



Perceptions of the Soviet Union in
Australian political discourse
between 1943 and 1950.

Belinda Quick
School of History & Politics
December 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	1
Abstract	2
Declaration.....	3
Introduction	4
Chapter 1: 1943.....	14
Chapter 2: 1946.....	44
Chapter 3: 1950.....	67
Conclusion.....	107
Bibliography.....	112

ABSTRACT

The aim of this dissertation is to assess the role of discourse about the USSR in Australian politics between 1943 and 1950. During these years, Australia experienced a period of political volatility. Despite the fact that almost every political debate in Australia at this time involved some reference to the USSR, scholars have discussed only tangentially the ways in which discourse about Soviet Russia was used for political purposes. This thesis, therefore, will address a gap in the historiography by identifying varying depictions of the Soviet Union during the early phases of the Cold War, and by examining how these depictions were used for political purposes.

This thesis is divided into three chapters, which will address case study years – 1943, 1946 and 1950. These years were chosen specifically for their significance in emphasising the contrast through time of perceptions of the Soviet Union. Beginning in 1943, a period of unparalleled optimism regarding the USSR, this dissertation analyses the events and themes which shaped opinions throughout the following seven years, concluding with the lowest point in Australian perceptions in the early-1950s. Some of the common and recurrent topics and themes for discussion are: war, life in the USSR, Soviet foreign policy and international communism. These issues will be addressed within both an international and domestic context.

A range of resources were used in the writing of this thesis to explore the changing nature of discourse about the Soviet Union. These include both the South Australian and national *Tribune* newspapers (the Communist Party of Australia digest), a range of over 60 state and national newspapers, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates and political pamphlets. Additionally, some biographical material has been used, as well as contemporary commentaries which assist in the development and understanding of political trends and tendencies throughout the early-Cold War era.

DECLARATION

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint award of this degree.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

I also give permission for the digital version of my thesis to be made available on the web, via the University's digital research repository, the Library Search and also through web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the University to restrict access for a period of time.

.....
Print name

.....
Signature

.....
Date

INTRODUCTION

During the decade between 1943 and 1953, the Soviet Union was used by all Australian political organisations as a 'blank canvas' onto which they projected images of the ultimate 'evil empire' or idyllic paradise, or something in between, depending on their agenda. The main aim of this dissertation is to assess this preoccupation with the Soviet Union and its impact on Australian political discourse. I intend to fulfil this task by researching three years (1943, 1946 and 1950) as case studies with a view to answering the research questions articulated below. I will then use these case studies and findings to paint a larger picture of the impact of discourse regarding the USSR on wider Australian political history.

At the core of this thesis are four interrelated research questions. Firstly, what is said or written in public discourse about the USSR and how did this change over time? Secondly, how were portrayals of the Soviet Union used as a political tool? Thirdly, how did rival strands within the discourse about the USSR interact with each other? Fourthly, in what ways did portrayals of the Soviet Union change political discourse?

The first research question might seem an obvious one, but it is necessary to ask it because – to my knowledge – no other historian has systematically worked through the relevant primary sources to provide an empirical basis for the study of discourse about the Soviet Union. The USSR was a heavily debated topic in Australian politics and these discussions were integral in the makeup of the discourse of this era. This thesis proposes systematically to examine the instances of such references and the pattern of changes in the discourse throughout the period 1943 to 1950.

My second research question focuses on how portrayals of the USSR were used as political tools by groups from across the political spectrum. Hitherto, there has been little direct discussion in the secondary literature of the place of the Soviet Union in Australian political discourse. The full significance of discourse has not been explored and discussion of the place of the USSR in Australian political discourse has been limited to isolated events rather than analysed in a wider historical context. For example, historians who have discussed Menzies' political career occasionally mention his anti-Soviet views in their coverage of particular episodes, such as the coal miners' strike of 1949, but make little attempt to reconstruct the overall place of anti-Soviet rhetoric in Menzies' political ideology and practice. Yet a systematic study of Menzies' speeches, public comments and writing during this period reveals that he constantly used references to the USSR for a wide range of political purposes. For instance, he condemned many of the policies of the ALP on the grounds that they represented a Soviet-

style 'socialisation' of Australia. He also used the bogey of the 'Red Threat' as a weapon against trade union militants and as a justification for the repression of the CPA.¹

For Menzies, invoking the Soviet bogey was a key discursive weapon which he attempted to use with varying degrees of success, for a number of reasons. These motives included isolating the Communist Party of Australia (CPA), defaming and destabilising the Labor Party (ALP), building the electoral appeal of the conservative parties he represented, and also combatting the industrial unrest which hampered Australian politics and economics during these seven years. In some situations, however, Menzies chose to muffle his strong anti-Soviet opinions. This was usually in instances when discussion of the issue might have proven counter-productive, such as during the period of alliance with the USSR in World War II.

In order to answer my third research question, I will analyse how the various rival strands within the discourse about the USSR interacted with each other. These strands did not exist in isolation from each other because the various rival groups were competing for public support and therefore had to respond to the discourse of others. For example, members of the Communist Party were obliged to defend themselves against allegations made by the Liberal/Country Party that they were agents of Moscow. How did the Communist Party attempt to use positive images and descriptions of the USSR in their discourse as a tool to respond to the criticisms of the major political parties in Australia? An example of this interaction between two rival strands within the discourse is provided by the debate about the introduction of conscription upon the outbreak of the Korean War. Menzies argued that one of the most important reasons for criminalising the CPA was to relieve the population of constant fears of the Soviets, who, he claimed, were attempting to spread their empire both through military aggression in Korea and through Communist subversion in Australia.² In response to Menzies' accusation, the CPA released the pamphlet, *Fight Conscription*, which defended the CPA, the Soviet Union and the anti-conscription movement in Australia. The pamphlet's author, Alan Miller, retorted to Menzies' claim of Communist espionage by stating that 'the drive for conscription today is part of the desperate attempts of the capitalists to save their own vile, discredited system and destroy the forces of peace and human endeavour. That is why there is hysteria about the so-called red menace'.³ Debate about the true nature of the Soviet threat, and how best to respond to it, was equally important in political dialogue between the Liberal/Country Party and the ALP, as well as within the ALP.⁴

¹ Brian Carroll, *The Menzies Years* (North Melbourne: Carroll Australia Ltd, 1977), 80.

² Anthony Burke, 'War Against the Other, 1945-1969' from *In Fear of Security: Australia's Invasion Anxiety* (Annandale, N.S.W.: Pluto Press, 2001), 101.

³ Alan Miller, *Fight Conscription* (Adelaide: Eureka Youth League, 1950?), 7.

⁴ Ann Curthoys & John Merritt (eds), *Australia's First Cold War 1945-1953 - Volume 1: Society Communism and Culture* (Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), 49.

My fourth and final research question addresses the degree to which the prominence of the Soviet Union in political discourse changed the very nature of Australian politics. During this period politicians and activists from all sides of the spectrum conceptualised their local squabbles as part of a global confrontation between the forces of Moscow and the West.⁵ Did the fact that they conceptualised their domestic conflicts in global terms influence political developments? It is, for example, conceivable that the inability of the ALP to find a convincing and unified response to the anti-Soviet rhetoric of the Liberal/Country Party was one of the main reasons for its political downfall of the late 1940s and early 1950s. In a wider sense, it is possible that by projecting either their deepest fears or as a nation their most passionate desires onto the 'blank screen' of the USSR, political actors raised the stakes in what would otherwise have been purely domestic issues.

The overarching aim of the thesis is to show that answering the four questions listed above sheds new light on a turbulent era by looking at a key theme – the role of the USSR in political discourse – which has not hitherto been studied except in fragments. There already exists a large body of secondary literature on both Australia and the Soviet Union during this period. However, only a small proportion of this literature discusses the role of the USSR in shaping Australian political discourse during the decade. In other words, there is an emphasis in the literature on diplomatic relations between Australia and the USSR, rather than on the ways in which Australian domestic politics were shaped by what was said and imagined about the Soviet Union. Therefore, the aim of this project will be to address gaps in the historiography of this aspect of early Cold War history. It is for this reason that my thesis, and the questions asked and answered therein, holds significance.

In order to keep this project manageable, I have not attempted to survey the whole of Australian political history in the period from 1943 to 1950. Instead, I have used a case study approach to analyse specific years. My dissertation will be divided into three sections, which will demonstrate the ebb and flow of Australian perceptions of the USSR evident in each year's discourse. The first chapter will focus on the peak of the Grand Alliance in 1943, and in particular on Australian reactions to the decisive victory of the Red Army at the Battle of Stalingrad. It was during this time that Australian discourse on the Soviet Union was most positive. The purpose of this section is to provide a benchmark against which the evolution of discourse about the USSR can be measured. The second section of the dissertation will focus on the initial post-war period, in particular 1946. The year was chosen specifically as it represented a time of significant change. Australia's domestic landscape was evolving economically, culturally and politically. Internationally, too, the world was transitioning from world war to Cold War, and wrangling with the issues which accompanied this change. Amongst other things, this chapter will

⁵ L.F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley: A Biography* (London: Longmans, 1961), 276.

examine militant trade unionism and the use made of discourse about the USSR by rival factions within the trade union movement, the ALP and the Liberal/Country Party. The third section of the dissertation will analyse discourse about the USSR under the re-elected Menzies government and in particular how starkly contrasted this discourse had become. This chapter will focus specifically on 1950, although there will be some mention of the events of 1949 (the year of Menzies' re-election) and 1951 (an analysis of the aftermath of the events of 1950). Particular emphasis will be paid to the reinvigorated war effort abroad, and the debate about the Australian Communist Party Dissolution Bill, of 1950/51. This final year is vitally important to this thesis, as it clearly demonstrates the evolution of Australian political discourse on the Soviet Union, and the decline in public perceptions of the USSR during the 1940s decade.

Literature Review

Although there is a large body of secondary literature on both Australia and the Soviet Union during this period, only a small proportion talks of the direct relationship between the two countries. A number of historians discuss the pro- or anti-Soviet views of political actors in relation to specific events, but few have hitherto attempted systematically to assess discourse about the USSR as a whole, and the ways in which the various strands within that discourse interacted.

I have identified several significant historians who analyse this period of Australian political history and to an extent the contribution of the Soviet Union in creating this history. L.F. Crisp, for example, wrote a comprehensive history of Ben Chifley and his post-war premiership. This biography narrates the life and times of Chifley throughout his term as Prime Minister and long-standing position as Labor treasurer. However, it is striking that – despite the fact that Chifley's premiership coincided with the outbreak of the Cold War and the development of vitriolic anti-Soviet rhetoric amongst Chifley's opponents – Crisp's biography mentions the USSR on only eight occasions.⁶ In fact, the first direct reference to the Soviet Union which pertains to the period after 1940 comes on page 291, where Chifley rationalises his choice not to stigmatise the Soviets, claiming that 'if Russia dropped off the world tomorrow the discontent and the desire for self-government and self-determination, which is usually called nationalism, would continue to assert itself.'⁷ Crisp's lack of interest in the USSR is surprising given how important it was to Chifley himself.⁸

⁶ L.F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley*.

⁷ L.F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley*, 291.

⁸ L.F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley*, 291.

Tony Griffiths' text *Beautiful Lies* (1993) is another example of biographical narrative which looks at the leadership of several Australian Prime Ministers and the events which defined their premierships, including Ben Chifley. Like Crisp, Griffiths avoids direct reference to the Soviet Union in his analysis, preferring rather to examine Chifley's domestic policies between 1945 and 1949. Griffiths is relatively objective when describing the events which defined Chifley's premiership, and he eloquently describes the anti-Communist and anti-Soviet sentiment of the time as well as the more pro-Soviet opinions of the leftists. For example, he correctly asserts that the coal miners' strike of 1949 was the monumental domestic issue which 'brought the Communist Party into the limelight and sent diligent right-wingers hunting for reds under beds'. There are times, however, when Griffiths diverts from such a clear cut, eloquent position. His remark that 'the influence of the Communist Party was not part of a giant Communist conspiracy to weaken the economy and destroy Australian society', for example, somewhat contradicts some of his earlier claims.⁹ Though Griffiths does not deny the larger international context in which the event occurred, he is rather missing the point. In politics, perception is often more important than reality. What mattered was that the miners' enemies were able to create the impression that the trade union militants behind the strike were acting on instructions from Moscow.

Another important historian of this period is the former Communist Party of Australia (CPA) member, Ralph Gibson. Gibson's *The Fight Goes On* (1987) is an example of a significant source by a former Communist, and his work is written with an exclusive focus on the 1945-1960 era. Gibson's account is essentially a detailed history of the CPA; although, unlike many other contemporary historians, Gibson refers directly to the Soviet Union throughout his study. He focuses particularly on the Communist Party's fight to deter the 'new sharp turn of world events and the new anti-Communist note of the media' which was typical of the post-war period.¹⁰ Although explicit mention of the USSR is for the most part limited to discussion of the last days of World War II, Gibson at all times implies a larger context than simple domestic issues for a small political minority. For example, his statement that 'the Communists thus saw the struggle as extending far beyond the miners and the immediate issues', in regards to the 1949 strike, suggests that the strike was no longer just a fight for better pay and conditions, but an ideological battle between good and evil, capitalism and communism.¹¹

The works of Stuart Macintyre, a prominent historian of the Australian labour movement, will also be used throughout in this project. Macintyre's history of the early years of the CPA, *The Reds* (1998), is an even-handed account, despite the author's 'leftist' affiliations. Throughout the narrative he speaks prolifically of the connections between the USSR and Australian communism, highlighting particularly

⁹ Tony Griffiths, *Beautiful Lies: Australia from Kokoda to Keating* (Kent Town, S.A.: Wakefield Press, 1993), 26.

¹⁰ Ralph Gibson, *The Fight Goes On: A Picture of Australia and the World in Two Post-War Decades* (Ascot Vale, Vic.: Red Rooster Press, 1987), 40.

¹¹ Ralph Gibson, *The Fight Goes On*, 80.

the CPA's acceptance of 'each new instruction from Moscow without question'¹² and the exploitation of the party by 'Stalin's utterly unprincipled opportunism'.¹³ Whilst *The Reds* is primarily a historical narrative on the CPA's history, there is an emphasis on the ways in which the Communist Party and other political parties interacted, particularly on the issue of the Soviet Union. There is also specific reference to how the CPA was affected by their policy of unwavering allegiance to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). However, Macintyre's history only covers the period to 1941 and is thus only useful to this project as background material and context for the section on the 1950 Communist Party Dissolution Bill.

In addition to these more specific texts, which discuss at least tangentially the political connections between Australia and the USSR, there are a number of general histories which cover this period. These commentaries cover key areas of the history of the period, such as the socio-economic development in Australia, international relations and domestic foreign policy and the Australian labour movement. The most commonly cited text on Australian social developments in this thesis is Humphrey McQueen's *Social Sketches of Australia, 1888-1975*. This comprehensive general history discusses the many events which unfolded in Australia, providing an invaluable contextual history. However, McQueen fails to address the significance of the USSR to Australian political discourse during the period 1943-1950. On only one occasion is 'Russia' mentioned, in a passing comment regarding the Communist acquisition of power in China.¹⁴ There were few references even to domestic Communism and, unfortunately, this text is only useful for general background narrative.¹⁵

The two volume text, *Australia's First Cold War*, a collection of pieces edited by Ann Curthoys and John Merritt, is used throughout this thesis. These histories provide insight on a range of events and issues pertaining to experiences with Communism, the Cold War and the USSR. The essays from Volume 1, *Society, Communism and Culture* dealt with Communism in a more general sense, often emphasising the tendency for Australian politicians' to recognise the 'distinction ... between Russian Communism and Australian Communism'.¹⁶ At times there is reference to the reactions of various individuals and groups in Australian politics to 'the Communist issue' but they typically ignore the competing strains of discourse across this political spectrum during this era.¹⁷ There are a few specific references to newspaper reports on the escalation of war-time politics but, generally speaking, the essays tend to

¹² Stuart Macintyre, *The Reds: The Communist Party of Australia from origins to illegality* (St. Leonards, N.S.W.: Allen & Unwin, 1998), 386.

¹³ Stuart Macintyre, *The Reds*, 408.

¹⁴ Humphrey McQueen, *Social Sketches of Australia, 1888-1975* (Ringwood, Vic: Penguin Books, 1978), 197.

¹⁵ Humphrey McQueen, *Social Sketches of Australia, 1888-1975*, 195 & 196.

¹⁶ Ann Curthoys & John Merritt (eds), *Australia's First Cold War 1945-1953 - Volume 1*, 49.

¹⁷ Ann Curthoys & John Merritt (eds), *Australia's First Cold War 1945-1953 - Volume 1*, 71.

underestimate the impact of the USSR on the various strains of political discourse.¹⁸ Volume 2, *Better Dead Than Red*, is more focused on domestic labour and industry.¹⁹ In Tom Sheridan's essay, 'The trade unions and post-war reconstruction', the Soviet Union is afforded only one cursory mention, in relation to the Red Army's efforts during the Second World War.²⁰

Essentially, whilst a great deal has been written on Australian political history during the post-war period, the authors and texts I have researched discuss only tangentially or in passing the impact of discourse about the USSR on Australian politics. The topic occasionally arises in historians' accounts of specific politicians, activists or events, but no historian looks at discourse about the USSR as a whole. Yet even a cursory look at the primary sources (discussed below) will demonstrate the pervasiveness of discourse about the USSR during the 1940s.

Primary resources form the core of this thesis. I have made more extensive use of two forms of primary discourse, newspapers and Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates (CPDs), and, to a lesser extent, a collection of contemporary political pamphlets and booklets about the Soviet. Although literature such as diaries and memoirs hold some value in providing insight into the motivations of key political figures, I have chosen not to include such materials in this thesis. Diaries and memoirs, whilst providing a stimulating political commentary, were not available to the public in the 1940s and thus had little impact on the formation of perceptions of the Soviet Union at the time. One source that was extremely important at the time, but which I have not used, is radio. There were two reasons why I chose not to incorporate radio recordings and transcripts of radio programmes in my study. Firstly, print media yielded more than sufficient information to answer my research questions. Secondly, recordings and transcripts of radio programmes have only survived in fragments. By contrast, we have complete runs of newspapers and CPDs for the whole period. It is therefore not possible to analyse radio recordings and transcripts in the same, systematic fashion as print media.

The most important and prolific source of information has been newspapers, as they are widely available and freely accessible. During the 1943-1950 period, newspapers were the primary vehicle of public political discourse. Newspapers were often preoccupied with political issues, almost all of which were bound up in some way with images of the USSR. The majority of my newspaper searching was conducted via the Trove digitised archives, using four keywords: Soviet, Union, USSR & Russia. This online database provided the easiest and most comprehensive access to over 60 Australian

¹⁸ Ann Curthoys & John Merritt (eds), *Australia's First Cold War 1945-1953 - Volume 1*, 100.

¹⁹ Ann Curthoys & John Merritt (eds), 'The trade unions and postwar reconstruction' by Tom Sheridan, in *Better Dead than Red – Australia's First Cold War: 1945-1959, Volume 2* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1986), 3-17.

²⁰ Ann Curthoys & John Merritt (eds), *Better Dead than Red – Australia's First Cold War: 1945-1959, Volume 2*, 7.

newspapers. Whilst I do not claim to have exhausted every possible account which mentioned the Soviet Union, I believe my research to have been systematic and expansive enough to answer the research questions which I set myself. In regards to the *Tribune* newspapers, my research was conducted significantly differently. This newspaper is, as yet, not available online and is rarely held by libraries and archives. The only copies of the national paper I located in South Australia consisted of a partially damaged microfilm copy at the University of Adelaide. I also managed to locate a selection of the South Australian edition at the State Library of South Australia, and a few copies held at the South Australian Communist Party 'Dog House' in Port Adelaide.

Throughout my thesis, I used a wide sample of newspapers but there were some that I made use of more regularly: the CPA's *Tribune*, *The Argus* (VIC), *The West Australian* (WA) and *The Sydney Morning Herald* (NSW), just to name a few. I have chosen to look in particular detail at these newspapers because they represent a cross-section of political views from the extreme left of Australian politics through to the conservative right.

Numerous articles from the *Sydney Morning Herald*, for example, make a direct connection between Australian domestic politics and the USSR. Many such reports call on Australians to be vigilant and urge 'active and widespread counter-measures against the stream of distortion, lies and malice unceasingly directed against democracy by Moscow and its henchmen'.²¹ By contrast, the *Tribune*, as one would expect of a Communist newspaper, contained hundreds of articles that upheld the USSR as an example, asserting that there existed a 'growing desire for peace and friendship between Australia and the Soviet Union'.²² Whilst I do not profess to have found all the examples of media responses to the perceptions of the Soviet Union in Australian political discourse, I believe the extensive research of more than 60 mainstream and both the national and South Australian Communist newspapers has yielded results that can be regarded as representative. Stark comparisons are clear between certain texts, and the wide variation in opinions on the subject, have created a fascinating research project.

This thesis also makes considerable use of Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates (CPD) throughout the period 1943-1950, in an effort to ascertain the importance of the Soviet Union to the competing discourse of those parties that were represented in parliament. I conducted a methodical search of CPDs in the years 1943, 1946 and 1950, using the hardcopies available in the Barr Smith Library at the University of Adelaide. Rather than limiting my search by addressing only what was listed in the indexes, I systematically scanned every page of every volume of literature, searching for any reference, both directly and indirectly, to the Soviet Union. Literature and transcripts from these sources, relating to

²¹ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Carrying Truth All Round The Globe', 22 April 1950, 2.

²² *Tribune*, 'Russia's Long Struggle For World Peace', 7 November 1947, 4.

trade unionism, international relations and foreign policy, and the Communist Party Dissolution Bill, have been especially useful in establishing an image of how essential discussions of the Soviet Union were to the construction of Australian political discourse. CPDs offer a plethora of primary information regarding the processes and policies of Australia's federal government. However, it is important to recognise that these resources were generally less widely accessed than, say, newspapers during the 1943-1950 period. It was not always common for the discourse of newspapers and CPDs to overlap directly. However, this became increasingly frequent during the years of Menzies' premiership, when the interests of the conservative parties (initially the United Australia Party [UAP] and latterly the Liberal Party) became financially intertwined with those of conservative press.

Political pamphlets and brochures brought out by the broad spectrum of Australian political groups are also used in this thesis. The CPA, for example, was a prolific publisher of political pamphlets during the post-war era and used these documents as a way of reaching the public. Throughout CPA literature, the USSR is constantly portrayed as a shining example of innovation and prosperity, 'a gigantic movement for peace, democracy and socialism'.²³ The argument is frequently made in such pamphlets, either explicitly or implicitly, that Australia should follow the example provided by the Soviets in both its domestic and foreign policies. Though less prolific than the CPA, the Country Party also published political booklets and pamphlets during the period, many of which refer to the USSR and communism in discussion of domestic issues. In 1952, for example, shortly after the Liberal/Country Party's attempt to reinstate the ban on the CPA through federal referendum was quashed, the Country Party attacked its 'enemies' by stating, 'no one can take away the credit which belongs to the Country Party for its insistence that the most drastic action be taken against the traitorous "fifth column" in Australia'.²⁴ Language such as this became more common in publicly distributed government literature, and was directly responsible for the 'witch-hunts' of the 1940s, 50s and 60s.²⁵ My research indicates that pamphleteering was used extensively by the smaller political groups, such as the CPA, to circulate their opinions of the USSR. More prominent groups such as the ALP and the Liberal Party used this means of disseminating their views less frequently. I believe this may be explained by the need for minor political groups to publish independently from the larger groups, who had freer access to mainstream press and greater parliamentary exposure.

I accessed a wide range of this variety of political material through extensive searches of the South Australian Communist Party and University of Adelaide special archives. Being methodical in my searches of this discourse was, at times, very difficult. Much of the literature was limited or restricted in

²³ Alan Miller, *Fight Conscriptation*, 7.

²⁴ J. Dredge, *Twenty Questions for Thoughtful Australians* (Sydney: Australian Country Party, 1952), 18.

²⁵ L.F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley*, 388.

its publication (especially the documents produced by the CPA) and have not been sufficiently cared for since production. Many of the documents had missing or incomplete sections. Others simply had no dates or details of publication – a practice of necessity for printers and authors of political material which could land them in legal difficulties during the periods when the CPA was banned.

Because of restrictions on the size of this thesis, I was only able to focus on three specific years as case studies: 1943, 1946 and 1950. However, in order to place these three years in their proper context, I have also provided information on relevant years and events that surrounded these times. For example, whilst I have chosen to focus particularly on 1943 in my first chapter, I have made significant effort to put in to context all the events of preceding years, in order to demonstrate the patterns which place this pivotal year in its wider setting. Likewise, the third chapter, on 1950, discusses the fall-out of several events that occurred in 1949, such as the gaoling of CPA general secretary, L.L. Sharkey, and the coal miners' strike.

Because of the limitations in length of this dissertation, I have also had to be particularly selective when choosing events of interest. For instance, because this is not a project on the history of CPA per se, I have not included a discussion of the Victorian Royal Commission into Communism in 1949. This is because I chose to include only those events that stimulated political discourse that explicitly referenced the USSR in some way. It was also for this reason that I chose to examine discourse about Chinese Communism only when it directly referred to the Soviet Union. The point of this thesis was not to explore Australia's connections with global Communism but the way that references to the USSR were used as political tools in Australian political discourse. It is true that the way the USSR was discussed in public discourse was influenced by the way that the Soviets interacted with other countries, especially China and Australia. But in order to keep a clear focus, I have only explored these interactions where they led to public discussions in Australia that used the Soviet Union as a point of reference.

CHAPTER 1: 1943

Following the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, the nature of war changed dramatically. The USSR had joined forces with the Western Allies, transforming the war into a global struggle against Fascism. Though the Western armies and their new ally, the USSR, continued to suffer major defeats throughout much of 1942, the battles of El Alamein (October-November 1942) and Stalingrad (August 1942-February 1943) marked a turning point in the war against the Axis aggressors. Thus began 1943 – a year characterised by great struggle and turmoil but also hope and optimism.

It was in 1943 that significant steps were taken to foster good relations between the United States, Britain, the various Dominions of the British Commonwealth, and the Soviet Union. There was a strengthening of multilateral and bilateral diplomatic contacts. Accordingly, William Slater opened the first Australian Legation in the USSR in January 1943, followed in March by the establishment of the first Soviet legation in Canberra.¹ Major international meetings were held throughout 1943, above all the Moscow and Tehran conferences of October and December. These conferences cemented the roles and responsibilities of all countries (particularly the 'Big Three') in securing the speediest end to conflict and the guarantee of long-lasting and sustainable peace.² The participating players also began to map out the shape of a post-war world in which, it was hoped, the wartime Allies would continue to cooperate in the interests of peace and mutual prosperity of all. The unity of the Allies and the importance of good relations between the Western Powers and the USSR were thus prominent political themes in 1943. Arguably, the relationship between the democratic West and the USSR was warmer than it had ever been before or ever would be again.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore public discourse about the USSR published in Australia during this climactic year of World War II. To do this, a wide variety of newspapers, the CPA gazette (*Tribune*), Australian Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates (CPDs) and political propaganda have been scrutinised. It will be shown that there was a far greater emphasis on discussions on the USSR in the media than in parliamentary debates. Therefore, most of the data examined in this chapter will be drawn from non-parliamentary sources. Major trends will be identified in terms of public discourse about the USSR. The chapter will then explore the policies of the Australian political parties, and how each party's stance on the USSR affected its political fortunes. Finally, the chapter will address, and attempt to answer, the question of why so little was said about the Soviet Union in parliament, despite the popularity of the topic in the Australian press. First of all, however, it is necessary to explore the political

¹ T.B. Millar, *Australia in Peace and War: External relations since 1788* (Botany, NSW: Maxwell Macmillan Publishing Australia Pty Ltd, 1978), 105.

² *Argus*, 'Purpose of 3-Power Meeting – Moscow Newspaper Rebukes "Chatterboxes"', 15 October 1943, 16.

and economic context in Australia in 1943. Discussion about the USSR did not take place in a vacuum, but was both shaped by and shaped the domestic situation.

Australia's Political and Economic Climate

The early-1940s had been a time of extreme hardship in many of the belligerent states involved in the Second World War. By comparison, Australia had managed to avoid the worst of the political and economic consequences of war. Though conditions were by no means favourable, many Australians enjoyed a relatively comfortable standard of living. Even so, with the introduction of rationing in May 1942, even the Australians had to tighten their belts.³ The Australian government urged the population to make ever greater efforts and sacrifices in the name of victory, whether this might take the form of sending men to the front, nurses to the hospitals, butter for the British, or sheepskins to the Red Army.⁴

It was not until the bombing of Pearl Harbor, in December 1941, that the Americans formally entered the war, thus opening the Pacific theatre. Whilst Australia continued to contribute to the European war, the Pacific arena was generally considered by Australians to be of greater geographical and strategic importance. The arrival of war on the northern coastline of Australia was a profound shock. In January 1942, Japanese forces invaded New Guinea. From this 'stepping stone' location, the Japanese began to attack Australian soil. On 19 February 1942, they launched their first bombing raid on Darwin. It was the first time Australian soil had been directly touched by war. Over the next 21 months, Darwin would be bombed a further 63 times. The final raid was on 12 November 1943. During this period Broome and Townsville were attacked four and three times respectively.⁵ Although these attacks were insignificant in comparison to raids endured in Europe in both material and human terms, the bombings heightened the Australian public's awareness of the importance of the war effort. In both parliamentary and public spheres there was more active discussion of the course of the war, and Australia's role in these matters. There was debate about whether Australia should enforce conscription, establish a domestic militia and demand greater representation at international conferences. According to P.G. Edwards: 'Australia burst onto the world stage in the 1940s', not just as an important belligerent power, but preparing as a nation for peace and post-war prominence on the world scale.⁶

³ *Barrier Daily Truth*, 'Rationing', 3 April 1943, 2.

⁴ T.B. Millar, *Australia in Peace and War*, 105.

⁵ Humphrey McQueen, *Social Sketches of Australia, 1888-1975*, 172.

⁶ P.G. Edwards, *Prime Ministers and Diplomats: the making of Australian foreign policy 1901-1949* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1983), 140.

In the context of these military and diplomatic developments, domestic politics in Australia underwent many significant changes. In September 1940 there had been a federal election, in which the incumbent coalition government, consisting of the United Australia Party (UAP) and the Country Party, led by Robert Menzies and Archie Cameron respectively, narrowly defeated the Australian Labor Party (ALP), led by John Curtin. The election was so close in fact that the appointment of the government was decided by the votes of two independent MPs in favour of the conservatives. In October 1941, however, the two independents switched their support to Labor, thereby bringing Curtin's ALP to power.⁷ In August 1943, another federal election was held in which a 9.8% swing to Labor yielded a comfortable majority in the House of Representatives.⁸ The humiliating defeat of the conservative parties signified a change in Australian political culture. It demonstrated that the Australian public was tired of petty squabbles and name-calling which plagued domestic politics in the early-World War years. Political discourse was now more focused on the unity of all free peoples against the common enemies – Nazism and Japanese militarism.⁹ Conservative discourse up to this point had been fervently anti-Communist, and, as a result, anti-Soviet. But, in this new political climate, anti-socialist and anti-Soviet rhetoric had become a liability.¹⁰ By contrast, Labor's dramatic victory in the 1943 federal election demonstrated that the discourse of anti-fascism, and admiration (in some quarters of the ALP) were, at the very least, not turning voters off, and may have even been attracting supporters.¹¹

During his two terms (1941-1943 & 1943-1945), Curtin's ALP ministry would accomplish considerable advances in the areas of social welfare and foreign affairs – no mean feat considering the fact that Australia was embroiled in a world war.¹² In 1943, the Labor government established the Department of Post-War Reconstruction, a federal ministry which began scaffolding Australia's future. These accomplishments were generally welcomed by, and popular with, the public, and from 1943 to 1945 both the ALP and Curtin himself retained a high degree of public support. However, in political circles, the government encountered fierce opposition. The UAP and Country Party constantly tried to make mischief, both in parliament and in the associated conservative press. A frequent allegation that was hurled against the ALP was that it was working in cahoots with the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) to indoctrinate the working class and establish a socialist system modelled closely on the Soviet example.¹³ Such allegations were vehemently denied by Labor members and the Communists, and in

⁷ Christopher Hayman, 'The Balance of Power in Second World War Australia: The Deliberate Role of Coles and Wilson in the House of Representatives from 1940' (PhD thesis, University of New South Wales, 2005), 6.

⁸ Stephen Barber, 'Federal Election Results 1901-2010', www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1112/12rp06, 12 September 2014.

⁹ *Tribune*, 'The Only Way Out', 21 April 1943, 2.

¹⁰ *Tribune*, 'Federal Post-War Plans – Fadden-Menzies-Hughes Sabotage', 2 December 1942, 3.

¹¹ *Tribune*, 'They Are Not Socialists', 12 August 1943, 7.

¹² CPD, *National Welfare Fund Bill 1943*, 17 March 1943, 1849.

¹³ *Tribune*, 'Federal Post-War Plans', 2 December 1942, 3.

the context of wartime politics they seem to have had little traction with the public. However, just three years later, in the dawning of the post-war period, these accusations would be effectively and repeatedly used by the coalition to unsettle the ALP.

For the Communist Party of Australia (CPA), the war brought even more dramatic changes of fortune. On 15 June 1940, by order of Prime Minister Menzies and the UAP, the CPA and all affiliated associations were declared illegal. Property and assets were seized and, on the strict instruction of the government, alleged Communists were banished from their workplaces. The conservatives' proposed amendments to the National Security Act ensured that any persons suspected of participating in or encouraging Communist activities would face incarceration and hefty fines. Those accused were dubbed traitors and their guilt recorded in a federal register with the purpose of identifying and isolating 'enemies of the Empire'.¹⁴ When the coalition government was ousted in October 1941, the CPA and Soviet sympathisers assumed that the ban would be lifted. However, it contentiously remained in place until December 1942 – some 14 months after Labor had seized power from the conservatives.

Calls to repeal the ban were made by a range of groups and individuals. Members of the CPA were, unsurprisingly, vigorously opposed to the ban. Many members of the Labor Party, who represented the left-wing faction of the ALP, were also in favour of repealing the far-reaching legislation. Australian civil rights committees and trade unions also expressed their concern. Similar organisations and their representatives from around the world petitioned the government to annul what they regarded as an unjust law.¹⁵ Burgeoning sympathy for the Red Army in its struggle against Germany, and the formation of the Anglo-Soviet alliance, were the determining factors in influencing Labor's decision to lift the ban.¹⁶ On some occasions, even individuals and groups which opposed the CPA spoke out against the law, claiming that the ban could be used to oppress the democratic rights of any social groups targeted by the government. Despite its relatively small size, the CPA, a minor offshoot of the Comintern, was attracting worldwide attention and support. In a brief report into the ALP's motives for reinstating the CPA, Thomas Joseph Collins (the Honourable member for Hume, New South Wales) asserted that, in the final six months of the ban, membership had exploded from roughly 7,000 members in June 1942 to almost 18,000 (a record number which would only be exceeded once, in 1945).¹⁷ The ALP concluded that it would be political folly to make martyrs out of the Communists, who were capitalising on a law that had been implemented with a view to suppressing them.

¹⁴ Stuart Macintyre, *The Reds*, 396.

¹⁵ *Tribune*, 'Lift the Ban!', 2 December 1942, 1.

¹⁶ *Tribune*, 'Ban On Party Lifted One Year Ago', 16 December 1943, 3.

¹⁷ CPD, *Communist Party*, 26 March 1943, 2462.

The CPA made further political gains during the 1943 federal and 1943/44 state elections, particularly in Queensland and Victoria. Federally, the CPA received 2% of votes, making 1943 the most successful year in the Party's history.¹⁸ In the 1943 Victorian state elections, Communist candidates received an eighth of the Ballarat vote, around a quarter of votes in the inner suburbs and nearly 40% of the preferences in Port Melbourne. In North Queensland, Communists also fared well, mainly because of the large population of working-class families on the 'front line against the Japanese'.¹⁹ In 1944, CPA stalwart, Fred Paterson, had Queenslanders 'flocking' to support the Communists with his calls for 'a new Australia. An Australia in which ... people can be contented and happy, living in bright and comfortable homes and surrounded by healthy and joyful children'.²⁰ Paterson became the first, and only, Communist to be elected to such a prominent political position. Whilst the CPA and its representatives never posed a serious threat to the dominance of the major parties they were able in 1943 to enhance their public profile, make significant gains in state and local elections, and exert considerable influence within the trade union and labour movements

Life in the Soviet Union

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the Australian media showed a lively interest in the USSR. One issue that cropped up frequently was living conditions and everyday life in the Soviet Union. Numerous lengthy articles were printed in the mainstream papers, making this topic the most extensively covered issue in newspaper discourse about the USSR. The level of attention afforded this issue was noteworthy enough in itself. Even more remarkable, however, was that, even in conservative newspapers which had traditionally been hostile to the USSR, the overwhelming majority of these articles painted the Soviet people in a positive light. Articles about daily life in the Soviet Union typically fell into one of four categories: religion, agriculture, culture and politics. Additionally, there were also several reports which covered a number of topics that were printed, in serial, for district newspapers in Victoria and New South Wales, entitled 'Why Russia Is Important' and 'Russia: A Wonderful Country, But Little Known', respectively.²¹

¹⁸ Geoffrey Bolton (ed.), *The Oxford History of Australia: Volume 5, 1942-1988* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1990), 29.

¹⁹ Geoffrey Bolton, *The Oxford History of Australia*, 21.

²⁰ *The Legend of Fred Patterson*, directed by Jonathan Dawson & Pat Laughren (Ronin Films, 1996).

²¹ Examples of these articles include:

Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser, 'Russia: A Wonderful Country, But Little Known', 15 February 1943, 1.

Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser, 'Russia: A Wonderful Country, But Little Known', 29 March 1943, 1.

Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser, 'Russia: A Wonderful Country, But Little Known', 8 April 1943, 1.

Portland Guardian, 'Why Russia is Important –The Country With A Plan–The Workers Are On Top', 22 February 1943, 3.

Portland Guardian, 'Why Russia is Important –The Country With A Plan–Equality of Nations', 22 March 1943, 3.

The articles in the 'Russia: A Wonderful Country, But Little Known' series were published in the *Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser* – a small local newspaper from New South Wales. The articles described social conditions in the Soviet Union at a level of detail unparalleled in any other newspapers. They were extracted in part from *The Socialist Sixth of the World* – a book written by the Dean of Canterbury, Reverend Hewlett Johnson, published by the Left Book Club.²² The *Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser* was just one of the many small presses which featured articles about the Soviet Union in 1943. In future years, the majority of reports on the USSR were published in major state and national newspapers, such as *The Sydney Morning Herald*. By contrast, in 1943, it was the small-circulation and local newspapers which showed greater interest in the issue. In the case of the *Grenfell Record*, editions of the 'Russia: A Wonderful Country, But Little Known' serial could be found sandwiched between church notices, advertisements for Arnott's biscuits and miscellaneous notes on the lapse in supply of fresh beer to the local hotel. Examples such as these presented a contrast to the juxtaposition of reports in mainstream newspapers, which placed articles about the USSR in sections specifically devoted to world news, war correspondence or political commentary and current events.²³

The articles in the *Grenfell Record* series typically discussed the basic lifestyle concerns of the average Soviet citizen. However, in the 19th chapter of the series, published on 29 March 1943, the content extended beyond observations of everyday life. Claiming that the 'Russian Empire' did not exist, the Dean of Canterbury used the article to assert his understanding of the 'fundamental principles' of Communism within the USSR, and to readdress the inconsistencies which had been prevalent in Australian discourse in the earlier years of the war, and indeed since the foundation of the USSR.²⁴ Combining his thoughts on each of the sub-topics of this debate – cultural, political and economic – Johnson paints a picture of 'a farmers' paradise', where all people, regardless of race or religion, live in an idyllic and thriving republic, united to better themselves and any allies who wish to join their way of life.²⁵ Whilst the articles were hardly even-handed, the extensive publication of such reports in state newspapers is striking because hitherto they had only ever reported on negative aspects of Soviet life.

²² Hewlett Johnson, the 'Red Dean' of Canterbury was a reputed Anglican minister from England, and a passionate Soviet sympathiser. Although he dedicated much of his 30-year career to the Soviet cause, and would be remembered almost solely for his pro-Communist ways, it was during the 1940s that the Dean achieved notoriety. He travelled extensively throughout the decade, visiting Australia and the USSR, in particular, several times. He played an integral part in pro-Soviet movements, such as the International Peace Congress, and was instrumental in spreading awareness of Communism throughout the British Empire. – Charles Moore, 'The Priest who thought Stalin was a saint', <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/charlesmoore/8660471/The-priest-who-thought-Stalin-was-a-saint.html>, 14 August 2014.

²³ *Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser*, 'Russia: A Wonderful Country, But Little Known – No. 21', 8 April 1943, 1.

²⁴ *Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser*, 'Russia: A Wonderful Country, But Little Known – No. 19', 29 March 1943, 1.

²⁵ *Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser*, 'Russia: A Wonderful Country, But Little Known – No. 19', 29 March 1943, 1.

Amongst the reports on 'beloved'²⁶ Russian politicians and praise for the inspirational 'example and sacrifice'²⁷ of the Soviet people, a collection of more unique articles emerged which detailed the advances in agricultural sciences. Several papers claimed that collective farmers had developed a 'perennial' strain of wheat, using the cross-pollination methods made famous by the Soviet biologist, Nikolai Tsitsin.²⁸ It was claimed by such newspapers that these new agricultural techniques might herald an end to rationing and possibly the banishing of hunger in Eastern Europe. A reporter for the NSW *Southern Mail* added that the 'marvels' of Soviet agriculture were 'an eye-opener' for Australian farmers, and that much was to be learned from the operations and advances in the USSR.²⁹ Several editorials in 1943 proclaimed the Soviet Union to be the world-leader 'in the development of new and more productive' farming techniques.³⁰ On numerous occasions, the papers sang the praises of the Soviet Union's 'once backward peasant', who had now evolved into 'the pioneer of human progress'.³¹ Such coverage demonstrates the degree to which public discourse about the USSR had changed direction. Even in early 1942, despite the military alliance with the Soviet Union, newspaper discussion of all things Soviet had generally been hostile. By the autumn of 1943, however, hostility towards Soviet citizens was described by the *Northern Star* as 'ridiculously misinformed' and contemptible.³²

One article that is worthy of special note – not because of its insights but because of its oddness – was published in the Perth *Sunday Times* in late March. The article, entitled 'There are no old maids in Russia', was a 'special report' written exclusively for the newspaper by Russian correspondent Josef Petrovski. In addition to praising the 'gallant role' of Soviet women 'in repulsing the invaders', Petrovski waxed lyrical about the physical charm of the Soviet female.³³ Claiming that 'old maids are practically extinct in Russia', Petrovski praised in particular Soviet women's use of cosmetics and their ample bosoms.³⁴ Whilst Petrovski undoubtedly intended to counter the prevailing image of Soviet poverty by painting a picture of opulence and glamour, he succeeded only in making himself – and the women of the Soviet Union – appear superficial and naïve.

Like the conservative press, the Communist newspaper *Tribune* reported extensively on life within the Soviet Union. Between December 1942 and 1943, the CPA newspaper published two-dozen articles of varying length. Unsurprisingly, no other newspaper rivalled the *Tribune* in terms of its attention to the

²⁶ *Mirror*, 'Beloved Kalinin', 13 March 1943, 12.

²⁷ *Mercury*, 'Illiterate Nation To Mighty Power In 26 Years', 8 November 1943, 7.

²⁸ *Western Mail*, 'Perennial Wheat – Russians Grow Up to Three Harvests a Year Without Replanting', 27 May 1943, 40.

²⁹ *Southern Mail*, 'Farm Workers Know Their Sciences – New Scientific Methods Work Wonders on Soviet Farms – Marvels of Artificial Fertilization', 2 April 1943, 4.

³⁰ *Northern Star*, 'Soviet Agriculture', 10 December 1943, 3.

³¹ *Daily News*, 'Opinion – Reality', 19 February 1943, 2.

³² *Northern Star*, 'Soviet Agriculture', 10 December 1943, 3.

³³ *Sunday Times*, 'There are no old maids in Russia', 28 March 1943, 12.

³⁴ *Sunday Times*, 'There are no old maids in Russia', 28 March 1943, 12.

Soviet issue. Articles and reports covered the same general topics addressed by the state and national presses – science, culture, religion and politics – but coverage was generally more comprehensive and detailed. There were reports, for example, on the scientific advancements in agriculture but, in addition, the *Tribune* also reported on Soviet advances in human biological science. One such article celebrated the ‘Soviet surgical marvels’, which enabled the restoration of sight and rejuvenation of damaged skin tissue on injured soldiers, using innovative techniques developed by Russian academic and eye specialist, V.P. Filatov.³⁵

Politics, and politicians, in the USSR were also afforded considerable attention. Several large, detailed articles appeared throughout the year celebrating the USSR’s superior ‘democratic’ government.³⁶ Interestingly, though, only Marshal Stalin and his comrades from the CPSU were directly mentioned in these articles. There was no comment on Premier Kalinin or his cabinet, apart from a brief assertion that ‘only about one half of the members of the Soviet Parliament’ were also CPSU card-holders.³⁷ Much praise was lavished on the ‘new Socialist society, with its human dignity and freedom, marvellous cultural progress and its essential democracy’. Particular attention was focused on Stalin, whom the *Tribune* considered a ‘genius as organiser, philosopher, statesman and military commander’.³⁸ The *Tribune* presented an image of ‘the Wise, Foreseeing Stalin’, at every opportunity.³⁹

The Communists’ comments on life within the Soviet Union were not limited to the *Tribune*. Throughout the 1942-1943 period the CPA and pro-Soviet commentators published several booklets on Soviet life, with particular emphasis on what Australia could learn from the USSR. Although not a member of the CPA himself, Reginald Spencer Ellery’s 64-page panegyric, *Eyes Left – the Soviet Union and the post-war world*, provided the most extensive observations of life within the USSR. Apart from the thoroughness of Ellery’s work, his booklet was more important than other similar types of literature because it was written by a non-communist commentator. Ellery, a psychiatrist by profession, travelled to the USSR during 1936/37.⁴⁰ His trip was originally planned as educational expedition, looking into advancements in mental health management, but became the basis for the booklet, and subsequently the foundation for the development of his deep ‘attraction to Communism’.⁴¹ He claimed that

³⁵ *Tribune*, ‘Battle-Blinded Soviet Soldiers See Nazis Flee’, 19 August 1943, 4.

³⁶ *Tribune*, ‘Can’t Crush Soviet Democracy’, 26 August 1943, 5.

³⁷ *Tribune*, ‘Soviet Parliament’, 13 January 1943, 3.

³⁸ *Tribune*, ‘Stalin, the Man and the Mould’, 23 December 1943, 1.

³⁹ Stuart Macintyre, *The Reds*, 411.

⁴⁰ As a side note, the period in which Ellery travelled to the USSR was during the height of the Great Terror.

⁴¹ Sebastian Gurciullo, ‘Australian Dictionary of Biography: Reginald Spencer Ellery’ from *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (hardcopy), <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/ellery-reginald-spencer-reg-10110>, 14 August 2014.

communism was 'a panacea for mental and social ills' and wrote extensively on the psychology of the ideology, throughout the 1940s.⁴²

Ellery's work, and that of other non-member sympathisers, was an example of the pro-Soviet discourse which was becoming common in Australia during the mid-1940s. *Eyes Left* also represented the increasing number of pro-Communist books and pamphlets which were published independently of the CPA. Ellery's booklet was published by Reed & Harris, a Melbourne-based printer which specialised in the production of a range of Australian works, from creative writing to political papers, such as *Eyes Left*. Reed & Harris had no affiliation with the CPA; they simply wished to provide an opportunity for Australian writers to publish their works, regardless of personal or political preference.⁴³ This booklet, and the printers who published it, provided more evidence that positive discourse about the USSR was spreading out of the boundaries of the Communist heartland.

Ellery made many comparisons between the Soviet Union in 1943 and the year the Communists came to power, 1917. He repeatedly championed the USSR's 'gigantic transformation ... from an illiterate and primitive peasant nation into an industrial power of the first magnitude'.⁴⁴ Ellery commented on all aspects of Soviet life – ranging from child-care to religion – and spent a considerable amount of time discussing employment. Claiming that 'unemployment in the USSR was a thing of the past', Ellery asserted that, before the outbreak of World War II, the majority of workers worked a 40-hour week and enjoyed extensive health, welfare and vocational benefits.⁴⁵ The only reason for increases in the length of the working week and production quotas was the war against Fascism. Moreover, according to Ellery, recent changes to working conditions in the USSR had been directed and implemented by the workers themselves.⁴⁶

A recurring theme in *Eyes Left* is 'happiness' – a topic of discussion which reflected Ellery's interest in the psychology of the Soviet people and the psychological impact of Communist ideology. Despite Ellery's claims that the people of the USSR had been deeply hurt by their enforced position as the 'outcasts of Europe ... distrusted, despised, feared and calumniated ... isolated in their epic struggle for survival', he claimed they were, in fact, the 'happiest' people in the world.⁴⁷ The workers of the Soviet Union all equally benefitted 'in the fruits of their collective labours ... enjoying the blessing of the rights and privileges guaranteed by their constitution', and, consequently, the adult workers of the USSR were

⁴² Sebastian Gurciullo, 'Australian Dictionary of Biography: Reginald Spencer Ellery', <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/ellery-reginald-spencer-reg-10110>, 14 August 2014.

⁴³ Samela Harris, 'Reed & Harris', http://www.ernmalley.com/reed_harris.html, 14 August 2014.

⁴⁴ Reginald S. Ellery, *Eyes Left – the Soviet Union and the post-war world* (Melbourne: Reed & Harris, 1943), 15.

⁴⁵ Reginald S. Ellery, *Eyes Left*, 16.

⁴⁶ Reginald S. Ellery, *Eyes Left*, 16.

⁴⁷ Reginald S. Ellery, *Eyes Left*, 11.

'happier and healthier than the labouring populations in other countries'.⁴⁸ Later in the booklet, Ellery again comments on the 'happiness' of the people of the Soviet Union, particularly Soviet children. Beginning the section 'Children' by stating that 'it would be no exaggeration to say that the Soviet people ... built their Socialist State for their children', Ellery asserts that there were 'more happy children in the USSR than anywhere else in the world'. Whilst these claims were hyperbolic and largely unsupported by any case evidence, Ellery's work added to the rich tapestry created by the pro-Soviet commentators of 1943.

Whilst life inside the Soviet Union was a popular topic of conversation in the media and other politicised discourse, on only a handful of occasions were the issues discussed in parliament. In one of the first sessions of the year, Labor senator, Gordon Brown, asked the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture (William Scully) 'whether the Government ... made inquiries regarding collective farming ... with a view to the adoption of similar methods in Australia during the post-war reconstruction period'.⁴⁹ Roughly a month later, James Michael Sheehan (ALP politician and prominent trade unionist) called for the recognition of the Red Army and tributes to be sent to the Soviet people on Red Army Day.⁵⁰ Over half a year later, William 'Billy' Hughes (former Labor Prime Minister and then UAP member), in a rare moment of pro-Sovietism, praised the Soviets for their 'abiding faith in, and love for, their fatherland'.⁵¹ Hughes then directly compared the moral health of the USSR to Australia and called for a more candid display of 'love' and strength at home. Hughes' praise is important for two reasons: firstly, it was rare to see such a display of affection for the Russian people from the notoriously stalwart anti-Communist. Furthermore, the statement showed the deviation of the UAP from a strictly anti-Soviet line during 1943. Due to a swing in public opinion regarding the USSR following the formation of the Anglo-Soviet alliance, the conservatives seemed to have realised no political capital could be made by attempting to discredit the Soviets. Therefore, they adapted their public discourse to include occasional praise. This, however, only extended to observations of the people of the Soviet Union and the Red Army, not the system under which they lived.

On only one more occasion was the situation inside the Soviet Union discussed, in the form of a brief exchange during a debate on the Australian National Welfare Fund Bill. During the debate, Senator Brian Gibson (Liberal) claimed that the USSR had 'gone back to capitalism' and certain Labor members' efforts to introduce socialism into the Australian way of life was futile, when even the most socialist country had reverted back to capitalism.⁵² Gibson's claims were rebuffed by Senator William Large

⁴⁸ Reginald S. Ellery, *Eyes Left*, 15.

⁴⁹ CPD, *Collective Farming*, 29 January 1943, 164.

⁵⁰ CPD, *Red Army Day*, 26 February 1943, 1057.

⁵¹ CPD, *Governor-General's Speech*, 29 September 1943, 177.

⁵² CPD, *National Welfare Fund Bill 1943*, 17 March 1943, 1849.

(ALP) as outrageous. Large claimed that he knew 'as much of affairs in Russia as anyone else', which was very little, but he could unequivocally say that of all the 'furphies' he had heard during his time as a politician, he had 'never heard one like that before'.⁵³

The role of the USSR in the war

A major theme in public discourse about the USSR in 1943 was, unsurprisingly, the role of the Soviet Union in the war itself. During the first two years of the war, mainstream discourse about the Soviet Union had been overwhelmingly negative, in large part as a result of the Nazi-Soviet Pact of August 1939 and the subsequent Soviet invasions of Poland, the Baltic States and Finland. As Robin Gollan, CPA member during the World War and labour historian, reflected in his memoirs, 'the German-Soviet non-aggression pact and the Russian invasion of Poland were hard to explain to oneself, let alone to other people'. Even after the German attack on the USSR in June 1941, Australian Communists were frequently challenged by those who questioned the sincerity of the USSR's motives for seeking friendship with the West, and who were sceptical about long-term Soviet intentions once the Germans had been defeated.⁵⁴

By 1943, however, a new phase of the War had begun and there was a significant change in the atmosphere of Allied relations. Of course, there were still many sceptics, both in parliament and the general public. But the balance between pro- and anti-Soviet perceptions was tipping in favour of the USSR. Public attitudes towards the USSR had been steadily improving in Australia, particularly since the dramatic victories of the Red Army at Stalingrad and elsewhere. According to T.B. Millar, much admiration was expressed regarding 'the massive Soviet military achievements and human sufferings throughout the war ... although understandably they were less reported and appreciated than the campaigns where Australians, British or Americans were involved'.⁵⁵

Amongst the plethora of articles generally singing the praises of the Red Army, numerous reports were published in newspapers which focused specifically on the proposed opening of the Second Front in Europe. The front was considered by Stalin and the Red Army to be essential in securing the swift and unconditional surrender of the Nazis. By 'giving him [Germany] no chance, day or night, to consolidate his defence lines' the 'annihilation of encircled enemy troops refusing to surrender' would be ensured,

⁵³ CPD, *National Welfare Fund Bill 1943*, 17 March 1943, 1849.

⁵⁴ Brian Attwood (ed.), 'Looking Back' by Robin Gollan in *Labour Histories* (Clayton, VIC: Monash Publications, 1994), 2.

⁵⁵ T.B. Millar, *Australia in peace and war*, 303.

consequently bringing the whole war to the swiftest conclusion.⁵⁶ Reports in the mainstream newspapers throughout 1943 continued to praise the ongoing offensives of the Red Army on the Eastern Front, and reported favourably on meetings of the 'Big Three', in which preparations were made for the launching of a second front in Western Europe. In December 1943, the *Northern Star* celebrated the outcomes of the Tehran conference, in which 'agreement had been reached on the timing of operations' by Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin.⁵⁷ The Tehran meeting, it was claimed in the newspapers, heralded the start of a major Allied offensive which 'would be relentless' to the point that 'no power on earth could now prevent the destruction of German land, air and sea forces'.⁵⁸

The issue of the Second Front was also heavily reported in the *Tribune*, which published 22 articles on the topic between December 1942 and December 1943. Like the mainstream state and national papers, the *Tribune* was enthusiastically in favour of the opening of a Second Front. However, the CPA newspaper was more cynical than the mainstream press about the motives of the Western Allies. Reflecting on the 'thundering victories' of the first half of 1943 – in Stalingrad, Tunisia and the Ruhr – *Tribune* correspondents asked the question 'what's the delay?'⁵⁹ Australian Communists argued that 'for three summers' Hitler had not had to deal with any attack in Western Europe. This meant that Hitler was able to concentrate his forces on the Eastern Front, 'quite confident that Britain and America' would not interfere with his plans.⁶⁰ The *Tribune* argued that the Western Allies were playing a dangerous game. If the USSR was 'left to continue bearing the whole burden of Hitler's land strength, all sorts of disquieting issues – both political and military' – would hamper any hopes of a quick victory. Despite the fact that the Red Army was putting the Wehrmacht through 'the "meat mincer"', only a knockout blow by the combined strength of the Anglo-American and Soviet armies would be enough to ensure that German forces would not be able to recuperate.⁶¹

The *Tribune's* campaign for the opening of a Second Front came to a head in the second half of 1943. The *Tribune* printed two articles which demonstrated the increasingly aggressive tone of the Communists. Reporting directly on the basis of sources inside the Soviet Union, the *Tribune* slammed the inaction of the British and Americans.⁶² Quoting the official newspaper of the CPSU, *Pravda*, the *Tribune* demanded the swiftest possible launching of 'a powerful common onslaught of Soviet, American

⁵⁶ *Argus*, 'Stalin Says Long Fight Ahead', 24 February 1943, 12.

⁵⁷ *Northern Star*, 'Allied Victory Now Assured – "Big 3" Agree On Early New Offensives – "Europe War Near End"', 7 December 1943, 1.

⁵⁸ *Northern Star*, 'Allied Victory Now Assured', 7 December 1943, 1.

⁵⁹ *Tribune*, 'Advancing To The Kill', 1 July 1943, 1.

⁶⁰ *Tribune*, 'Straight Talk On Second Front', 15 July 1943, 1.

⁶¹ *Tribune*, 'Kharkov Underlines Need For Second Front', 24 March 1943, 1.

⁶² *Tribune*, 'Pravda Warns Delay Serves Hitler – Rebel Europe Waiting', 24 June 1943, 2.
Tribune, 'Soviet Accuses Allies Of Broken Pledge', 12 August 1943, 1.

and British armed forces against the German fascist enslavers ... to hasten the desired day of victory'.⁶³ Citing another Soviet source, the trade-union newspaper *Trud*, the *Tribune* expressed disgust at how 'four or five million men available to throw against Hitlerite Europe'.⁶⁴ As far as the *Tribune* was concerned, the inaction of the Anglo-American was 'inexcusable'.⁶⁵ Quoting yet another publication of the Soviet trade unions, *War and the Working Class*, the CPA newspaper stated that the Second Front 'must be nothing short of a land invasion that will force a diversion from Russia of at least 60 Nazi divisions' – adding that the time had come when this expectation needed to be clearly outlined 'for the benefit of those who still pretend they don't know what the second front means'.⁶⁶

In addition to the discussion about the Second Front, another area attracted attention in both the mainstream and Communist press was the role of women in the Soviet armed forces. In February and March, respectively, articles on this topic were published by the *Tribune* and *The Australian Women's Weekly*.⁶⁷ The *Tribune* article focused on a Ukrainian sniper by the name of Lyudmilla Pavlichenko who, it was claimed, had personally killed 389 enemy officers and men. In recognition of this feat, she was described as the 'Soviet's most famous' and deadliest sniper.⁶⁸ The article, which included an autobiographical account written by Pavlichenko herself, claimed that hers was a tale of 'will-power and endurance', and a commendation to the Soviet Union's war-effort.⁶⁹ According to the *Tribune*, before joining the Red Army Pavlichenko had been lying in hospital. But so great was her desire to fight that she had been 'cured ... at once of all ... ailments'. In Pavlichenko's own words, the Nazis were so barbaric that they were 'worse than brute beasts'; they were 'tyrants, sadists and tormentors for whom no laws exist'.⁷⁰ The article in *Women's Weekly* focused on the experiences of two other female snipers, Natali Kovshova and Maria Polivanova, who had been awarded the 'highest of all Soviet honours, "Hero of the Soviet Union"'.⁷¹ Both volunteers, Kovshova and Polivanova were renowned for their heroism, unparalleled by even the men in their units. Both women held formidable records, and 'had been known to kill as many as 15 enemy soldiers in a day', proving to doubters worldwide that women could be just as inspirational in the armed forces.⁷²

However, it was not only the choice of topic which made this article so stimulating. The printing of an article which referenced the USSR in such a publication as the *Australian Women's Weekly* was

⁶³ *Tribune*, 'Pravda Warns Delay Serves Hitler', 24 June 1943, 2.

⁶⁴ *Tribune*, 'Pravda Warns Delay Serves Hitler', 24 June 1943, 2.

⁶⁵ *Tribune*, 'Soviet Accuses Allies Of Broken Pledge', 12 August 1943, 1.

⁶⁶ *Tribune*, 'Soviet Accuses Allies Of Broken Pledge', 12 August 1943, 1.

⁶⁷ *Tribune*, 'A Woman With A Rifle', 17 February 1943, 4.

Australian Women's Weekly, 'Highest Soviet award for girl snipers', 13 March 1943, 20.

⁶⁸ *Australian Women's Weekly*, 'Highest Soviet award for girl snipers', 13 March 1943, 20.

⁶⁹ *Tribune*, 'A Woman With A Rifle', 17 February 1943, 4.

⁷⁰ *Tribune*, 'A Woman With A Rifle', 17 February 1943, 4.

⁷¹ *Australian Women's Weekly*, 'Highest Soviet award for girl snipers', 13 March 1943, 20.

⁷² *Australian Women's Weekly*, 'Highest Soviet award for girl snipers', 13 March 1943, 20.

unheard of. The *Women's Weekly*, a glossy, tabloid magazine, was best known for its articles on fashion, celebrities and kitchen recipes and tips. Like the articles which appeared in the *Grenfell Record* (discussed in the previous section), the editorial from the *Women's Weekly* demonstrated the increase in pro-Soviet discourse which was emerging in the strangest of places in the Australian media in 1943.

The role of the USSR in fighting the war was also discussed periodically in parliament. The role of the Soviet Union, and the general efforts of the Red Army, were mentioned on seven separate occasions throughout the year. There were also several dozen briefer exchanges on the topic of war which cropped up in the context of other debates. Curiously, discussions regarding the USSR only took place in January, February and September – a pattern which was also applied to debates on life within the USSR. One possible reason for this is that, during the first two months of 1943, the USSR was particularly at the forefront of public attention because it was during these months that the epic struggle at Stalingrad reached its climax. The burst of parliamentary interest in the USSR in September might possibly be related to the ALP's success in August's federal election. It was during these first few months of the new session that Labor began to lay down plans for post-war reconstruction, and also emphasise Party policy on Allied relations and Australian involvement in war.

The tone of parliamentary discussion about the role of the USSR in the war was generally positive. On several occasions, both the Australian government and the opposition expressed their 'greatest admiration for the Red Army's magnificent fight'.⁷³ Even former critics of the USSR from the Liberal Party were inclined to join the chorus, celebrating the patriotism of the Russians who, to protect their homeland, were willing 'to fight and die ... under any form of government'.⁷⁴ This, Billy Hughes claimed, was 'the secret of Russia's magnificent resistance, of its sacrifices, of its successes', and should be studied in order to ensure similar victories for Australia.⁷⁵ The Minister for External Affairs in the Labor Government, Doc Evatt, argued that, despite the great victories that had been won in late 1942/early 1943, Australians should not lose their interest in Europe. Nor should they allow their concern with the progress of the Pacific War blind them to the importance of European affairs, especially those involving the USSR. According to Evatt: 'European colonies are our neighbours in the Pacific, and one of the three great powers of Continental Europe, the Soviet Union, is also a world power and will be a great force in the Pacific of to-morrow. Therefore the peace, order and good government of Europe are vital to us.'⁷⁶

⁷³ CPD, *Red Army Day*, 26 February 1943, 1057.

⁷⁴ CPD, *Governor-General's Speech*, 29 September 1943, 177.

⁷⁵ CPD, *Governor-General's Speech*, 29 September 1943, 177.

⁷⁶ CPD, *Governor-General's Speech*, 23 September 1943, 9.

In other political literature, such as that published by the CPA or other pro-Soviet commentators, the war was, of course, a popular topic of discussion. Ellery's *Eyes Left*, for example, began with a short introductory section which praised the Soviet commitment to the war against Fascism. Ellery claimed that the war was 'doing more than killing and maiming', it was 'disrupting the psychological structure upon which [mankind's] attitude to life is based', and called for the utmost support for the Red Army in defeating the Fascist forces.⁷⁷ Moreover, Ellery claimed that it had been the anti-Soviet stance of the nations of Western Europe in the 1930s, especially Britain and France, which was in part responsible for the outbreak of war. Fear of the Soviet Union had led the British and French to appease Nazi Germany and spurn all the efforts of the USSR to build an anti-Nazi coalition.⁷⁸ The Soviets had even resorted to 'begging' the British to work with them to contain the threat posed by Hitler but had been ignored. As a result, the USSR had been left with only one option – to win time for itself by signing the non-aggression pact with Germany.⁷⁹ Ellery concluded his discussions of the origins of war by arguing that the West should learn from past mistakes and follow more closely the example provided by the USSR:

Should the enemy conquer the Soviet Union and the democracies, war will have destroyed civilisation. Should the allied nations triumph it will be in their power to destroy war – but only if the people themselves, following the example of their Soviet allies, assume the power to guide their own destinies.⁸⁰

Another document published in 1943 was the report of the CPA's 12th Party Congress. Although the event had been held in November 1938, publication of the report had been delayed by the ban on the CPA, imposed by the Menzies government in 1940. Along with the report, there was a supplementary section which highlighted the significance of the Congress not only on the world on the cusp of war in 1938 but also to the nature of struggle against Fascism in 1943. According to the report, the Congress had met in 1938 'in a tense atmosphere of struggle against fascist reaction'.⁸¹ The main purpose of the Congress had been to highlight the dangers of the international situation at that time, particularly in light of the failure of Appeasement. However, the primary function of the document was to justify and rationalise the Soviet-German Pact of August 1939. According to the report, the pact was commonly 'misrepresented' and misunderstood. The real blame for the Pact lay at the door of the British and French governments, who had undermined 'Collective Security against the rising threat of Nazi Germany'. British and French betrayal of Czechoslovakia at the Munich Conference, and refusal to enter into a military alliance with the USSR at the time of negotiations in Moscow were the root cause of

⁷⁷ Reginald S. Ellery, *Eyes Left*, 5.

⁷⁸ Reginald S. Ellery, *Eyes Left*, 12.

⁷⁹ Reginald S. Ellery, *Eyes Left*, 12.

⁸⁰ Reginald S. Ellery, *Eyes Left*, 13.

⁸¹ L.L. Sharkey, *Congress report on the work of the C.C. from the 12th to the 13th Party Congress* (Sydney: Communist Party of Australia, 1943), 1.

consternation.⁸² The arguments deployed in the document were rather convoluted and unconvincing. In one paragraph, the CPA called for staunch resistance to Nazi Germany. Then, shortly afterwards, it attempted to justify the fact that, between 1939 and 1941, the USSR had actively cooperated with Nazi Germany to carve up much of Eastern Europe.

A main objective of the report on the 12th Congress was to provide instruction to all CPA members and sympathisers, and to create a seamless narrative that would both explain away an inconvenient episode in the past and reaffirm commitment to the USSR in the present and future. The report asserted that the CPA could never be 'intimidated or cajoled into deserting its Marxist-Leninist principles'.⁸³ The CPA would, therefore, always support the world's only Marxist-Leninist state, the USSR. Any nation or government that sought to harm the USSR was an enemy of the CPA. In 1938, the report explained, various governments and political parties in the West – the conservatives in Britain (led by Neville Chamberlain) and Australia's Joseph Lyons, in particular – had posed as democratic but in fact only been interested in defending their class interests, even if that meant collaborating with Fascism. Appeasement and rejection of Soviet efforts to build a system of collective security had resulted in the outbreak of war. In 1941, however, the nature of war had been transformed by the German attack on the Soviet Union and the subsequent formation of a military alliance between the USSR and the Western powers. The primary duty of all Communists was to support the international struggle against Fascism, to promote friendship with the USSR, and to consign German and Italian Fascism to hell.⁸⁴

As we shall see shortly, Australian conservatives and anti-Communists were sceptical about the sincerity of the CPA's change of heart regarding the war effort, and the Communists faced constant accusations of cowardice and 'somersaulting'.

The USSR and the post-war world

The USSR was discussed in a variety of contexts in public discourse in Australia in 1943. As we have seen, two topics that attracted much attention were everyday life in the USSR and the role of the Soviet Union in the war. A third context within which the Soviet Union was frequently mentioned was the discussion of the terms and conditions of peace – and, more specifically, the division of lands and assets that would take place in the aftermath of victory. As with the discussion of Soviet life and the role

⁸² L.L. Sharkey, *Congress report on the work of the C.C. from the 12th to the 13th Party Congress*, 4.

⁸³ L.L. Sharkey, *Congress report on the work of the C.C. from the 12th to the 13th Party Congress*, 5.

⁸⁴ L.L. Sharkey, *Congress report on the work of the C.C. from the 12th to the 13th Party Congress*, 8.

of the USSR in war, public discourse about the nature of the post-war world was generally much more sympathetic towards the USSR than had been the case in previous years.

Perhaps the clearest indicator of this change was the tenor of public discussion about the future of Poland. Between 1939 and 1941, conversations regarding Polish-Soviet relations in the mainstream newspapers had focused overwhelmingly on the aggression and expansionism of the Soviets, who, it was claimed, were only interested in 'carving up' Poland and imposing Communism on the annexed regions of the country.⁸⁵ The tone of newspaper articles on Polish-Soviet relations in 1943 was starkly different. It was now acknowledged that the Russians had a legitimate claim to eastern Poland, for much of this land was inhabited by Byelorussians (White Russians) and Ukrainians and had been seized by the Poles during the Polish-Soviet War of 1920.⁸⁶

The coverage of the Soviet-Poland border issue was extensive in both the mainstream and Communist press. Articles were generally sympathetic to the Soviet position and critical of the position taken by the Polish government-in-exile in London. Even the more conservative papers were willing to 'rebuke' the London Poles for their hostility to the USSR.⁸⁷ On 3 March alone, three articles were published in Western Australia, New South Wales and Tasmania which reported on the details of a Soviet reply to the Polish declaration, which had been issued on 25 February.⁸⁸ Echoing the claims of the USSR, all three articles were sceptical about the motives of the Poles who, it was claimed, were failing to recognise the 'historic rights of the Ukrainian-Byelo-Russian (White Russian) peoples to be united within their national States'.⁸⁹ In its commentary on a speech made on behalf of the Soviet government, by an unidentified broadcaster on Moscow Radio on 2 March, the *Sydney Morning Herald* claimed that the Poles were imperialistic and that their position on the issue of the Polish-Soviet border was contrary to the terms of the Atlantic Charter.⁹⁰ The Polish government-in-exile was accused of adopting a 'policy of plundering'⁹¹ which was all the more inappropriate given the fact that the Poles were clearly unable to liberate themselves, and would have to rely on the Red Army to drive out the Germans.⁹²

Unsurprisingly, *Tribune* reports were extremely supportive of the Soviet Union's position on the Polish frontier issue. Citing *Pravda*, one article argued that the anti-Soviet position of the Polish government-in-

⁸⁵ T.B. Millar, *Australia in peace and war*, 101.

⁸⁶ *Braidwood Review and District Advocate*, 'Russia's Day', 9 November 1943, 4.

⁸⁷ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Rebuke for Poland – Soviet Maintains Slav Rights', 3 March 1943, 8.

⁸⁸ *West Australian*, 'Russia and Poland – Frontier Issue – Soviet Reply – Censorious Attitude', 3 March 1943, 3.

The Sydney Morning Herald, 'Rebuke for Poland', 3 March 1943, 8.

Mercury, 'Charge Against Poles – Favour "Plundering" Policy, Moscow Declares', 3 March 1943, 2.

⁸⁹ *West Australian*, 'Russia and Poland', 3 March 1943, 3.

⁹⁰ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Rebuke for Poland', 3 March 1943, 8.

⁹¹ *Mercury*, 'Charge Against Poles', 3 March 1943, 2.

⁹² *Daily News*, 'Poles Silent On Soviet Note', 28 April 1943, 1.

exile was directly contrary to the interests of the Polish people. Under German occupation, there was 'not a single Polish town, not a single village, and not a single family ... in which Hitler's hangmen have not left bloody traces'.⁹³ It was the Germans who were the enemy of the Polish people, not the Soviets. For this reason alone, the Soviets and Poles should band together. By seeking to stir up hostility to the USSR, the Polish government-in-exile was simply playing 'Hitler's game' – for Hitler's only hope in staving off defeat was to promote disunity amongst his enemies.⁹⁴ The *Tribune* further argued that the territorial claims made by the Polish government-in-exile were unfounded because the area in question had been seized under questionable circumstances during the Polish-Soviet War of 1920. At this time, in a gesture of good faith following the horrors of the First World War, Lenin had ceded the territory to the Poles in the name of peace. As recognition of this friendship and generosity, the great sacrifice made by the USSR on behalf of the Poles, and especially in the interest of the native peoples of the region, the *Tribune* argued that the goodwill of the USSR should now be reciprocated.⁹⁵

The *Tribune* also commented extensively on the international conferences held in Quebec, Moscow and Tehran, in August, October and September, respectively. In its coverage of these events, the *Tribune* trumpeted the contribution of the USSR to the war against Nazism. Commenting only briefly on the Quebec Conference, in which only Britain and America were represented, the *Tribune* praised the Soviets' 'preference for deeds instead of words' and their actions which 'without pausing for a conference on ways and means of defeating the Axis' was leading the way to victory in Europe.⁹⁶ Naturally, the *Tribune* showed more interest in the Moscow Conference and lauded its decisions, which included the establishment of an agreement between the 'principal world forces', for 'unified strategy and post-war security'.⁹⁷ In its comments on the Tehran conference, the *Tribune* claimed that 'the whole of democratic Australia' welcomed 'the historic decisions reached by Marshal Stalin, Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt'.⁹⁸ 'With perseverance and vigilance', the *Tribune* argued, the path to victory – 'the earliest possible victory' – was now 'mapped out'.⁹⁹

On only a handful of occasions were the plans for peace discussed within parliament, and in even fewer debates was the USSR's rights and position discussed. In fact, in reports on the meetings of the leaders of the 'Big Three', Stalin and the Soviet Union was only mentioned once – in reference to his absence from the Casablanca conference, held in January 1943.¹⁰⁰ Despite being 'cordially invited' by Churchill

⁹³ *Tribune*, 'Polish Reaction Plays Hitler's Game – Provocations Must Be Ended', 5 May 1943, 1.

⁹⁴ *Tribune*, 'Polish Reaction Plays Hitler's Game', 5 May 1943, 1.

⁹⁵ *Tribune*, 'Soviet Reply to Polish Government', 10 March 1943, 2.

⁹⁶ *Tribune*, 'Red Army Shows The Way', 26 August 1943, 3.

⁹⁷ *Tribune*, 'West Invasion Should Follow Moscow Talks', 28 October 1943, 1.

⁹⁸ *Tribune*, 'Communist Party CC Hails Victory Pact Of Teheran', 9 December 1943, 1.

⁹⁹ *Tribune*, 'Communist Party CC Hails Victory Pact Of Teheran', 9 December 1943, 1.

¹⁰⁰ CPD, *International Affairs*, 27 January 1943, 4.

and Roosevelt to attend the meeting, Stalin was recorded as 'unable to leave [the USSR] ... on account of the great offensive which he himself, as commander-in-chief, was directing.'¹⁰¹ Reassurance was given to the senate in this statement that the Anglo-American representatives had fully informed Stalin of all necessary outcomes of the conference. The fact that these momentous occasions were so rarely mentioned in the Australian parliament is surprising. The silence about the USSR's role in foreign policy will be assessed at length in the analytical section at the end of this chapter.

Not all Soviet sympathisers were convinced by such assurances that the Casablanca Conference had not deliberately excluded the USSR. It would have been better, the *Tribune* argued, had Britain and the USA postponed the conference until Stalin was able to attend to represent his country's interests but respected the Soviet preference of actions over words.¹⁰² Pro-Soviet groups were also disgruntled at the failure of the Western Allies to acknowledge 'the enormous weight of the war' which was being 'successfully beared' by Russia alone.¹⁰³ As in the case of the Quebec Conference seven months later, it seemed unfair for the Anglo-Americans to be able to sit around flapping their gums while the Soviets fought to achieve victory against the common enemy on behalf of all the Allied countries.

The leader of the UAP, Robert Menzies, had a different take on the failure of the British and Americans to include the Soviets at Casablanca and Quebec. Such Anglo-American collaboration on matters of post-war planning was not intended to exclude any of the other Allied countries. However, 'in organizing world peace it is a good thing to proceed by one firm step at a time and, if there are peoples who by instinct understand each other and have by instinct and practice the same desire for peace and hatred of aggression' these peoples should work together as closely as possible in the interests of all.¹⁰⁴ Independent talks between the British and Americans were not against the interests of the USSR, but were rather an extension of the friendship forged between the two countries many years before the USSR joined the Allied powers. The media debate on the Casablanca Conference demonstrated that, even at the height of Allied cooperation, conflict was already starting to surface. As will be shown in the subsequent chapters, conflicts such as these – which would eventually develop into the Cold War – would impact significantly upon the nature of discourse about the Soviet Union in Australia.

¹⁰¹ CPD, *International Affairs*, 27 January 1943, 4.

¹⁰² *Tribune*, 'Roosevelt-Churchill Conference – Soviet Offensive', 3 February 1943, 1.

¹⁰³ CPD, *International Affairs*, 27 January 1943, 4.

¹⁰⁴ CPD, *Governor-General's Speech*, 24 September 1943, 58.

The USSR, Australia and Britain

In May 1942, the British and the Soviet Union formally concluded a Treaty of Alliance. The Treaty was 'warmly endorsed' by the Australian government. Subsequently, there was much discussion in both parliament and media about the relationship between the USSR and the British Commonwealth.¹⁰⁵ Even in the mainstream press, articles praised 'the mighty United States of Soviet Socialist Republics', the 'saviour of civilisation', and the strengthening of relations between the Soviets and the West.¹⁰⁶ There was renewed interest in the relationship between the USSR and the British Commonwealth after the opening of the first Australian Legation to the USSR under William Slater in January 1943, and the opening of the Soviet Legation in Canberra in the following March. Prior to this, Australia and the USSR had minimal contact with each other, not just because of Australian hostility to the USSR, but also because the Soviet government had considered Australia 'entirely without influence, a remote, antipodean British dependency'.¹⁰⁷ However, by 1943 a new and friendly relationship between the two states seemed to be emerging.

A number of articles were published in state and national newspapers that discussed the diplomatic exchange between the USSR and Australia. Two articles, for example, were published in the *Horsham Times* and *The Argus* which dealt with Slater's departure for the USSR and another on return to Australia.¹⁰⁸ Another two articles were published in *The Mercury* and *The West Australian*, which described the establishment of the Soviet Legation in Australia.¹⁰⁹ Of the two articles pertaining to Slater's stay in the USSR, which lasted from January to October 1943, the first mainly consisted of a description of the city of Kuibyshev, to which the Soviet government had been evacuated, and where the Australian Legation would be stationed. The second article was a short account of Slater's experiences in the USSR, and reported the diplomat's pride in being part of Australia's establishment of 'happy and harmonious relations with that great country'.¹¹⁰ Slater reflected on the Russian people's 'devotion, fortitude and courage that was almost unparalleled in world history' and called for heightened recognition of the amazing efforts being made by the Soviets.¹¹¹ These sentiments were echoed in a report on the Soviet Minister to Australia's speech, given at Victorian May Day celebrations, in November 1943. M. Andre Vlasov was welcomed by 'a tremendous ovation'. His speech, which was

¹⁰⁵ T.B. Millar, *Australia in peace and war*, 105.

¹⁰⁶ *Braidwood Review and District Advocate*, 'Russia's Day', 9 November 1943, 4.

¹⁰⁷ T.B. Millar, *Australia in peace and war*, 121.

¹⁰⁸ *Horsham Times*, 'Memories of life in Soviet Russia – Interesting address by Hon. W. Slater – Pleasant Sunday Afternoon in Horsham Theatre', 22 October 1943, 3.

Argus, 'Russia Now Has Two Capitals-Moscow and Kuibyshev – Mr Slater Will Live in Kuibyshev, but He Will See Moscow's Wonders, Too', 30 January 1943, 8.

¹⁰⁹ *Mercury*, 'Illiterate Nation To Mighty Power In 26 Years', 8 November 1943, 7.

West Australian, 'Soviet Press Attache – An Interesting Visitor', 22 December 1943, 2.

¹¹⁰ *Horsham Times*, 'Memories of life in Soviet Russia', 22 October 1943, 3.

¹¹¹ *Horsham Times*, 'Memories of life in Soviet Russia', 22 October 1943, 3.

well received, emphasised the need for a united Allied effort to inflict the 'decisive blows' that were necessary if the Nazi forces were to be totally destroyed.¹¹² Whilst 'closer and more fruitful collaboration between Britain, America, and Russia' had been established, Vlasov called for an extension of this 'foundation', with Australia and the Soviet leading by example.¹¹³

The most comprehensive coverage of the diplomatic exchange and the development of the Soviet Legation to Australia was offered by the *Tribune*. Similar to the articles from mainstream newspapers, *Tribune* reports reflected on the 'great enthusiasm' of both Australian and Russian diplomats towards furthering relations between the two countries.¹¹⁴ The CPA newspaper also reported on Slater's experiences, claiming that the Minister to Russia found 'the morale of the Soviet people was the highest in the world'.¹¹⁵ The *Tribune* also supported Slater's assertion that immense national pride made possible the rapid advances in industry and agriculture, the superior levels of employment and the enviable incentives afforded all Soviet workers.¹¹⁶

Considering the importance the *Tribune* placed on Slater's position in bolstering Australian-Soviet relations, it is worth noting that the *Tribune* reported more extensively on the former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Joseph Davies, than on the Australian Minister to Russia. On three separate occasions Davies' views on the USSR, expressed after his return to the USA, were quoted in the pages of *Tribune*. Davies was reported as saying that, in terms of fulfilling its treaty obligations, its contribution to the war effort and the determination of its citizens, the record of the Soviet Union was 'as fine ... as that of any nation on earth'.¹¹⁷

A particularly thought-provoking series of articles published by *Tribune* did not relate in any obvious way to the developing relationship between Australia and the Soviet Union. Rather unexpectedly, the Communist newspaper revived the issue of Trotskyism, and particularly the emergence of neo-Trotskyite groups within Australia and other Western nations. In its reports on the Trotskyist revival, the *Tribune* asserted that Leon Trotsky, a former senior member of the CPSU who had been exiled by Stalin in 1929, was a Gestapo agent.¹¹⁸ The *Tribune* claimed that, prior to his death, by the hand of one of his 'quislings' in Mexico, Trotsky was in close communication with Rudolf Hess.¹¹⁹ Trotsky, it was alleged, had claimed to be a Communist but in fact he had never been loyal to the Party, to Lenin or to

¹¹² *The Mercury*, 'Illiterate Nation To Mighty Power In 26 Years', 8 November 1943, 7.

¹¹³ *Mercury*, 'Illiterate Nation To Mighty Power In 26 Years', 8 November 1943, 7.

¹¹⁴ *Tribune*, 'Labor Unity Was Keynote of ACTU Conference – Soviet Link', 1 July 1943, 3.

¹¹⁵ *Tribune*, 'No "Post-War Problem" In Soviet Union', 24 June 1943, 3.

¹¹⁶ *Tribune*, 'No "Post-War Problem" In Soviet Union', 24 June 1943, 3.

¹¹⁷ *Tribune*, 'Ambassador Praises Soviet Integrity – Tribune Special', 10 June 1943, 8.

¹¹⁸ *Tribune*, 'The White-Collared Trotskyites', 10 March 1943, 4.

¹¹⁹ *Tribune*, 'Trotskyite Who Killed Trotsky – Sentenced by Mexican Court', 28 April 1943, 4.

the USSR. He and his followers had simply pretended to be Communists in order to try and infiltrate the Soviet system, destroy it from within, and reinstate capitalism.¹²⁰ The revival of such a threat alarmed the *Tribune*. Western capitalists, it was claimed, were again trying to undermine international Communism, and, due to a favourable swing in popularity towards the USSR, would again try to employ similar tactics to decay Communist groups from within.

The claim that Trotsky had acted in the service of the Nazis was, of course, a fabrication. However, the *Tribune* was keen to drive home the point in order to emphasise its claim that Trotskyism in Britain and Australia was 'a mighty desperate menace'. Trotskyites, the *Tribune* argued, were 'poisoning the atmosphere between Russia and the rest of the democratic nations'.¹²¹ Trotskyites constituted a '5th Column within the working class movement' and were particularly active and influential in Australia and Britain, but also in the USA and China.¹²² According to the *Tribune* 'Trotskyite Quislings',¹²³ posing as socialists within the Labor Party, should be weeded out and condemned as the worst kind of traitorous 'criminals'. All Trotskyists should be expelled from the labour movement and, if found to be nationals of a foreign country, deported from the Australia.¹²⁴ Between December 1942 and September 1943, the *Tribune* published 13 articles on the resurgence of Trotskyism in the Western world, making this particular issue one of the most extensively debated in the newspaper that year.

Of all the topics covered in this chapter, the relationship between Australia and the USSR was the issue which warranted the greatest attention in Commonwealth parliamentary debates. The legitimacy and operations of the CPA were vigorously debated, which is hardly surprising given the fact that the ban on the CPA had only been lifted in December 1942, and that there were still many MPs who harboured strong opinions on the subject. There was much discussion of the reasons why Menzies had introduced the ban in the first place, and whether the lifting of the ban by Labor was in the best interests of the Australian public.¹²⁵ There were also some rather less heated conversations in which MPs discussed the implications of the growth of the CPA for Australian federal politics and the future of the labour movement.¹²⁶

Another topic which briefly attracted the attention of parliament was the rumour of a 'College for Revolutionaries' being opened in Melbourne by the Communist Party of Victoria.¹²⁷ The 'Communist

¹²⁰ *Tribune*, 'Trotsky's Foul Technique – "World Revolution" Meant Capitalism in Russia', 24 March 1943, 4.

¹²¹ *Tribune*, 'L. Harry Gould and W.A. Wood Tell – How Russia Smashed Its Fifth Column', 22 July 1943, 4.

¹²² *Tribune*, 'Tool of Fascism', 9 December 1942, 4.

¹²³ The name 'quisling' was commonly attributed to the group of traitorous collaborators, which followed the example of Trotsky in attempting to suppress Communist and socialist movements and uprisings.

¹²⁴ *Tribune*, 'Alias for Quislings', 13 January 1943, 3.

¹²⁵ CPD, *Communist Party*, 28 January 1943, 114.

¹²⁶ CPD, *Communist Party*, 28 January 1943, 111.

¹²⁷ CPD, *Communist Party – College for Revolutionaries*, 4 March 1943, 1182.

University', described as 'a class for commissars', caused great concern within the parliament. Members of both sides of the senate called for an immediate halt and investigation into the institution 'before untold damage' could be done.¹²⁸ The main concern for the government, and indeed all non-Communist politicians, was that the curriculum taught at the 'College for Revolutionaries' would be modelled on a political structure which fundamentally opposed Australian democratic principles, and threatened the stability of domestic life.¹²⁹ The school would be independently run and regulated with free-licence to indoctrinate pupils on an ideology which promotes violence and revolution, and the acquisition of control by any means necessary. This not only endangered the entire foundation on which Australian politics was built but encouraged national disunity, at a time when solidarity was of the utmost importance. Although this issue was only afforded momentary attention in parliament, it was perhaps one of the most important issues discussed in 1943. Generally speaking, during this time politicians expressed praise for all things Soviet, albeit through gritted teeth for some. However, this issue brought to the fore the expressions of hostility which had been typical in previous years. It also emphasised the juxtaposition maintained by politicians, which differentiated between the still hated CPA and the recently revered Soviet Union. Whilst many were prepared, at least, to tolerate the USSR, Communism in Australia was still criticised and considered unpatriotic.

'Help for Russia' was another issue afforded some importance in parliamentary discussions. The exchange of goods between Australia and the Soviet Union, it was claimed, demonstrated the willingness of the two nations to work together. During a parliamentary discussion on the issue, Sir Frederick Stewart (UAP member for Parramatta) asserted that the 'Help for Russia' program was also a display of 'the active cooperation of the United Nations in the brilliant military achievements of their Russian Ally'.¹³⁰ On 12 March, an account was given in parliament which listed some of the contributions made to the USSR by members of the United States and the British Commonwealth, ranging from sheepskins to tanks, 'miscellaneous foodstuffs' and planes.¹³¹ At no time was the assistance provided to the USSR by Australia criticised by any member of parliament.

The final topic of debate regarding the relationship between Australia and the Soviet Union concerned the diplomatic exchange which began in 1943. Curiously, the Legation was not mentioned until September, even though William Slater had been sent to Kuibyshev half a year previously. Slater, the first of three ministers to be sent to Russia throughout the 1940s, completed a 10-month residency in the USSR before returning to Australia after suffering from poor health. In one of two parliamentary

CPD, *Communist Party – College for Revolutionaries*, 5 March 1943, 1270.

¹²⁸ CPD, *Communist Party – College for Revolutionaries*, 4 March 1943, 1182.

¹²⁹ CPD, *Communist Party – College for Revolutionaries*, 4 March 1943, 1182.

¹³⁰ CPD, *Help for Russia*, 24 February 1943, 925.

¹³¹ CPD, *Answers to Questions – Help for Russia*, 12 March 1943, 1613.

records relating to the diplomat, South Australian Senator, George McLeay, offered the government his congratulations during a short reference to the diplomatic posting. According to McLeay: 'before the war there was a tendency [in Australia] to regard too lightly the Department of External Affairs'.¹³² The diplomatic exchange with the USSR had placed Australia in a strong position to develop its diplomatic profile in the post-war period. The second reference to the minister came in October, following the resignation of Slater in the same month. Prime Minister Curtin assured that the vacancy left in the foreign ministry would be filled and relations re-established, after adequate 'time to deal with the qualifications of the numerous persons ... ready to serve Australia in this capacity' had been assessed.¹³³

What to say about the USSR? A common problem

Throughout the early 1940s, the issue of the Soviet Union presented problems and difficulties for all political groups. The transition of the USSR from enemy to ally, and the impact of Communism at home, had a significant influence on determining the way that all political groups spoke in public about the Soviet Union. For conservatives, the Communists and the ambivalent ALP alike, there was no escaping the fact that what a party said about the USSR could have significant consequences for its popularity and internal cohesion.

For the conservatives in the UAP/Country Party coalition, the growing public popularity of the USSR (or, at least the diminishing public hostility to the USSR), posed an obvious problem. For many years, conservatives had made no secret of the fact that the USSR represented everything they despised. Now, however, the Soviets were no longer the enemy. It was no longer appropriate to attack, both publicly and politically, every facet of Communist theory. Moreover, there was no political capital to be gained from vehement opposition to the Soviet Union, or the principles under which the USSR operated. The public was no longer interested in hearing about the threat posed by Soviet Communism. For the most part, Australians were more impressed by the military achievements of the Red Army than they were worried about the ideology of the Soviet state.¹³⁴

To counter the problem posed by a change in perception of the Soviet Union, conservatives tended to use two strategies in their public discourse – avoidance of the issue, and deflection away from the shortcomings in UAP/Country Party approach by emphasising the weaknesses of their rivals. With

¹³² CPD, *Governor-General's Speech*, 29 September 1943, 129.

¹³³ CPD, *Australian Minister to Russia*, 12 October 1943, 317.

¹³⁴ T.B. Millar, *Australian in Peace and War*, 102.

regard to the first of these tactics, the discreet silence about matters pertaining to the Soviet Union becomes obvious through an analysis of parliamentary debates (or, more accurately, the lack of UAP/Country Party comment in the debates). Whilst the number of CPDs addressing the Soviet in 1943 was substantially less in both volume and quality of content for all parliamentary groups (an area which will be analysed in the following section), the coalition's contribution was almost non-existent. On only a handful of occasions was the Soviet Union directly mentioned by any opposition member, and in most cases the reference was made in passing, usually a simple factual reference in the course of a speech about something else.

One of the only examples of candid conservative comment was in fact made not by a UAP/Country Party member at all, but by George William Martens, a right-wing, anti-Communist member of the ALP. During a discussion about the suggested *Motion of Want of Confidence* against his own party, which stretched over two days of parliamentary discussions in June 1943, Martens suggested that some conservatives suspected the USSR had only forged an alliance with the West as a means of ensuring its national security. Once victory was assured the Soviets would return to their policies of world domination and the undermining of democracy.¹³⁵ There would undoubtedly have been some members of both the opposition and the right-wing ALP that supported Martens' views in private but in parliament no other MP made similar remarks.

The mainstream press was also uncharacteristically hushed on the Soviet issue, during 1943. For example, when I conducted a detailed search of articles discussing the USSR in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1943, I was able to locate only nine.¹³⁶ By contrast, in 1946 no fewer than 31 articles were printed in *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Although the number of reports turned up in the same search of *The Sydney Morning Herald* in 1950 were considerably lower than the 1946 figure, they still outnumbered those from 1943 by a ratio of roughly 2:1.

Whilst newspapers, such as *The Sydney Morning Herald*, were uncharacteristically quiet regarding the Soviet Union, some papers remained politically engaged. One such newspaper was the Fairfax publication offshoot of *The Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Sunday Herald*. Following the defeat of the UAP/Country Party in the 1943 federal election, and with the party at 'its lowest ebb, Menzies obtained political and financial support for the formation of a new party under his leadership'.¹³⁷ The first task was to rename the UAP. The *Sunday Herald* was instrumental in reinventing the UAP, and was a primary supporter of renaming the conservatives the Liberal Party. The newspaper approved of the new name

¹³⁵ CPD, *Motion of Want of Confidence*, 22-24 June 1943, 248.

¹³⁶ The search was conducted via the Trove digitised archives, using four keywords – Soviet, Union, USSR & Russia.

¹³⁷ Gavin Souter, *Company of Heralds: A century and a half of Australian publishing by John Fairfax Limited and its predecessors 1831-1981* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1981), 271.

because the old name was too associated in the public mind with the impersonal interests of big business, and had become a 'liability' in a changing political environment.¹³⁸

Although the newly-formed Liberal Party downplayed anti-Soviet sentiment, the party's policy never changed and was never truly abandoned; it was just temporarily muffled. The conservatives recognised there was no political capital to be made from vocalising anti-Soviet rhetoric. However, there was plenty of opportunity for the Liberals to profit by downplaying their own party's weaknesses, and discrediting their competitors by creating controversy. The ALP was the primary target of the conservatives' attacks, and constant concerns were raised regarding the strength, unity and ability of the government.

As discussed previously, the conservatives were particularly critical of the links (assumed or real) between the ALP and the CPA. They also drew comparisons between certain Labor policies, which were described as being socialist in nature, and the institution of socialism in the USSR. The ALP's proposal to nationalise 'commerce, transport, National Work, Social Service, health, housing and ... welfare', in an effort to achieve the central regulation of wealth in the post-war period, for example, was described by the Liberals as a move in the direction of Communist dictatorship.¹³⁹ Prominent Labor men, such as Doc Evatt, rebuffed these claims. According to Evatt: 'after the war, and under the Labor Party government' there was to be 'more capitalism than ever, and a growth of the capitalist class'.¹⁴⁰ The ALP also denied, both publicly and politically, 'any affiliation, or connection, with Socialism and Communism'.¹⁴¹ Regardless of the claims, Menzies' conservatives were not convinced and for the remainder of the war their thoughts could not be swayed from the notion that the ALP had something sinister to hide. Although the UAP no longer sought to discredit Labor by linking it with the USSR directly, the conservatives still caused considerable strife by alleging a connection between the ALP and the CPA.

At the opposite end of the political spectrum was the CPA. Whilst in many regards, 1943 was one of the most successful years in the Party's history, the Communists' relationship with the USSR still presented difficulties. Although the Soviet alliance was accompanied by a swing of public opinion towards 'the image of benign, peace-loving Russia, entertained by a good many Australians on the left of politics', the CPA was still burdened by the dubious positions it had taken in the past.¹⁴² The Party's attempts to create a seamless narrative for 'somersaulting' on its war participation policy, without any recognition of the inconsistencies present in the first half of the war, created much consternation amongst the CPA's

¹³⁸ *Tribune*, 'Herald Seeks A UAP By Another Name', 9 September 1943, 3.

¹³⁹ *Tribune*. 'Federal Post-War Plans'. 2 December 1942, 3.

¹⁴⁰ *Tribune*, 'They are not Socialists', 12 August 1943, 7.

¹⁴¹ *Tribune*, 'They are not Socialists', 12 August 1943, 7.

¹⁴² T.B. Millar, *Australia in peace and war*, 101.

critics. Regardless of the efforts of the CPA in the 12th Party Congress report, and the attempts of pro-Communist commentators such as Ellery, to explain away the change of heart, many Australians remained sceptical. Firstly, whilst the CPA's support for the war was welcomed, there was still much criticism of the failure of the Communists to support the war before June 1941. Questions were also raised in regards to the Party's loyalties. After all, during the first years of war, when strength and unity were most needed at home, the CPA had virulently attacked the nation's participation in what the Communists at that time described as an 'imperialist' war. Now that the Communists' Soviet masters had clicked their fingers, the CPA was suddenly behind the war effort. The fact that the CPA's change of heart had been so 'immediate and untroubled' aroused many suspicions about the depth of its commitment, whilst its refusal to acknowledge past mistakes made many Australians suspect that the Party had learned nothing.¹⁴³ 1943 may have been a good year for the CPA, but the decisive memory of past political confrontations, and the CPA's refusal to take responsibility for past wrongdoings, placed limits on the Party's ability to make friends and influence people.

Labor Party discourse about the USSR, and the consequences of this discourse on the Party's fortunes in the early- and mid-1940s, were the most interesting of any political group. The CPA was united in its sympathy for the USSR, whilst the Liberal and Country parties were united in their hostility. But in the Labor Party, attitudes towards the USSR were much more ambiguous. As a result, the issue of the USSR was more complicated for the ALP. Given the divisions within the ranks of the Party itself, too much discussion of the USSR by the Party leadership could easily lead to internal feuding. If the Party leadership made too many critical remarks about the USSR in public, it risked alienating many of its own working-class supporters, many of whom they were in danger of losing to the CPA. On the other hand, if Labor politicians said too many nice things about the USSR, they opened themselves up to criticisms from their right-wing opponents for being too friendly to the Soviet Union and, by implication, of being in cahoots with the Communists. This could result in Labor losing some of its softer supporters in the political middle ground and amongst the middle classes. Moreover, being too sympathetic in public to the Soviet Union might also increase the danger of losing working-class support to the CPA. In short, the ALP found itself in a tricky situation. Since the Party's leaders had little to gain and much to lose by saying anything at all in public about the USSR, they preferred to talk about this subject as little as possible, at least directly.

But the shadow of the USSR was still there in Labor public discourse. It was simply displaced into discussion of other topics. For example, whilst Labor leaders said very little in public about the Soviet Union, they said quite a lot in public about the CPA. In several parliamentary debates in 1943, Labor

¹⁴³ Stuart Macintyre, *The Reds*, 411.

Party leaders rejected opposition claims about the links between the two parties and reaffirmed that the ALP had no formal or informal connection with the CPA, or any sympathy with the CPA's political programme.¹⁴⁴ The CPA was equally clear that the two left-wing parties were entirely separate. A *Tribune* article from 1943 reprinted a quote of CPA President, Lance Sharkey, which had been made some years before but which represented the Party's current stance on the ALP/CPA issue. Paraphrasing Lenin, Sharkey stated that 'the ALP was a Liberal Party; that is a bourgeois party', was 'definitely not a Socialist party' and was not in any way a substitute for a group such as the Communists.¹⁴⁵ The Communists believed 'that there was nothing to choose between the two capitalist blocks since they were both belligerent' and there was no friendship between the two parties.¹⁴⁶ Sharkey went on to say that any instances of CPA support for Labor were merely an attempt to see the 'lesser of two evils' at the helm of Australian politics.

In 1943 it was thus in the interests of neither of the conservative parties or the ALP to say too much about the USSR in parliament. This is clearly borne out by a statistical comparison of references to the USSR in parliament between the years 1940, 1943 and 1946 (see *Diagram 1* below). In 1940 and 1946 there were 26 and 27 debates, respectively, which specifically referenced the Soviet Union. In 1943 there were only 22. Stark differentiations appear between 1943 and the other years, when assessing the periods of most vigorous debate on the Soviet Union in parliament. For example, in both 1940 and 1946, the period of most vigorous discussion on the USSR was during the beginning of the parliamentary term – roughly March to May. During these years there were 14 and 11 debates recorded, respectively. In the same time period during 1943, discussions were relatively quiet. In fact, in comparison with 1940, there were only half as many debates which discussed the Soviet Union during the March-May period. When compared to 1946, there were 40% less mentions of the Soviet Union in the March-May months.

Year	No. of Volumes	No. of debates, per volume, specifically referencing the USSR				Total no. of debates	Highest no. of debates in a single volume
1940	3	14	8	4	-	26	14 – Vol. 163: 17 April – 31 May
1943	4	7	5	2	8	22	8 – Vol. 176: 23 September – 15 October
1946	4	11	5	1	10	27	11 – Vol. 186: 6 March – 11 April

Table 1: Debates specifically referencing the USSR in parliament.

¹⁴⁴ *Tribune*, 'They are not Socialists', 12 August 1943, 7.

¹⁴⁵ *Tribune*, 'They are not Socialists', 12 August 1943, 7.

¹⁴⁶ Stuart Macintyre, *The Reds*, 408.

Of course, it is not just the number of parliamentary debates which is important. The content of the debates, the length and depth of each transcript and the variety of topics covered in the literature, is of much greater significance. In this regard, also, discussion of the USSR in parliament was noticeably scantier in 1943 than in either 1940 or 1946. Most of the 1943 debates which make reference to the USSR are no longer than a paragraph or two, and on no occasion was there an article which mentioned the Soviet Union more than twice. By comparison, the debates which addressed Soviet issues in 1946 were often between three and ten pages long (and occasionally even lengthier), and made frequent reference to the subject. Furthermore, when the USSR was mentioned in discussions during 1943, typically only one or two parliamentarians were involved and the comments would be better described as statements, rather than debates. In 1946, however, it was common for half a dozen or so members to participate in an active conversation regarding the Soviet Union. Moreover, in 1943, references to the USSR crop up exclusively in context of discussions on the war. By 1946, as we shall see in the next chapter, discussions of the international situation in general, and of the USSR in particular, had become hopelessly intertwined.

Conclusion

In 1943, there was considerable public discussion of the USSR in newspapers and political pamphlets. Mainstream public discourse was generally sympathetic to the USSR, and certainly more favourable than it had been in the past or would be in the future. To a degree, positive portrayals of the USSR even spilled beyond the main national and state newspapers and began to crop up in local newsheets and even recreational literature, like *Women's Weekly*. The turn to more positive discourse about the USSR was clearly a result of the military alliance with the Soviet Union and the stunning victories of the Red Army on the Eastern Front.

By contrast, there was relatively little discussion of the USSR in parliament because none of the main parties had anything to gain, and all had much to lose, from talking too much in public about the USSR. The issue was problematic for the Liberal and Country parties because saying derogatory things in public about the USSR was no longer acceptable, but being complimentary about the Soviets was contrary to their very nature. On rare occasions where they did make positive comments about the Soviet Union, conservatives generally tried to focus attention on the Russian people rather than the Communist system.

For the Labor Party, the issue of the USSR was even more problematic, partly because there were divisions in its own ranks on the subject, and partly because Labor wanted to lose neither working-class

votes to the CPA nor middle-class votes to the conservative parties. Both Labor and the conservative parties however continued to talk about the CPA, usually in a hostile manner, but neither dwelled too much on the intimate connection between the CPA and Moscow.

Since Moscow was now an ally, whereas the CPA was still an enemy, it was politically convenient in 1943 to talk as if the CPA was an independent political party, when of course everybody knew that it was not. By 1946, after the cessation of World War II, this convenient fiction was no longer necessary in Australian public discourse about the USSR. Perceptions of the Soviet Union in public discourse again began to swing to favour the more conservative views of Australians.

CHAPTER 2: 1946

Australia's opportunity to enjoy the victory of 1945 was brief. According to contemporary commentators, such as Ralph Gibson of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA), the 'atmosphere of achievement and high hopes' felt by many Australians at the end of the war soon dissipated in the face of a multitude of domestic and international problems.¹ The year 1946 was arguably one of the most important in Australia's post-war history. During this year there were important developments both in domestic politics and foreign relations, as well as a fiercely contested federal election. Concern regarding the Soviet Union's perceived imperialist expansionism, the Communist threat at home, and seemingly unending industrial conflicts dominated both public and political discourse throughout 1946. Moreover, debates about Australia's foreign relations and her domestic problems became hopelessly entangled. For Communists and anti-Communists alike, domestic issues were presented as part of a wider, international conflict.

Based on data from over 60 Australian newspapers, as well as Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates (CPD) and contemporary political pamphlets, this chapter will analyse discourse about the Soviet Union in 1946, and the impact of this discourse upon the shaping of post-war Australian politics. Comparisons will also be drawn between the data from 1946 and the literature analysed in the previous chapter, in an effort to plot patterns and fluctuations in public perception of the Soviet Union. After a brief survey of Australia's immediate post-war political and economic conditions, the chapter will look in turn at industrial relations, the controversy unleashed by former Minister to Moscow, J.J. Maloney, and public discourse about Soviet foreign policy and espionage. Certain topics, such as the intrigues surrounding Soviet spying on the West, are new to this history and demonstrate a shift in Australian treatment of the USSR. Other issues, such as Australian-Soviet diplomatic relations and industrial strife, will again be discussed, in an effort to emphasise not only continued concern over particular affairs but the development of the situation. The chapter concludes with some wider observations on the nature and significance of public discourse about the USSR in 1946.

Political and Economic Conditions in 1946

Although Australia's hardships paled in comparison to the devastation experienced in Europe and the Pacific, World War II bequeathed to Australia a range of serious political and economic concerns.² The man primarily responsible for addressing these issues was the new Labor Prime Minister, Ben Chifley,

¹ Ralph Gibson, *The Fight Goes On*, 1.

² Anthony Burke, *In Fear of Security*, 83.

who had taken over after the sudden death of the popular wartime Prime Minister, John Curtin, in July 1945. Chifley, the former Labor Party Treasurer, was much more preoccupied than his predecessor with Australia's economic stability. His reconstruction program focused on avoiding the 'enemy' of inflation.³ Wartime price controls on industrial production were continued, as was wage-pegging, in an effort to balance the budget and ensure that Australian goods remained competitive in a difficult international market. Heavy taxation on basic goods continued and consumer goods and luxuries would, at least in the short term, remain scarce.⁴ Whilst bolstering Australia's economy to some degree, Chifley's 'steely single-mindedness' also resulted in widespread industrial strife.⁵ This affected the entire population, and consequently became an issue which plagued the Australian Labor Party (ALP) for the remainder of the 1940s.⁶

The other major aspect of Chifley's post-war reconstruction plans related particularly to the standard of living in Australia. Electricity was still a luxury for many people, and only half of Australian households had access to this utility. Those lucky enough to have electricity available still had to contend with the inconvenience of regular black-outs and shortages.⁷ A mere 25% of dwellings had gas connections for heating and cooking.⁸ Only 50% of homes had indoor plumbing, and one of every four households lacked a proper bathroom.⁹ For many post-war Australian families, 'baths and bugs were common topics of conversation'.¹⁰ Families who inhabited remote rural settlements typically lived in shanty-town squalor, miles from hospitals or other amenities. During the immediate post-war years, many thousands of former farm-workers took jobs in large-scale infrastructure projects, such as the Snowy Mountains irrigation scheme. Workers often lived and worked in poor conditions and without the benefits of mechanisation. Educational opportunities for most Australians remained limited, and the workforce was seriously undertrained. During his premiership, Chifley introduced a range of policies designed to improve the 'lot in life' of ordinary Australian workers and their families, and his leadership in this area undoubtedly helped the ALP to victory in the 1946 federal election.¹¹ Welfare and healthcare systems were improved, educational opportunities increased, and employment and housing programs were established.¹² However, it would take many years before the benefits of these reforms would lift ordinary working-class Australian families out of poverty. In 1946, conditions were still grim.

³ L.F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley*, 188.

⁴ L.F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley*, 188.

⁵ Ann Curthoys & John Merritt (eds), 'The trade unions and postwar reconstruction' by Tom Sheridan, in *Better Dead than Red – Australia's First Cold War: 1945-1959, Volume 2*, 5.

⁶ Tony Griffiths, *Beautiful Lies*, 24.

⁷ Humphrey McQueen, *Social Sketches of Australia – 1888-1975*, 185.

⁸ Humphrey McQueen, *Social Sketches of Australia – 1888-1975*, 185.

⁹ Humphrey McQueen, *Social Sketches of Australia – 1888-1975*, 185.

¹⁰ Humphrey McQueen, *Social Sketches of Australia – 1888-1975*, 181.

¹¹ Tony Griffiths, *Beautiful Lies*, 22.

¹² Tony Griffiths, *Beautiful Lies*, 22.

1946 was also a significant year in terms of Australian foreign policy. Most Australians still considered themselves an integral part of the Anglo-American alliance. Britain was still considered by many to be the 'motherland', whilst the USA was widely recognised as the economic and military powerhouse of the western world, and vital to Australian interests.¹³ Given this close relationship with Britain and the USA, the Australian government was generally supportive of the Western powers during the early phases of the Cold War. This necessarily led the Australian government to adopt a much more hostile attitude towards the USSR, its erstwhile wartime ally. Between 1945 and 1946 there was a major shift in public discourse regarding the Soviet Union. During the first months of 1945, while the war was still being waged, Australian politicians and diplomats publicly praised the USSR for its 'vast contribution' to the war effort.¹⁴ Such comments were duly reported by journalists and frequently appeared in newspapers and, by and large, discourse reflected the optimistic and pro-Soviet sentiments common in literature from 1943. By 1946, however, positive statements about the USSR had all but disappeared from the lips of mainstream politicians and from the pages of all except Communist newspapers.¹⁵ Instead, there were frequent references to the 'expansionist urges' of the Soviet Union, as well as allegations about the brutality with which the Soviet government treated its own population.¹⁶

One of the most striking features of political discourse in 1946 is that international and domestic developments were seen by most contemporary observers as intimately connected – a significant shift from Australia's individualistic (and, at times, isolationist) policies typical of the late-World War era. This shift in perception occurred regardless of whether the perceived links between domestic and foreign affairs were in fact true, or purely imaginary. The most obvious example of this inter-connectedness was the debate concerning trade union militancy in Australia, an issue which became increasingly prominent in both public and political discourse during 1946.

Trade unionism or treason?

Of all the topics discussed in newspapers and parliaments during 1946, perhaps the most contentious concerned workers' rights, trade unionism, and the wave of strikes that swept across Australia. Between July and October alone, there were no fewer than 392 strikes in Australia, which incurred the loss of 763,791 working days.¹⁷ The onset of mass industrial unrest during 1946 altered the original path of

¹³ Geoffrey Bolton, 48.

¹⁴ *Army News*, 'People of the Soviet Union Friendly to Australia', 14 July 1945, 4.

¹⁵ Ann Curthoys & John Merritt (eds), *Australia's First Cold War 1945-1953 - Volume 1*, 49.

¹⁶ *Worker*, 'Soviet Imperialism – Immense Territories Annexed', 24 June 1946, 8 & 20

¹⁷ CPD, *Industrial Disputes – July to October, 1946*, 27 November 1946, 697.

Chifley's domestic policies. Industrial conflicts also contributed significantly to the suspicion with which most politicians and political commentators regarded the Soviet Union.

In large part, the strikes were a result of workers' frustration at the failure of the government and employers to meet their demands for basic improvements. As far as many Australian workers were concerned, their continued poverty was a poor reward for all the sacrifices they had made during the war.¹⁸ The strikes began in the first half of 1946 in the eastern states. By the middle of 1946, they had spread across Australia and involved, at their peak, some 1.2 million workers.¹⁹ The strikes had a serious impact on the Australian population and plunged the country into a national crisis. Political and public discourse polarised between militant unionists at one extreme and anti-Communist conservatives at the other. Controversy regarding the strikes became vitriolic, particularly after the publication of several explosive articles by the former Australian Minister to Moscow, J.J. Maloney. Multiple debates erupted in parliament, in the pages of newspapers, and across the air waves. A year-long debate between trade unionists, state representatives and employers ensued, which eventually resulted in the division of the Australian labour movement and the controversial amendment of the 1904 Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act.²⁰

The media attention given to industrial strikes during 1946 was immense. In July 1946 alone, no fewer than 39 articles appeared in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, detailing various strikes and union action throughout Australia. Many of the shorter articles that appeared in mainstream presses were of a purely factual nature, but there were also numerous longer articles and editorials that sought to place the strikes in their wider political context, which for most commentators was the Cold War. In fact, during 1946 no other domestic issue was linked as explicitly to international developments. Almost all the articles which appeared in mainstream regional and state newspapers were hostile to the strikes and to the unions that were involved in them, but not to the strikers themselves. Instead, most commentaries blamed the strikes on Communists who, it was claimed, were exploiting the grievances of the workers to undermine both the economy and the democratic system in Australia as a prelude to revolution.²¹ It was further argued that the Communists were using undemocratic and even illegal methods in order to maintain their grip on ordinary workers. Explosive allegations were made, for example, in the *Courier-*

¹⁸ Ralph Gibson, *The Fight Goes On*, 77.

¹⁹ Tom Sheridan, *Division of Labour: Industrial Relations in the Chifley Years, 1945-1949* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press Australia), 53.

²⁰ The Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act was passed in 1904 and, despite the changes in Australia's economic conditions due to the First and Second World Wars and the Great Depression, amendments to the original act were largely ineffective and irrelevant considering the vast change which Australian economics and industry had undergone during the previous 42 years.

²¹ Communist Party members were able to secure the leadership positions of several Australian trade unions, at the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) Conference in December 1945, leading many industrial employers and politicians to believe that the CPA was planning an infiltration of the Australian labour movement.

Mail and *Cairns Post* newspapers, about Australian 'Commos', acting 'under instruction from Moscow', indoctrinating ordinary workers and even attacking those who wavered.²²

The ultimate villain of the piece, as far as most of the articles in the mainstream press were concerned, was Moscow. The Kremlin, it was alleged, was pulling the strings of the Communist Party (CPA) and using it as a Trojan Horse to destabilise Australia. Such articles typically consisted of sweeping allegations and little attempt was made to substantiate them with concrete facts. Union militants were described as traitors whose only loyalty was to Stalin and the Soviet Union, and who were 'not welcome in any part of Australia'.²³ H.H. McFie, who wrote the 'Public Opinion' column of the *Tasmanian Advocate*, went as far to say that Communist union leaders were no better than the Nazi war criminals, and 'should be tried for their lives' for inciting such chaos.²⁴ Sentiments such as these demonstrated the vitriolic tone of mainstream press coverage of the strikes, and the intertwining of domestic issues with international conflict. The articles from non-Communist newspapers also showed the metamorphosis of public and political opinion in regards to the Soviet Union, which took place in two short years between the close of 1943 and the beginning of 1946 – a change which occurred almost as instantaneously as a light switch being turned on and off.

In the press campaign against the strikes, another tactic that was frequently used by mainstream newspapers was to attack the 'myths' and 'fairy stories' that Communists told about the USSR.²⁵ Far from being a workers' paradise, as the Communists claimed, the Soviet Union was in reality a workers' dystopia. Significantly, very little concrete evidence was produced to substantiate these allegations about poverty and the suppression of workers' rights in the USSR. *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported on 17 May, for example, that 'any breach of industrial discipline or objection to Government orders is regarded by the Soviet trade unions as a criminal offence' punishable by death or incarceration, although not one specific example is given to support these aspersions.²⁶ Ambiguous statements were made about the 'rather heavy' taxation of workers' wages.²⁷ According to an article published in the *Worker* in June 1946, the cruelty of the Soviet government would have put even the most terrible of the tsars to shame.²⁸ Such negative depictions of the condition of workers in the USSR were particularly common in newspapers in the Eastern states, and especially in strike-addled Queensland.²⁹ Between

²² *Worker*, 'Why Russians Don't Go On Strike – Bosses Won't Allow It', 10 June 1946, 7.

²³ *Cairns Post*, 'Bitter Pill For Communists', 15 July 1946, 5.

²⁴ *Advocate*, 'Public Opinion – Communism', 19 January 1946, 6.

²⁵ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Answer To Mr. Thornton On Unions In the Soviet', 1 March 1946, 2.

²⁶ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Industrial Offences Bring Drastic Penalties', 17 May 1946, 2.

²⁷ *Advertiser*, 'How The Russian Worker Is Paid – Taxation Described As "Rather Heavy"', 22 May 1946, 6.

²⁸ *Worker*, 'Soviet Imperialism – Immense Territories Annexed', 24 June 1946, 8 & 20.

²⁹ *Cairns Post*, 'Address To Meat Workers – Effects Of Strikes', 13 June 1946, 4.

Cairns Post, 'Bitter Pill For Communists', 15 July 1946, 5.

Worker, 'Ernie Thornton's "Pressure Group" – Candid Confession', 3 June 1946, 6.

May and November, Queensland newspapers printed eight articles, all of which criticised domestic striking and Communism, and additionally the Soviet workplace. Soviet workers were described by each of the Queensland newspapers as 'industrial serfs' whose lives knew no freedom from 'the iron heel of a Police state'.³⁰

In anti-Communist, anti-Soviet newspapers, the name of one trade unionist was vilified more than any other. Ernest 'Ernie' Thornton was the proudly militant Secretary of the Federated Ironworkers Association (FIA), as well as a prominent member of the CPA. In October 1945, Thornton attended the founding meeting of the World Federation of Trade Unions in Paris. He then visited the Soviet Union, where he remained until December 1945 as a guest of the Soviet trade union movement. Upon Thornton's return to Australia, the Communist unionist presented himself as the leader of the ever-increasing number of militant trade unions, which he labelled 'pressure groups'.³¹ A firm believer in the model of 'powerful, energetic and free' Soviet trade unionism, Thornton was a constant thorn in the side of establishment.³² The anti-Communist press made three main charges against Thornton. First, he was accused of being a traitor to Australia. According to former ALP Prime Minister William 'Billy' Hughes,³³ for example, writing in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Thornton was 'in our community but not of it. His spiritual home is in Russia. It is to Russia that he looks for light, guidance, and orders', even when those orders are contrary to the good of Australia.³⁴ The second charge against Thornton was that he was exploiting the strikes for personal and political gain. The *Cairns Post*, among other publications, claimed that 'clean living, decent independent, Australian workers, are being led by the noses, like cattle, by a lot of people who are more interested in foreign doctrines and ideologies than in you as true-blue Australians'.³⁵ Thirdly, the FIA leader was accused of deliberately lying about the true condition of workers in the Soviet Union. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, in particular, frequently condemned the 'idyllic' picture that Thornton painted of the USSR.³⁶

There was only one national newspaper in Australia that consistently supported the strikes – the *Tribune*. This Communist newspaper was established in 1939 to replace the *Worker's Weekly*. In 1946,

Worker, 'Why Russians Don't Go On Strike – Bosses Won't Allow It', 10 June 1946, 7.

Courier-Mail, 'Risks In Powers Scheme', 20 August 1946, 3.

Courier-Mail, 'Union Attack on Bevin and U.K. Foreign Policy', 19 November 1946, 3.

Courier-Mail, 'Red Paradise Or Workers' Slum', 15 May 1946, 3.

Worker, 'Maloney Tells Thornton – Debate On Soviet To-morrow Night', 13 May 1946, 1.

³⁰ *Worker*, 'Why Russians Don't Go On Strike – Bosses Won't Allow It', 10 June 1946, 7.

³¹ *Tribune*, 'Thornton On Union's Role', 7 May 1946, 1.

³² *Tribune*, 'Letters to the Editor – SMH Suppression', 5 March 1946, 4.

³³ It is important to note that Hughes had been ALP Prime Minister during the First World War but had left the Labor Party in 1916, after an electoral defeat. He then joined the Liberal Party in 1944, and became vocally unsupportive of Labor policies and politicians.

³⁴ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Answer To Mr. Thornton On Unions In the Soviet', 1 March 1946, 2.

³⁵ *Cairns Post*, 'Address To Meat Workers – Effects Of Strikes', 13 June 1946, 4.

³⁶ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Answer To Mr. Thornton On Unions In the Soviet', 1 March 1946, 2.

the *Tribune* was a bi-weekly publication, circulated throughout all Australian states and territories from the headquarters of the CPA, Marx House, in Sydney. Not only did the *Tribune* cover the strikes in greater detail than any other national newspaper, but it also published more articles about the USSR than all the other national newspapers combined. Many of the articles that appeared in the *Tribune* in 1946 explicitly referred to the coverage of the strikes by mainstream newspapers such as the *Daily Telegraph* (NSW) and, to a lesser extent, *The Sydney Morning Herald*. According to the *Tribune*, the journalists who wrote for these newspapers were 'liars' and that it was 'a hell of a misfortune to the Australian toilers that these fellows ever learned to write'.³⁷ According to Thornton, writing in the *Tribune* in March 1946, the 'orthodox policy' of the mainstream press was to suppress the truth about the strikes.³⁸

Three main points were embedded in the coverage of the strikes by the *Tribune*. Firstly, the *Tribune* argued that the strikes were justified because Australian workers were being exploited by capitalists and monopolists. Not only were the employers blocking 'real progress' in the fight to ensure worker safety and satisfaction, but they were hiding behind the façade of the newly established Arbitration Courts.³⁹ Secondly, the *Tribune* vigorously denied the allegation that Communists were manipulating the strikes. Instead, Communist militants were depicted in heroic terms, as fighters who defended the interests of working people. In May 1946, for example, the *Tribune* quoted a speech made by Ernie Thornton at the National Conference of the FIA:

I do not think there should be one voice raised to suggest that we can get justice for the workers or that we ever do get justice without exerting the maximum pressure we can accumulate as a result of our collective organisation... Today we must go flat out in every possible direction for increases in wages, improvements in working conditions, shorter working hours, increased holidays, sick leave, seniority and so on.⁴⁰

The final argument made repeatedly by the *Tribune* was that the USSR showed the way forward for the Australian working class. Numerous articles appeared which celebrated the 'genuine democracy' of Soviet trade unions.⁴¹ Workers in the USSR, claimed the *Tribune*, enjoyed complete freedom of speech, and through their trade unions they exerted a strong influence on the day-to-day operations of their enterprises.⁴² Members of the Soviet Electrical Workers' Union had, for example, enforced a stoppage

³⁷ *Tribune*, 'Daily Telegraph Shuts Eyes To Truth On Russia', 21 May 1946, 8.

³⁸ *Tribune*, 'Letters to the Editor – SMH Suppression', 5 March 1946, 4.

³⁹ *Tribune*, 'Thornton On Union's Role', 7 May 1946, 1.

⁴⁰ *Tribune*, 'Thornton On Union's Role', 7 May 1946, 1.

⁴¹ *Tribune*, 'Praises USSR Unions' "Genuine Democracy", 4 June 1946, 2.

⁴² *Tribune*, 'Constructive Criticism Keynote Of Big Soviet TU Conference', 19 April 1946, 4.

of a Moscow factory after the plant manager continually neglected to improve working conditions.⁴³ On another two occasions, the *Tribune* printed reports made by British delegates regarding the “vigour and enthusiasm” of Soviet workers’ and the superiority of the Soviet railway union.⁴⁴ On 28 May, the *Tribune* reported the removal of Soviet railway managers and controllers by disgruntled workers. Trade unionists, the *Tribune* claimed, had even been successful in influencing the planning and implementation of the Fourth Five-Year Plan, whilst the theme of the Soviet trade union conference had been ‘constructive criticism’.⁴⁵

In addition to the Communist and anti-Communist newspapers, there was also a selection of papers that were generally supportive of the ALP and the labour movement. Such newspapers were predominantly regional publications with a smaller readership and they had little impact on a national scale. Queensland’s *Morning Bulletin*, the *Northern Standard* (NT) and *Western Mail* (WA) were amongst the more widely circulated pro-Labor newspapers. Such newspapers dealt with the issue of the strikes in a very different manner to Communist and mainstream newspapers. To begin with, their coverage was largely factual, and they refrained from taking a clear stance either in favour of or against the strikers. Very occasionally, articles in such newspapers hinted that the strikers’ demands were legitimate. Quoting ALP candidate Dr Leigh Wallman, the *Northern Standard* stated that ‘strikes are the only weapon the working man has against exploitation’ and to implement Liberal ‘big-stick methods’ which denied workers’ this opportunity was unconstitutional.⁴⁶ Very little mention was made of the role of Communists in the unions, and, in stark contrast to both the Communist and mainstream press, the connection between the strikes and the USSR was rarely discussed. Typically, the furthest that such newspapers went in their analysis of the tumultuous state of Australian industrial relations was to argue that the problems of capitalism engendered economic instability, and eventually turmoil, and that it was the role of local and national authorities to provide a credible way forward for the working people.⁴⁷

The strikes of 1946, and the role of domestic and international Communism within the strikes, were widely discussed not just by newspapers but also in the Federal Parliament. In the first half of the year, there were four debates on this issue, the most important of which occurred on 20 March 1946.⁴⁸ During this lively debate, five members (Robert Menzies [Liberal], Norman Makin [ALP], Percy Spender [Liberal], John McEwen [Country Party] and Kim Beazley [ALP]) argued that the influence of the CPA in the trade union movement was dangerous to the country, since the ‘spiritual home’ or the Communists

⁴³ *Tribune*, ‘USSR Trade Union Orders Stoppage’, 7 May 1946, 2.

⁴⁴ *Tribune*, ‘Explains Why USSR Unions Are Different’, 24 May 1946, 2.

⁴⁵ *Tribune*, ‘Constructive Criticism Keynote Of Big Soviet TU Conference’, 19 April 1946, 4.

⁴⁶ *Northern Standard*, ‘Wallman Gives Territory Labour Policy Speech - Progress and Development Under Control of the People’, 13 September 1946, 4.

⁴⁷ *Morning Bulletin*, ‘Communist Conference’, 19 February 1946, 2.

⁴⁸ CPD, *International Affairs*, 20 March 1946, 451-460.

was located not in Australia, but in Russia.⁴⁹ Liberal and Country Party MPs used the industrial turmoil as an occasion to denounce not only the CPA and its affiliated trade unions, but also the ALP, which they accused of being 'servile and silent' in the face of Communist infiltration of the Australian workforce.⁵⁰ John McEwen, the Country Party MP for the division of Indi, argued that the CPA, through its influence in the unions, now controlled roughly a million workers.⁵¹ Moreover, because of the close relationship between the unions and the ALP, there was now a real danger that Australia would have 'its foreign policy shaped outside and applied ... by a non-governmental authority', namely by the CPA on behalf of the Soviet Union.⁵²

As in 1943, Labor Party members responded to these allegations by arguing that the ALP had no connection with the CPA, that trade unions in Australia remained politically unaffiliated and independently operated, and that that the Liberal and Country parties were simply inventing the alleged connections.⁵³ However, the interventions (or lack thereof) of Labor Party MPs in these early debates about the strikes were brief, defensive, and rather unconvincing. The conservatives strongly dominated the overall discussions of trade unionism. On each of the nine occasions which discussed the strikes in depth, and the Communist links to the crisis, opposition members were the instigating parties of the debate. ALP members were often forced to forego debates because of lack of information, or submit delayed written responses to clarify simple questions, even when those questions pertained to Labor policy.⁵⁴ It was clear the Liberal Party had found in these early debates about the strikes, the unions, and their relationship with the CPA and the Soviet Union an ideal issue for political leverage.

Between July and November 1946, as the industrial crisis deepened, there were a further 12 parliamentary debates that specifically addressed the issue of Communist and Soviet influence in Australian trade unions. There were also several dozen debates relating either to specific strikes or to parliamentary proposals to amend the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act of 1904, in order to make striking more difficult. As in the first half of 1946, the Liberal MPs continued to argue that militant trade unionists were acting 'under the direction of the Soviet Government', and that the militants posed a serious danger to Australian democracy.⁵⁵ Moreover, according to the Liberals, the ALP was either unable or unwilling to do anything about the subversive influence and illegal behaviour of Communists in the Australian labour movement. According to the former ALP Prime Minister William 'Billy' Hughes (now Liberal Member for North Sydney), speaking in a debate on 4 July 1946:

⁴⁹ CPD, *International Affairs*, 20 March 1946, 451.

⁵⁰ CPD, *International Affairs*, 20 March 1946, 451.

⁵¹ CPD, *International Affairs*, 20 March 1946, 451.

⁵² CPD, *International Affairs*, 20 March 1946, 451.

⁵³ CPD, *Industrial Unrest – Ironworkers: Activities of Communist Party*, 6 August 1946, 3728.

⁵⁴ CPD, *Industrial Unrest – Statement by Mr. Justice Brennan*, 4 July 1946, 2205.

⁵⁵ CPD, *International Affairs*, 14 November 1946, 203.

'Communism still directs the Government and defies the law'.⁵⁶ Some Liberal and Country Party members even claimed that the CPA was trying 'to disrupt and ruin the country by overthrowing the normal form of government' in a 'bloody revolution'.⁵⁷ Whilst statements such as these were hyperbolic, such sentiments were typical of anti-Communist, anti-Labor politicians.

During the first half of 1946, the response of the Labor Party to the allegation that it was soft on Communism had been rather unconvincing. As in 1943, the ALP stood divided on the Soviet issue and this division (which played right into the hands of the opposition) inhibited Labor's party unity and ability to govern effectively. In the second half of the year, by contrast, the ALP began vigorously defending itself against the allegations made by the opposition parties. Rather than skirt around the claim that the strings of the labour movement were being pulled by Moscow, Labour MPs dismissed such allegations as 'myths' designed to promote fear, which did not merit serious consideration.⁵⁸ Frank Forde, ALP member for Capricornia, was particularly dismissive of opposition claims that the ALP was in 'secret cahoots' with the CPA.⁵⁹ According to Forde, the attempts of the Liberal and Country parties 'to link the Labor party with the Communist party, merely because there are some Communists associated with this industrial dispute, will fail to influence thinking people who know that every State Labor conference and federal Labor convention has agreed that no member of the Communist party will be allowed to join a branch of the Australian Labor party'.⁶⁰ When Australia went to the polls in September 1946, it became clear that the Liberal and Country parties had failed in their attempt to smear the Labor Party. Despite the strikes and continuing economic problems of Australia, the ALP won 43 of the 74 seats in the House of Representatives, and 16 of the 19 contestable seats in the Senate. The ALP's victory (their second, following the Party's success in the 1943 federal election) reaffirmed that Australians were uninterested in conservative political extremism. Upon his re-election, Prime Minister Chifley announced his belief that although negative media and political attention plagued the ALP throughout 1946, 'the people made up their minds six months ago: they judge our policy, not our propaganda'.⁶¹

In addition to Parliamentary debates, political pamphlets addressing the strike epidemic were published on occasion during 1946. These pamphlets were used as a means publicly to distribute political discourse, especially by those parties and affiliates which were unrepresented in the House of Representatives and the mainstream press. During 1946, the CPA released several booklets discussing domestic and Soviet industrial relations. The transcript of Ernie Thornton's speech at the NSW Ironworkers' Federation national conference was printed, as was his pamphlet *The Soviet Workers and*

⁵⁶ CPD, *Industrial Disputes*, 4 July 1946, 2223.

⁵⁷ CPD, *Industrial Unrest*, 4 July 1946, 2205.

⁵⁸ CPD, *Industrial Unrest – Ironworkers: Activities of Communist Party*, 6 August 1946, 3728.

⁵⁹ CPD, *Industrial Disputes*, 4 July 1946, 2226.

⁶⁰ CPD, *Industrial Disputes*, 4 July 1946, 2226.

⁶¹ L.F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley*, 227.

their Trade Unions. The former, which was reproduced and widely distributed to Australian industrial workers, detailed the position of the Communist-led unions on arbitration.⁶² Thornton avoided direct reference to the Soviet Union throughout the speech; however, his suggested amendment of the FIA union objectives to implement the 'abolition of the wages system and the introduction of socialism' demonstrated his loyalties.⁶³ The latter pamphlet reflected on Thornton's experiences during his visit to the USSR of October to December 1945. The booklet, which documented the workings of the Soviet industrial workplace, was amongst the most widely distributed pamphlets of 1946 and required a second printing.⁶⁴

The CPA pamphlet, *Labor Betrayed*, released in 1946 and written by the Party President, L.L. Sharkey, was another example of Communist political discourse. Though the pamphlet did not specifically refer to particular strikes, it was released at the height of the conflicts and must be understood in that context. In the pamphlet, Sharkey analysed the conflict between the CPA and its affiliates, with the ALP. According to Sharkey, the impasse was a result of an orchestrated campaign by Federal and NSW governments to curb the influence of Communists in the trade union movement.⁶⁵ The Soviet Union was mentioned on every page of the pamphlet, with the exception of the cover and foreword pages. Sharkey complained indignantly about the harassment of union activists by 'war-mongers [in this case both the government and the opposition] who want to isolate the Soviet Union'.⁶⁶ Sharkey also hit back at accusations that the CPA was the servile tool of the USSR by arguing that the Soviet model of industry would benefit the vast majority of domestic industrial workers, but was also a tool which needed to be tailored to the specific needs of the Australian situation.⁶⁷ Union leaders who defied the rules and arbitration system imposed by the Australian government in order to further socialist progress were not traitors, because the current system only served the interests of the capitalists.⁶⁸

Maloney vs. the Soviet Union

Public debates became particularly bitter after the return of Australia's Minister to the Soviet Union, J.J. Maloney, in late February 1946.⁶⁹ Maloney, a veteran of the Australian labour movement and the ALP, had been appointed as Minister to Moscow in 1943 following the premature repatriation of Australia's

⁶² Ernest E. Thornton, *Thornton on Arbitration* (Sydney: Newsletter Printery, 1946?), 1.

⁶³ Ernest E. Thornton, *Thornton on Arbitration*, 3.

⁶⁴ *Tribune*, 'Maloney Pushes Thornton's Book', 21 May 1946, 5.

⁶⁵ L.L. Sharkey, *Labor Betrayed* (Sydney: Current Book Distributors, 1946), 2.

⁶⁶ L.L. Sharkey, *Labor Betrayed*, 2.

⁶⁷ L.L. Sharkey, *Labor Betrayed*, 4.

⁶⁸ L.L. Sharkey, *Labor Betrayed*, 4.

⁶⁹ *Worker*, 'Maloney Tells Thornton Debate On Soviet To-morrow Night', 13 May 1946, 1.

first diplomat, William Slater. In 1943, a time when relations between Australia and the USSR had been more favourable, the inaugural ministerial exchange had been deemed successful; in 1946, when perceptions of the Soviet Union had drastically changed, opinions became much more critical. Opposition members asserted that Slater had been too sympathetic towards the USSR and that the appointment of another Soviet sympathiser would be folly. The anti-ALP and anti-Soviet clique argued that by pursuing too actively a positive relationship with the USSR, Australia could upset their most precious allies – the UK and USA. Secondly, by appointing a pro-Soviet, left-wing minister, the ALP left itself open to Communist manipulation and infiltration which could result in the erosion of Australia's political structure. By employing a vocal anti-Communist, such as Maloney, who heralded from the Catholic right-wing of the Labor Party, the ALP avoided much criticism on this point.⁷⁰

From the point of view of the Labor government, therefore, Maloney had been the ideal choice for the position of Minister to the Soviet Union. He was well known for his moderate views and his history of campaigning against the influence of Communists in the labour movement. Given his impeccable credentials as an anti-Communist, even the Liberals would find it difficult to accuse him of being in league with the Soviets.⁷¹ During his time in office, Maloney achieved little of note. Upon his return to Australia, however, he wrote a series of articles, and gave a number of speeches, in which he excoriated both the Soviet Union and the home-grown Communists who served its interests. Comparisons were drawn between Maloney's vitriolic anti-Sovietism and the pro-Soviet propaganda of the CPA, and specifically the elegiac descriptions of the USSR made by Ernie Thornton.⁷² The resulting controversy catapulted Maloney from relative obscurity to temporary fame.

The Maloney saga first came to public attention in late April 1946, after Maloney's independent broadcast on the 2FC radio station. During the 26 April radio show, Maloney criticised the Soviet rationing system and, in particular, the meagre payments which were afforded typical Soviet workers.⁷³ The broadcast was heard by Thornton, who wrote privately to Maloney on 30 April to deny the former minister's allegations. Further to his criticisms, Thornton challenged Maloney to a public debate in the Sydney Town Hall on 13 May. Maloney printed the details of Thornton's letter, as well as a personal rebuttal. In his response, Maloney warned of the impending battle he intended to wage 'against individuals and organisations who give their first allegiance to any foreign political power'.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ *West Australian*, 'The Other Side – Arguments in Favour – Reply to Mr Maloney', 14 May 1946, 8.

⁷¹ *Tribune*, 'Opposition Eager to Use Maloney to Bait Govt.', 19 March 1946, 6.

⁷² *Advertiser*, 'Mr Maloney's Articles on Russia', 27 May 1946, 8.

⁷³ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Former Minister Tells Of Soviet Conditions To-day', 27 April 1946, 4.

⁷⁴ *Argus*, 'Former Minister On Russian Conditions – Offers to Debate With Communist Party Leader', 11 May 1946, 5.

The debate organised for 13 May failed to eventuate, however, and Thornton was left to address 2,000 attendees at the Sydney Town Hall alone.⁷⁵ According to the *Tribune*, the only newspaper to report on the abortive debate, Thornton was 'given a great ovation' whilst Maloney's podium remained vacant.⁷⁶ The *Tribune* failed to report, however, that on 7 May Maloney had requested from Thornton a change of time and date, a fact of which was reported by the *Worker* on the morning of 13 May.⁷⁷ The Communists' initial attempts to discredit the Minister to Moscow's observations went unheeded by all but a niche audience. Maloney, on the other hand, had managed not only to avoid recrimination over his preliminary faux pas but had also obtained a momentary advantage over his opponents.

A substitute debate was organised in lieu of the 13 May debacle. An ABC radio broadcast was organised by Maloney to take place at 7:15pm, on 14 May 1946. In this instance, both Maloney and Thornton were present, and the issues pertaining to the condition of Soviet workers and citizens were discussed. The *Worker* published the most extensive reports of the debate in the non-Communist media and delivered, unsurprisingly, glowing accounts of Maloney's arguments.⁷⁸ The *Worker* published two articles which ridiculed the arguments put forward by the CPA and dismissed the performance of Thornton in the debates with Maloney as 'feeble'.⁷⁹ According to the *Worker*, Thornton could come up with only one explanation for the problems of the USSR, namely, the impact of war, an excuse which he trotted out over and over again. Thornton's 'monotonous voice' left the impression that he had not prepared properly for the debates, that he was poorly educated, and that he was a complete 'embarrassment to the whole of the Communist Party of Australia and the trade union movement in general'.⁸⁰ Maloney, by contrast, had spent three years living in the USSR and was well informed. On the basis of his superior knowledge and experience, Maloney had been able to refute every single point that had been made by Thornton.⁸¹

It was at approximately the same time that Maloney began penning a regular column in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, entitled 'Inside Russia Today'. Maloney used his column to describe in detail his experiences in the USSR and to comment on almost every aspect of the everyday lives of Soviet citizens. In particular, he focused on the working and living conditions of ordinary Soviet workers. He did not paint a pretty picture. According to Maloney, the Soviet system of management was incompetent, brutal and corrupt. Soviet workers were underfed, poorly clothed, and lived in slum-like squalor.⁸² The

⁷⁵ *Tribune*, 'Thornton Exposes Maloney's Tales – Soviet Life Described', 17 May 1946, 3.

⁷⁶ *Tribune*, 'Thornton Exposes Maloney's Tales – Soviet Life Described', 17 May 1946, 3.

⁷⁷ *Worker*, 'Maloney Tells Thornton – Debate On Soviet To-morrow Night', 13 May 1946, 1.

⁷⁸ *Worker*, 'Maloney Tells Thornton – Debate On Soviet To-morrow Night', 13 May 1946, 1.

Worker, 'Conditions in Soviet Russia – Thornton Off Balance In Radio Debate', 20 May 1946, 4/20.

⁷⁹ *Worker*, 'Maloney Tells Thornton – Debate On Soviet To-morrow Night', 13 May 1946, 1.

⁸⁰ *Worker*, 'Maloney Tells Thornton – Debate On Soviet To-morrow Night', 13 May 1946, 1.

⁸¹ *Worker*, 'Maloney Tells Thornton – Debate On Soviet To-morrow Night', 13 May 1946, 1.

⁸² *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Former Minister Tells Of Soviet Conditions To-day', 27 April 1946, 4.

elections in which Soviet workers participated were a farcical sham.⁸³ Home-grown Communist claims of workers' freedoms, or of any insinuation that conditions in Australia were inferior to those in the Soviet Union, were slammed by Maloney as dangerous fabrications which required rebuttal (namely by him) in the public sphere.⁸⁴ In virtually every way, Maloney presented a continued political challenge to the CPA, Ernie Thornton, and the unions under Communist control.

Maloney's column sparked a public controversy. The *Tribune* reported on the Maloney affair in detail and berated both the former Minister to Moscow and all those who supported him. As soon as Maloney began to publish his column in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Tribune* responded by denouncing his 'laughable inventions'.⁸⁵ According to the *Tribune*, Maloney was guilty of a 'gross' lack of professionalism because he had allowed his personal biases to influence his diplomatic duties.⁸⁶ Full-page articles appeared regularly in the *Tribune*, refuting Maloney's 'distortions' and giving an alternative view on everyday life in the USSR based on the experiences of Soviet nationals and foreign visitors.⁸⁷

In addition to the Communist criticisms, instances of resistance also appeared in mainstream presses. Whilst reports on the strikes in the mainstream press were uniformly anti-Communist and anti-Soviet, Maloney's writings provoked a more differentiated response. Many of those who wrote letters to *The Sydney Morning Herald* as well as other newspapers to protest against Maloney's outbursts were clearly not themselves Communist, but they nonetheless thought it was unprofessional for a former diplomat to discuss matters pertaining to his former job in such strident language.⁸⁸ R.M. Crawford, for example, wrote a letter to the *Adelaide Advertiser* in which he quoted at length from the *Guide to Diplomatic Practices* – in particular to the sections which stipulated that a recently retired diplomat 'ought not to publish any writing on international politics either anonymously or with his name'.⁸⁹ Naturally, Maloney also provoked the ire of those sympathetic to the Soviet Union. J.R. Bound of Devonport in Tasmania, for example, wrote the 'Public Opinion' column of the *Tasmanian Advocate* newspaper on 19 August. In his article, Bound expressed his 'unshakable' belief that the experiment of socialism in the USSR would

⁸³ *Mercury*, 'Inside Russia Today – Working Hours Fall To 48 But Same Output Decried', 17 May 1946, 3.

Advertiser, 'How The Russian Worker Is Paid – Taxation Described As "Rather Heavy"', 22 May 1946, 6.

⁸⁴ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Former Minister Tells Of Soviet Conditions To-day', 27 April 1946, 4.

⁸⁵ *Tribune*, 'Limbless War Hero's Reply To Maloney – "Laughable Inventions"', 4 June 1946, 8.

⁸⁶ *Tribune*, 'Limbless War Hero's Reply To Maloney', 4 June 1946, 8.

⁸⁷ *Tribune*, 'Maloney Is Exposed By Prof. Crawford – "Twisted, Misleading Pictures Of Soviet"', 31 May 1946, 8.

⁸⁸ *Advertiser*, 'Mr. Maloney's Articles On Russia – To the Editor', 27 May 1946, 8.

Advocate, 'Public Opinion – Letters To The Editor', 19 August 1946, 2.

West Australian, 'The Other Side – Reply to Mr. Maloney', 14 May 1946, 8.

⁸⁹ *Advertiser*, 'Mr. Maloney's Articles On Russia', 27 May 1946, 8.

Advocate, 'Public Opinion', 19 August 1946, 2.

West Australian, 'The Other Side', 14 May 1946, 8.

soon prove successful, despite the fact that the regime was still in its infancy. According to Bound, sympathy for the Soviet Union was a growing force amongst all peace-loving Australians.⁹⁰

Furthermore, whilst there is no reason to believe that Maloney ever lied about his experiences in the Soviet Union, or that the views of his critics were any more credible, it is worth noting that he could hardly be considered to have been a reliable witness. Reports from fellow diplomats and Russian correspondents allege that Maloney was set-up in comfortable yet isolated accommodation throughout his stay in Moscow, and demonstrated little inclination to immerse himself in the Soviet culture. This isolation caused the minister to formulate an 'invented' impression of Soviet conditions, and also encouraged feelings of resentment towards the people he believed were exiling him.⁹¹ His hatred of the Soviet system was almost visceral. Furthermore, many of Maloney's observations were based on out-of-date or incomplete evidence, and on numerous occasions he made sweeping allegations that he failed to support without any concrete evidence.⁹²

The final stage in the Maloney saga unfolded in November, when the former minister again came under scrutiny by Australian unionists. Maloney had planned to present his 'Soviet myth exploded' lecture at the Melbourne Town Hall on 9 November, a date which coincided with the visit of the First Soviet Ambassador to Australia, Nikolai Lifanov. Officials representing 11 unions, as well as diplomats, judges, clergymen and the like signed a petition to enforce a postponement of Maloney's address.⁹³ The petitioners claimed that the speech would be 'offensive in the worst possible taste' given the ex-minister's position on the Soviet Union.⁹⁴ Despite the plea reaching Minister for Foreign Affairs, 'Doc' Evatt, the request failed. Consequently, Lifanov and the Russian delegation absented themselves from the diplomatic dinner, an incident which led to a further deterioration of diplomatic relations between the Soviet and Australian governments.⁹⁵

The Maloney affair was discussed to an extent in the federal parliament. On each of the four occasions that the matter was raised between March and July 1946, the ALP refused to be drawn into the debate and attacked neither Maloney nor his critics. The lack of significance afforded to the Maloney affair in

⁹⁰ *Advocate*, 'Public Opinion', 19 August 1946, 2.

⁹¹ *Tribune*, 'Diplomats "Invent" Anti-Soviet Tales', 3 May 1946, 3.

⁹² *Advertiser*, 'No Opposition In Soviet Elections – Elected Members "Merely Set Of Rubber Stamps"', 17 May 1946, 8.

Mercury, 'Inside Russia Today – Working Hours Fall To 48 But Same Output Decreed', 17 May 1946, 3.

The Sydney Morning Herald, 'Inside Russia To-day No.4 – Industrial Offences Bring Drastic Penalties', 17 May 1946, 2.

West Australian, 'Inside Russia – Censor Isolate People From World', 17 May 1946, 9.

Advertiser, 'How The Russian Worker Is Paid – Taxation Described As "Rather Heavy"', 22 May 1946, 6.

N.B. The articles listed above are by no means the completely exhaustive collection of Maloney-penned reports. His words and works were re-printed several times throughout the May to August 1946, as well as combined to create new articles. The articles above merely represent the original writings of Maloney, upon their first publication in the various newspapers.

⁹³ *Barrier Miner*, 'Move To Prevent Address By Mr. J.J.Maloney', 7 November 1946, 1.

⁹⁴ *Barrier Miner*, 'Move To Prevent Address By Mr. J.J.Maloney', 7 November 1946, 1.

⁹⁵ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Soviet Envoy Stays Away', 11 November 1946, 3.

parliamentary debates demonstrated that the media's claim that the former minister had 'damaged' the ALP was sensationalised.⁹⁶ As Labor saw it, Maloney, 'having exercised his right of criticism ... would be the last to complain of an answer given to his remarks'.⁹⁷

Soviet Foreign Policy – Spies or Scapegoats?

In addition to the debates about the role of the USSR in the strikes of 1946, and the controversy over the articles and speeches of J.J. Maloney, there was also much discussion, both in the newspapers and in parliament, of the wider international situation during the early phases of the Cold War. There was much speculation about the 'true' intentions of the Soviet Union, in both Europe and Asia. Though these debates rarely made explicit the connection between the Cold War and events in Australia itself, they in fact served a vital purpose in controlling public perceptions through manipulative discourse.

Soviet foreign policy was much discussed in the newspapers. Several articles appeared in the mainstream press which focused on Stalin's alleged plan for 'world domination'.⁹⁸ One of the fiercest critics of Soviet foreign policy was the *Worker*. On 24 June 1946, for example, the paper published two lengthy articles which described in detail the massive expansion of Soviet influence in Eastern Europe, and the 'immense booty' that had been taken from the region by the Soviets.⁹⁹ The *Worker* claimed that the pre-war Soviet Union policy of isolation had been totally abandoned as a result of newfound confidence. The USSR, it was claimed, had dominated the various post-war treaty negotiations and now constituted a real threat to the security of the Anglo-American nations and their colonies.¹⁰⁰ In the *Tasmanian Advocate*, Soviet forces were accused of aggression against, rather than liberation of, South-East European satellite countries.¹⁰¹ In contrast to Soviet claims of assistance to 'the Danube States', the newspapers revealed that the 'true' aim of the Red Army was 'to compensate the Soviet people at the expense of the vanquished'.¹⁰²

The *Tribune* also discussed the international situation in depth. In fact, the issue attracted more editorial comment in the *Tribune* in 1946 than any other. Moreover, during 1946, the *Tribune* published 22 feature articles, the main argument of which was that the USSR was leading the global 'struggle for

⁹⁶ *Tribune*, 'Says Maloney Broadcast Damaged ALP', 28 May 1946, 6.

⁹⁷ CPD, *Australian Minister To Russia – Comments By Mr. Maloney*, 4 April 1946, 987.

⁹⁸ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Is Stalin Planning World Domination?', 23 November 1946, 2.

⁹⁹ *Worker*, 'Soviet Imperialism – Immense Territories Annexed', 24 June 1946, 8 & 20.

¹⁰⁰ *Worker*, 'Soviet Imperialism – Immense Territories Annexed', 24 June 1946, 8 & 20.

¹⁰¹ *Advocate*, 'Soviet Aims In S.E. Europe', 2 December 1946, 2.

¹⁰² *Advocate*, 'Soviet Aims In S.E. Europe', 2 December 1946, 2.

peace, restoration and progress'.¹⁰³ The British and American governments, by contrast, were denounced as 'rotten imperialists', anti-democratic and anti-Soviet.¹⁰⁴ With the exception of December 1946, at least two prominent articles, several hundred words in length, were published each month. The *Tribune* also rebutted the claims made by the mainstream press about Soviet expansionism. In response to mainstream media claims of extensive post-war territorial gains by the criminally 'drunk' Red Army, the *Tribune* hypothesised that the Soviets had annexed only the land to which it was entitled.¹⁰⁵ The *Tribune* claimed that the USSR legitimately reclaimed the land which had been unjustly occupied by the Nazis during World War II, and occupied territories which had been promised to the Soviet Union during negotiations at the Potsdam and Yalta Conferences.¹⁰⁶

Soviet foreign policy was also much discussed in the federal parliament in 1946. From the first session of the House of Representatives in March, through to the final session in December, members returned over and over again to the question: 'What is the underlying intention and purpose of the Soviet Union?'¹⁰⁷ Many ALP members, such as Herbert 'Doc' Evatt (Minister for Foreign Affairs, Barton), Eddie Ward (East Sydney), Norman Makin (Hindmarsh) and John Gaha (Denison), argued that the primary goal of the USSR was defence. Having been invaded across its western border on so many occasions in the past, and having suffered so much in the latest war, it was only natural that the Russians should now seek to construct a buffer zone of friendly states in eastern and central Europe.¹⁰⁸ According to ALP member for Flinders, Tom Ryan, Russia 'above all' sought safety, and any expansionist initiatives were instances not of aggressive imperialism but security.¹⁰⁹

The Liberal opposition, led by the former Prime Minister Robert Menzies, took a much less charitable view of Soviet intentions. When Labor MPs argued that the Soviets were simply trying to protect themselves, they retorted with the question: 'self-protection against whom?'¹¹⁰ All the countries who had invaded Russia in the past – Poland, France, Germany – had been devastated by the war, and neither Britain nor the USA had any ambition to threaten the territorial integrity or security of the Soviet Union. According to the Liberals, Soviet foreign policy was essentially aggressive, disguised behind the façade of defensive policy. Liberal MPs pointed out that the Soviet annexations of the states of East-Central Europe was not that different to the policy of Lebensraum that had been pursued by the Germans during World War II.¹¹¹ The Labor MPs, by seeking to excuse Soviet expansionism, were in fact

¹⁰³ *Tribune*, 'Soviet's May Day Call For Peace, Unity', 3 May 1946, 2.

¹⁰⁴ *Tribune*, 'Churchill Calls For War On Soviet', 1 March 1946, 1.

¹⁰⁵ *Tribune*, 'Why They Slander The Red Army', 8 February 1946, 4.

¹⁰⁶ *Tribune*, 'Soviet Food For Berlin', 8 January 1946, 7.

¹⁰⁷ CPD, *International Affairs*, 13 March 1946, 204.

¹⁰⁸ CPD, *International Affairs*, 13 March 1946, 205.

¹⁰⁹ CPD, *International Affairs*, 22 March 1946, 559.

¹¹⁰ CPD, *International Affairs*, 22 March 1946, 551.

¹¹¹ CPD, *International Affairs*, 20 March 1946, 440-441.

condoning it, and were thus guilty of appeasement. It is striking that Labor MPs seemed to struggle to come up with a convincing reply to the position taken by the Liberals. In fact, the only rebuttal to the allegations of the Liberal Party came in the form of critical reply – that is, of the former Menzies United Australia Party's (UAP) appeasement of the Nazi Party during 1933-1939.

Another issue pertaining to the USSR that cropped up occasionally in discourse from 1946 was espionage. In February, for example, there was a brief flurry of articles that discussed the alleged leak of sensitive atomic intelligence by a former clerk of the Soviet Embassy in Canada, Igor Gouzenko.¹¹² Gouzenko was a Soviet defector and had been a cipher clerk in Canada, who had been accused of mishandling atomic secrets. The incident was certainly one which deserved attention, especially given the worsening political climate, but the talk of double-agents, nuclear Armageddon and the infiltration of Soviet spies into domestic territories may have been a little extreme. Though reports on the Gouzenko affair in the mainstream press were brief, they were written in sensationalist language under explosive headlines, such as 'Canada Attacked by Soviet'.¹¹³ Significantly, the mainstream press failed to produce a single subsequent report on the affair, and no mention was made to the consequential Canadian investigation into the accusations – the Kellock-Taschereau Commission on Espionage. Essentially, the Gouzenko case became a relatively obscure side note to the overall assessment of the Soviet Union, in the mainstream media. However, in collaboration with the wider coverage of Soviet affairs became one of the most sensationalised issues discussed in public discourse, throughout the year.

By contrast, the *Tribune's* coverage of the Canadian spy case was far more comprehensive. Between February and November 1946 it published 13 large articles on the Gouzenko investigation. According to the *Tribune*, the actual act of espionage had occurred back in October 1945, but was 'not considered sufficiently important to act upon' until such time as an attack on the world labour movement would serve to discredit the Soviet Union.¹¹⁴ As one would suspect, the *Tribune* whole-heartedly supported the Soviet position and ridiculed the accusations of the Canadian government and mainstream press as nothing more than 'another instalment in the plan to turn Canada into an anti-Soviet war base for America'.¹¹⁵

In parliament, there was little discussion of Soviet spies in Canada or anywhere else. The majority of questions and debates in parliament, regarding espionage activities in Australia and abroad, were presented in the latter half of the year. 'Doc' Evatt (ALP Minister for Foreign Affairs) and Jack Holloway (Acting Attorney-General and member for Melbourne Ports) were the main speakers in the half-dozen

¹¹² *Tribune*, 'New Drive To War In "Atom Spies" Scare', 19 July 1946, 1.

¹¹³ *Mercury*, 'Canada Attacked By Soviet', 22 February 1946, 4.

¹¹⁴ *Tribune*, 'New Drive To War In "Atom Spies" Scare', 19 July 1946, 1.

¹¹⁵ *Tribune*, 'New Drive To War In "Atom Spies" Scare', 19 July 1946, 1.

parliamentary discussions, and adhered very closely to the Labor Party line that no investigations into espionage within Australia had been undertaken, or would be undertaken, because Australian state secrets had not been compromised.¹¹⁶ The recurrent badgering of the ALP by the Liberal and Country Party members, evident in all other debates of 1946, was almost non-existent in the discussions on Soviet espionage. Exchanges were usually resolved in a simple question-and-answer format, and on no occasion were the answers rendered by the ALP queried.

Three observations

If we now take a step back to try and draw some wider conclusions about the political uses of discourse about the USSR in 1946, three key points are worth noting. I shall return to these points in the next chapter in order to identify how discourse about the Soviet Union had changed in Australia by 1950.

The first point that is striking is that, in 1946, commentators of all political orientations were very poorly informed about what was really taking place in the Soviet Union. The immediate post-war period was one of extreme hardship for the mass of the Soviet population. Millions of Soviet citizens were still homeless as a result of the physical destruction inflicted by the war. Living standards remained extremely low for almost all Soviet citizens. Millions of civilians were expelled from their homes by the Soviet government because they belonged to ethnic groups (for example the Chechens and Crimean Tartars) that were accused of having collaborated with the Nazis. The policies of the Soviet government towards culture and religion, which had been relaxed somewhat during the war, became much more repressive. In many parts of the USSR which had been occupied by the Germans, such as the Baltic States, Chechnya and Ukraine, there was considerable armed resistance to the reimposition of Soviet rule. The collective-farm system, which during the war had broken down across much of the countryside, was reimposed, which depressed the living standards of the peasantry still further. Worst of all, a combination of state agricultural policy and drought led to famine which, in July 1946, swept across the Ukraine and lasted thirteen months. Hundreds of thousands of people died, and it took many years for Soviet agriculture to recover from this blow.¹¹⁷

Yet none of these events were discussed in Australian political discourse. On no occasion was the Ukrainian famine mentioned in either mainstream or Communist newspapers. The post-war purges of returned Soviet servicemen was also unreported, and the only mention of exile and internment related

¹¹⁶ CPD, *Communist Party – Activities in Canada and Australia*, 17 July 1946, 2613.

CPD, *Foreign Legation Staffs*, 20 March 1946, 418.

¹¹⁷ Peter Kenez, *A History of the Soviet Union from beginning to end* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 167.

to those members of the Soviet trade unions who had failed to maintain productivity after the implementation of the fourth Five-Year Plan.¹¹⁸ Nor were these matters discussed in parliament. The only related issue that was debated in parliament was the Soviet annexation of territory and the resistance it encountered.¹¹⁹ Even this issue cropped up in parliament on only four occasions. Political debates, in both this and other contexts, skirted the real issues that were affecting Soviet citizens. That the Communists did not mention the numerous domestic problems of the USSR is perhaps hardly surprising, but anti-Communists did not discuss them either. In other words, the Soviet Union that Australian commentators were discussing was essentially an imaginary country. The claims they made both on behalf of and in criticism of the USSR were based on profound ignorance of the real facts.

A second key point that emerges from an analysis of discourse about the USSR in 1946 is that it impacted in very different ways on the various political parties. The Liberal and Country parties were uniformly anti-Soviet and anti-Communist. Some members of these parties were more vocal in their criticisms of the USSR than others, but on no occasion – either in parliament or in the press – did any member of the Liberal and Country parties deviate from the anti-Soviet line of the parties' leaders. The Communist Party was equally united on the issue of the USSR. Whatever Australian Communists may have really thought about the USSR, and whatever views they may have expressed in private, there is no trace in the public discourse of Communists harbouring doubts about the progressive nature of the Soviet Union and its commitment to international peace. The experience of the ALP, by contrast, was very different. Clear differences of approach towards the USSR were already visible in the ranks of the ALP in 1946. Most of the leaders of the ALP – and in particular Ben Chifley and Herbert 'Doc' Evatt (Minister for External Affairs) – rarely allowed themselves to be drawn into debates about the USSR. Reading between the lines of parliamentary debates, one gets the strong impression that the whole issue of the USSR made them uncomfortable. They certainly refrained from discussing the USSR in the newspapers. But Labor members lower down the chain of command were much less coy. A number of backbenchers, including Dr John Gaha (Member for Denison), Norman Makin (Hindmarsh) and Eddie Ward (East Sydney) were more than happy to stand up in parliament and make speeches that defended the USSR from the accusations of the opposition. But there were also prominent ALP members who were every bit as vitriolic in their denunciations of the USSR as members of the Liberal and Country parties. J.J. Maloney was the most prominent of the anti-Soviet ALP conservatives but there were others, including many supporters of the Catholic political activist B.A. Santamaria. Maloney and his

¹¹⁸ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Industrial Offences Bring Drastic Penalties', 17 May 1946, 2.

Worker, 'Why Russians Don't Go On Strike – Bosses Won't Allow It', 10 June 1946, 7.

Worker, 'Blood Purge In Russia – Latest (Not Last) Of Long Series', 7 October 1946, 7.

¹¹⁹ CPD, *International Affairs – Russo-Persian Dispute*, 20 March 1946, 423.

CPD, *International Affairs*, 26 March 1946, 591-593.

CPD, *United Nations – Russo-Persian Dispute*, 9 April 1946, 1135.

CPD, *International Affairs – Russo-Persian Dispute*, 15 March 1946, 378.

fellow anti-Communists inside the ALP were frequently denounced by their own left-wing comrades as being 'red-baiters'.¹²⁰

Significantly, the ALP leaders neither supported nor attacked the positions of either faction inside the ALP. In the tense political climate of 1946, when both the pro- and anti-Soviet camps seemed hell-bent on asserting their positions, the leadership of the Labor Party remained largely silent. Whilst recurrent reports emerged throughout the year predicting the 'complete breakdown' of the ALP, this silence appears to have been the saving grace of the federal Labor Party, which was returned to power in the 1946 elections.¹²¹ As in 1943, voters identified more closely with the ideals of the ALP, which reflected the popular notion that Australia's post-war successes relied most heavily on the solution of domestic concerns, rather than a preoccupation with international issues and irrelevant propaganda. Whilst the majority of Labor members were re-elected, it is significant to note that certain outspoken politicians, such as J.J. Maloney, disappeared into obscurity. The implication is that, in 1946, talking too much about the USSR did not impress the average voter, who seems to have been much more concerned with domestic issues.

Whilst analysis suggests that the ALP benefitted from its delicate silence regarding the Soviet Union, it is also apparent that the anti-Soviet diatribes of the opposition parties probably damaged their political position, or, at the very least, did not win them any political advantage. This is especially true of the Liberal Party, whose anti-Soviet and anti-Communist discourse did nothing to attract potential voters during the mid-1940s. Australia, although being almost physically untouched during World War II, was a country which craved peace, stability, and economic growth. Although the air of hostility surrounding the USSR had begun to return in 1946, Australian voters maintained their stance against prejudicial policy and rhetoric which had been established in 1943. Harping on about the Communist threat at home and the Soviet threat abroad did not win support. By the same token, the pro-Soviet discourse of the CPA made little if any difference to its popularity, and may even have made it more difficult for the Communist Party to expand its base of support. It is possible that many Australian workers, though angry at their poor conditions and the exploitation they suffered at the hands of their bosses, nonetheless regarded themselves as loyal subjects of the British Crown. From this perspective, the devotion of the CPA to the Soviet Union may have seemed distinctly unpatriotic.

Thus there is a paradox in terms of the relationship of the major parties to the Soviet Union. The Liberal, Country and Communist parties were all internally united on the issue of the USSR – at least in terms of their public discourse. All three parties spoke with one voice in their pronouncements about the Soviet

¹²⁰ *Tribune*, 'Says Maloney Broadcast Damaged ALP', 28 May 1946, 6.

¹²¹ *Argus*, 'Breakdown', 21 October 1946, 2.

Union. Yet this internal unity did not result in political growth or electoral success because the general public does not seem to have been all that interested in the Soviet Union, at least not in 1946. The Labor Party, by contrast, was clearly much more divided in its attitude to the USSR, which is precisely why the leadership of the Labor Party was so reluctant to get drawn into the debate between the Party's pro- and anti-Soviet factions. Yet the very silence of the Labor leadership on the issue of the USSR, and its concomitant focus on domestic issues, probably served it well in the election of 1946. The splits in the ALP on the issue of the USSR certainly do not seem to have done the Party any harm.

The final observation stems from a direct comparison between 1943 and 1946. During 1946, greater parliamentary attention was paid to the Soviet situation. Although the Labor leadership group continued to avoid discussions on the topic, many lesser members were vocal in parliament. Through these members, who represented the full array of ALP factions, a rich dialogue began to develop. At the opposite end of the political spectrum, the conservative parties, too, became more active in debates. Unlike in 1943, when international relations starkly contrasted the climate of 1946, and the conservatives had to remain tight-lipped regarding their policy on the Soviet Union, Liberal and Country Party members regularly asserted their opposition to both domestic and international communism. In terms of both quantitative and qualitative measurements,¹²² in 1946, the development of Australian political discourse on the Soviet Union exploded.

Outside of parliament, too, there was a noticeable change in the patterns of discourse on the Soviet Union. In 1946, it became increasingly common for newspapers to respond directly to claims made in other newspapers. For example, on multiple occasions the *Tribune* directly rebuffed quotes from several conservative presses – most notably *The Sydney Morning Herald*. In 1943, by contrast, newspapers did not engage with each other in this way. As well as an increase in media interaction, there was acceleration in publication of articles about the USSR in Australian newspapers during 1946. *The Sydney Morning Herald* is the prime example of this. During 1943, 9 articles were published, in comparison to the 31 published in 1946.¹²³ It is possible that the increase in publications in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, a more conservatively inclined publication, was related to the swing away from wartime pro-Soviet perceptions to more hostile opinions in 1946.

In addition to the increases in certain presses coverage, it is interesting to note the ebb of other media publications' reports. In 1943, many of the editorials on the Soviet Union came from small local or state newspapers. In 1946, apart from a few exceptions (such as the *Worker*), most of the reports were

¹²² In this instance, quantitative measurements refer to the heightened number of CPDs from 1946, in comparison to 1943. Qualitative measurements refer to the greater number of participants in parliamentary debates, and the length and depth of discussion when compared to 1943.

¹²³ The search was conducted via the Trove digitised archives, using four keywords – Soviet, Union, USSR & Russia.

printed in large tabloids. This trend extended into other forms of politicised literature, with the genre of non-Communist, pro-Soviet discourse all but disappearing.

Conclusion

In 1946, the Soviet Union was essentially a 'blank canvas' onto which journalists, politicians, ideologists and social commentators projected their personally perceived ideas and notions. In Australia, politicians and the public alike formulated opinions about their former ally based on very limited information. Political leaders and activists on both the right and the left of the political spectrum regarded the Soviet Union as a major issue with profound implications for the conduct of domestic Australian politics. The Liberal Party, led by former Australian Prime Minister, Robert Menzies, undoubtedly led the charge against the Soviet Union, and emphasized the connection between the Soviet threat abroad and the 'Red Menace' at home. But there were also right-wing ALP members, such as J.J. Maloney, who subscribed to the anti-Soviet narrative and whose tirades made public the growing rift that was emerging, not just between the ALP and the CPA, but also within the ranks of the Labor Party. At the other extreme of the spectrum, the CPA consistently and vigorously held out the USSR as proof that life in a socialist society was better and more cheerful.

Yet there is no evidence that the Australian general public shared this obsession with the Soviet Union. At the very least, attempts by conservatives and Communists alike to make political capital from talking about the USSR were unsuccessful. The Liberal and Country parties were trounced in the general election, the Communist Party remained in its political ghetto, and J.J. Maloney's attempt to whip up anti-Soviet sentiment was a dismal failure. It is quite possible that talking too much about the Soviet Union was even counter-productive, for the majority of Australians seem to have been far more concerned with Australia's domestic problems. By contrast, Chifley and his colleagues in the leadership of the ALP said very little about the USSR, probably because they knew how divided their own party was on this issue. In 1946, their very silence probably worked to their advantage, and certainly did them no electoral damage.

It was not long, however, before the tide of public opinion began to turn. By 1950, as we shall see in the next chapter, the increasing sensitivity of the Australian public to foreign policy issues transformed the context of Australian domestic politics, with disastrous results for both the ALP and the CPA.

CHAPTER 3: 1950

Between 1947 and 1950 the landscape of the Cold War changed dramatically. Diplomatic relations between the West and the USSR had deteriorated to a series of snide and hostile exchanges. By the turn of the decade, most of the globe had become segregated into two groups - the 'Free World' and the 'Communist bloc'.¹ Hostilities intensified between the two camps as communism broke free of its European borders and spread across large areas of Asia. Throughout the Western world, and particularly in Australia, the threat of Communist invasion seemed very real in 1950, as the focus of conflict turned away from Europe to Asia.² Fears of a nuclear apocalypse intensified as the USSR gained more intelligence on the creation and use of atomic weapons. After the Soviets tested their first atomic bomb in August 1949, many Westerners believed that another World War was just around the corner.³

This chapter will analyse the significance of the events of 1950, using contemporary newspapers, CPDs and political literature.⁴ Comparisons will also be drawn between the situation in 1950 and 1946 in order to reach some conclusions regarding the shift in Australian discourse about the USSR during these three years. As in previous chapters, discourse about the internal structure of the Soviet Union will be examined. The chapter will also look in detail at discussion about the Soviet Union's role in the Cold War. In particular the chapter will analyse the USSR's relationship with the new Communist powerhouse, China. Finally, the chapter will explore how debates about Australia's domestic situation were entangled with discourse about the USSR, in particular with regard to the CPA's relationship with the USSR and the Communist Party Dissolution Bill.

Political and Economic Conditions in 1950

During the latter half of the 1940s, the Cold War entered a new, more tumultuous phase. The nuclear arms race, for example, had intensified to a point where many feared a global apocalypse. Throughout Europe, nations were tugged between the Soviets and the Americans. Germany was literally divided. The victory of Mao Tse Tung's Communist forces in China in 1949 meant that the Cold War was now a worldwide struggle for ideological supremacy. Finally, with the onset of the Korean War in 1950, the

¹ Brian Carroll, *The Menzies Years*, 75.

² Humphrey McQueen, *Social Sketches of Australia, 1888-1975*, 196.

³ Humphrey McQueen, *Social Sketches of Australia, 1888-1975*, 195.

⁴ As a comprehensible copy of the national Communist newspaper, *Tribune*, was unobtainable, the *South Australian Tribune* will be used extensively.

Western world, and particularly Australia, was 'more convinced than ever ... that there would be another world war' within the following five years.⁵

The 1949/1950 period had been a challenging one for Australia. In addition to a general concern regarding the instability of the international situation, which became particularly intense after the geographical shift of focus from Europe to Asia, a number of domestic conflicts impacted upon the population. One of the greatest conflicts began in June 1949, when a major strike in the coal mining industry began. The strike, a consequence of continuing post-war tension between trade unionists (particularly Communist unionists), plant owners and the government, lasted a full seven weeks, from 27 June to 15 August 1949. Prime Minister Chifley responded aggressively to the strike, threatening the miners with a 'boots and all' reaction to their 'unreasoning and callous war' on the people of Australia.⁶ The strike brought out in Chifley a previously unexpressed anti-Communist streak, which led the prime minister to make (often defensive) claims that there was no person in Australia 'more anxious ... to stop the inroads' and 'vicious proposals of Communism'.⁷ In a move that had no precedent, Chifley even called in the army to cut coal in the mines of New South Wales in an attempt to demonstrate once and for all that the ALP would not be bullied by the Communist trade unionists. Remembered by many as marking one of the challenging periods of Australian history, the strike was responsible for widespread hardship through the coldest winter in 15 years.⁸ Whilst many countries strove to rebuild their crippled economies after the devastation of war, Australia once again endured a period of rationing and impoverishment.⁹

In addition to the obvious socio-economic consequences, the coal miners' strike also had important political repercussions. The strike was, in fact, a major contributor to the electoral defeat of the ALP. Industrial unrest had been a problem for all Australian governments, but had become particularly vexing for the post-war Chifley administration. As was discussed in Chapter 2, Chifley's premiership had been largely defined by a protracted series of industrial conflicts. Although Chifley would posthumously be remembered for enacting 'the most positive, imaginative and comprehensive' policies of any Australian governmental leader, throughout the coal crisis he was not so popular.¹⁰

Voters were prepared to overlook industrial strife during the 1946 election, when such conflicts were fobbed off as inevitable consequences of the war. However, by 1949, they were not so forgiving. Chifley

⁵ Humphrey McQueen, *Social Sketches of Australia, 1888-1975*, 195.

⁶ *Infamous Victory: Ben Chifley's War on Coal*, directed by Geoff Burton (Screen Australia, 2008).

⁷ L.F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley*, 383.

⁸ Mike Steketee, 'The tough get going', *The Australian*, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/features/the-tough-get-going/story-e6frq6z6-111117913525>, 14 August 2014.

⁹ *Infamous Victory: Ben Chifley's War on Coal*, directed by Geoff Burton (Screen Australia, 2008).

¹⁰ L.F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley*, 351.

was defeated by Robert Menzies, leader of the Liberal/Country Party coalition, in December. Although the ALP managed to retain a majority in the senate, the strength and unity of the party began to fracture. This resulted in much petty in-fighting – a trend which would continue throughout the Cold War.

The impact of Labor's ousting resonated throughout Australian society. Despite being plagued by intrigue, Chifley had instituted revolutionary social and economic reforms during his term, which benefitted thousands of Australians. By removing Chifley, voters unwittingly stunted, or in some cases halted, initiatives implemented by Labor for the betterment of all – such as important industrial actions regarding worker safety and the basic wage. Had it not been for the economic injection delivered by the onset of the Korean War in 1950, and some financial gain from European immigration, it is possible that the Australian economy might have slid into recession.¹¹

In a time of relative instability, Chifley's successor, Robert Menzies, attempted to steady the Australian people. A former Prime Minister and leader of the disbanded United Australia Party (UAP), Menzies returned to office as head of the Liberal Party, which had been founded in 1945. Menzies' government in 1949 looked much like it did in 1941 – a right-wing, anti-Communist and conservative. In contrast to his more pragmatic Labor predecessors, Menzies' party policy revolved primarily around ideological concerns. Whereas Chifley would be remembered for his social welfare initiatives and attempts to reform industry, Menzies would be remembered for his Anglo-Americanism and anti-communism.¹² According to pro-Soviet commentators, such as former-CPA member Ted Hill, 'Menzies loved Hitler, hated Stalin and hated socialism in the Soviet Union', and he was quite willing to advertise his strong opinions.¹³ Both domestic and international communism, and its impact on Australian life, were *the* issue of interest to the newly elected government.¹⁴ The reprioritisation of the Communist/capitalist conflict by the Liberals was the catalyst which shifted Australia into the next phase of the Cold War.

Discourse about developments inside the USSR

Developments within the USSR continued to be a prominent theme in the Australian media in 1950. Numerous newspaper reports were published in both the mainstream and Communist presses. Important issues discussed included the oppression of Soviet peoples, and the threat posed by the

¹¹ Humphrey McQueen, *Social Sketches of Australia, 1888-1975*, 184.

¹² Len Fox, *Guilty Men Again* (Sydney: Current Book Distributors, 1950), 10.

¹³ E.F. Hill, 'Rise and Fall of Imperialisms in Australia – The Australian Workers, Working and Patriotic People and the Soviet Union, 1917-1953' in *Imperialism in Australia: The menace of Soviet social-imperialism* (Melbourne: Unlisted publication, 1975), 10.

¹⁴ Brian Fitzpatrick, *The Unnecessary Police State Bill* (Melbourne: The Australian Council for Civil Liberties, 1950), 5.

USSR both to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other countries and to world peace. Essentially, the discourse of 1950 is very similar to that of 1946, but there are also pivotal differences.

As in 1946, the issue of Soviet leadership was widely discussed. In 1950, as in 1946, there were elections in the USSR. There was much discussion of the fact that Stalin had been unanimously reinstated in his position. As in 1946, the *Tribune* celebrated the results of the Soviet elections and claimed that they were the most democratic in the world.¹⁵ According to the *Tribune*, the Soviet electoral system was superior to that of Australia in three key respects. Firstly, Australian Aborigines were not considered citizens and, therefore, not allowed to vote. In the USSR, by contrast, all adults, 'irrespective of race ... nationality' or gender voted. Secondly, Australian voters were only able to remove their elected representatives in elections the timing of which was decided by government. The Soviet people, by contrast, had the right to petition for the removal of elected representatives at any time during the electoral cycle. Finally, in Australia, any individual had the right to put him/herself forward as a candidate to become an MP. However, the Australian government was not elected directly by the population but was formed out of those MPs who had been elected, and was thus determined by the political parties. In the Soviet Union, however, any adult was free to run for election directly to government. Furthermore, all successful candidates in Soviet elections were subject to continuous public debate and scrutiny, which determined the length and legitimacy of candidature.¹⁶

A point of note regarding the *Tribune's* coverage of the elections is that, in comparison to 1946 at least, there seemed to be a dwindling focus on the USSR's internal political structure. Only two articles in the national *Tribune* and *South Australian Tribune* reported on the 12 March elections. For the remainder of the year, very little more was said about Soviet leadership.¹⁷

The mainstream press, on the other hand, paid much more attention throughout the year to the political situation in the USSR. Whilst not commenting specifically on the March elections, a handful of articles were published in four different states' newspapers regarding the Soviet leadership.¹⁸ As in mainstream newspaper discourse from 1946, the articles emphasised the dictatorial tendencies of the Stalinist regime, the widespread use of propaganda by the Kremlin ministers, and the detrimental effects of such leadership on the Soviet public. Comparisons were drawn between Stalin's and Hitler's 'gross abuses'

¹⁵ *South Australian Tribune*, 'Soviet Has Most Democratic Electoral System In World', 3 March 1950, 2.

¹⁶ *South Australian Tribune*, 'USSR Elections Are World's Freest', 17 March 1950, 4.

¹⁷ *Tribune*, 'Soviet Has Most Democratic Electoral System In World', 8 February 1950, 4.

Tribune, 'Why Soviet Elections Are Freest In World', 15 March 1950, 4.

¹⁸ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Famed "Insider" Probes Secrets of the Kremlin', 16 September 1950, 2.

The Sydney Morning Herald, 'Anti-Red Revolt Is Impossible In Russia To-day', 18 September 1950, 2.

Advertiser, 'As I See It', 14 October 1950, 2.

Examiner, 'Soviet Union Leadership', 30 March 1950, 2.

Argus, 'Bertrand Russell says Communism is: "State enterprise – and dictatorship"', 31 July 1950, 2.

of their constituents. But, on the whole, the mainstream media seems to have refined their coverage of the Soviet situation markedly in the 1947-1950 period. More up-to-date information as well as a reduction in speculative generalities was typical of the discourse during this time.¹⁹

One particularly curious article was published by the Tasmanian *Examiner* in March 1950. Just 18 days after the elections of 12 March, in which Stalin was unanimously re-elected as General Secretary of the CPSU, the *Examiner* reported that 'the man of steel' might be dead.²⁰ Despite the inaccuracy of this particular claim, the article went on to speculate about the possible impact of Stalin's death on the USSR. Apart from being an entertaining read, this article clearly demonstrates the degree to which western media accounts of events inside the USSR were based on speculation and misinformation.

Another recurring topic in the Australian media was Soviet law enforcement – particularly the internment of civilians in concentration camps. In contrast to the media's reports in 1946, which made generalised assumptions about what was happening in the USSR, articles appearing in the national press in 1950 were less speculative. An example of this is the *Barrier Miner's* exposé from 26 June, which detailed the deportation of 30,000 inhabitants of the Black Sea region, as well as a further 16 million Soviet citizens whose 'crimes' landed them in Siberia.²¹ During the course of an extensive search of the Trove internet database of Australian newspapers in 1950, I was able to find only two articles which specifically related to enslavement in the mainstream-conservative press. However, several more articles discussed the oppression of the alleged millions of Soviet citizens who had 'the hardihood to claim freedom of opinion and speech and to criticise the ruling party in Russia'.²²

It is worth noting that the *Tribune* remained remarkably silent about abuses of human rights in the Soviet Union. Even those articles that touched on the subject were evasive. For example, in March 1950 the *Tribune* printed one article which argued that allegations about the abuse of human rights in the USSR could not 'hide the triumph of socialism'.²³ Rather than denying or explaining away the incarceration of millions of civilians and political prisoners, the article simply listed the successes of socialism which allegedly outweighed the 'horror stories ... flooding the world capitalist press'.²⁴

Besides discussion of these specific issues, there was, of course, general emphasis in both the conservative and Communist presses on living conditions in the Soviet Union. In a survey of over 60 national and regional newspapers between April and September, I found only eight articles which

¹⁹ *Argus*, 'Bertrand Russell says Communism is: "State enterprise – and dictatorship"', 31 July 1950, 2.

²⁰ *Examiner*, 'Soviet Union Leadership', 30 March 1950, 2.

²¹ *Barrier Miner*, 'Reds Have 16 Millions Enslaved In Siberia', 26 June 1950, 2.

²² *Daily News*, 'The Reds' Show of Effrontery', 22 March 1950, 10.

²³ *Tribune*, 'Horror Stories Cannot Hide Triumph Of Socialism', 11 March 1950, 4.

²⁴ *Tribune*, 'Horror Stories Cannot Hide Triumph Of Socialism', 11 March 1950, 4.

discussed the living conditions of the 182.3 million inhabitants of the Soviet Union. Following the pattern set in 1946 articles published in New South Wales and Queensland newspapers in 1950 were the most vocally anti-Soviet. There was a spike of negative reports stemming from Western Australia during 1950, which contrasted the literature coming out of the west in 1946 that, by comparison, had been quite positive.²⁵ A possible explanation for this could be the spate of industrial conflicts plaguing Western Australia in 1950.

One striking characteristic of the articles was the use of a common vocabulary to describe conditions inside the USSR. Words such as 'brutal' were frequently used to describe the conditions under which the USSR was governed.²⁶ As in 1946, the typical claim of the majority of Australian newspapers was that the USSR posed as 'world pacifist' in an attempt to disguise its true intentions, which was ultimately to unleash 'tyranny and cruelty' upon the world.²⁷

Though the *Tribune* had little to say about issues pertaining to policing and the abuse of citizens' rights, it frequently published articles that discussed everyday life and living conditions in the USSR. Emphasis was again placed on tales of the burgeoning Soviet economy and the superior living and working conditions enjoyed by the Soviet working class. The enormous effort undertaken by the Soviet people in reconstructing 'their country in the midst of an again bitterly hostile provocative world capitalist environment' was a point of particular focus.²⁸ Claims that 'back breaking toil' had become a feature of the past for every Soviet man, woman and child littered the Communist press throughout 1950.²⁹ The *Tribune* articles were plagued by bias, and undoubtedly ignored many inconvenient truths about Soviet life. However, the *Tribune's* accounts of life in the USSR, bolstered by the testimony of a variety of political, military and social experts, did at least provide an alternative point of view to that of the mainstream, anti-Soviet newspapers.³⁰

Technological advancements in the areas of both industry and agriculture were, as in 1943 and 1946, a focus of the print media. Following the catastrophic drought and subsequent famine of 1946, Stalin had further developed scientific research into the advancement of agricultural science in an effort to ensure

²⁵ *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 'Life in Soviet – Russian "Big Shots"', 27 February 1950, 3.

Daily News, 'The Reds' Show of Effontery', 22 March 1950, 10.

Daily News, 'Opinion on our way of life – Communism offers us nothing', 4 September 1950, 6.

Kalgoorlie Miner, 'Russia Today – No Hope of Revolution: Children Taught Communism', 21 September 1950, 5.

²⁶ *Daily News*, 'Opinion on our way of life – Communism offers us nothing', 4 September 1950, 6.

Townsville Daily Bulletin, 'Readers' Views – Communism Criticised', 25 April 1950, 7.

²⁷ *Worker*, 'Russian Pose As World Pacifist – Stratagem of Soviet Tyrants', 10 July 1950, 9.

²⁸ EF Hill, *Imperialism in Australia*, 16.

²⁹ *Tribune*, 'How They Put 5/- More Value in Soviet "Pound"', 11 February 1950, 4.

³⁰ *South Australian Tribune*, 'British Workers Visit USSR: "Socialism Not Only Works, But Works Well"', 9 June 1950, 2.

South Australian Tribune, 'Russia Calm: UK Workers Impressed', 25 August 1950, 4.

South Australian Tribune, 'Soviet Engineers Record New Technical Advances', 2 June 1950, 2.

stability and higher production. Following the theories of the USSR's most celebrated agricultural scientist and Head of the Soviet Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Trofim Lysenko, the USSR, it was claimed, was leading the world in agronomy. The *Tribune* boasted about the USSR's advances, quoting another famous agriculturalist, Ivan Michurin: "Man must not wait for Nature's mercy; he must take from her what he needs".³¹ In 1949, the *Tribune* was celebrating the production of 'exceptionally large' ears of wheat, which had supposedly been grown using the Lysenko method.³² And, according to the *Tribune*, it was not only the USSR which was benefitting from the advancements in agriculture. Although, the *Tribune* recognised, it would never be admitted, British scientists were attempting to harness the knowledge used by Lysenko in agricultural genetics.³³ The *Tribune* also alleged that the rouble's value had increased significantly as a result both of the success of the Soviet economy and the continued problems of capitalist economies. This increase meant that any gaps in Soviet production, industrial and agricultural, could be remedied by purchasing foreign goods.³⁴

According to the *Tribune*, Soviet industry was also making rapid advances. In the *South Australian Tribune*, three reports boasting Soviet accomplishments were published in 1950, by correspondents from Russia, London and the US.³⁵ Although none of the reports drew comparisons between the Soviet and Australian experiences, it is clear that the observations reported upon were chosen specifically to demonstrate how far ahead the Soviets had surged.

In an article by Russian journalist, M. Timoveyev, special attention was given to the low level of industrial accidents in the USSR. This, Timoveyev claimed, was a result of advanced mechanisation.³⁶ Reference was also made to the improvements in workers' rights, such as the 8-hour day, an issue which had been a major point of contention in Australian industrial relations.³⁷ In another report, by British trade-unionists, it was boasted that the newly erected Stalin automobile works was a 'Palace of Culture', an area totally devoted to 'workers' recreation and vocational training'.³⁸ One of the British visitors opined: "I don't know any British city with such magnificent buildings".³⁹ Although these optimistic reports on the state of Soviet agriculture and industry did not reflect the reality of the situation in the USSR, and exemplified the *Tribune's* tendency to hyperbolise Soviet accomplishments, they certainly added to the fabric of the pro-Soviet argument.

³¹ *Tribune*, 'Soviet Making Nature Serve Human Needs', 27 May 1950, 5.

³² *Tribune*, 'New Wheat Big Success in Russia', 1 April 1949, 5.

³³ *Tribune*, 'Theories Of Lysenko Have Brought Results', 11 March 1949, 6.

³⁴ *South Australian Tribune*, 'Soviet Puts More Value Into Rouble', 10 March 1950, 4.

³⁵ *South Australian Tribune*, 'Soviet Engineers Record New Technical Advances', 2 June 1950, 2.

South Australian Tribune, 'British Workers Visit USSR: "Socialism Not Only Works, But Works Well"', 9 June 1950, 2.

³⁶ *South Australian Tribune*, 'Soviet Engineers Record New Technical Advances', 2 June 1950, 2.

³⁷ *South Australian Tribune*, 'Soviet Engineers Record New Technical Advances', 2 June 1950, 2.

³⁸ *South Australian Tribune*, 'Russia Calm: UK Workers Impressed', 25 August 1950, 4.

³⁹ *South Australian Tribune*, 'Russia Calm: UK Workers Impressed', 25 August 1950, 4.

In both 1943 and 1946, living and working conditions in the USSR had frequently been discussed in parliament. In 1950, by contrast, there was little parliamentary interest in this topic. Though speakers in parliamentary debates constantly referred to the USSR's foreign policy, the diplomatic situation in the Far East and the impact of the global Communist movement, there were no discussions regarding the general welfare of Soviet citizens, or the internal political situation in the USSR. This, however, was not the case in political discourse outside the houses of parliament. Aside from the multitude of media releases printed by, or on the behalf of, the Communist Party, there were political pamphlets printed by the minor party throughout 1949/1950. These specifically related to political, social and economic conditions in the USSR. Of particular note was the pamphlet, *Report on the Soviet Union*, which was the transcript of speech given by John Rodgers to an audience of trade unionists and members of the labour movement. Although the speech was given in mid-1949, his comments and observations are directly relevant to the situation in 1950, and were often repeated in 1950 by the Communist Party and pro-Soviet sympathisers.

Rodgers was the Director of the Australia-Soviet House but he was neither a member of the CPA nor a self-proclaimed Communist. Between June 1948 and January 1949 he had visited the USSR and several other European countries.⁴⁰ Upon his return to Australia, Rodgers was invited to speak about his travels and observations by a group of no fewer than 17 sponsors (none of whom were members of the Communist Party, or known Communist sympathisers).⁴¹ The presentation was originally booked to take place at the Melbourne Town Hall on 23 February 1949. This event never took place. Instead, one week before the proposed lecture, several Melbourne City Council members protested and forced the Council to withdraw its permission for the event. No explanation was given for the cancellation of the event, although Rodgers alluded to the fact that the Council's misconceptions about his position on the CPA swayed the decision.⁴² Rodgers also claimed that the Melbourne City Council 'feared' the possibility that he 'might say something favourable about conditions in Russia' – an inconvenience for the government in the current Cold War climate.⁴³

After an unsuccessful attempt by the sponsors to have the decision overruled by the Supreme Court, it seemed that Rodgers' speech would never be heard.⁴⁴ Over the following two weeks, protests were held in several workplaces by major trade union organisations, demanding that Rodgers be allowed to

⁴⁰ John Rodgers, *Report on the Soviet Union: the speech which was banned...by the Melbourne City Council* (Melbourne: Australia Soviet House, 1949), 7.

⁴¹ John Rodgers, *Report on the Soviet Union*, 1.

⁴² John Rodgers, *Report on the Soviet Union*, 7.

⁴³ John Rodgers, *Report on the Soviet Union*, 8.

⁴⁴ John Rodgers, *Report on the Soviet Union*, 1.

give his speech. Under the guise of a general trade union meeting, entitled 'Trade Unions and World Peace', Rodgers was finally able to give his speech on 25 May 1949.

Rodgers discussed many aspects of Soviet life in his speech, giving brief overviews on general living standards, the effects of war, the lot of the Soviet worker, economics, religion, governance and crime. Amongst the multitude of Rodgers' observations, perhaps the most thought-provoking statements involved his insights into the daily lives of Soviet citizens. Although the salaries of Soviet workers were considerably lower than Australian standards, Rodgers observed that 'what interests the Soviet worker is not how his present standard of material comfort compares with the standard of the Australian worker or the American. What concerns him is whether he is better off than he was a year ago'.⁴⁵ In the opinion of Rodgers, the situation for Soviet citizens had improved markedly, and with the additional value added to real wages by 'paid holidays, free medical and dental services, cheap meals in well-equipped factory canteens, pensions and sick benefits', the workers of the USSR were better off than most Australians.⁴⁶

Another notable feature of Rodgers' speech was the constant comparisons he drew between the situation in the USSR and in Australia, as well as commentary on domestic governance and political figures. Although not yet the prime minister, Menzies was referred to on several occasions. Claiming that Menzies' perceptions were fabrications, Rodgers urged his audience to disregard the Liberal leader's anti-Soviet, 'fascist' policy.⁴⁷

In his speech, Rodgers also mentioned J.J. Maloney, former Minister to Russia, who had been a key figure in public debate about the USSR in 1946. Rodgers clearly opposed Maloney and stated that the former minister's 'absurd attitude' towards the Soviet Union had put Australia in an unfavourable position. It would have been much more advantageous, Rodgers claimed, to foster an environment of democratic peace similar to that for which the USSR was striving.⁴⁸ Rodgers slammed Maloney for his ignorance of certain facts about the Soviet lifestyle, and reinforced his own 'wonder' at the astounding progress made by the USSR since the end of World War II.⁴⁹ What was most interesting about Rodgers' condemnation of Maloney was the fact that he lumped the former Labor minister with Liberal leader, Robert Menzies. This strategy of linking anti-Soviet Labor politicians and Liberal politicians was typical of the discourse of the pro-Soviet camp during this period. For those sympathetic to the USSR, there

⁴⁵ John Rodgers, *Report on the Soviet Union*, 11.

⁴⁶ John Rodgers, *Report on the Soviet Union*, 11.

⁴⁷ The points identified by Rodgers were:

1. The Soviet Union is a police state in which millions of people live in misery and subjection.
2. The Soviet Union is an aggressor nation, has invaded a number of Eastern European countries, and has committed acts of war against Britain over Berlin.
3. Australia must prepare immediately for a third world war against Russia

⁴⁸ John Rodgers, *Report on the Soviet Union*, 9.

⁴⁹ John Rodgers, *Report on the Soviet Union*, 9.

was no longer a difference between the right-wing of the Labor Party and Liberal parties – they were all capitalist ‘warmongers’, hell-bent on the Americanisation of the world and the crushing of any opposition which might hinder their plans.⁵⁰

Soviet foreign policy and the Cold War

The events of 1950, both at home and abroad, were decisive in moving the world into the next phase of the Cold War. During this year, anti-Soviet sentiment intensified and phrases such as ‘Reds vs Rest’ and ‘Reds under the beds’, frequently appeared in the media and in parliamentary debates.⁵¹ Moreover, sections of the Australian general public also began to use such anti-Soviet vocabulary. In 1946, Australians had been predominantly concerned with domestic post-war reconstruction. In 1950, by contrast, international conflicts, such as that unfolding in Europe, were much more commonly discussed. Generally speaking, public and political discourse was extremely hostile to the USSR. The Russians were perceived as the ‘sole aggressors’ in the Cold War conflict. Despite any pro-Soviet claims to the contrary, it was commonly believed that the USSR represented the dominant threat to world peace.⁵²

Between 1946 and 1950, the world (and particularly Europe) was carved up by the victors of war. A milestone in the early phases of the Cold War was the introduction, in April 1948, of the Marshall Plan.⁵³ Most of the Australian press supported the American position, praising Washington’s generosity and scolding the stubbornness of the USSR. It was claimed that the Soviets, threatened by the overwhelming post-war power of the US, were desperately trying to sabotage an American plan which would benefit the wider European community. In mainstream Australian discourse, the Soviets were only interested in world domination.⁵⁴

Unsurprisingly, the pro-Soviet press refuted these notions. According to the *Tribune*, the USA was not in the least bit interested in the economic stability and prosperity of Europe. Rather, the Americans hoped to undermine the USSR because they were afraid that the Soviet Bloc would soon demonstrate its economic superiority over capitalism.⁵⁵ Furthermore, the Soviets were not, as was suggested in the conservative press, interested in annexation as an instrument of war. Instead, the *Tribune* claimed that

⁵⁰ John Rodgers, *Report on the Soviet Union*, 8.

⁵¹ *Daily News*, ‘Editorial – Reds v Rest’, 15 May 1950, 5.

⁵² *Daily News*, ‘Editorial – Reds v Rest’, 15 May 1950, 5.

⁵³ The Marshall Plan was a lucrative financial support system for war-ravaged European countries, particularly those areas which were ‘at risk’ of Soviet annexation.

⁵⁴ *West Australian*, ‘The Communist Line’, 22 July 1950, 3.

⁵⁵ *Tribune*, ‘Americans Say: Occupy More Countries, Start War’, 3 June 1950, 4.

the Soviets were concerned only with security – a theme which was recycled from 1946 discourse. Quoting several Australian Communists, international diplomats and members of the Soviet armed forces, the *Tribune* claimed that it was beyond belief that the Russians felt they ‘could run other countries better than anyone else’, and that attempts to attract European nations were rather an attempt to offer a viable alternative to the trickery of the USA.⁵⁶

The conflict caused by the Marshall Plan eventuated in a major crisis. In 1949 Germany was literally split in two with the creation of the pro-American Federal Republic and the Soviet-controlled German Democratic Republic. Between June 1948 and May 1949, Germany’s capital, Berlin, was the centrepiece of the Berlin Blockade and Airlift. Over eleven months, German civilians, European prisoners-of-war, military and bureaucratic personnel endured extensive food and fuel shortages, segregation from loved ones and widespread poverty – all as a result of the Russian and American rivalry which was reaching boiling point. The conflict escalated following the severing of road, rail and canal links between the western zones of occupation and West Berlin. It is commonly acknowledged that this manoeuvre was part of a Soviet plot to undermine the Americans, whose efforts in West Germany were popularly regarded. Rather than negotiate terms in which the separate German states could exist under conflicting occupancies, the USA’s response exacerbated the conflict by flying enormous quantities of food and general goods into West Germany.

Outside of Germany, too, questions of Soviet expansionist imperialism surfaced. In 1946, the primary focus of the media had been on the territories that the USSR had actually annexed. In 1950, by contrast, much greater emphasis was placed on speculating about which territories the Soviets would attempt to conquer next. According to multiple reports, ‘a real crisis impended in Europe’, in particular Eastern Europe, if Communism remained unchecked.⁵⁷ It was suggested that, whilst Germany was the primary objective of the USSR, countries such as Czechoslovakia and Persia were also key targets for Soviet expansion. These nations, the conservative press argued, offered specific advantages to the Soviets, such as an abundance of natural resources. They would undoubtedly fall unless more than ‘good-intentioned words of friendship and sympathy’ were offered in assistance from the West.⁵⁸

The *Tribune*’s observations on global imperialism paralleled those of the national papers. There was no mention of the alleged Soviet annexations in Europe and, in fact, the only mention of the USSR was in reference to its allegedly peaceful intentions. The *Tribune* claimed, as it had in earlier years, that America was the real threat to international peace, not the USSR. The pro-Soviet press particularly

⁵⁶ *Tribune*, ‘Russians Don’t Want War’, 7 June 1950, 6.

⁵⁷ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, ‘Soviet Pressure In Europe Increasing’, 4 April 1950, 3.

⁵⁸ *Daily News*, ‘Will Persia Be the Next?’, 29 October 1950, 26.

emphasised that the USA's intentions in Europe were based upon the need to 'provide the bulk of cannon fodder' in their phoney-war against the USSR and also increase the human resources available to capitalism, which had been significantly reduced by the victory of the Chinese Revolution.⁵⁹ According to the *Tribune*, it was preposterous to claim that the Soviets were the war-hungry aggressors when the Americans had so many military bases throughout the world, and particularly throughout Europe, a domain to which the Americans had no legitimate claim.⁶⁰ Whilst the mainstream press had succeeded in conjuring fear about the Soviets' imperialist intentions, the *Tribune* and the wider pro-Soviet camp attempted to cast doubt on the claims of the mainstream press, raising the question 'who is it that threatens war'?⁶¹

Soviet expansionism and the threat of nuclear war were popular topics of debate in the Australian parliament in 1950. As in 1946, debates focused on the discussion about whether or not the USSR was the primary aggressor. However, unlike in 1946 when the range of political opinions varied, in 1950 the overwhelming majority of MPs agreed that the Soviet Union was, in fact, the threatening party. Political discourse reinforced Australia's 'self-evident and unchanging' foreign policy – namely a policy 'inseparable from ... the closest possible co-operation within the British Commonwealth and with the United States of America and other nations friendly to the Commonwealth'.⁶² The point was clearly made that the USSR and any other Communist states were the enemy. In the eyes of many Australian parliamentarians, especially Menzies' Liberals and more specifically Percy Spender (Minister for External Affairs), CPA members and Soviet-sympathisers could not be more wrong in their assumptions about the Soviet Union's international intentions.⁶³

In a debate about international relations made in parliament on 9 March 1950, Spender made the following observations:

Soviet Russia's foreign policy is essentially global in character. There is a necessary interdependence, recognized by it perhaps more than any other nation, between European and Asiatic policies.

Its ultimate objective is world communism with Moscow as the controlling centre, either inspired by a belief that only by the destruction of other forms of government can communism be secured, or inspired by no other motive than aggression.

Its immediate purpose is to work towards its ultimate objective by Communist infiltration in all democratic countries – organized from the centre, Moscow – so creating unrest, causing economic

⁵⁹ *Tribune*, 'US War Claims Worry Europe', 27 May 1950, 7.

⁶⁰ *Tribune*, 'Soviet Legation Small, But Yank One Very Large', 29 March 1950, 6.

⁶¹ *Tribune*, 'Who is it that threatens war?', 26 April 1950, 4.

⁶² CPD, *International Affairs*, 9 March 1950, 621.

⁶³ CPD, *International Affairs*, 23 March 1950, 1154.

disruption and discrediting governments. The means employed may differ from time to time – “peace offensives”, propaganda and industrial dislocation may be used or discarded as circumstances dictate – but the purpose will remain constant.⁶⁴

Whilst Spender’s observations were a clear reflection of the Liberal Party’s perceptions of the Soviet Union, the opinions of Labor politicians were less clear cut. Certainly, many Labor politicians shared the view that the USSR was exacerbating the current volatile climate but most were not willing to ignore the injustices of the past, or the role played by the representatives of the Western right-wing in the present. A prime example of this inconsistency was epitomised by Labor MP, E. James Harrison, in his lengthy speech to the House on 22 March 1950. Harrison began by asserting that ‘all that the Russians have done has been to erect a protective screen around their own country, and, in doing so, they are only emulating our own example’.⁶⁵ Yet shortly after, Harrison stated that ‘aggression will come’ and, in his opinion, would come from Russia and their European satellites.⁶⁶ Later in this debate, fellow Labor MP for Yarra, Stan Keon, made further damning comments against the Soviet Union. In Keon’s speech, which dominated several pages of the 30-page debate, he argued that ‘the most urgent task of every democratic government to-day should be to secure some workable means of controlling those (atomic) weapons, if that be possible in the face of the deliberate hostility and truculence of the Soviet Union’.⁶⁷ It would seem that, unlike in 1946, when Labor-men remained silent or diplomatic towards the USSR, in 1950 they were not so reticent about expressing their feelings.

Another contrasting feature of 1950 CPDs, in comparison to those from 1946, was the vocal presence of not only Labor back-benchers but ALP leaders. Ben Chifley (former Prime Minister) and Doc Evatt (former Minister for External Affairs) frequently spoke in parliament on manner matters concerning the Soviet Union. For example, on 27 September 1950 Chifley spoke at length about the USSR’s foreign policy. Chifley asserted that ‘there is one thing that is dangerous to the world to-day, it is the fanatic, whether political or otherwise, who can see only with one eye and with some particular obsession’.⁶⁸ These comments were made in reference to coalition members’ branding of ALP politicians Communists because of the party’s discomfort in declaring all-out war on the USSR. The former PM then stated, in much clearer terms than he had ever done in his premiership, that the ALP ‘entirely disagreed not only with the principles associated with communism, but also with the imperialism which now characterized Russia’s policy’.⁶⁹ Although Chifley regretted losing his position at the helm of

⁶⁴ CPD, *International Affairs*, 9 March 1950, 624.

⁶⁵ CPD, *International Affairs*, 22 March 1950, 1063.

⁶⁶ CPD, *International Affairs*, 22 March 1950, 1064.

⁶⁷ CPD, *International Affairs*, 22 March 1950, 1069.

⁶⁸ CPD, *International Affairs*, 27 September 1950, 22.

⁶⁹ CPD, *International Affairs*, 27 September 1950, 22.

Australian politics, his new position at least afforded him the freedom to finally speak his mind about the Soviet Union.

In addition to the fears of Soviet invasion, in 1950 the threat of nuclear war was frequently discussed in public discourse about the USSR. Discussions of espionage, and arguments over the rightful handling of atomic secrets, were by no means new ground but the debates intensified at the turn of the decade. In 1946, the Australian press had referred only sporadically to Soviet spies, and most of these references pertained to Soviet agents in the USA or Canada, rather than in Australia itself. Throughout 1950, however, several articles were published in both the Communist and national presses on the issue. Two major international incidents of espionage dominated the discourse in 1950 – the Dr Fuchs debacle in the UK, and the trials of Rosenberg, Gold and Slack in the USA. Several articles were also published that raised concerns about whether Australia was vulnerable to infiltration by Soviet spies. In some of these articles, Ernie Thornton was again mentioned as a person of interest.⁷⁰

The mainstream media contributed significantly to the escalating atmosphere of fear. It accused the USSR of having spies everywhere, including Australia. Such articles frequently made use of terms such as ‘betrayed’, ‘traitor’ and ‘sabotage’, reinforcing the deepening atmosphere of suspicion which became characteristic of the Cold War era.⁷¹ Specific reports on the trials of Fuchs, Rosenberg, Gold and Slack were characteristic of the intense anti-Sovietism that was becoming more dominant in Australian papers.⁷² The convicted spies, particularly the ‘fanatical’ Fuchs, were widely condemned in the media for showing ‘the Russians enough short cuts in research to enable them to complete and explode their first atomic bomb probably five years earlier than they had hoped’.⁷³ Perhaps more importantly, however, these high-profile cases of espionage highlighted the concerns of the anti-Soviet conservatives regarding a secret Soviet infiltration of Australia. According to the mainstream press, the Western World had to wake up to the fact that democracy was ‘at war with Soviet-backed Communism’ both at home and abroad.⁷⁴

Soviet espionage and the nuclear arms race were also widely discussed in the *Tribune* newspapers. The Fuchs case was given some attention in both the national and South Australian papers, which presented a starkly different story to that published by the mainstream press. Describing the spy scares

⁷⁰ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, ‘Communist Trips Abroad A Danger To Security’, 24 July 1950, 2.

⁷¹ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, ‘The True Face of the Communist Party’, 7 March 1950, 2.

⁷² Whilst these international scandals were separated geographically, they did actually share an intrinsic link – Between 1943 and 1945, Fuchs, Rosenberg, Gold and Slack reportedly worked together in the Allied American Army Signal Corps. After it was alleged that Fuchs began passing valuable atomic information to the Russians since 1945, suspicions over the American trio solidified into real condemnations.

⁷³ *West Australian*, ‘International Hunt For Atom Spies – Sequel To Imprisonment Of Scientist’, 3 March 1950, 1.

⁷⁴ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, ‘Communist Trips Abroad A Danger To Security’, 24 July 1950, 2.

as 'the dirtiest anti-Soviet provocation since the war', the *Tribune* claimed that the 'trials' in both England and North America were fabrications, invented by the US atomic monopolists.⁷⁵ The *Tribune* alleged that the Fuchs case was based upon evidence which could best be described as circumstantial. Despite being jailed for 14 years, there was no documented evidence presented during the trial to prove Fuchs' betrayal, or confirmation that he was known to any member of the Soviet government.⁷⁶ Essentially, the *Tribune* argued, spy scares were nothing more than American 'imperialist' attempts to 'blackmail the world' into entrusting them with atomic secrets in a shameful display of one-up-manship.⁷⁷ The *Tribune* claimed that the 'fallacies' of the conservative press demonstrated the US's 'thinly veiled call for the formation of an Australian counterpart of the neo-fascist American FBI'.⁷⁸ If the Australian public did not recognise these stunts, the country would follow Britain into a state of complete submission to the US warmongers.

Despite the prominence of spy stories in the press, the issue of espionage was discussed only rarely in parliament. But it did crop up from time to time. In March 1950, for example, Liberal member William Wentworth directly queried Prime Minister Menzies about the Fuchs case. Claiming that Fuchs had been 'involved with an organization known as the British Association of Scientific Workers', Wentworth questioned whether Fuchs, and the aforementioned association, had any connection to the Australian chapter of this group.⁷⁹ He also called the attention of the house to the fact that there was also a Canadian Association of Scientific Workers, and that the scientists associated with the 1945/1946 espionage case (discussed in the previous chapter) were members of the group. Speaking directly to Menzies again, Wentworth asked 'does he also know that these three organizations ... together with affiliated organizations in other countries, formed a Soviet-controlled network operating for Soviets' atomic objectives, creating the climate of treason and furthering acts of treason'?⁸⁰ Whilst Menzies admitted in his response that he 'had no personal knowledge of the matter', the Prime Minister assured his fellow parliamentarian that investigations were underway.

Following Wentworth's statements, several debates took place in parliament regarding the threat of Soviet spying in Australia. Popular points of conflict included the request for all 'Communists or Communist sympathizers among the war-time refugees, whether married or not' to be extradited back to their native countries in an effort to eliminate traitors in the midst.⁸¹ However, without doubt, the most contentious issue regarding treason and espionage pertained to the familiar figure of Ernie Thornton. In

⁷⁵ *Tribune*, 'Atom Spy' Drama Is Plot Against World Peace', 3 June 1950, 6.

⁷⁶ *Tribune*, 'Atom Spy' Drama Is Plot Against World Peace', 3 June 1950, 6.

⁷⁷ *Tribune*, 'Soviet Denounces H-Bomb Hysteria; New Peace Call', 1 April 1950, 8.

⁷⁸ *Tribune*, 'Herald Wants Australian FBI', 15 March 1950, 5.

⁷⁹ CPD, *Communism*, 9 March 1950, 571.

⁸⁰ CPD, *Communism*, 9 March 1950, 571.

⁸¹ CPD, *Answers to Questions: Communism*, 9 March 1950, 654.

just one volume of 1950 CPDs, Thornton's name appeared on at least three different occasions, and in April 1950 an entire debate focused on his person. Both Liberal and Labor politicians condemned Thornton's movements around the world on behalf of the Federated Ironworkers Union, and called for the government to revoke his Australian passport and disallow him entry back into the country.⁸² Bernard Corser (Liberal) echoed the sentiments of many Australian politicians, asking 'is it not time that our national interests were protected by preventing, as far as possible, Australian traitors from attending enemy conferences overseas?'⁸³

Although not an act of espionage per se, the trial of former-CPA President and current Secretary, Lawrence 'Lance' Sharkey, for sedition received much attention in the media and in parliamentary discourse. The debacle began on 4 March 1949, when Sharkey gave a controversial interview to Sydney newspaper, *Daily Telegraph*, detailing his thoughts on the Soviet Union and the role it could/should play in Australia's future. Sharkey's comment that 'if Soviet forces in pursuit of aggressors entered Australia, Australian workers would welcome them', particularly alarmed the Australian government, who believed that such comments were seditious and posed a direct threat to national security.⁸⁴ Following the publication of the telephone interview, in which reporter John McGarry actually admitted 'he did not remember which part of the statement represented the actual words used by Sharkey', an indictment was filed against the CPA General Secretary on 30 May.⁸⁵

Sharkey's trial began on 20 July, and wore on for three months, until sentencing on 17 October 1949. During this time, Sharkey was tried on two occasions – firstly in Federal Court, and, on the second occasion, Sharkey's appeal against the first trial's guilty verdict was heard by the High Court of Australia. The crux of the Crown's case against Sharkey was that he had violated Section 24D of the Commonwealth Crimes Act, which stipulated that it was 'an indictable offence for a person to write, print, utter or publish any seditious words'.⁸⁶ A further description of what constitutes 'seditious intention', described by Harold Rich (Sharkey's solicitor) in the pamphlet, *The Story of the Sharkey Trial*, in part, as follows: to bring the Sovereign land into hatred or contempt; to excite disaffection against the Sovereign or the Government or Constitution; to excite disaffection against the Government or Constitution of any of the King's Dominions; to excite disaffection against the Government or Constitution of the Commonwealth or against either House of the Parliament of the Commonwealth; or,

⁸² CPD, *Communism – Dr Hewlett Johnson-Passports*, 19 April 1950, 1505.

⁸³ CPD, *Mr. E. Thornton*, 19 April 1950, 1565.

⁸⁴ R. Dixon, *The Trial of L.L. Sharkey: Speech by R. Dixon to Sharkey Protest Meeting held in Sydney October 21, 1949* (Sydney: Current Book Distributors, 1949), 5.

⁸⁵ R. Dixon, *The Trial of L.L. Sharkey*, 3.

⁸⁶ Harold Rich, *The Story of the Sharkey Trial* (Sydney: Release Sharkey Committee, 1949), 3.

to promote feelings of ill-will and hostility between different classes of His Majesty's subjects so as to endanger the peace, order or good government of the Commonwealth.⁸⁷

Sharkey's defence argued that none of these points had been violated, as the Australian Communist had responded (against his will and better judgement) in a purely 'hypothetical' manner, to McGarry's questions regarding the statements made by French Communist leader, Maurice Thorez.⁸⁸ He had also responded in the context that if fascist forces were to invade Australia, as had been done in Europe during the Second World War, 'Australian workers would welcome Soviet forces'.⁸⁹ The defence contended, 'how could it possibly endanger the peace, order and good government of the Commonwealth to reply to a man's question over the telephone?'⁹⁰ Furthermore, how could the testimony of a reporter of poor repute, who could not conclusively determine which words were those of the defendant and those of his own collusion, be used as evidence? Sharkey's only intention, Rich claimed, was 'to express the opposition of the working class to the war plans of the imperialists, and to defend the idea of peace'.⁹¹

Despite the strong arguments made in his defence, Sharkey was found guilty and sentenced to the harshest penalty for violation of the sections of the Crimes Act – three years imprisonment. The presiding judge, Mr Justice Dwyer, was slammed by Sharkey's attorneys for his closing words to the jury, which they claimed had been impartial and which had swayed the jurors. Furthermore, it was claimed, Dwyer's personal and political agendas affected the overall sentencing of Sharkey – that is, Sharkey's standing in the CPA afforded him a much more severe penalty than an 'average' defendant, as a result of the judge's anti-Communist opinions.⁹²

Sharkey's incarceration provoked a furious reaction in the part of the CPA, as well as in the wider community, particularly in the working classes.⁹³ Throughout 1949 and 1950, a number of articles were printed in the *Tribune* condemning what the newspaper claimed to be a misrepresentation and false imprisonment of their leader, a man whom Australian Communists and workers named an 'outstanding fighter for world peace'.⁹⁴ Articles on the Sharkey issue fell into one of two categories – narratives and reflections on the trial itself, or reports on a range of strikes and petitions throughout Australia calling for the Secretary's release. Many of the articles from the former category simply repeated the words uttered

⁸⁷ Harold Rich, *The Story of the Sharkey Trial*, 4.

⁸⁸ Harold Rich, *The Story of the Sharkey Trial*, 1.

⁸⁹ Harold Rich, *The Story of the Sharkey Trial*, 1.

⁹⁰ Harold Rich, *The Story of the Sharkey Trial*, 5.

⁹¹ R. Dixon, *The Trial of L.L. Sharkey*, 7.

⁹² Harold Rich, *The Story of the Sharkey Trial*, 22.

⁹³ R. Dixon, *The Trial of L.L. Sharkey*, 3.

⁹⁴ *Tribune*, '5000 sign Sharkey petition', 24 March 1950, 3.

by Sharkey adding very little, apart from an occasional reference to the injustice of the trial or assertions that from an early stage 'Sharkey was a marked man'.⁹⁵

There were, however, a handful of more notable examples on the Sharkey case were printed. In an article which detailed the police visit to the *Tribune* headquarters shortly after the charge of sedition was laid against Sharkey, it was suggested that action against the CPA secretary would be quashed because 'Australian people did not want war. They will not submit meekly to being dragged into an imperialistic assault on the Soviet Union at the behest of Wall Street and City of London imperialists'.⁹⁶ Later in the year, a report printed in the *Tribune* asserted that Sharkey's words 'harmonised' with the ethos of the Charter of the United Nations and that the Australian government's action against the CPA Secretary was contrary to the agreements which Australia made when it had joined the UN.⁹⁷ Making a particular comparison between Sharkey's statements that Australian workers would welcome the Red Army liberators in an instance of fascist invasion and the Charter, the report noted that 'if aggression occurs, the Security Council on which, the Soviet Union has a permanent seat, may decide to "take such action by air, sea or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace"'.⁹⁸

Support for Sharkey was not just confined to the pages of the *Tribune* newspaper. Throughout the course of the Sharkey affair, protests and petitions which attracted thousands of supporters were quite common in Australia.⁹⁹ On several occasions, reports were printed in both the *Tribune* and non-Communist newspapers throughout Australia. Two of the more intriguing *Tribune* articles appeared almost a year apart, in April 1949 and January 1950. The former was a report on a strike of Port Pirie, Wallaroo and Port Augusta (all S.A.) waterside workers, who had sent an 'indignant' protest to the ALP damning the oppression of Sharkey, whose 'statement was in the interests of world peace'.¹⁰⁰ The latter article was less a reflection on an isolated event and more a 'call to arms' actioned by Victorian Communist State Executive member, Ralph Gibson.¹⁰¹ The article quotes Gibson as saying that 'Mr. Sharkey was gaoled in the cause of peace. His call was to treat the Soviet as a friend, not an enemy. Friendship with the Soviet is the condition of peace'.¹⁰² Whilst mainstream newspapers never explicitly mentioned the USSR when reporting on the strikes against Sharkey's imprisonment, it was not uncommon for the presses to emphasise that workers' demands to repeal the summonses were a result

⁹⁵ *Tribune*, 'Sharkey was a marked man', 24 February 1950, 3.

⁹⁶ *Tribune*, 'Police Visit To Tribune', 25 March 1949, 1.

⁹⁷ *South Australian Tribune*, 'Sharkey upheld UN Charter', 28 October 1949, 2.

⁹⁸ *South Australian Tribune*, 'Sharkey upheld UN Charter', 28 October 1949, 2.

⁹⁹ *Tribune*, '5000 sign Sharkey petitions', 24 March 1950, 3.

¹⁰⁰ *Tribune*, 'Strong protests in South Australia', 1 April 1949, 6.

¹⁰¹ *South Australian Tribune*, 'Free Sharkey in fight for peace', 13 January 1950, 1.

¹⁰² *South Australian Tribune*, 'Free Sharkey in fight for peace', 13 January 1950, 1.

of ill-feeling towards the action against a man they believed to be acting in the interests of world peace.¹⁰³

Petitions, too, were sent 'from countries as remote from Australia as Cuba and Cyprus, and also from Britain and the United States of America', damning the first jailing of a citizen of a Western nation under the charge of Communist sedition.¹⁰⁴ The *Tribune* reported twice on outcries from Britain, firstly from the Communist Party of Great Britain in July 1949, and, in March 1950, from 'the brain behind D-Day', Professor J. D. Bernal.¹⁰⁵ In April 1949, there appeared another article which denigrated the decision to prosecute Sharkey, this time made by Polish and Russian delegates at the UN. In the article, the Polish delegate, Drohojowski, accused the Australian government of denying Sharkey and the CPA of basic human rights, and requested that the UN investigate the proceedings.¹⁰⁶ The representative of White Russia, Kisselev, added that the action taken against Sharkey was a manifestation of the blatant anti-Soviet policy which was increasingly evident in Australia.¹⁰⁷

Whilst the tenor of the articles about Sharkey's prosecution remained consistent, the *Tribune's* actual reporting of the trial was not. When other issues came to the forefront, the *Tribune* no longer covered the Sharkey affair in such detail. For example, during winter 1949, when Sharkey's initial trial was underway, there was relatively little discussion of the proceedings. Instead, the *Tribune* focused on the coal miners' strike. A similar pattern could be observed during significant periods of 1950 – in the first half of the year during the implementation of the CPA ban, and in the second half of the year (which coincided with Sharkey's release) following the outbreak of the Korean War. This inconsistency is even more notable when one considers that the coverage of the trial by the mainstream press (discussed below) was so thorough throughout the entire March 1949-October 1950 period.

The non-Communist media also paid significant attention to the Sharkey trial. Whilst only a small percentage of these articles referred to the connection between Sharkey, the CPA and the USSR, this debate was undoubtedly one of the more intensely debated by the national and state media. As in many other cases involving discussion of Communist matters, the New South Wales and Queensland media dominated reports. One of the earliest reports on the Sharkey trial appeared in the *Barrier Miner*. The article claimed that prosecution of the CPA Secretary was unlikely because 'the addition of the safe words "in pursuit of aggressors" make it impossible successfully to prosecute'.¹⁰⁸ Three more notable

¹⁰³ *Daily News*, 'Seamen Protest Over Sharkey', 25 October 1949, 11.

¹⁰⁴ R. Dixon, *The Trial of L.L. Sharkey*, 3.

¹⁰⁵ *Tribune*, 'Quash Sharkey trial, says British CP', 22 July 1949, 2.
Tribune, 'Bernal backs Sharkey', 17 March 1950, 2.

¹⁰⁶ *Tribune*, 'Sedition charge "violation of human rights"', 29 April 1949, 7.

¹⁰⁷ *Tribune*, 'Sedition charge "violation of human rights"', 29 April 1949, 7.

¹⁰⁸ *Barrier Miner*, 'Prosecution of Sharkey unlikely', 9 March 1949, 4.

articles were printed in New South Wales and Queensland papers throughout March 1949. What made these reports so different was the lack of an obvious anti-Communist bias. The first, which appeared on 14 March, detailed Sharkey's speech at the Sydney Domain on the previous day. Excerpts of the speech were recorded and then commented upon, unencumbered by the anti-Soviet bias which was typical of Queensland newspapers. Sharkey's assertion that 'Russia did not want war because she was a peace-loving country' set the tone of the article.¹⁰⁹ The second article appeared on 29 March and was an even-handed analysis of the opening days of Sharkey's trial. Whilst the final paragraphs of the report were reasonably uncomplimentary towards Sharkey (they dictated the Crown prosecutor's damning statements about the Soviet 'potential enemy' and the connection with the CPA), much of the article outlined the support shown to Sharkey throughout the trial.¹¹⁰ By contrast, the final article which was printed the following day in another Queensland newspaper, listed the claims made by Sharkey's counsel. Amongst the most notable excerpts was a paraphrased statement that the trial had been 'brought about because of bias caused by repeated hostile propaganda against the Soviet Union'.¹¹¹

Of course, there were also many articles printed which made derogatory claims against Sharkey, although these typically began to surface later in 1949 and then again in 1950 as Australian politics became increasingly conservative in nature. One of the more obviously anti-Soviet and anti-Sharkey reports was printed in the *Barrier Daily Truth* newspaper, repeating the accusations of the Crown that Sharkey's statement 'on March 4 was a cunningly worded piece of propaganda. It was inflammatory in nature and preached class warfare'.¹¹² Another article appeared in the Brisbane's *Courier-Mail* on 9 December 1949. Although not directly referencing the USSR, the article highlighted the feelings of ill-will towards the CPA and communism in Australia. The short report detailed the elation of an Auburn crowd to reassurances made by Prime Minister Chifley that Sharkey would not be released, despite several demonstrations by workers and petitions by CPA and sympathisers from around the globe.¹¹³

Red Russia & Communist China

The spread of communism into the Asian continent emerged as the most widely debated topic of discussion in Australian political discourse during 1950.¹¹⁴ After the Communist overthrow of Chang Kai

¹⁰⁹ *Morning Bulletin*, 'Sharkey says Russia peaceful', 14 March 1949, 1.

¹¹⁰ *Courier-Mail*, 'Crown's view over Sharkey – Crowd chairs Sharkey', 29 March 1949, 1.

¹¹¹ *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 'Sharkey's counsel alleges bias', 30 March 1949, 1.

¹¹² *Barrier Daily Truth*, 'Sharkey Case', 18 August 1949, 3.

¹¹³ *Courier-Mail*, 'Sharkey to stay', 9 December 1949, 1.

¹¹⁴ It is important to note that in 1950 there was no differentiation between Chinese and Soviet Communism. It is not until the mid-1950s, following the Sino-Soviet split, that each nation's ideology is regarded individually. At this stage, when Communist movement in Asia is mentioned in the Australian media and parliament there is an undefined yet intrinsic link to the USSR, and the discourse should be regarded with this in mind.

Shek's nationalist government in China on 1 October 1949, there were widespread fears that communism would spread to other Asian countries. By 1950, Korea had been divided between the Communist north and nationalist south. The impact upon the whole South-East Asian region was immense and brought the threat of communism dangerously close to Australia.¹¹⁵

The spread of communism into Asia arguably affected Australia more than any other part of the Western World. In previous years the Australian experience was ignored or downplayed because of its proximity to Europe. However, in 1950, after the Communist takeover in Asia, Australia's position became a focal point of the Cold War conflict. One view that was frequently expressed in Australian political circles was that Chinese Communist regime, whilst posing a very real threat to Australia, was unlikely to survive for very long.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, the Australian government believed that, if the Soviet-instructed Asian Communists were to invade via the near north, Australia would be assisted by the allied forces.¹¹⁷

A recurring theme in Australian public discourse was that, because the spread of communism had been blocked in Europe, the USSR had been forced to shift its attention to the East. Whilst conquest of Europe was the original and primary aim, the declining popularity of Communist parties in Western Europe had turned the Russians eastward, where poor, uneducated Asians would be more easily convinced.¹¹⁸ A dozen reports printed in many national newspapers claimed that Asia, and more specifically China, had been chosen by the Kremlin as a prime target for the expansion of Communism. The People's Republic of China was thus a tool of Soviet foreign policy.¹¹⁹ According to the mainstream press, the Soviets were also eager to gain control over the vast human and material resources of Asia. The addition of 450 million Chinese citizens to the 182 million Soviets ensured that by year's end 20% of the world's population would be under Communist control.¹²⁰

The *Tribune* newspaper, unsurprisingly took a different view of the situation in Asia. Rather than envisioning the Chinese Revolution as a short-lived phenomenon that had been engineered by the Soviets, the *Tribune* saw the victory of communism in China as an important achievement of the global peace movement. It argued that the formulation of the Sino-Soviet Pact in February 1950, which bound China and the USSR to each other ideologically, financially and culturally for 30 years, was a 'shattering blow ... for the American imperialists'.¹²¹ No longer could the warmongers deny the impending victory of

¹¹⁵ Malcolm Booker, *The Last Domino: Aspects of Australian Foreign Relations* (Sydney: William Collins Publishers, 1976), 13.

¹¹⁶ CPD, *International Affairs*, 23 March 1950, 1184.

¹¹⁷ CPD, *International Affairs*, 9 March 1950, 640.

¹¹⁸ *Mail*, 'Vital Talks for Aust.', 14 March 1950, 2.

¹¹⁹ *Examiner*, 'All-Out Effort To Win', 6 July 1950, 2.

¹²⁰ *Examiner*, 'All-Out Effort To Win', 6 July 1950, 2.

¹²¹ *Tribune*, 'Sino-Soviet Pact Bolsters Peace', 18 February 1950, 2.

communism over the waning capitalist empire. In addition to the threat posed to America, the *Tribune* claimed that it was in Australia's own interests diplomatically to recognise the new government in China.¹²² In a rare example of a direct rebuttal of the stance taken by the anti-Soviet conservatives, the *Tribune* published an article criticising the derogatory remarks made by Australia's Minister for External Affairs, Percy Spender, about the Chinese Communists. According to the *Tribune*, Spender had attempted 'to impress his American patrons' at an international conference in Colombo by expressing 'gratuitous malice towards Communism'.¹²³ The *Tribune* then alleged that Spender had single-handedly isolated Australia during a time of great instability for the Western world.¹²⁴

The *Tribune* also attacked the claim made by the mainstream press that the USSR was in complete control of the Asian Communist movement, and was manipulating the situation solely in the interests of the Kremlin. On the contrary, the pro-Soviet press argued, the Soviets had made many sacrifices to help the Chinese Communists, and the pact between the USSR and Communist China was 'a model of brotherly, equal relations'.¹²⁵ Particular examples given in the *Tribune*, such as the USSR's gift of Manchurian land and lucrative financial support to the Chinese, starkly contrasted the devilish claims made in the conservative press.¹²⁶ Whilst both the pro-Soviet and conservative presses presented strong cases for their positions, the truth regarding the deepening Communist/capitalist conflict remained elusive. As in 1946, when the threat of Communist expansion had been largely confined to Europe, very little was known in Australia about what was actually taking place on the ground in those parts of the world that were falling under Soviet influence; reality and fallacy were inextricably intertwined.

The Korean War, which began in June 1950 and continued to rage for the next 37 months, was arguably the most definitive physical battle of the Cold War. The conflict was a consequence of continually strained relations between America and China, the former feeling threatened by the latter's ambitions to extend Communist power. When North Korean forces, bolstered financially by the Soviets and militarily by the Red Army, crossed the 38th Parallel (the latitudinal indicator which separated Communist North Korea from nationalist South Korea), allied forces were deployed in an attempt to push them back. Between 1950 and 1953, 17,000 Australian soldiers were sent to Korea. Although only

¹²² *Tribune*, 'Friendship With Asia Only Safe Way For Aust.', 18 January 1950, 6.

¹²³ The Colombo Plan was established in January 1950 amongst a small group of Australasian nations, in Sri Lanka. The purpose of the conference was to establish an alliance of sorts between those nations resisting Communist infiltration in threatened areas, as well as decide the appropriate action for recognition of the Chinese People's Democracy.

¹²⁴ *Tribune*, 'Spender's "Hate China" Talk Isolates Australia', 14 January 1950, 8.

¹²⁵ *Tribune*, 'Soviet-China Treaty Is Equal, Brotherly', 8 March 1950, 2.

¹²⁶ *Tribune*, 'Soviet's Many Gifts To Chinese People', 25 February 1950, 2.

340 Australian servicemen died, the Korean War became a definitive 'psychological landmark' of the Cold War.¹²⁷

The significance of the Korean War did not escape the mainstream press. Between June and December 1950, numerous lengthy articles dealing specifically with the Korean War appeared in papers, from every Australian state and territory (excepting Northern Territory).¹²⁸ West Australian newspapers were again vocal in their opposition to communism in general, and the Soviets in particular. Less predictably, however, Tasmanian papers joined in the chorus of critics. Over four days, between 14 and 17 July, the *Mercury* and *Examiner* published three articles denouncing the Soviets' manipulation of the Korean conflict.¹²⁹ Dismissing the Asian Communists as mere 'catpaws' for the 'obstructive and malicious' Russians, it seemed that, with few exceptions, the Australian media had totally aligned itself with the anti-Soviet position.¹³⁰ As far as the mainstream conservative press was concerned, the Soviets had 'mastered' a high level of control over the Chinese and Korean 'puppet' governments.¹³¹ The brazen aggression of the USSR's Communist forces, it was alleged, bore 'within it the seeds of a third World War, for Soviet Russia and the United States confront each other in a crucial test on the shores of Asia'.¹³²

Many articles which reported generally on the Korean conflict were published in the *Tribune* newspapers. Between May and October 1950 a further dozen in depth articles were published, which specifically rebuffed the position taken by the mainstream media with regard to the Korean War.¹³³ The most salient characteristic of these reports was their denial of any wrong doing on the part of the Chinese or Korean Communist forces. Whilst the mainstream press argued that the war was entirely due to aggression by the North Koreans and the Chinese, both of whom were acting on orders from Moscow, and that the population of South Korea suffered horrible oppression during the period of North Korean occupation, the *Tribune* painted a very different picture. America, the *Tribune* claimed, was desperate to maintain its grasp on the 'remaining foothold' of the capitalists on mainland East Asia.¹³⁴ As in all of the Cold War conflicts, when the US realised that its control was waning (if not completely

¹²⁷ *Mercury*, 'Korea Attack Is Psychological Landmark For The West', 14 July 1950, 3.

¹²⁸ The lack of coverage in NT newspapers is quite curious. Throughout World War Two, the NT capital, Darwin, had been badly bombed by Japanese forces, and it was commonly agreed that if an Asian attack were to happen again it would target northern Australia. Whilst there was certainly a focus on north QLD, the Northern Territory was certainly not 'out of the woods'.

¹²⁹ *Examiner*, 'Soviet Branded As Instigator Of Korean Aggression – A.L.P. Resolution', 17 July 1950, 4.

¹³⁰ Malcolm Booker, *The Last Domino*, 119.

¹³¹ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Soviet Puppet Launches War Of Aggression', 26 June 1950, 2.

¹³² *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Soviet Puppet Launches War Of Aggression', 26 June 1950, 2.

¹³³ It is important to note that the national *Tribune* records for the latter half of 1950 were extensively damaged and only the articles from the *South Australian Tribune* can be used legitimately. Therefore, whilst I am sure there are many more examples which could have been used, I am unfortunately limited in my research.

¹³⁴ *South Australian Tribune*, 'U.S.A. Aggression In Korea Imperils World Peace', 30 June 1950, 1.

lost), Western reactions became rash and desperate – leading to a time of escalated fears over nuclear intervention by the capitalist superpower.¹³⁵

On at least three occasions, the *South Australian Tribune* published articles which vehemently rebuffed the notion, perpetuated throughout the mainstream press, that the North Koreans were to blame for the outbreak of the war. Alleging that American intelligence supplied to the UN regarding a North Korean attack on the south was nothing more than ‘a huge international confidence trick’, *Tribune* reports laid out the counter-claims of the pro-Communist camp.¹³⁶ In rebuttal to the allegations made in the media and political spheres, which identified the North Korean invasion of 25 June as the beginning of the war, the *Tribune* argued that, in fact, it was the American-inspired bombardments of North Korea on 23/24 June which really began physical combat.¹³⁷

The final focal point of the *Tribune*’s reports on Korea related to the position and role of the USSR in the conflict. Rather than simply speculate on the significance of the Soviet Union in Korea, the *Tribune* published several articles either by Russian correspondents or with reference to specific data released by Soviet sources, detailing the motivations of the CPSU. Of all the articles on this topic, the short editorial published on 14 July was probably the most articulate. Quoting extensively the ‘Note handed by the Soviet Government to the American Ambassador in Moscow’, the article set out the USSR’s past, present and future position in Korea.¹³⁸

Refuting conservative claims that the conflict had arisen as a result of continued pressure and intimidation, the pro-Soviet camp responded that all Red Army troops had been withdrawn from Korea by the agreed date of December 1948 – a date which had been determined at a special conference of the UN, and a date which American forces had failed to meet.¹³⁹ The Note then went on to articulate the USSR’s position in current UN discussions regarding the Korean situation. In contradiction to reports in the Western media, which painted the Soviets as petulant children unwilling to cooperate, the Kremlin claimed that secret American negotiations with the UN to exclude Communist China were the driving force in deciding the stance taken by the USSR. The USSR accused the UN of being biased against the Communist countries in favour of the USA. The Soviets asserted that if the faction allowed itself to be manipulated by a single power who was free to exclude other members (in this case China) whenever it suited its agenda, the UN could no longer function as an instrument of global peace.¹⁴⁰ Finally, the

¹³⁵ *South Australian Tribune*, ‘Soviet People Demand Ban On Atom Bomb’, 21 July 1950, 1.

¹³⁶ *South Australian Tribune*, ‘Facts On Korea Are Undeniable’, 8 September 1950, 2.

¹³⁷ *South Australian Tribune*, ‘US Rulers Launched Attack On N. Korea’, 7 July 1950, 2.

¹³⁸ *South Australian Tribune*, ‘Soviet Note On War In Korea’, 14 July 1950, 2.

¹³⁹ *South Australian Tribune*, ‘Soviet Note On War In Korea’, 14 July 1950, 2.

¹⁴⁰ *South Australian Tribune*, ‘Soviet Note On War In Korea’, 14 July 1950, 2.

article reaffirmed the ideal that 'Asia should be left to the Asians', a stance which exemplified the peaceful nature of the Soviet Union, and called for America to do the same.

In Australian parliamentary debates, conflicts in Asia were by far the most discussed international issue that pertained to the Soviet Union. Whilst politicians on both sides of the political spectrum could not conclusively decide whether the USSR masterminded the spread of communism into Asia (particularly China), it was unanimously believed that 'the changes have been playing into the hands of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in its search for new satellites'.¹⁴¹ In his comments during the discussion of international affairs, Labor MP, Donald Cameron, asserted that there was 'no valid reason for supposing that communism in China or anywhere else is any different in essence from the communism of Russia... the fountainhead of the doctrine of communism'.¹⁴² Russia, it was claimed, used communism 'as a weapon' to control and command dominance throughout the world, by exploiting the poverty, ill-education and poor living standards of nations ravaged by war and decades of brutal feudalism – and this was bad news for any countries which were part of the Anglo-American bloc.

Australian parliamentarians felt that the domestic situation was especially threatened by the migration of communism into the Asian continent. As the western country most immediately threatened by the spread of Communism to the Asia-Pacific region, Australia had 'a great and grave responsibility' in the management of the situation.¹⁴³ Prior to the outbreak of the Korean War, Australian politicians attempted to maintain a 'friendly' outlook on the Soviet situation, in what was becoming a 'very distorted world'.¹⁴⁴ However, with the onset of 'actual' war in Korea, perspectives changed – at least for certain politicians. One of the liveliest debates concerning military action in Korea occurred on 27 September 1950. One of the first commentators, Ben Chifley, continued petitioning for a 'friendly' approach to the Soviet issue, one which, if ignored, would ensure a 'very bad' future for Australians.¹⁴⁵ Later in the debate, Thomas White (Liberal Minister for Air and Minister for Civil Aviation) offered a different opinion. Stating that 'war (was) a part of Russia's expansionist policy', White surmised that China, Korea and the Far-East was being used as 'catspaws' in the new Russian order, which was the 'same old expansionist policy of the Czars'.¹⁴⁶

It was on the Korean issue that the differences in opinion between the ALP and Liberal Party again became particularly clear. The Liberals envisioned the USSR as purely evil and believed that strength was the only way to respond to Soviet aggression. There was no differentiation on the part of any

¹⁴¹ CPD, *International Affairs*, 9 March 1950, 625.

¹⁴² CPD, *International Affairs*, 9 March 1950, 625.

¹⁴³ CPD, *International Affairs*, 28 March 1950, 1223.

¹⁴⁴ CPD, *International Affairs*, 28 March 1950, 1223.

¹⁴⁵ CPD, *International Affairs*, 27 September 1950, 24.

¹⁴⁶ CPD, *International Affairs*, 27 September 1950, 49.

Liberal members from the party line. Whilst the Labor Party shared Liberal scepticism about the USSR, its approach towards handling the issue was not so hard-lined. Generally speaking, ALP members accepted that the USSR was problematic but believed a more nuanced approach involving both strength and diplomacy was advisable. There were, of course, differentiation within the Labor ranks to this line. Debates, both internally and between parties, on the optimum balance between confrontation and conciliation were common.

By the end of the parliamentary year, almost all political debates on foreign policy issues were dominated by talk of Korea, national defence and the Soviet Union. Amongst the concerns debated was an issue that provoked vigorous debate in parliament – the fact that the Australian media had seemingly greater knowledge of the situation regarding Australian soldiers in Korea than the Senate.¹⁴⁷ On 4 October, one of the lengthiest debates on the Korean issue raged in parliament. During the discussion, the right-wing ALP member for Fremantle, Kim Beazley, stated that, without doubt, 'Russia (had) established a dictatorship in the north'.¹⁴⁸ The Soviets had been able to do this by their acts of 'superior good faith' towards the North Korean peasantry in reclaiming land from landlords.¹⁴⁹ Beazley asserted that this shrewd and clever policy worked in favour of the Soviet Union because of the appeal of communism to those impoverished by the actions of capitalists. In order to regain the initiative in Korea, the West needed to sponsor political and economic reform. Beazley's statements were a classic example of the polarised stance of the ALP on the USSR, namely, that the USSR manipulating the situation in Asia in its own interests but it was not alone in its deviousness.

Nigel Drury (Liberal member for Ryan) contributed to the debate in a fashion which was typical of the conservative government. Drury stated 'that international communism is on the march. The world scene is changing rapidly and communism is spreading its red shadow over more and more of the world'.¹⁵⁰ In a statement reminiscent of the early-1940s, Drury went on to say; 'Hitler, in comparison to Stalin, was an amateur at the game of acquiring territory and power', and it was the primary responsibility of the Anglo-American powers to halt his expansionism.¹⁵¹

Menzies claimed in December that the problems in Korea had escalated, and were no longer a 'national but international' problem due to the involvement of Chinese Communist forces, which had been trained by the Red Army.¹⁵² The Prime Minister called for a more concerted war effort, and more manpower. Doc Evatt, on behalf of the opposition, called for calm, stating that the ALP did 'not desire the

¹⁴⁷ CPD, *International Affairs*, 6 December 1950, 3767.

¹⁴⁸ CPD, *International Affairs*, 4 October 1950, 263.

¹⁴⁹ CPD, *International Affairs*, 4 October 1950, 263.

¹⁵⁰ CPD, *International Affairs*, 4 October 1950, 265.

¹⁵¹ CPD, *International Affairs*, 4 October 1950, 265.

¹⁵² CPD, *Korea*, 8 December 1950, 4079.

conflagration in Korea to extend into a general world war'.¹⁵³ All such arguments put forward by the ALP were ignored by the Liberals and, by the close of the year, the Australian government had made a substantial military commitment to the war in Korea.

The CPA, fearing that its position on Korea and the Soviet Union was not being heard in parliament, released several political publications that dealt with the Korean War. Alan Miller's pamphlet, entitled *Fight Conscription* began shockingly by claiming that 'the Menzies' Government has let the cat out of the bag. The wealthy men are screaming for blood – young blood'.¹⁵⁴ Miller asserted that the Liberals, hell-bent on protecting their own wealth and prospects, prayed for the profits brought by war. This, and this alone, was the real motive behind the campaign of the Liberals and mainstream press to whip up public hysteria about the alleged 'Red Menace'.¹⁵⁵ Miller explained that American business was heavily dependent on war-time economics and quoted Harvard University economist, Dr Sumner Slichter, as his proof. Slichter stated in an interview that 'without the cold war, the demand for goods by the government would be many billions of dollars less than now and the expenditure both of industry and government on technological research would be hundreds of millions less than now'.¹⁵⁶

Focusing more on the domestic situation, Len Fox's pamphlet, *Guilty Men Again*, blasted the policies of Menzies' Liberals. Claiming that the Liberal Party was run by 'secret bodies', namely the Fairfax media, Fox criticised the current PM for allowing Australian foreign policy to be controlled by American interests.¹⁵⁷ Fox wrote of his disgust at the 'stabbing in the back' of Australia's war-time ally, and noted that this fact alone was enough to identify the world's true warmongers – in his opinion (and the opinion of many others, not only Communists), Menzies and the Liberals in Australia, and General MacArthur and his American militants overseas.¹⁵⁸

Domestic Issues

Of all the controversies reported in the pages of Australian newspapers, and the multitude of arguments which hampered democratic progress in federal parliament, one issue 'over-shadowed' all other domestic 'political excitements' – the Communist Party Dissolution Bill.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵³ CPD, *Korea*, 8 December 1950, 4082.

¹⁵⁴ Alan Miller, *Fight Conscription*, 1.

¹⁵⁵ Alan Miller, *Fight Conscription*, 6.

¹⁵⁶ Alan Miller, *Fight Conscription*, 9.

¹⁵⁷ Len Fox, *Guilty Men Again*, 6.

¹⁵⁸ Len Fox, *Guilty Men Again*, 12.

¹⁵⁹ L.F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley*, 381.

Vocal political hostility towards the CPA was by no means a new phenomenon. Since 1921, when the Communist Party was established, Australian Communists had fought tooth-and-nail against accusations of treason and treachery. Despite the genuine advancements in industry and worker welfare, for which Communist union leaders were partly responsible, the CPA had continually to fight off accusations that it owed its loyalty to Moscow rather than to the Australian working class.

In addition to the constant vilification of the CPA in right-wing political discourse, the party also had to contend with threats to its very existence. As we saw in chapter 1, the first of these occurred in 1940. Eight months after the Commonwealth declaration of war against Germany, the UAP had unleashed its first assault on the legality of the CPA and affiliated bodies. Menzies, who in 1940 was in his second year of his first premiership, had declared the CPA to be a threat to national security and the Allied war effort. On 27 May 1940 he had introduced legislation calling for the outlawing of the CPA and any related organisations. Unlike the situation in 1950, when talk of dissolution created much consternation (see below), the 1940 amendment to the National Security Act went through parliament unopposed. On 15 June 1940, the CPA had been declared illegal. As we have seen, the ban on the CPA remained in force for almost two years.

From the moment Menzies reclaimed the premiership, the CPA became Australia's primary domestic enemy. As in 1940, Menzies accused the Communists of trying to undermine the democratic system in Australia in the interests of the USSR. On 27 April 1950, the Menzies government introduced to parliament a bill proposing the banning of the CPA and all its affiliated bodies. The act gave the government full discretion to accuse and convict any persons, and undertake trials without adhering to the obligations and regulations of the federal judiciary courts.¹⁶⁰ The Liberals also proposed an amendment to the Crimes Act which would ensure that Communists and sympathisers tried under the bill were classed as seditious criminals whose activities threatened Australia's security. Those found guilty of harbouring, or sympathising with, Communist beliefs faced a term of imprisonment of between three and five years without the right of appeal.

The Liberals seem to have been fully united behind Menzies' attempt to ban the CPA. Menzies' coalition partner, the Country Party, was also united behind the proposed legislation. The Country Party even released a number of publications which described how the Liberal/Country Party coalition had been instrumental in thwarting the 'fifth-columnists' of the CPA, and which argued in favour of banning the Communists altogether. The focus of such pamphlets was the external threat posed to Australian

¹⁶⁰ Ralph Gibson, *The Fight Goes On*, 88.

security from the Soviet-controlled 'near north', in other words, China, and the threat posed from within by the Soviet-inspired Communist Party.¹⁶¹

Though the Liberal and Country parties were united on this issue, getting the anti-Communist legislation proved much more difficult in 1950 than it had been ten years earlier. Despite the victory of the Liberal and Country coalition in the election of 1949, the ALP retained the majority of seats in the Senate and was therefore in a position to block the passage of the legislation.¹⁶² The Labor Party had been notoriously plagued by disunity in the post-war years, especially on the issue of global and domestic communism, and on this issue the situation was no different. Apart from being split between the more left-wing members and right-wing factions, whose personal preferences regarding the CPA's legitimacy and involvement with the USSR differed greatly, the ALP decision was also clouded by doubts. Labor was concerned about whether the bill was a violation of civil liberties, not just of Communists but of all Australian citizens.¹⁶³ The Liberals used the ALP's qualms about the bill to suggest that Labor was linked to the CPA and incapable of defending the Australian public from the threat of Communism.

Following Menzies' contentious second reading of the legislation in September 1950, there was such intense debate between Liberal and Labor that the prime minister threatened a double-dissolution. Forced into an awkward position, the ALP allowed the bill to be passed under the pretence that certain amendments be actioned. Menzies officially enacted the bill in October 1950 – albeit without any of Labor's requested additions. This caused great uproar and the Labor Party requested the intervention of the High Court in overriding the government. The case was heard over a period of 24 sitting days between 14 November and 19 December 1950. However, the findings of the court were not released until March 1951, when the bill was declared unconstitutional and dissolved. Menzies remained undiscouraged and in September 1951 a public referendum was held. The Liberals' attempts were unsuccessful and Menzies finally conceded the battle.¹⁶⁴ As in 1946, when the Menzies government's underestimation of the ALP resulted in electoral embarrassment, the Liberal Party walked away from the row with egg on its face. In the words of former-Prime Minister Ben Chifley: 'Mr Menzies showed his mind before he had time to curb his tongue'. As a result the Liberal Party had replaced policy with hyperbole.¹⁶⁵

Mainstream press coverage of the CPA Dissolution Bill was extensive. State and national newspapers were full of articles, the majority of which supported the government's attempt to ban the CPA.

¹⁶¹ J. Dredge, *Twenty Questions for Thoughtful Australians*, 6.

¹⁶² L.F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley*, 387.

¹⁶³ L.F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley*, 383.

¹⁶⁴ Ralph Gibson, *The Fight Goes On*, 91.

¹⁶⁵ L.F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley*, 386.

According to the *West Australian*, for example, it was 'beyond any doubt that the Communist Party, as organised in Australia and in other countries on this side of the iron curtain, owes its inspirations to an alien philosophy and its allegiance to a foreign Power'. The ultimate objective of the CPA and its Soviet patrons was the annihilation of the Australian way of life, initially through subtle infiltration and then 'violent revolutionary' battles.¹⁶⁶ Given the fact that Soviet policy was now openly aggressive and that peace now existed only in a 'technical sense', the criminalisation of an organisation which served the interests of a hostile foreign power was both valid and necessary.¹⁶⁷ Neither the Liberals nor the mainstream press seemed to appreciate the irony that, in order to defend the freedom of Australian citizens, they were proposing a piece of legislation which would violate the civic right of all Australians to join a political party of their choice.

The Communist Party Dissolution Bill (CPDB) was naturally a matter of major concern for the *Tribune* newspaper. Since the *Tribune* was funded by the CPA, it was feared that all contributors, printers and readers of the paper, regardless of whether or not they were card-holding members, could be criminalised. In the first half of 1950, the *Tribune* published 30 articles on this issue. Describing the Dissolution Bill as Menzies' 'Fascist Bill', the *Tribune* vigorously attacked a piece of legislation which would inevitably turn Australia into a 'police state'.¹⁶⁸ In an effort to allay the fears which had been stirred up by the anti-Communist media, the *Tribune* presented several full-page broadsheet exposés throughout 1950 addressing some of the common misconceptions about the nature of communism.¹⁶⁹ To back up its claim that the CPA was not a danger to democracy, but that the CPDB posed a real threat to people's democratic rights, the *Tribune* interviewed and cited people from around Australia and across the globe. Quoting all manner of men, from ordinary members of the Australian labour movement and members of the ALP, to political commentators from the USSR and Britain, and the Peking press, the *Tribune* portrayed the CPBD as part of a much wider struggle between the labour movement and capitalism, and between the forces of peace and the forces of war.

Although there were many issues discussed in parliament pertaining to the domestic stability of Australia, the CPDB was undoubtedly the most ferociously debated. Even before the bill had been presented to the Senate, talk of Menzies' plans appeared in the CPDs. As early as 9 March, Liberal members were asserting their stance, claiming that they intended 'to ban the Communist party, to outlaw and destroy it. Communists are in exactly the same category as is the anopheles mosquito. They carry with them death, and if they are permitted to have their way they will completely destroy the entire

¹⁶⁶ *West Australian*, 'The Communist Issue', 13 May 1950, 3.

¹⁶⁷ *Courier-Mail*, 'Labour Views Clash – Ward slates Red Bill, Chambers supports it', 17 May 1950, 3.

¹⁶⁸ *Tribune*, 'This Is The Fascist Bill That Menzies Has Aimed At You!', 10 May 1950, 4.

¹⁶⁹ *Tribune*, 'The Tribune Answers Some Questions On Communism', 22 March 1950, 4.

fabric of the nation'.¹⁷⁰ In response to these claims, Bill Aylett (ALP Senator for Tasmania) queried: 'If the Government believes that the Communist party, or any other organization, is sabotaging industry why has it failed during the last three months to take action against the offender?'¹⁷¹ Aylett would only have to wait a further month, before drastic action was taken by Menzies' Liberals.

The day before the Bill was to be presented to the Senate, a huge uproar was caused by Liberal MP, William Wentworth. A renowned anti-Communist, at times so much so that his fellow Liberalites cringed, Wentworth accused opposition members of organising a 'Communist-sponsored deputation ... to be present in Canberra for the purpose, *inter alia*, of disrupting the proceedings of this House'.¹⁷² Wentworth went on to suggest that several ALP members had 'close personal' links to the CPA, and demanded to know the House's stance on having motions put in place to ban the entry of both Communist and Labor members into the Senate, the following day. In response, three Labor MPs rose to object to Wentworth's comments. Arthur Calwell, the most senior ALP member of the group, stated that he considered Wentworth's statement 'a personal insult'. The speaker, Hon. Archie Cameron, declared Wentworth's questioning out of order and the debate ended quickly – but not before the Liberal MP attempted, again, to bring the ALP into disrepute. In the eyes of the Liberal Party, the CPA was synonymous with the CPSU and if, as they believed, the ALP was in cahoots with the CPA, the Labor Party was in fact a servant of a foreign and hostile power.

The following day, Menzies introduced the bill and spoke at length to the house regarding the 'novel' and 'far-reaching' legislation.¹⁷³ The Prime Minister began his speech by stating that the CPDB was not an amendment to the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act, as it did not simply focus on industrial relations; it was legislation to deal with national security at a time when there was a real danger of war. In a rare direct reference to the USSR, Menzies stated 'the Soviet Union – and I say this with profound regret – has made perfect the technique of the "cold war". It has accompanied it by the organizing of peace demonstrations – peace demonstrations, save the mark! – designed, not to promote true peace, but to prevent or impair defence preparations in the democracies'.¹⁷⁴ Furthermore, Menzies claimed, Stalin's call for 'revolutionary power based on violence' were more than just a slogan but represented the real intentions of the USSR. Drastic action was needed to safeguard Australia's security, beginning with the home front.¹⁷⁵ The CPA was the servant of a hostile foreign power. Its subversive activities, and the threat it posed to the democratic system, had to be eliminated.

¹⁷⁰ CPD, *Governor-General's Speech*, 9 March 1950, 589.

¹⁷¹ CPD, *Governor-General's Speech*, 14 March 1950, 734.

¹⁷² CPD, *Communism*, 26 April 1950, 1843.

¹⁷³ CPD, *Communist Party Dissolution Bill 1950*, 27 April 1950, 1994.

¹⁷⁴ CPD, *Communist Party Dissolution Bill 1950*, 27 April 1950, 1995.

¹⁷⁵ CPD, *Communist Party Dissolution Bill 1950*, 27 April 1950, 2000.

Dozens of debates about the CPDB raged in parliament throughout the remainder of the year, with the exception of the winter months during which a recess was called on the issue. In early May 1950, several small issues hampered the government's initiation of the bill – namely, Menzies' inaccuracy in identifying members of the CPA. In the aforementioned speech, the PM had identified 53 'known' Communists, five of whom were not even members of the CPA. In a following discussion, opposition MPs called on the government to reassure them that protection could be provided to innocent citizens against the 'liars, perjurers pimps' whose sole purpose was to 'damn the reputation of individuals'.¹⁷⁶

The issue of the accurate identification of Communists and 'onus of proof' continued to dominate parliamentary proceedings on the CPDB for the remainder of the year. In the Senate, where the Liberals did not have a majority, the government was plagued by debates about the amount of time that had been allocated to discussion of the bill. Opposition members did not deny that national security needed to be bolstered, particularly against the threats posed by the Soviet Union and global Communism. However, they did express reservations about the impact of the proposed legislation on civil liberties in Australia. In the words of Fred Daly (Labor MP for Grayndler), 'when a similar measure, in not such a drastic form, was introduced in America, it was vetoed by President Truman himself. There are many liberal minded people in this country who are apprehensive about this bill'.¹⁷⁷

What was particularly striking about parliamentary and media discourse surrounding the CPDB is that there was a stark difference between the two in terms of the frequency with which the USSR was invoked. In parliament, there was a great deal of discussion about the CPDB but the USSR was directly mentioned only rarely. By contrast, newspaper discourse about the CPDB constantly discussed the nature of the relationship between the USSR and the CPA. One possible explanation of this anomaly is that those who were in favour of the CPDB had much to gain by invoking the USSR in public and little to gain by talking about the USSR in parliament. On the one hand, Menzies and his colleagues realized that there was political capital to be gained by persuading the public that the Soviets and the Communists were a real threat, and that only the Liberals were willing and able to defend Australia against this threat.¹⁷⁸ On the other hand, in parliament the Liberals were more interested in undermining the opposition by highlighting the connection, be it real or imagined, between the Labor Party and the CPA.

The Communist Party, and other interested parties, whose position on the bill was not represented in parliamentary debates, used different means to publicise their beliefs – in particular, the political

¹⁷⁶ CPD, *Communist Party Dissolution Bill 1950*, 9 May 1950, 2269.

¹⁷⁷ CPD, *Communist Party Dissolution Bill 1950* [No. 2], 23 September 1950, 80.

¹⁷⁸ CPD, *Communism – Dr Hewlett Johnson-Passports*, 19 April 1950, 1505.

pamphlet. Two notable publications dealing specifically with the CPDB were published in 1950. Brian Fitzpatrick's pamphlet, *The Unnecessary Police State Bill*, criticised the bill, from a non-party perspective. Written on behalf of The Council for Civil Liberties in Australia, a non-CPA organisation, the paper's objective was:

to defend against attack, not the Communist Party for which it [held] no brief, but the right of all to hold and express opinions, and the traditional rule of law under which, in British communities, accused men's freedom and reputation depend, not on arbitrary executive determination by government, but on the determination of public tribunals.¹⁷⁹

Although Fitzpatrick's pamphlet made no mention of the USSR, it highlighted the fact that in a Royal Commission into the activities of the Victorian Communist Party (held between June 1949 and March 1950), no evidence had been found to indicate that 'it or any one of its members had engaged in sabotage, espionage or treason'.¹⁸⁰ Furthermore, the formal connection between the CPA and the international Communist movement had been dissolved in 1943, with the dissolution of the Comintern. Since that time, there had been "no evidence to show control from abroad".¹⁸¹ There was also no evidence to suggest that financial support had been offered to the CPA from any foreign source. Finally, Fitzpatrick asserted, there was already legislation in place to deal with treacherous activities under the Crimes Act. Since the existing legislation was already adequate, the only reason to introduce more was to obtain totalitarian control.¹⁸²

The other pamphlet of note, E.F. Hill's *Defeat Menzies' Fascist Bill*, was certainly a CPA supported publication. The main emphasis of the pamphlet was on the threat posed by the proposed legislation to civil liberties. Hill condemned 'the Menzies government's aims to dictate the most intimate details' of people's lives. But Hill also puts the CPDB in its international context.¹⁸³ After comparing the banning of the CPA to legislation brought in by the pre-war Hitler regime, Hill claimed 'that war is clearly to establish American domination of the world – to crush Soviet Russia – despite the advocacy by that country of disarmament, a complete ban on the atomic bomb and the conclusion of a peace pact of the five major powers'.¹⁸⁴ According to Hill, the CPDB was not just a domestic measure. It was part of a concerted international campaign to undermine peace. The Australian people, Hill concluded, could no longer remain silent.¹⁸⁵

¹⁷⁹ Brian Fitzpatrick, *The Unnecessary Police State Bill*, 3.

¹⁸⁰ Brian Fitzpatrick, *The Unnecessary Police State Bill*, 6.

¹⁸¹ Brian Fitzpatrick, *The Unnecessary Police State Bill*, 8.

¹⁸² Brian Fitzpatrick, *The Unnecessary Police State Bill*, 4.

¹⁸³ E.F. Hill, *Defeat Menzies' Fascist Bill* (Melbourne: Communist Party of Australia, 1950), 2.

¹⁸⁴ E.F. Hill, *Defeat Menzies' Fascist Bill*, 2.

¹⁸⁵ E.F. Hill, *Defeat Menzies' Fascist Bill*, 8.

How much changed?

Throughout the 1940s, the character of public discourse about the USSR in Australia changed dramatically. So, too, did the quantity and quality of this discourse.

One striking way in which discourse changed was the quantity of material that was printed in the newspapers. Through the period 1943 to 1950, newspapers provided the most comprehensive commentary on the Soviet Union. In 1943, for example, when very little was being said in parliament regarding the USSR, newspapers, be they mainstream tabloids, the Communist press or local town papers, frequently discussed matters pertaining to the Soviet Union. By 1946, the quantity of newspaper coverage had grown exponentially and far exceeded that of 1943. In 1950, the amount of newspaper coverage had increased still further. However, the nature of newspaper coverage changed significantly. In 1943 the vast majority of articles gave positive accounts of Soviet foreign policy, the performance of the Red Army, and daily life in the Soviet Union. By 1946 discourse had become more polarised. By 1950, mainstream press coverage was overwhelmingly hostile to the Soviet Union.

Something else that changed during the period was the type of newspapers that published articles about the USSR. In 1943, articles commonly appeared in smaller local papers sandwiched in between articles about the local pub and advertisements for biscuits. The main conservative newspapers, by contrast, preferred to keep relatively quiet about the USSR. By 1946, however, diplomatic relations with the USSR had begun to turn sour. It was at this point that the high-circulation national and regional newspapers began to discuss the USSR more frequently and in most cases critically. Newspaper discourse began to polarise into pro- and anti-Soviet camps. By 1950, discussion of the USSR in local newspapers had dwindled considerably and almost all newspaper discussion took place in the larger national and regional newspapers, which by now were even more polarised than they had been in 1946.

The table below demonstrated the ebb in discussion of the USSR in one of the smaller, local publications from 1943-1950:

Newspaper	Mention in 1943	Mention in 1946	Mention in 1950
<i>Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser</i>	74	23	14

Table 2: Contrast between articles referring to the USSR, printed in the Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser

Brochures and pamphlets were also an important medium for discourse about the USSR in the period 1943 to 1950. In terms of both nature and volume, brochures followed a similar pattern to newspapers. However, whereas newspapers devoted more and more attention to the USSR as the decade wore on, the number and variety of pamphlets and brochures actually decreased during the period. In 1943, when the Soviet Union was allied with the Western Powers in the fight against fascism, a stream of pamphlets sympathetic to the USSR was published, not just by the CPA but by fellow travellers. By 1946, pro-Soviet pamphlets and booklets were still being published, but almost all of them stemmed from the CPA and affiliated bodies. However, with the inauguration of Menzies' Liberal Party coalition in December 1949, the publication of CPA and pamphlets decreased. When the CPDB was enacted in October 1950, CPA publications completely halted. At the same time, publications by the Liberal and Country parties increased.¹⁸⁶

The type of discourse about the USSR that changed most significantly during the period – both in terms of quantity and quality – was parliamentary debate. In chapter 1, for example, we saw that the frequency with which the USSR was mentioned in parliament increased by 20 percent between 1943 and 1946.¹⁸⁷ The number of parliamentary debates that discussed the USSR increased still further in 1950. In 1943, there were a total of 22 CPDs which referenced the Soviet Union. In 1946, there were 27 debates with Soviet citations. In 1950, the USSR was discussed on at least another 30 occasions. CPDs pertaining to the USSR, from 1950, were both longer and more detailed than had been the case in 1946. Whilst there was still a plethora of shorter 1 or 2 page discussions, many of the CPDs which mentioned the USSR stretched over 20 or more pages.¹⁸⁸ Some discussions on the Communist Party Dissolution Bill, in fact, covered between 50 and 100 pages of dialogue.¹⁸⁹ Even in instances where the USSR was not directly mentioned, debates on the CPDB (a bill which was enacted on the pretence of a connection between the CPA and CPSU) were intrinsically linked to the Soviet Union.

The reason for these fluctuations in the patterns of discourse was predominantly political. For example, at both the beginning and end of the 1940s decade, when Menzies and the conservatives were in power, discourse which criticised the USSR was obviously more prolific. This was particularly true of the

¹⁸⁶ Alan Miller, *Fight Conscripton*.

Len Fox, *Guilty Men Again*.

Brian Fitzpatrick, *The Unnecessary Police State Bill*.

John Rodgers, *Report on the Soviet Union: the speech which was banned...by the Melbourne City Council*.

E.F. Hill, *Defeat Menzies' Fascist Bill*.

¹⁸⁷ See chart on Page 32.

¹⁸⁸ CPD, *International Affairs*, 22 March 1950, 1062-1094.

CPD, *International Affairs*, 27 September 1950, 16-64.

¹⁸⁹ CPD, *Communist Party Dissolution Bill*, 11 May 1950, 2482-2565 (excepting pages 2519 and 2520).

CPD, *Communist Party Dissolution Bill*, 16 May 1950, 2627-2681.

CPD, *Communist Party Dissolution Bill*, 17 May 1950, 2742-2796.

CPD, *Communist Party Dissolution Bill*, 3 October 1950, 148-201.

print media, especially newspapers such as *Sunday Herald*, which was popularly reputed to be the mouthpiece of conservative Australian politics.¹⁹⁰ On the other hand, when the ALP was at the helm of Australian politics, discourse regarding the USSR (be it critical or complimentary) was much more restrained. Whilst the number of articles in newspapers was consistently high during Labor's period in office, there were fewer instances of direct comment from members of the government or overtly obvious mention of political perspectives.

Similar observations can be made regarding parliamentary debates. During the years when the ALP was in power, lengthy and critical debates on the Soviet Union were uncommon. In 1943, in fact, there was not a single CPD discussion which reflected negatively on the USSR. In 1946, when the Anglo-American-Soviet alliance was dissolving, derogatory comments were still few and far between. Moreover, in 1946 the Labor leadership tried to talk about the USSR as little as possible, leaving the squabbling on the topic up to an array of backbenchers. The tendency towards silence from the Labor leadership was a characteristic which served to both benefit and betray the ALP over the course of the decade. In 1943 and 1946, it was better for the ALP to remain quiet regarding the USSR. In 1943, the Soviets had become allies of Australia and were not to be criticised. In 1946, although no longer a friend, the Australian voters were not yet prepared to view the Soviet Union as a true enemy. However, by the close of the decade, the world was entangled in Cold War politics. Australians wanted their government to demonstrate strength and opposition to Soviet aggression and, when the ALP did not deliver, their supporters turned upon them.¹⁹¹

When Menzies' anti-Soviet conservatives took over the reins in December 1949, negative commentary on the USSR became common, not only from backbenchers but also from the leadership of the Liberal and Country parties. CPDs were typically lengthier and it was at this time that the senior members of the Labor opposition began to be more vocal on the issue. As the USSR moved from ally to enemy, forever changing the atmosphere of world politics, a clear movement in the atmosphere of political discourse also ensued.

In addition to the changes in patterns of discourse throughout the decade, there were several significant changes in the topics discussed in the literature. Throughout the 1940s, public discourse about the USSR can be divided into four broad categories – life within the Soviet Union, war, Soviet foreign policy and the Soviet relationship with Australia. Over the course of the decade, attention would wax and wane on each of these topics, depending on the events which unfolded at various times.

¹⁹⁰ *Tribune*, "'Herald' seeks a U.A.P. by another name', 9 September 1943, 3.

¹⁹¹ L.F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley*, 353.

The topic of war was the most widely and vigorously debated issue regarding the USSR. Between 1939 and 1941, the USSR was in cahoots with Australia's enemy, Nazi Germany. Between 1941 and 1945, the USSR was an ally, the contribution of which to the victory over Nazism was immense. After 1945, the USSR an enemy once again in the early phases of the Cold War, and an actual enemy – albeit by proxy – in the Korean War. As the diplomatic pendulum swung back and forth, so too were there changes in the way that the USSR was discussed in terms of its relationship with war.

Discourse in the first half of the decade was, obviously, dominated by discussions of the Second World War. Between 1940 and 1943, perceptions of the USSR were grim, and this was reflected both in the Australian parliament and media. Even following the German invasion of the USSR in 1941, and the subsequent formation of a Soviet alliance with the Western Powers, discourse was notably negative. Although the ALP ousted Menzies' conservatives in October 1941, it took until mid-1942 for the atmosphere in which discourse on the USSR appeared to change dramatically. Parliament, perhaps as a reaction to lingering suspicion of the USSR and confusion over the true nature and extent of the alliance, went almost completely silent on the topic of the Soviet Union. There were few exceptions to this hush and, on almost every occasion when the USSR was mentioned, the discussion revolved around the topic of war. The print media, on the other hand, talked almost constantly of Australia's new friend. In the mainstream, local and state, and Communist newspapers alike, articles celebrated about the military feats performed by the Red Army. In less than a year, the Soviet Union was transformed from a despised opponent to an ally whose 'example and sacrifice provided an inspiration to all'.¹⁹²

In 1945, when the war was over and the Anglo-Soviet alliance was beginning to disintegrate, discourse on the topic gained momentum. All attention had turned inward, towards the task of post-war reconstruction. In 1946, very little was said or written about the USSR and war. On the few occasions when the USSR's war efforts were discussed in CPDs and newspapers, there was no mention of Soviet heroism and the contribution of the USSR to victory over Nazi Germany and Japan. Instead, commentary about the USSR became increasingly negative. Although political discourse in Australia was not yet dominated by the Cold War, by the close of 1946 it appeared that war was once again on the minds of Australians and the potential enemy was the USSR.

By the close of the decade, perceptions (and, indeed, political discourse) had come full circle. With the reinstatement of Menzies as Prime Minister, albeit at the head of a new conservative political party, anti-Soviet sentiment and behaviour returned to Australia with a vengeance. Newspapers, with the exception of Communist publications, echoed the sentiments of the Liberal Party which suggested that the USSR was, once again, asserting its policy of aggressive world domination. Parliamentary debates generally

¹⁹² *Mercury*, 'Illiterate Nation to Mighty Power in 26 Years', 8 November 1943, 7.

reflected this hostility to the Soviet Union. By 1950, Australian politics were thoroughly intertwined with the Cold War. The interest in, and attention paid to, war not only regenerated itself in the dawn of the new decade but evolved. Newspapers and politicians began to talk of a 'Red Terror' that cast its shadow over Australians.¹⁹³ The spread of communism in Asia, by means of the 'domino effect', combined with the fear of nuclear war, ushered in a new period.

The topic of Soviet foreign policy often closely intertwined with discussions of war but it was also an issue of major significance in its own right. Like discourse on war, discussion about Soviet foreign policy moved through a full circle. At both the beginning and end of the decade, the USSR was generally portrayed in political discourse as a 'menace to world peace', fixated on world domination.¹⁹⁴ Of course, the CPA and, on occasion, members of the ALP defended the USSR's apparent motives, claiming that the reason for the Soviet Union's formation of dubious alliances and annexation of satellite countries was an attempt to safeguard national security.¹⁹⁵ On the whole, though, discussion of Soviet foreign policy in the period before 1941 was highly critical.

The only period of time in which the USSR was considered otherwise was during the years of alliance, in World War Two (1943-1945). Border issues, especially involving Poland, which had been a stain on the reputation of the Soviet Union between 1939 and 1942, had resolved themselves almost overnight. The USSR, which had been depicted in mainstream discourse as a bully, had now itself become a victim of German aggression. Not only was the USSR now an ally in the struggle against Hitler, but Stalin had also made it clear – for example through the dissolution of Comintern – that harmonious relations with its allies was more important to the USSR than international revolution. However, when war ended and the USSR began to export Communism to East-Central Europe, the depiction of Soviet foreign policy as imperialistic and predatory became common once again in mainstream discourse.

By 1950, mainstream discourse about the USSR's foreign policy had become much more hostile than it had been in 1946. As a result of the 1950 Communist Party Dissolution Bill, the CPA and its affiliates' assertions about a peaceful Soviet had been quashed. There were no longer calls from ALP backbenchers to defend the once glorious ally, and even when Labor members criticised the actions of Menzies' Liberals (primarily) against the leftists it was made clear that these concerns were not being raised in an effort to help the Communists but to defend democratic liberties. Anti-Soviet sentiment was splayed over the pages of the full range of newspapers, with the sole exception of the *Tribune*. Some papers rehashed criticisms of the mistakes made by the Soviet Union during the first years of World War

¹⁹³ L.F. Crisp, *Ben Chifley*, 276.

¹⁹⁴ *Daily News*, 'Reds v Rest', 15 May 1950, 5.

¹⁹⁵ *Tribune*, 'Russians Don't Want War', 7 June 1950, 6.

II, particularly in relation to the carving up of Europe by Stalin and Hitler.¹⁹⁶ Others told horrifying stories of internment camps in Siberia and the Baltic states holding millions of innocent men, whose only crime was that they 'were not Russian enough' and posed a threat to the total Communist takeover of Eastern Europe.¹⁹⁷ In 1950, speculation ran rife in both the media and in parliament over the Soviet Union's infiltration of Asia, too. Disgust was shown at the USSR's blatant efforts to export communism to East and South-East Asia based on a manipulation of poor, undereducated people.¹⁹⁸

Discourse on the USSR's relationship with Australia demonstrated fluctuations and patterns throughout the 1940s. There were instances in which topics within the discourse overlapped from year-to-year – the appointment of an Australian Minister to the Soviet Union is an example of this. But there were also many examples of stand-alone issues, which only attracted attention in a given year. The starkest differences in discourse on this subject are obvious when comparing 1943 to 1950. In 1943, a time of friendship between the Soviet Union and Australia, the relationship between the two states was discussed favourably. With the ascension to power of Curtin's ALP in October 1941, a more left-wing political atmosphere had taken over in Australia. In both the media and parliament, the discourse championed the Soviet war effort and called for an invigorated approach to supporting the Red Army.¹⁹⁹ By 1950, however, the tenor of discourse could not have been more different. Undoubtedly as a result of the reinstatement of Menzies and his conservative coalition and the strengthened allegiance to America, discourse became intensely anti-Soviet in nature. Threatening phrases such as 'better dead than Red' and 'Reds under the beds' increased in popularity and commonality, and it became clear that any positive relationship between the USSR and Australia had deteriorated.

An issue relating to this topic which transcended much of the decade was discussion of the Australian-Soviet ministerial exchange. The original exchange took place in early 1943 and was reasonably successful despite the early return of the ALP's chosen representative, William Slater. After the return of the inaugural legation, discussions ensued in parliament about the deployment of a replacement and a continued effort towards forging closer relations with the Soviet Union. In 1946, J.J. Maloney was chosen to represent Australia abroad, though Maloney's appointment proved to be less successful than that of Slater. Again, discourse regarding Australia's relationship with the USSR was littered with mentions of the ministerial exchange. By the close of the decade, the diplomatic relationship between the USSR and Australia had deteriorated and, as a result, discourse no longer focused on the issue. On occasion, criticisms were made in parliament by the conservatives about the ALP's attempts during their

¹⁹⁶ *Worker*, 'Memory Of Nazi-Soviet Pact Will Never Pass', 24 June 1946, 1.

¹⁹⁷ *Barrier Miner*, 'Reds Have 16 Millions Enslaved in Siberia', 26 June 1950, 2.

¹⁹⁸ CPD, *International Affairs*, 4 October 1950, 263.

¹⁹⁹ *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Red Army's Feats – Tributes in Britain', 23 February 1943, 6.

West Australian, 'May Day – Celebrations in Moscow – British Minister's Message', 3 May 1943, 2.

West Australian, 'Deathless Pages – Message from Mr Roosevelt', 8 November 1943, 2.

premiership to build friendly relations with the Soviet Union. However, the specific issue of the Australian legation to the USSR did not crop up again in parliament or press discussion.

The final issue, which was also the most consistently discussed topic in Australian political discourse, examined life in the Soviet Union. In every year throughout the 1940s, newspapers and parliament discussed the living conditions and lifestyles of the USSR's 160 million inhabitants. Topics such as politics, culture, religion and work, dominated discourse throughout the decade. Similar to the discourse on Australia's relationship with the USSR, the difference in tenor between the beginning and end of the analysed period was significant. In 1943, newspaper reports were overwhelmingly positive. In parliament, too, praise was generously given to the Soviet people and their dedication to the war effort. By 1946 the discourse had become less homogenous and, especially in parliament, was increasingly polarised. Finally, in 1950, there ceased to be any positive comment on the USSR in any newspaper, with the exception of the *CPA Tribune*, of course. Undoubtedly a reaction to the increasingly conservative and right-wing political culture in Australia, discourse had gone from discussions of the transition of the Soviet people from paupers to pioneers,²⁰⁰ to slanderous accusations of 'power-mad despotism'.²⁰¹ Over the period of a decade, the image of the Soviet people in Australian discourse had come full circle, both beginning and ending the 1940s as poor and oppressed citizens of a cruel and restrictive dictatorship.

²⁰⁰ *Daily News*, 'Opinion – Reality', 19 February 1943, 2.

²⁰¹ *Worker*, "'Power-mad Dictators" Behind Communistic Despotism', 30 October 1950, 6.

CONCLUSION

Revisiting the research questions

In the 1943-1950 period there were several key issues regarding the USSR which were prominent in Australian political discourse. Journalists, politicians and other political figures regularly discussed the USSR in relation to the topics of war, Soviet expansionism and daily life, and domestic issues which had an international context.

There was, at all times, constant discussion of these issues, yet the manner of the discourse evolved over time. For example, during the brief respite from war, in the immediate post-war years, discussions on the topic of battle were less prevalent than in the World War Two era, or in the first years of the Cold War. Whilst discourse on life within the Soviet Union was a constant feature of the discourse, this, too, changed during the period. In 1943, when the USSR was a member of the 'great and glorious' alliance, there was much discussion concerning the strength and determination of Soviet civilians.¹ Following the end of the war, positive references to the USSR became much less common in the non-Communist discourse. By the beginning of the 1950s, non-Communist discourse about the Soviet Union was extremely hostile.² The discourse on Soviet expansionism varied greatly as well. In 1943, for example, even newspapers that were traditionally hostile to the USSR were willing to concede that it had legitimate territorial claims in Eastern Europe. By 1950, the Soviet Union was almost universally depicted by non-Communist commentators as aggressive and expansionistic.³ The discourse on the final issue, the relationship between domestic and international affairs, also underwent significant change between 1943 and 1950. Again, positive discussion by non-Communist commentators was restricted to the mid-1940s and focused on the friendly diplomatic relations which were developing between Australia and the USSR. In 1946, the glowing reports began to disappear, although the ruling Labor government still attempted to maintain a friendly atmosphere. By 1950, only the Communists still had anything positive to say about the Soviet Union.

Much like the content, the quantity of the discourse changed throughout the 1940s decade. Across the three years surveyed in this study (1943, 1946 and 1950), the number of CPDs increased.⁴ The number of times the USSR was mentioned in parliamentary debates also increased, as did the volume of what

¹ *Mercury*, 'Illiterate Nation To Mighty Power In 26 Years', 8 November 1943, 7.
Mirror, 'Beloved Kalinin', 13 March 1943, 12.

² *Barrier Miner*, 'Reds Have 16 Millions Enslaved in Siberia', 26 June 1950, 2.
Advertiser, 'The Mask Slips', 14 July 1950, 2.

³ CPD, *International Affairs*, 9 March 1950, 624.

⁴ 1943 – 22, 1946 – 27, 1950 – 69.

was said. In 1943, the typical report on a Soviet-related issue was only a few paragraphs, and mentions of the USSR were limited to minor inferences.⁵ By 1946, the number of discussions in parliament had increased significantly, and the volume of what was being said had increased somewhat.⁶ Finally, by 1950, the instances in which the Soviet Union were mentioned had reached their peak. Discourse on the Soviet Union in newspapers also followed this trend. For example, when comparing the number of articles printed in mainstream and conservative presses in the period 1943 to 1950 there appears a pattern of growth. The same can be said for the *Tribune's* coverage of certain issues during this period. Whereas, in 1943, the *Tribune* printed 16 articles on daily life, in 1950 there were over 30 reports written on the issue.

Although the discourse of the various political groups in Australia varied enormously, there remained one constant between them – they all used the USSR as a leveraging tool. The parties on the right of Australian politics – initially the UAP and then the Liberal Party, as well as the Country Party attempted to use the spectre of the USSR to disparage their political enemies. Their political policy never wavered from the notion that the USSR was basically evil. The conservatives claimed that the policies of the CPA were decided by the CPSU, which made the Australian Communists agents of evil, also. But their use of the USSR went much further than simply attacking the Communists. The conservative coalition tried to use negative discourse about the Soviet Union to undermine the ALP – often with great success.⁷ The UAP and Liberal Party asserted that, just as the CPA and the CPSU were one and the same, Communism and Socialism were also identical. Whilst the conservatives did not often make direct assertions to a connection between the Labor Party and Moscow, they often suggested links between the CPA and ALP.⁸ These links, although indirect, inferred the same notion – both the CPA and ALP were in cahoots and petitioning for the destruction of Australian and, indeed, global democracy.

To the left of the political spectrum resided the CPA, whose policies regarding the USSR were simple – the Soviet Union epitomised all that was progressive in the world. Soviet Communism was essential to the creation and implementation of all CPA policies. The fidelity with which the CPA followed Soviet policy and CPSU orders was naïve, to say the very least, and often landed them in hot water – both politically and publicly.⁹ The CPA's refusal to support the Allied war effort between 1939 and 1942 was extremely unpopular in Australia, and was a stance which permanently damaged the CPA's political credibility. Efforts to radicalise the labour movement and trade unions in the latter half of the 1940s were

⁵ CPD, *Collective Farming*, 29 January 1943, 164.

⁶ By comparison there were 5 more CPDs related to the USSR in 1946.

⁷ *Tribune*, 'Opposition Eager To Use Maloney To Bait Govt.', 19 March 1950, 6.

⁸ CPD, *Communism – Dr Hewlett Johnson-Passports*, 19 April 1950, 1505.

⁹ Stuart Macintyre, *The Reds*, 393.

damaging too, as it alienated the only possible domestic ally of the CPA, the ALP.¹⁰ With the exception of the short period of alliance and Soviet popularity during the last two years of World War Two, the CPA experienced total political isolation and, because of the party's ideological extremism, essentially failed as a political force in Australia.

Without doubt, the experiences of the ALP throughout the period 1943-1950 were the most varied of any political group. The issue of the USSR was a difficult one for the ALP, especially because it did not share the same unified political position of the other parties. On the issue of the USSR, both the Communists and the conservatives were internally united; the former loved it and the latter loathed it. The ALP, by contrast, contained a range of views on the USSR, some of which were irreconcilable. As a result, in both 1943 and 1946 the party leadership tried to say as little as possible about the USSR in order to minimise the danger of a damaging internal split. At least in the period of Labor's premierships, between 1941 and 1949, the public discourse of prime ministers Curtin and Chifley almost totally ignored the issue of the Soviet Union. This tactic, whilst seen as a weakness by the conservatives, actually worked in the ALP's favour. As was discussed in the 1946 chapter, there was very little evidence to suggest that the public shared the perceptions of the conservatives or the CPA, and, at this time, was generally more concerned with domestic issues. It was only after the reacquisition of power by Menzies that Labor men, such as Chifley and Evatt, began to assert themselves regarding the USSR.¹¹ ALP leaders left most of the commentary up to the more minor party men, and on this issue many Labor ministers were vocal. The variety of opinions on the Soviet Union eventuated in a rift in the Labor Party, which began to become bothersome in the late-1940s. Communism, both domestic and international, was the issue which, undoubtedly, affected the unity and political stability of the ALP the most during this time.

Throughout this thesis, patterns regarding the interaction between the competing strains of political discourse have appeared. The instances in which parties commented upon their opposition's opinions, in both print media and parliament, increased throughout the period 1943-1950. Beginning in 1943, for example, instances in which the USSR was discussed by any parliamentary speaker were relatively infrequent. Also, because of the alliance between the USSR and Australia, there was also less obvious differentiation in perception between the competing political groups. Therefore, the instances in which competing strains interacted with one another were minimal. In 1946, however, a degree of interaction can be detected between the various strands within the discourse, particularly in newspapers. The *Tribune*, for example, began printing articles which talked directly of the alleged lies that Menzies and his men were spreading about Russia, the CPA and Labor, through the Liberal mouthpiece, *The Sydney*

¹⁰ Stuart Macintyre, *The Reds*, 393.

¹¹ CPD, *Communist Party Dissolution Bill – Second Reading*, 9 May 1950, 2267-2295.

Morning Herald.¹² There was also a number of articles printed by the *Tribune* in response to the Maloney debacle, discussing the 'Red baiting' tactics of the conservatives.¹³ In parliament, too, the conservatives began to attack the ALP on a number of topics, ranging from control of the Communist issue at home and abroad to discussions of Soviet imperialism.¹⁴ By 1950, parliamentary debates were verbal ping-pong matches, with even the ALP joining in on the blame game. Every point was argued upon, from distribution of passports to known Communists to implementation of the Communist Party Dissolution Bill.¹⁵

The data presented in this thesis suggests that discourse concerning the USSR was significant in changing the face of Australian politics. Not only did the Soviet issue impact upon the evolution of party policy for all the major players, but discourse about the Soviet Union impacted on the atmosphere of Australian politics as a whole. Discourse about the USSR raised the stakes in Australian politics. No longer were domestic issues simply that; they were conceptualised – in particular by the Communists and the conservatives – as part of a wider, international struggle. Almost every local political issue was somehow inextricably linked to the global political situation, and every debacle was in some way connected to the spectre of the Soviet Union. Regardless of this, however, it was obvious nobody in Australia had any real concept of what was going on inside the Soviet Union. The discourse, whether it was in the form of the overwhelmingly glowing reports of the CPA, the glaringly pessimistic rhetoric of the conservatives, or somewhere in between, was largely fictional. The reality was that none of the information coming out of the USSR or, on the other side of the coin, the USA, had any real evidentiary basis.

One final word

In October 1939, Winston Churchill famously said, 'I cannot forecast to you the action of Russia. It is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma'.¹⁶ Although this iconic speech was made with specific reference to the Second World War, and the USSR's role in the conflict, time has demonstrated that this statement holds greater significance. Throughout the period from 1943 to 1950, the Soviet Union remained shrouded in mystery, a topic of much discussion and consternation throughout the world. The events throughout the 1943-1950 period were enormously significant, not only to the time in which they unfolded but in a larger context, to the entire Cold War era. The relationships which were formed or, in

¹² *Tribune*, 'Letters to the Editor – SMH Suppression', 5 March 1946, 4.

¹³ *Tribune*. 'Opposition Eager to Use Maloney to Bait Govt.'. 19 March 1946, 6.

¹⁴ CPD, *International Affairs*, 20 March 1946, 440.

¹⁵ CPD, *Communism – Dr. Hewlett Johnson-Passports*, 19 April 1950, 1505.

¹⁶ Winston Churchill, *The Russian Enigma*, www.churchill-society-london.org.uk/RusnEnig.html, 7 July 2014.

the case of the Soviet Union, destroyed, the tense atmosphere that was established, and the fears and ideologies which were developed during the dying days of World War Two and the dawning of the Cold War, acted as an important precursor to the following forty years.

The events of the period 1943-1950 were some of the most defining of modern Australian history. Whilst certain aspects of Australian history in the Cold War era have been explored thoroughly and deeply, there is no doubt that, up to this point, commentaries on Australian political history have been too parochial. There is a tendency to limit the scope in which events of this time are framed, and the bigger picture which places the Australian experience in a global context have been understudied. The significance of this period has also been underestimated. The Cold War era, especially the initial years of the conflict, was a period of immense social and political change in Australia. Whereas there is a tendency for Australian history to epitomise events such as the First World War as the most significant in shaping national identity, there is no doubt that the 1940s were also of greater relevance. It was during this time that the line between domestic and international concerns blurred, when Australia began to take a place on the world stage, and when the most memorable rise and falls of the political arena took place. It was in these initial years of the Cold War when a new Australia was born.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Introduction:

Primary Sources

Dredge, J. *Twenty Questions for Thoughtful Australians*. Sydney: Australian Country Party, 1952.

Miller, Alan. *Fight Conscription*. Adelaide: Eureka Youth League, 1950.

The Sydney Morning Herald. 'Carrying Truth All Round The Globe'. 22 April 1950, 2.

Tribune. 'Russia's Long Struggle For World Peace'. 7 November 1947, 4.

Secondary Sources

Burke, Anthony. 'War Against the Other, 1945-1969' from *In Fear of Security: Australia's Invasion Anxiety*. Annandale, N.S.W.: Pluto Press, 2001. 81-128.

Carroll, Brian. *The Menzies Years*. North Melbourne: Carroll Australia Ltd, 1977.

Crisp, L.F. *Ben Chifley: A Biography*. London: Longmans, 1961.

Curthoys, Ann & Merritt, John (editors). *Australia's First Cold War 1945-1953 - Volume 1: Society Communism and Culture*. Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1984, 49-59.

Curthoys, Ann & Merritt, John (editors). 'The trade unions and postwar reconstruction' by Tom Sheridan in *Better Dead than Red – Australia's First Cold War: 1945-1959, Volume 2*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1986, pp3-17.

Gibson, Ralph. *The Fight Goes On: A Picture of Australia and the World in Two Post-War Decades*. Ascot Vale, Vic.: Red Rooster Press, 1987.

Griffiths, Tony. *Beautiful Lies: Australia from Kokoda to Keating*. Kent Town, S.A.: Wakefield Press, 1993.

McQueen, Humphrey. *Social Sketches of Australia, 1888-1975*. Ringwood, Vic: Penguin Books, 1978.

Chapter 1 – 1943

Primary Sources

Argus. 'Purpose of 3-Power Meeting – Moscow Newspaper Rebukes "Chatterboxes"'. 15 October 1943, 16.

Argus. 'Russia Now Has Two Capitals-Moscow and Kuibyshev – Mr Slater Will Live in Kuibyshev, but He Will See Moscow's Wonders, Too'. 30 January 1943, 8.

Argus. 'Stalin Says Long Fight Ahead'. 24 February 1943, 12.

Australian Women's Weekly. 'Highest Soviet award for girl snipers'. 13 March 1943, 20.

Barrier Daily Truth. 'Rationing'. 3 April 1943, 2.

Braidwood Review and District Advocate. 'Russia's Day'. 9 November 1943, 4.

CPD. *International Affairs*, 27 January 1943, 3-4.

CPD. *Communist Party*. 28 January 1943, 111.

CPD. *Collective Farming*. 29 January 1943, 164.

CPD. *Help for Russia*. 24 February 1943. 925.

CPD. *Red Army Day*. 26 February 1943, 1057.

CPD. *Communist Party – College for Revolutionaries*. 4 March 1943, 1182.

CPD. *Communist Party – College for Revolutionaries*. 5 March 1943, 1270.

CPD. *Answers to Questions – Help for Russia*. 12 March 1943, 1612-1613.

CPD. *National Welfare Fund Bill 1943*. 17 March 1943, 1798-1860.

CPD. *Communist Party*. 26 March 1943, 2462.

CPD. *Motion of Want of Confidence*. 22-24 June 1943, 223-266.

CPD. *Governor-General's Speech*. 23 September 1943, 7-11.

CPD. *Governor-General's Speech*. 24 September 1943, 52-66.

CPD. *Governor-General's Speech*. 29 September 1943, 127-148.

CPD. *Governor-General's Speech*. 29 September 1943, 171-190.

CPD. *Australian Minister to Russia*. 12 October 1943, 317.

Daily News. 'Opinion – Reality'. 19 February 1943, 2.

Daily News. 'Poles Silent On Soviet Note'. 28 April 1943, 1.

Ellery, Reginald S. *Eyes Left – the Soviet Union and the post-war world*. Melbourne: Reed & Harris, 1943.

Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser. 'Russia: A Wonderful Country, But Little Known'. 15 February 1943, 1.

Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser. 'Russia: A Wonderful Country, But Little Known – No. 19'. 29 March 1943, 1.

Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser. 'Russia: A Wonderful Country, But Little Known – No. 21'. 8 April 1943, 1.

Horsham Times. 'Memories of life in Soviet Russia – Interesting address by Hon. W. Slater – Pleasant Sunday Afternoon in Horsham Theatre'. 22 October 1943, 3.

Mercury. 'Charge Against Poles – Favour "Plundering" Policy, Moscow Declares'. 3 March 1943, 2.

Mercury. 'Illiterate Nation To Mighty Power In 26 Years'. 8 November 1943, 7.

Mirror. 'Beloved Kalinin'. 13 March 1943, 12.

Northern Star. 'Allied Victory Now Assured – "Big 3" Agree On Early New Offensives – "Europe War Near End"'. 7 December 1943, 1.

Northern Star. 'Soviet Agriculture'. 10 December 1943, 3.

Portland Guardian. 'Why Russia is Important –The Country With A Plan–The Workers Are On Top'. 22 February 1943, 3.

Portland Guardian. 'Why Russia is Important –The Country With A Plan–Equality of Nations'. 22 March 1943, 3.

Sharkey, L.L. *Congress report on the work of the C.C. from the 12th to the 13th Party Congress*. Sydney: Communist Party of Australia, 1943.

Southern Mail. 'Farm Workers Know Their Sciences – New Scientific Methods Work Wonders on Soviet Farms – Marvels of Artificial Fertilization'. 2 April 1943, 4.

Sunday Times. 'There are no old maids in Russia'. 28 March 1943, 12.

Tribune. 'A Woman With A Rifle'. 17 February 1943, 4.

Tribune. 'Advancing To The Kill'. 1 July 1943, 1.

Tribune. 'Alias for Quislings – Misuse of Name "Socialist"'. 13 January 1943, 3.

Tribune. 'Ambassador Praises Soviet Integrity – Tribune Special'. 10 June 1943, 8.

Tribune. 'Battle-Blinded Soviet Soldiers See Nazis Flee'. 19 August 1943, 4.

Tribune. 'Ban On Party Lifted One Year Ago'. 16 December 1943, 3.

Tribune. 'Can't Crush Soviet Democracy'. 26 August 1943, 5.

Tribune. 'Communist Party CC Hails Victory Pact Of Teheran'. 9 December 1943, 1.

Tribune. 'Federal Post-War Plans – Fadden-Menzies-Hughes Sabotage'. 2 December 1942, 3.

Tribune. 'Herald Seeks A UAP By Another Name'. 9 September 1943, 3.

Tribune. 'Kharkov Underlines Need For Second Front'. 24 March 1943, 1.

Tribune. 'L. Harry Gould and W.A. Wood Tell – How Russia Smashed Its Fifth Column'. 22 July 1943, 4.

Tribune. 'Labor Unity Was Keynote of ACTU Conference – Soviet Link'. 1 July 1943, 3.

Tribune. 'Lift the Ban!' 2 December 1942, 1.

Tribune. 'No "Post-War Problem" In Soviet Union'. 24 June 1943, 3.

Tribune. 'Polish Reaction Plays Hitler's Game – Provocations Must Be Ended'. 5 May 1943, 1.

Tribune. 'Pravda Warns Delay Serves Hitler – Rebel Europe Waiting'. 24 June 1943, 2.

Tribune. 'Red Army Shows The Way'. 26 August 1943, 3.

Tribune. 'Roosevelt-Churchill Conference – Soviet Offensive'. 3 February 1943, 1.

Tribune. 'Soviet Accuses Allies Of Broken Pledge'. 12 August 1943, 1.

Tribune. 'Soviet Parliament'. 13 January 1943, 3.

Tribune. 'Soviet Reply to Polish Government'. 10 March 1943, 2.

Tribune. 'Stalin, the Man and the Mould'. 23 December 1943, 1.

Tribune. 'Straight Talk On Second Front'. 15 July 1943, 1.

Tribune. 'The Only Way Out'. 21 April 1943, 2.

Tribune. 'The White-Collared Trotskyites'. 10 March 1943, 4.

Tribune. 'They are not Socialists'. 12 August 1943, 7.
Tribune. 'Tool of Fascism'. 9 December 1942, 4.
Tribune. 'Trotsky's Foul Technique – "World Revolution" Meant Capitalism in Russia'. 24 March 1943, 4.
Tribune. 'Trotskyite Who Killed Trotsky – Sentenced by Mexican Court'. 28 April 1943, 4.
Tribune. 'West Invasion Should Follow Moscow Talks'. 28 October 1943, 1.
The Sydney Morning Herald. 'Rebuke for Poland – Soviet Maintains Slav Rights'. 3 March 1943, 8.
West Australian. 'Russia and Poland – Frontier Issue – Soviet Reply – Censorious Attitude'. 3 March 1943, 3.
West Australian. 'Soviet Press Attache – An Interesting Visitor'. 22 December 1943, 2.
Western Mail. 'Perennial Wheat – Russians Grow Up to Three Harvests a Year Without Replanting'. 27 May 1943, 40.

Secondary Sources

Attwood, Brian (ed.) *Labour Histories*. Clayton, VIC: Monash Publications, 1994.
Barber, Stephen. 'Federal Election Results 1901-2010'.
www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1112/12rp06. Date accessed: 12 September 2014.
Bolton, Geoffrey. *The Oxford History of Australia: Volume 5, 1942-1988*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1990.
Dawson, Jonathan & Laughren, Pat (directors). *The Legend of Fred Paterson*. Ronin Films. 1996.
Edwards, P.G. 'Evatt 1941-1949' in *Prime Ministers and Diplomats: the making of Australian foreign policy 1901-1949*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1983, 140-186.
Gurciullo, Sebastian. 'Australian Dictionary of Biography: Reginald Spencer Ellery' from *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (hardcopy). <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/ellery-reginald-spencer-reg-10110>. Date accessed: 14 August 2014.
Harris, Samela. 'Reed & Harris'. http://www.ernmalley.com/reed_harris.html. Date accessed: 14 August 2014.
Hayman, Christopher. 'The Balance of Power in Second World War Australia: The Deliberate Role of Coles and Wilson in the House of Representatives from 1940'. PhD thesis, University of New South Wales, 2005.
Macintyre, Stuart. *The Reds: The Communist Party of Australia from origins to illegality*. St. Leonards, N.S.W.: Allen & Unwin, 1998.
McQueen, Humphrey. *Social Sketches of Australia, 1888-1975*. Ringwood, Vic: Penguin Books, 1978.
Millar, T.B. *Australia in peace and war: external relations since 1788*. Sydney: Australian National University Press, 1991.

Moore, Charles. 'The Priest who thought Stalin was a saint'.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/charlesmoore/8660471/The-priest-who-thought-Stalin-was-a-saint.html>. Date accessed: 14 August 2014.

Souter, Gavin. *Company of Heralds: A century and a half of Australian publishing by John Fairfax Limited and its predecessors 1831-1981*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1981.

Chapter 2 – 1946

Primary Sources

Advertiser. 'How The Russian Worker Is Paid – Taxation Described As "Rather Heavy"'. 22 May 1946, 6.

Advertiser. 'Mr Maloney's Articles on Russia'. 27 May 1946, 8.

Advertiser. 'No Opposition In Soviet Elections – Elected Members "Merely Set Of Rubber Stamps"'. 17 May 1946, 8.

Advocate. 'Public Opinion – Communism'. 19 January 1946, 6.

Advocate. 'Soviet Aims In S.E. Europe'. 2 December 1946, 2.

Argus. 'Breakdown'. 21 October 1946, 2.

Argus. 'Former Minister On Russian Conditions – Offers to Debate With Communist Party Leader'. 11 May 1946, 5.

Army News. 'People of the Soviet Union Friendly to Australia'. 14 July 1945, 4.

Barrier Miner. 'Move To Prevent Address By Mr. J.J. Maloney'. 7 November 1946, 1.

Cairns Post. 'Bitter Pill For Communists'. 15 July 1946, 5.

Cairns Post. 'Address To Meat Workers – Effects Of Strikes'. 13 June 1946, 4.

Courier-Mail. 'Risks In Powers Scheme'. 20 August 1946, 3.

Courier-Mail. 'Red Paradise Or Workers' Slum'. 15 May 1946, 3.

Courier-Mail. 'Union Attack on Bevin and U.K. Foreign Policy'. 19 November 1946, 3.

CPD. *International Affairs*. 13 March 1946, 187-206.

CPD. *International Affairs – Russo-Persian Dispute*. 15 March 1946, 378.

CPD. *Foreign Legation Staffs*. 20 March 1946, 418.

CPD. *International Affairs*. 20 March 1946, 437-462.

CPD. *International Affairs – Russo-Persian Dispute*. 20 March 1946, 423.

CPD. *International Affairs*. 22 March 1946, 537-565.

CPD. *International Affairs*. 26 March 1946, 587-631.

CPD. *United Nations – Russo-Persian Dispute*. 9 April 1946, 1134-1135.

CPD. *Industrial Unrest – Statement by Mr. Justice Brennan*. 4 July 1946, 2205.

CPD. *Communist Party – Activities in Canada and Australia*. 17 July 1946, 2613.

CPD. *Industrial Unrest – Ironworkers: Activities of Communist Party*. 6 August 1946, 3728.

CPD. *International Affairs*. 14 November 1946, 265-308.

CPD. *Industrial Disputes – July to October, 1946*. 27 November 1946, 697.

Mercury. 'Canada Attacked By Soviet'. 22 February 1946, 4.

Mercury. 'Inside Russia Today – Working Hours Fall To 48 But Same Output Decreed'. 17 May 1946, 3.

Morning Bulletin. 'Communist Conference'. 19 February 1946, 2.

Northern Standard. 'Wallman Gives Territory Labour Policy Speech - Progress and Development Under Control of the People'. 13 September 1946, 4.

Sharkey, L.L. *Labor Betrayed*. Sydney: Current Book Distributors, 1946.

The Sydney Morning Herald. 'Answer To Mr. Thornton On Unions In the Soviet'. 1 March 1946, 2.

The Sydney Morning Herald. 'Former Minister Tells Of Soviet Conditions To-day'. 27 April 1946, 4.

The Sydney Morning Herald. 'Industrial Offences Bring Drastic Penalties'. 17 May 1946, 2.

The Sydney Morning Herald. 'Inside Russia To-day No.4 – Industrial Offences Bring Drastic Penalties'. 17 May 1946, 2.

The Sydney Morning Herald. 'Is Stalin Planning World Domination?' 23 November 1946, 2.

The Sydney Morning Herald. 'Soviet Envoy Stays Away'. 11 November 1946, 3.

Thornton, Ernest E. *Thornton on Arbitration*. Sydney: Newsletter Printery, 1946.

Tribune. 'Churchill Calls For War On Soviet'. 1 March 1946, 1.

Tribune. 'Constructive Criticism Keynote Of Big Soviet TU Conference'. 19 April 1946, 4.

Tribune. 'Daily Telegraph Shuts Eyes To Truth On Russia'. 21 May 1946, 8.

Tribune. 'Diplomats "Invent" Anti-Soviet Tales'. 3 May 1946, 3.

Tribune. 'Explains Why USSR Unions Are Different'. 24 May 1946, 2.

Tribune. 'Letters to the Editor – SMH Suppression'. 5 March 1946, 4.

Tribune. 'Limbless War Hero's Reply To Maloney – "Laughable Inventions"'. 4 June 1946, 8.

Tribune. 'Maloney Is Exposed By Prof. Crawford – "Twisted, Misleading Pictures Of Soviet"'. 31 May 1946, 8.

Tribune. 'Maloney Pushes Thornton's Book'. 21 May 1946, 5.

Tribune. 'New Drive To War In "Atom Spies" Scare'. 19 July 1946, 1.

Tribune. 'Opposition Eager to Use Maloney to Bait Govt.'. 19 March 1946, 6.

Tribune. 'Praises USSR Unions' "Genuine Democracy"'. 4 June 1946, 2.

Tribune. 'Says Maloney Broadcast Damaged ALP'. 28 May 1946, 6.

Tribune. 'Soviet Food For Berlin'. 8 January 1946, 7.

Tribune. 'Soviet's May Day Call For Peace, Unity'. 3 May 1946, 2.

Tribune. 'Thornton Exposes Maloney's Tales – Soviet Life Described'. 17 May 1946, 3.

Tribune. 'Thornton On Union's Role'. 7 May 1946, 1.

Tribune. 'USSR Trade Union Orders Stoppage'. 7 May 1946, 2.
Tribune. 'Why They Slander The Red Army'. 8 February 1946, 4.
West Australian. 'Inside Russia – Censor Isolate People From World'. 17 May 1946, 9.
West Australian. 'The Other Side – Arguments in Favour – Reply to Mr Maloney'. 14 May 1946, 8.
Worker. 'Blood Purge In Russia – Latest (Not Last) Of Long Series'. 7 October 1946, 7.
Worker. 'Conditions in Soviet Russia – Thornton Off Balance In Radio Debate'. 20 May 1946, 4/20.
Worker. 'Ernie Thornton's "Pressure Group" – Candid Confession'. 3 June 1946, 6.
Worker. 'Maloney Tells Thornton – Debate On Soviet To-morrow Night'. 13 May 1946, 1.
Worker. 'Soviet Imperialism – Immense Territories Annexed'. 24 June 1946, 8 & 20.
Worker. 'Why Russians Don't Go On Strike – Bosses Won't Allow It'. 10 June 1946, 7.

Secondary Sources

Bolton, Geoffrey. *The Oxford History of Australia: Volume 5, 1942-1988*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Burke, Anthony. *In Fear of Security: Australia's Invasion Anxiety*. Annandale, N.S.W.: Pluto Press, 2001.

Crisp, L.F. *Ben Chifley: A Biography*. London: Longmans, 1961.

Curthoys, Ann & Merritt, John (editors). *Australia's First Cold War 1945-1953 - Volume 1: Society Communism and Culture*. Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1984.

Curthoys, Ann & Merritt, John (editors). 'The trade unions and postwar reconstruction' by Tom Sheridan in *Better Dead than Red – Australia's First Cold War: 1945-1959, Volume 2*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1986, pp3-17.

Gibson, Ralph. *The Fight Goes On: A picture of Australia and the world in two post-war decades*. Ascot Vale, Vic.: Red Rooster Press, 1987.

Griffiths, Tony. *Beautiful Lies: Australia from Kokoda to Keating*. Kent Town, S.A.: Wakefield Press, 1993.

Kenez, Peter. *A History of the Soviet Union from beginning to end*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

McQueen, Humphrey. *Social Sketches of Australia, 1888-1975*. Ringwood, Vic: Penguin Books, 1978.

Sheridan, Tom. *Division of Labour: Industrial Relations in the Chifley Years, 1945-1949*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press Australia, 1989.

Chapter 3 – 1950

Primary Sources

Advertiser. 'As I See It'. 14 October 1950, 2.

Argus. 'Bertrand Russell says Communism is: "State enterprise – and dictatorship"'. 31 July 1950, 2.

Barrier Daily Truth. 'Sharkey Case'. 18 August 1949, 3.

Barrier Miner. 'Prosecution of Sharkey unlikely'. 9 March 1949, 4.

Barrier Miner. 'Reds Have 16 Millions Enslaved In Siberia'. 26 June 1950, 2.

Courier-Mail. 'Crown's view over Sharkey – Crowd chairs Sharkey'. 29 March 1949, 1.

Courier-Mail. 'Labour Views Clash – Ward slates Red Bill, Chambers supports it'. 17 May 1950, 3.

Courier-Mail. 'Sharkey to stay'. 9 December 1949, 1.

CPD. *Answers to Questions: Communism*. 9 March 1950, 654.

CPD. *Communism*. 9 March 1950, 571-572.

CPD. *Governor-General's Speech*. 9 March 1950, 585-621.

CPD. *International Affairs*. 9 March 1950, 621-641.

CPD. *Governor-General's Speech*. 14 March 1950, 732-751.

CPD. *International Affairs*. 22 March 1950, 1062-1094.

CPD. *International Affairs*. 23 March 1950, 1146-1191.

CPD. *International Affairs*. 28 March 1950, 1223-1232.

CPD. *Communism – Dr Hewlett Johnson-Passports*. 19 April 1950, 1505-1506.

CPD. *Mr. E. Thornton*. 19 April 1950, 1564-1565.

CPD. *Communism*. 26 April 1950, 1843-1843.

CPD. *Communist Party Dissolution Bill 1950*. 27 April 1950, 1994-2007.

CPD. *Communist Party Dissolution Bill 1950*. 9 May 1950, 2267-2295.

CPD. *Communist Party Dissolution Bill*. 11 May 1950, 2482-2518.

CPD. *Communist Party Dissolution Bill*. 11 May 1950, 2521-2565.

CPD. *Communist Party Dissolution Bill*. 16 May 1950, 2627-2681.

CPD. *Communist Party Dissolution Bill*. 17 May 1950, 2742-2796.

CPD. *International Affairs*. 27 September 1950, 16-64.

CPD. *Communist Party Dissolution Bill 1950 [No. 2]*. 28 September 1950, 78-134.

CPD. *Communist Party Dissolution Bill*. 3 October 1950, 148-201.

CPD. *International Affairs*. 4 October 1950, 261-300.

CPD. *International Affairs*. 6 December 1950, 3767.

CPD. *Korea*. 8 December 1950, 4079.

Daily News. 'Editorial – Reds v Rest'. 15 May 1950, 5.

Daily News. 'Opinion – Reality'. 19 February 1943, 2.

Daily News. 'Opinion on our way of life – Communism offers us nothing'. 4 September 1950, 6.

Daily News. 'Seamen Protest Over Sharkey'. 25 October 1949, 11.

Daily News. 'The Reds' Show of Effrontery'. 22 March 1950, 10.

Daily News. 'Will Persia Be the Next?' 29 October 1950, 26.

Dredge, J. *Twenty Questions for Thoughtful Australians*. Sydney: Australian Country Party, 1952.

Examiner. 'Soviet Branded As Instigator Of Korean Aggression – A.L.P. Resolution'. 17 July 1950, 4.

Dixon, R. *The Trial of L.L. Sharkey: Speech by R. Dixon to Sharkey Protest Meeting held in Sydney October 21, 1949*. Sydney: Current Book Distributors, 1949.

Fitzpatrick, Brian. *The Unnecessary Police State Bill*. Melbourne: The Australian Council for Civil Liberties, 1950.

Examiner. 'All-Out Effort To Win'. 6 July 1950, 2.

Examiner. 'Soviet Union Leadership'. 30 March 1950, 2.

Fox, Len. *Guilty Men Again*. Sydney: Current Book Distributors, 1950.

Hill, E.F. *Defeat Menzies' Fascist Bill*. Melbourne: Communist Party of Australia, 1950.

Kalgoorlie Miner. 'Life in Soviet – Russian "Big Shots"'. 27 February 1950, 3.

Kalgoorlie Miner. 'Russia Today – No Hope of Revolution: Children Taught Communism'. 21 September 1950, 5.

Mail. 'Vital Talks for Aust.' 14 March 1950, 2.

Mercury. 'Illiterate Nation To Mighty Power In 26 Years'. 8 November 1943, 7.

Mercury. 'Korea Attack Is Psychological Landmark For The West'. 14 July 1950, 3.

Miller, Alan. *Fight Conscription*. Adelaide: Eureka Youth League, 1950.

Morning Bulletin. 'Sharkey says Russia peaceful'. 14 March 1949, 1.

Rich, Harold. *The Story of the Sharkey Trial*. Sydney: Release Sharkey Committee, 1949.

Rodgers, John. *Report on the Soviet Union: the speech which was banned...by the Melbourne City Council*. Melbourne: Australia Soviet House, 1949.

South Australian Tribune. 'British Workers Visit USSR: "Socialism Not Only Works, But Works Well"'. 9 June 1950, 2.

South Australian Tribune. 'Facts On Korea Are Undeniable'. 8 September 1950, 2.

South Australian Tribune. 'Free Sharkey in fight for peace'. 13 January 1950, 1.

South Australian Tribune. 'Russia Calm: UK Workers Impressed'. 25 August 1950, 4.

South Australian Tribune. 'Sharkey upheld UN Charter'. 28 October 1949, 2.

South Australian Tribune. 'Soviet Engineers Record New Technical Advances'. 2 June 1950, 2.

South Australian Tribune. 'Soviet Note On War In Korea'. 14 July 1950, 2.

South Australian Tribune. 'Soviet People Demand Ban On Atom Bomb'. 21 July 1950, 1.

South Australian Tribune. 'Soviet Puts More Value Into Rouble'. 10 March 1950, 4.

South Australian Tribune. 'US Rulers Launched Attack On N. Korea'. 7 July 1950, 2.

South Australian Tribune. 'U.S.A. Aggression In Korea Imperils World Peace'. 30 June 1950, 1.

South Australian Tribune. 'USSR Elections Are World's Freest'. 17 March 1950, 4.

The Sydney Morning Herald. 'Anti-Red Revolt Is Impossible In Russia To-day'. 18 September 1950, 2.

The Sydney Morning Herald. 'Communist Trips Abroad A Danger To Security'. 24 July 1950, 2.

The Sydney Morning Herald. 'Famed "Insider" Probes Secrets of the Kremlin'. 16 September 1950, 2.

The Sydney Morning Herald. 'Red Army's Feats – Tributes in Britain'. 23 February 1943, 6.

The Sydney Morning Herald. "'Soviet Pressure In Europe Increasing"'. 4 April 1950, 3.

The Sydney Morning Herald. 'Soviet Puppet Launches War Of Aggression'. 26 June 1950, 2.

The Sydney Morning Herald. 'The True Face of the Communist Party'. 7 March 1950, 2.

Townsville Daily Bulletin. 'Readers' Views – Communism Criticised'. 25 April 1950, 7.

Townsville Daily Bulletin. 'Sharkey's counsel alleges bias'. 30 March 1949, 1.

Tribune. 'Americans Say: Occupy More Countries, Start War'. 3 June 1950, 4.

Tribune. "'Atom Spy" Drama Is Plot Against World Peace'. 3 June 1950, 6.

Tribune. 'Bernal backs Sharkey'. 17 March 1950, 2.

Tribune. 'Friendship With Asia Only Safe Way For Aust.'. 18 January 1950, 6.

Tribune. 'Herald Seeks A U.A.P. By Another Name'. 9 September 1943, 3.

Tribune. 'Herald Wants Australian F.B.I.'. 15 March 1950, 5.

Tribune. 'Horror Stories Cannot Hide Triumph Of Socialism'. 11 March 1950, 4.

Tribune. 'How They Put 5/- More Value in Soviet "Pound"'. 11 February 1950, 4.

Tribune. 'Police Visit To Tribune'. 25 March 1949, 1.

Tribune. 'Quash Sharkey trial, says British CP'. 22 July 1949, 2.

Tribune. 'Russians Don't Want War'. 7 June 1950, 6.

Tribune. 'Sedition charge "violation of human rights"'. 29 April 1949, 7.

Tribune. 'Sharkey was a marked man'. 24 February 1950, 3.

Tribune. 'Sino-Soviet Pact Bolsters Peace'. 18 February 1950, 2.

Tribune. 'Soviet Denounces H-Bomb Hysteria; New Peace Call'. 1 April 1950, 8.

Tribune. 'Soviet Has Most Democratic Electoral System In World'. 8 February 1950, 4.

Tribune. 'Soviet Legation Small, But Yank One Very Large'. 29 March 1950, 6.

Tribune. 'Soviet Making Nature Serve Human Needs'. 27 May 1950, 5.

Tribune. 'Soviet's Many Gifts To Chinese People'. 25 February 1950, 2.

Tribune. 'Soviet-China Treaty Is Equal, Brotherly'. 8 March 1950, 2.

Tribune. 'Spender's "Hate China" Talk Isolates Australia'. 14 January 1950, 8.

Tribune. 'Strong protests in South Australia'. 1 April 1949, 6.

Tribune. 'The Tribune Answers Some Questions On Communism' 22 March 1950, 4.

Tribune. 'Theories Of Lysenko Have Brought Results'. 11 March 1949, 6.

Tribune. 'This Is The Fascist Bill That Menzies Has Aimed At You!' 10 May 1950, 4.

Tribune. 'US War Claims Worry Europe'. 27 May 1950, 7.

Tribune. 'Who is it that threatens war?' 26 April 1950, 4.

Tribune. 'Why Soviet Elections Are Freest In World'. 15 March 1950, 4.

Tribune. '5000 sign Sharkey petition'. 24 March 1950, 3.

West Australian. 'Deathless Pages – Message from Mr Roosevelt'. 8 November 1943, 2.
West Australian. 'International Hunt For Atom Spies – Sequel To Imprisonment Of Scientist'. 3 March 1950, 1.
West Australian. 'May Day – Celebrations in Moscow – British Minister's Message'. 3 May 1943, 2.
West Australian. 'The Communist Issue'. 13 May 1950, 3.
West Australian. 'The Communist Line'. 22 July 1950, 3.
Worker. "Power-mad Dictators" Behind Communistic Despotism'. 30 October 1950, 6.
Worker. 'Russian Pose As World Pacifist – Stratagem of Soviet Tyrants', 10 July 1950, 9.
Worker. 'Soviet Imperialism – Immense Territories Annexed'. 24 June 1946, 8 & 20.

Secondary Sources

Booker, Malcolm. *The Last Domino: Aspects of Australian Foreign Relations*. Sydney: William Collins Publishers, 1976.
Burton, Geoff (director). *Infamous Victory: Ben Chifley's War on Coal*. Screen Australia, 2008.
Carroll, Brian. *The Menzies Years*. North Melbourne: Carroll Australia Ltd, 1977.
Crisp, L.F. *Ben Chifley: A Biography*. London: Longmans, 1961.
Gibson, Ralph. *The Fight Goes On: A Picture of Australia and the World in Two Post-War Decades*. Ascot Vale, Vic.: Red Rooster Press, 1987.
Hill, E.F. 'Rise and Fall of Imperialisms in Australia – The Australian Workers, Working and Patriotic People and the Soviet Union, 1917-1953' in *Imperialism in Australia: The menace of Soviet social-imperialism*. Melbourne: Unlisted publication, 1975, 1-18.
McQueen, Humphrey. *Social Sketches of Australia, 1888-1975*. Ringwood, Vic: Penguin Books, 1978.
Steketee, Mike. 'The tough get going' from *The Australian*.
<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/features/the-tough-get-going/story-e6frg6z6-1111117913525>,
Date Accessed: 14 August 2014.

Conclusion

Primary Sources

Advertiser. 'The Mask Slips'. 14 July 1950, 2.
Barrier Miner. 'Reds Have 16 Millions Enslaved in Siberia'. 26 June 1950, 2.
CPD. *International Affairs*. 9 March 1950, 621-641.
CPD. *International Affairs*. 20 March 1946, 437-462.
CPD. *Communism – Dr. Hewlett Johnson-Passports*. 19 April 1950, 1505-1506.
CPD. *Communist Party Dissolution Bill – Second Reading*. 9 May 1950, 2267-2295.

Mercury. 'Illiterate Nation To Mighty Power In 26 Years'. 8 November 1943, 7.

Mirror. 'Beloved Kalinin'. 13 March 1943, 12.

Tribune. 'Letters to the Editor – SMH Suppression'. 5 March 1946, 4.

Tribune. 'Opposition Eager to Use Maloney to Bait Govt.' 19 March 1946, 6.

Secondary Sources

Macintyre, Stuart. *The Reds: The Communist Party of Australia from origins to illegality*. St. Leonards, N.S.W.: Allen & Unwin, 1998.

Churchill, Winston. *The Russian Enigma*, www.churchil-society-london.org.uk/RusnEnig.html. Date accessed: 7 July 2014.