of the workers.

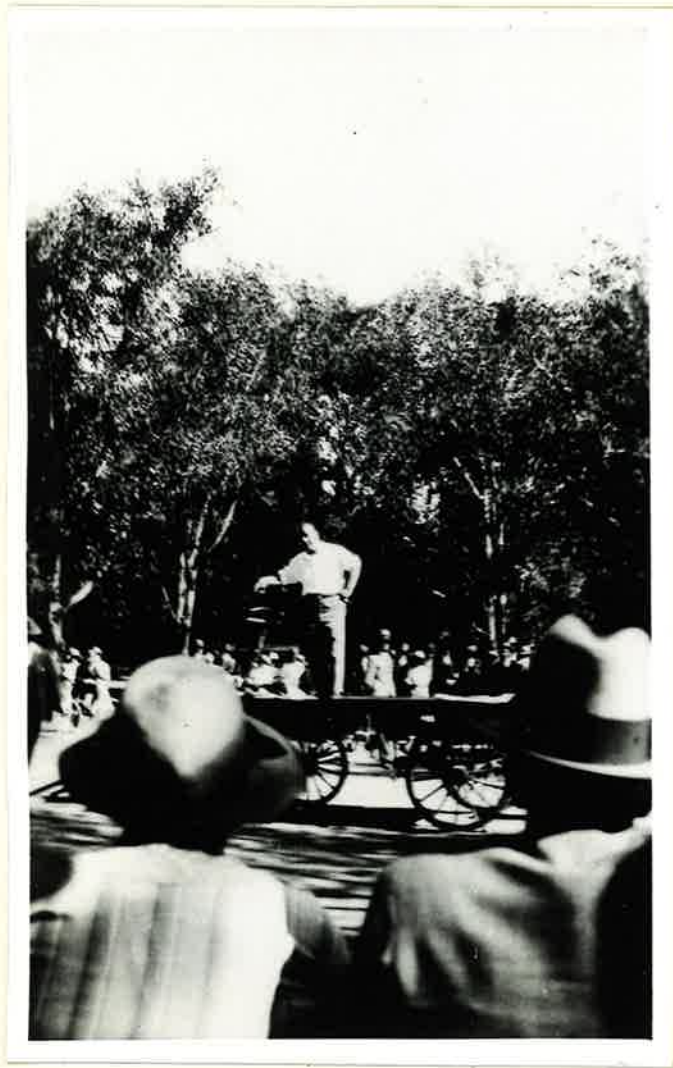
In Geneva, under the aegis of the League of Nations and international reformers, a new international offensive of the bourgeoisie against the working class is being prepared.

JOIN THE COMMUNIST PARTY.



AUSTRALIAN MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE who are returning home in the *Maloja* which berthed at Outer Harbor this afternoon. Back row (from left)—C. Riley, J. McNeil, C. McIlroy, C. Walters (Adelaide). In front are J. Franklin and J. Carter.

Source : Mail, 11 February 1939, p. 2.



The Time: Any Sunday Afternoon.  
The Place: Botanic Park.  
The Speaker: Charles Reeve.



Mick O'Callaghan orating  
at the Yarra Bank, Melbourne  
in the 1930's.



First Row—J. Pope, H. Denford, A. K. Wallace, F. J. Riley.  
Second Row—J. R. Wilson, H. E. Holland, J. E. Greig (chair), R. S. Ross, P. Lamb.

THIRD ANNUAL CONFERENCE, SOCIALIST FEDERATION OF AUSTRALASIA, 1910.

Source: International Socialist, 15 July 1910, p. 4.



HARRY DENFORD.

Source: Workers' Weekly, 8 May 1925, p.1.





MR. AND MRS. A. K. WALLACE.

Source : Socialist, 20 January 1909, p.5.

# FORTY HOURS IN FIVE DAYS!

## Why Not?

---

**Don't work on Saturdays.**

**Shorter hours means a longer job or more mates.**

**Unemployment is the result of long hours and intense over production.**

**When all men work just long enough to produce their own upkeep, there will be no unemployed.**

**Shorter working hours and a longer working life, or longer working hours and a shorter life. Which will suit you best?**

**Overwork and underwork are causes of insanity. If the two were evened out a little, there would be less insanity in the world.**

**Shorter working hours means more workers for the same output.**

**More workers for the same output means less unemployment.**

**Less unemployment means greater security of unemployment.**

**Greater security of employment means a higher standard of comfort.**

**A higher standard of comfort means a higher appreciation of life.**

**A higher appreciation of life is possible by shorter working hours.**

**When you worked 60 hours a week you got sufficient to exist on, when you worked 48 hours you got sufficient to exist on, when you worked 44 hours you got sufficient to exist on, if you work 40 hours you will get the same. The only difference being that you get it in 40 hours instead of 60 hours. Work this out in your spare time.**

**You work hard and get the sack because there is nothing to do ; you work easy and get the sack because you don't work hard. What's a fellow to do?**

**Organise for job control!**

*Poster issued by Builders Laborers' Federation at the beginning of the 40 hour week strike, 1919.*



TED MOYLE

Source : Workers Weekly, 31 August 1934, p.1.

Workers' Industrial Union of Australia

**ONE BIG UNION** £1

19 BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT

BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT  
CLASS—NOT CRAFT

Member \_\_\_\_\_

Financial to **SEPTEMBER 30, 1922**

Issued at \_\_\_\_\_

Issued by \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary: P. T. COWHAM

J. S. GARDEN,

KEEP THIS TICKET

Secretary for Australia



Group of Militants in the Botanic Park, including Hugh McKie (standing), Charles Reeve (sitting, fourth from right), and Jim Bryan (sitting, second from left).



A Group of Militants in the late 1920s.  
Top Row: Perce Cowham, Bert Wall.  
Bottom Row: Jim McNeill, Ted Dickinson, Jack Zwolsman.



TOM GARLAND.

Source: Workers' Weekly, 14 September 1934, p. 2.



Ted Dickinson  
on his wedding-day  
shortly before sailing  
for England.

# WORKERS—ATTENTION!

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The iron heel is upon you, and it will crush you, if you do not organise and throw it off. A handful of men (the Oligarchy of Australia) control everything in this country, viz., Shipping, Mining, Insurance, Banking, need I say, Parliaments (I have gone to the trouble to ascertain the names of the bunch). They control our lives, because we let them. A century ago men could be jailed for attempting to organise their fellow-workers, and now, in 1928, they can suffer the same fate. Watch our Courts of Law. The worker who is so bold as to come out in the face of the forces arrayed against him, must be protected, and it is you and I—the working men—that will have to do it.

A group of working men (who are indignant over several fresh impositions on our class, the Arbitration Amendment Act and other legislation to the detriment of the worker) have formed The Workers' Defence and Release League to operate in the interest of any worker charged with a crime(?) under this savage legislation.

Fellow-worker! be an organiser on your own account. Talk with your mates about it.

Talk about the Arbitration Court Amendment Act.

Talk about the good old sliding scale.

Talk about the dividends you have known big concerns to pay (to the boss).

Talk about the present depression—One year and nine months now! It has been a lean and hungry time for the workers and their families. Talk about it!

Is the iron heel down on you?

Fellow-working-men! protect the men who try to protect your working-class interests.

Be a helper, and a subscriber to the fund for the defence of working class fighters.

Don't let it be one-sided!

Get in touch with "The Workers' Defence and Release League," and do YOUR bit for YOUR class!

This League has at present in hand the case of E. A. (Ted) Dickinson, charged with Riot and Sedition.

This case comes on about November 21st, or a little later. Funds are urgently needed at once.

Get into touch with—

Secretary, WORKERS' DEFENCE AND RELEASE COMMITTEE,

C/o Builders' Laborers' Union,

11 Franklin Street,

Adelaide.