

## AUSTRALIAN COMMUNISTS, PROGRESSIVES AND SOVIET JEWRY

### Australian Communists and Soviet Jewry.

In view of Australia's geographical isolation, the marginal role of Jews in the Party and the absence of a numerically strong intellectual element—the Australian Communist Party was never really confronted with the question of Soviet Jewry.

Even in 1956 following Khrushchev's exposure of Stalin, the Jewish Question which was badly agitating the European and North American Parties, barely caused a stir. In 1953, J. D. Blake, then a member of the CP. Secretariat, who during the "Doctors' Plot" had attacked "some of our Jewish comrades" who "tended to act more like Zionists than Communists",<sup>148</sup> publicly apologised to Jewish Communists and regretted having described Zionism as nothing but "bourgeois nationalism".<sup>149</sup> Apart from this vague reference, the Communist press does not suggest that the issue was of great consequence.

Only one pro-Communist group took up the Jewish Question—the Melbourne based Jewish Progressive Centre which catered primarily for Yiddish speaking Communists and sympathisers. It had established itself as one of the staunchest defenders of Stalin's Jewish policy and in 1953 had gone so far as to organise public campaigns to justify the "Prague Trials" and "Doctors Plot".

After considerable internal controversy, the Jewish Progressive Centre in September 1956 belatedly wrote a letter to the "Soviet Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries" criticising Stalin's treatment of the Jews and soliciting further information regarding the existing state of Jewish culture in the Soviet Union.<sup>150</sup>

The reply was most unsatisfactory. It denied that Stalin had committed injustices to Jews as such, attempted to demonstrate that Soviet Jews had full civic equality, and insisted that the Jews themselves wished to avoid the "humiliation of ghettos . . . and segregation of Jewish culture". The "national tongue" of the Soviet Jew was "either Russian or the language of the Republic where they live".<sup>151</sup>

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148 *Communist Review* April 1953.

149 *Tribune* August 15, 1956.

150 September 15, 1956.

151 December 20, 1956.

Three months later the Jewish Progressive Centre replied. They appealed to the Soviet Union to make cultural restitution for the "destructive cloud" that commenced "with the opening of the Beria epoch in the years 1936, 1937".

The argument that Soviet Jewry did not desire Jewish culture was strongly rejected:

A national culture does not disappear overnight, not even in one generation. Precisely because of our own experience, we are convinced that the problems arising from these changes must not be solved mechanically and by administrative measures . . . . To forcibly hasten the end of a people's culture, even a weakling one, is not just, not humane, and not permissible.

In reply to the assertion that Soviet Jews enjoyed civic equality, the Jewish Progressive Centre retorted:

That is not all. We Jews in Australia enjoy full civic rights, just as Jews do in many other democratic countries. But we do not make a fuss about it. Jews here, too, are free to occupy positions in all spheres of the national economy and culture and government.<sup>152</sup>

This outspoken letter was published by Communist Party newspapers in Poland, Israel, Canada, Argentine and other countries. About May 1958, *Outlook*, a Sydney based bi-monthly initiated by Communists all of whom subsequently defected or were expelled, included it as a section of a roneoed symposium entitled *Documents on the Position of the Jewish People in the USSR*. The publication also included extracts from the writings of Salsberg, Professor Levy and other Communists. But it was not taken up by the Australian Communist press. One is tempted to conclude that after "having done their duty" the Jewish Progressive Centre did not press too hard to make the question a major issue within Australian Communist circles. This supposition is strengthened by the fact that after having signed their name to such a dignified and humane letter, the Jewish Progressive Centre then proceeded to harass Jewish newspapers from 1957 to 1964 with a stream of letters and statements clearly contradicting the content and spirit of their March 1957 protest.

From 1957, for about five years, the Australian Party followed the standard line of overseas Communist Parties with regard to the Soviet Jewish question. But generally speaking, the issue simply did not exist. All that happened was an occasional *Novosti Press Agency* reprint in *Tribune* or *Guardian* giving the official Soviet viewpoint.

In 1962, the Australian Jewish community initiated a major campaign to focus public attention on the plight of Soviet

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152 March 27, 1957.

Jewry.<sup>153</sup> This ultimately brought about the first Australian Communist confrontation with the issue of Soviet Jewry.

Judah Waten, a Jewish Communist writer, emerged as the Communist Party expert and guide on the subject. Waten is no Paul Novick. By the brutal neo-Stalinist methodology he employed, and the obvious relish with which he handled the question, it was clear that his earlier approach to the question of Soviet Jewry had in no way been "influenced" by the facts that had emerged in 1956.<sup>153a</sup>

A series of unsigned articles dealing with Soviet Jewry written by Waten, began appearing in the pages of *Tribune* and *Guardian*.<sup>154</sup> The whole question was merely a Santamaria, D.L.P., fascist, Liberal stunt:

At a meeting in the office of a well known lawyer, representatives of *The Bulletin*, a Liberal M.P., a representative of the National Civic Council and several D.L.P. influenced members of the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies mapped out the campaign against the Soviet Union using the most fraudulent anti-Soviet material.<sup>155</sup>

Following the publication of an article outlining the plight of Soviet Jewry in *The Bulletin*,<sup>156</sup> the Soviet Embassy in Canberra also moved into the fray. Parliamentarians were approached and briefed and vast quantities of *Novosti Press* releases and other handouts denying the existence of anti-semitism in the USSR widely distributed. The USSR Press Attache, Mr. V. Gamzeichshikov, wrote a long vitriolic letter to *The Bulletin* in which undiplomatic language predominated and claimed that

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153 On March 5, 1962, when the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies unanimously carried a resolution to this effect.

153a Waten was expelled from the Communist Party in 1942. It is significant that he rejoined the party in mid-1956 precisely when the Communist Party was having difficulties with its intellectuals. He rapidly assumed the role of chief Australian apologist for Soviet policy towards the Jews but went much further and defended Stalinist anti-semitism. For example after visiting the Soviet Union in 1958 he went so far as to state: "There was never any anti-semitism or race discrimination in the Soviet Union, despite the crimes committed against some Jewish writers and cultural workers by Beria's associates, crimes committed for political, not racial reasons" (*Tribune*, March 11, 1959). In a similar vein when reviewing Manning Clark's book *Meeting Soviet Man* (*Tribune* March 9, 1960) he criticised Professor Clark in these words: "He trots out all the supposed crimes of the past, such as the persecution of the Jews, as if it had actually occurred, giving currency to one of the most vicious lies ever told about the Soviet Union".

154 *Guardian* May 3, August 2, October 18, November 22, November 29, December 19, 1962. September 5, October 21, 1963. *Tribune* October 17, October 24, October 31, November 7, 1962.

155 *Guardian* November 29, 1962.

156 *The Bulletin* September 29, 1962.

"Frankly speaking, Jews in the USSR are enjoying even better conditions compared with other Soviet nationalities".<sup>157</sup>

On October 18, 1962 the Minister for External Affairs announced that the Australian Government would raise the question of Soviet Jewry at the United Nations. This took place two weeks later.<sup>158</sup>

Soviet authorities were apparently concerned by this, because in addition to an intensification of activity on the part of the Soviet Embassy, Moscow Radio broadcast a series of English language programmes specially written by Aaron Vergelis, designed to refute the "vicious lies" being spread by "ignorant Australians".<sup>159</sup> In addition, Mr. Samuel Rozin of *Novosti Press Agency*, took the unprecedented step of writing a long letter from "Pushkin Square, Moscow" to *The Bulletin* in which, amongst other matters, Moscow's Chief Rabbi was "quoted" as having allegedly reprimanded the "ill informed Australian gentlemen" who "tell untruths about our life".<sup>160</sup>

The Communist Party also felt obliged to counter the impact made by the Australian Government's decision to raise the question at the United Nations. The greatest obstacle was dealing with the documentary evidence of Soviet anti-semitism that was being presented by Jewish leaders—particularly anti-semitic extracts from the Soviet press. At first, efforts were made to justify such articles as legitimate anti-religious propaganda.<sup>161</sup> When this line of approach failed, Judah Waten stepped in and solved the problem by questioning the authenticity of the quotations and demanding to see reproductions of original articles.<sup>161a</sup>

When these were produced, Waten made the extraordinary assertion that the photostatic reproductions could not "be treated as evidence of anything". Waten also asserted that the blood libel article which had appeared in the *Dagestan Kommunist* was a fake despite the fact that in his letter to *The Bulletin*

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157 *The Bulletin* October 20, 1962.

158 The full text of the statement on Soviet Jewry made by Australia's United Nations representative, is included as an appendix to the "Dissent" publication of the *Socialist International Study Group Report*. Today, even a Communist would have to concede that it reads as an extremely moderate statement on the subject, far more temperate than the recent critical writings by some Western Communists.

159 Radio Moscow English language broadcasts (South East Asia and Australia), November 21, 22 and 23, 1962.

160 *The Bulletin* January 12, 1963.

161 Paul Mortier in a letter to *The Bulletin* December 22, 1962.

161a Judah Waten in a letter to *The Bulletin* December 22, 1962.

Rozin of the *Novosti Press Agency* had conceded that the article was genuine.<sup>162</sup>

Waten's cynicism was reflected when at about the same time he wrote an article for the Communist press in which he violently attacked Emanuel Litvinoff, the respected editor of *Jews in Eastern Europe* as a cold war warrior and forger. Waten accused Litvinoff of using documents whose "ultimate source is the United States where there are many experts in the production of cold war 'technically excellent montage'."<sup>163</sup> This violent calumny has yet to be retracted by the Australian Communist press.

A little later the Party reproduced Herbert Aptheker's American Communist pamphlet denying the existence of Soviet anti-semitism. It carried a brief foreword by Harry Stein suggesting that the Australian U.N. intervention "was part of a plot aimed at splitting the Labour Party" and had been engineered by a combination of "Santamaria's National Civic Council, News Weekly, the Packer press, the Liberal Party, and certain reactionary leaders in the Melbourne Jewish community". Stein also claimed that it was "an international disgrace" that a Government which "refuses to bar vile anti-semitic material from the post, [and] whose supporters bar Jews from golf and other clubs" should have the "audacity" to raise such a "fraudulent" issue on a United Nations level.<sup>164</sup>

In March 1964, the Jewish community again initiated a public campaign relating to Soviet Jewry, this time centred on the *Kichko* book. Public protest meetings were held and a pamphlet consisting of reproductions of some of the caricatures, together with extracts and commentary on the *Kichko* book was widely distributed.<sup>165</sup>

By 1964 Judah Waten was no longer contributing articles defending Soviet anti-semitism to the Communist press. But even so, compared to protests from other Western Communist Parties

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162 *The Bulletin* February 2, 1963.

163 *Tribune* February 2, 1963.  
*Guardian* February 7, 1963.

164 Herbert Aptheker, *The Fraud of Anti-Semitism*. Foreword by Harry Stein: Current Book Distributors, Sydney, 1963.

165 20,000 copies were published. This move brought about a hysterical reaction from conservative quarters within the Jewish Community who tend to look askance at any type of militant action. In this case they were fearful that the caricatures would poison the minds of the people seeing them and "provide anti-semitic material for Eric Butler". This approach was supported by "a committee of Jewish members of the CPA" in the *Guardian* May 7, 1964.

prior to the CPSU Ideological Committee's condemnation, the Australian Party was very slow to act. The first to break the ice was Rex Mortimer Editor of the *Guardian*, who made an impromptu statement to the *Australian Jewish News* on April 3, condemning the book. This was reproduced in the *Guardian*.<sup>166</sup>

Two weeks later the Jewish Progressive Centre released the text of a letter it had sent to the Soviet Ambassador. The letter strongly condemned the *Kichko* book, noted that other anti-semitic articles had appeared previously in the Soviet press, and concluded from this that the Soviet Government was not taking adequate and prompt measure to prevent anti-Jewish publications from appearing. It urged the Soviet Government to remedy this in the future and take legal action against those responsible for the *Kichko* book.<sup>167</sup> This letter was important mainly because it appeared to reflect a change of policy from the intransigent and dogmatic approach adopted since 1958 by the Jewish Progressive Centre, on matters relating to Soviet Jewry. The letter was not reproduced in the Australian Communist press. Instead, at about the same time, rather belatedly, as the Soviet Government had already criticised the book two weeks earlier, *Tribune* associated itself with other Western Communist condemnations. The opening remarks were rather tortuous—citing the Soviet withdrawal of the book as proof that "contrary to Australia and other capitalist countries, anti-semitism is against the law in the Soviet Union". The statement then warned that:

Occasionally manifestations of anti-semitism such as Kichko's book . . . have a certain historical logic, but remain a cause for deep concern. Protests help the Soviet leaders in their struggle against this evil . . . Because of centuries of suffering in Christian Europe, the Jewish people attach to their faith an emotional significance transcending purely religious limits. Therefore people scientifically criticising Judaism have a special responsibility to guard against forms of expression which can rekindle anti-semitic ideas.<sup>168</sup>

This statement was hardly breathtaking in its scope compared to those of other Communist Parties, but for Australian Communists it was an important step in the right direction. Unfortunately it was taken no further, not even when a copy of the anti-semitic *Mayatsky* book—condemned by leading overseas Communist Parties—was brought to the attention of Communist leaders.

It was also significant that the theoretical journal of the Australian Communist Party saw fit to publish an outdated over-

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166 *Guardian* April 2, 1964.

167 *Australian Jewish Herald* April 17, 1964.

168 *Tribune* April 29, 1964.

seas Communist apologia on the question of Soviet Jewry precisely when the *Kichko* book was under fire.<sup>169</sup> The *Guardian* issue reporting on the condemnation of the *Kichko* book also carried a fantastic article by "a committee of Jewish members of the Communist Party of Australia" which included the assertion that "the Soviet Union has never pursued an anti-semitic policy . . ."<sup>170</sup> It was clear that if Australian Jewish Communists were still going to deny Stalinist anti-semitism, there would not be policy changes without a struggle.

In June 1964, the pro-Chinese Communist Party (Marxist Leninist) published a strong attack on the Soviet Union for practising anti-semitism.<sup>171</sup> Coming precisely from those quarters which had previously strongly resisted the de-Stalinisation of the Australian Communist Party, it was clearly a cynical tactical move.

However, the break-away Communist Party (ML) did have a general impact on the CPA because by indulging freely in polemics with them, more "liberal" CPA elements began to come out into the open.<sup>172</sup>

Australia's strategic position in the world Communist Sino Soviet split, probably helped the liberalisers considerably. Their position ultimately became associated in the minds of outside observers with ideas popularised by the leadership of the Italian Communist Party, viz., greater autonomy, replacement of outworn slogans, elimination of Stalinism, and genuine co-operation with progressive non-Communist elements. Their philosophy was said to be expressed in Togliatti's memorandum released by the Italian Communists a month after his death.<sup>173</sup>

Togliatti's statement could well have far reaching implications for the fate of Soviet Jewry, despite the fact that the Jewish Question was not mentioned. However, some of the general principles enunciated were more than pertinent.

For example, Togliatti called for a "repudiation of revolutionary phrasemongering and opportunist practicalism"; he expressed his unwillingness to re-establish "a centralised international organisation" which might again interfere with the "autonomy of the Parties"; he appealed to Communists:

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169 *Communist Review* May 1964, pp. 153-154.

170 *Guardian* April 16, 1964.

171 *Vanguard* June 1964.

172 For an excellent example see the article by CPA functionary Bernard Taft in *Guardian* April 16, 1964. Also "Some Comments on Intellectuals and Communism" by Rex Mortimer in *Communist Review*, August, 1963, pp. 270-271.

173 See the article by Luigo Longo in *Peace, Freedom and Socialism*, Vol. 7 No. 11, November 1964, pp. 2-9.

to show enough political daring to overcome dogmatism in all its forms, to advance and solve new problems in a new way, to adjust the methods of work to the rapidly changing political and social situation . . . we can and must act more boldly, discarding the outmoded formulae no longer conforming to present day reality.

Togliatti appealed for better relations with religious groups like the Catholics and the discarding of "the old atheistic propaganda" no longer of any use. Commenting on this, Luigi Longo, the Italian Communist leader, stated:

We consider it a mistake to regard religion as a weapon used by the conservative classes. On the contrary, sincere religious sentiment can make a valuable contribution to the struggle.<sup>178</sup>

Togliatti urged Communists to "act as champions of the freedom of intellectual life, freedom of artistic expression and scientific progress". He concluded by stating:

The problem meriting the greatest attention—this concerns both the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries—is however, that of overcoming the regime of restricting and suppressing democratic and personal freedom which was introduced by Stalin. We do not see an identical picture in all socialist countries in this respect. The general impression is that of slowness and resistance in the matter of returning to the Leninist norm, that ensured within the Party and outside it, a broad freedom for expression and debate in culture, art and also in politics. We find this slowness and this resistance difficult to explain, especially in view of the present situation, when capitalist encirclement no longer exists and economic construction has had tremendous success.

Togliatti apparently struck a chord with some members of the Communist Party of Australia.

Rex Mortimer, editor of the *Guardian* and a member of the Central Committee of the CPA, made front page headlines throughout the Australian and overseas Jewish press by an outspoken prepared statement on Soviet Jewry which he released late in November 1964, a week or so after his return from a visit to the Soviet Union.<sup>174</sup>

Mortimer said that he was "very concerned that problems relating to Soviet Jewry were still unresolved". Whilst the matter was in the process of being considered within the framework of the CPA, he expressed his "regret that the Australian Communist Party on the surface, was not more active in taking initiatives on this question". He added that "the Australian Communist Party was unfortunately not always 'as quick off the mark' in such matters as it should be". He emphasized that:

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174 *Australian Jewish Herald* November 27, 1964.  
*Australian Jewish News* November 27, 1964.  
*Australian Jewish Times* December 4, 1964.  
*Sydney Jewish News* November 27, 1964.



the Communist Party of Australia has previously pointed out that constructive criticism of negative features of Soviet life assist rather than harm the cause of peace and socialism. The question of Soviet Jewry falls into this category!<sup>174</sup>

Mortimer's outspoken comments were correctly interpreted here and abroad as a most significant statement from a leading Communist functionary. The influential London *Jewish Chronicle* used the statement as the basis for its main editorial leader.<sup>175</sup>

Not surprisingly, Mortimer's remarks created a certain amount of friction within the Communist Party. In a manner that smacked of an indirect rebuke to Mortimer, the *Guardian* suggested that his published statements were extracts of wider discussions and might give "a false impression". But it also stressed that what Mortimer had stated was essentially "a restatement of the Communist Party's publicly expressed views".<sup>176</sup>

It is also clear that some Jewish Communists did not welcome Mortimer's statement. They were alleged to have complained that Mortimer's unilateral action caused them to "lose face" in the Jewish community and should not have been made without prior consultations. Presumably to make up for this, Mortimer subsequently cosigned a letter with Bernard Taft, which was sent to the Jewish press, and was to some extent a restatement of the official Soviet position on the Jewish Question.<sup>177</sup> The letter was bitterly attacked in the same issue of the *Australian Jewish Herald* which editorially accused Jewish Communists of exerting pressure against "liberal" ideas, and attempting to stifle any possible breakthrough on the Soviet Jewry level.

Mortimer's stand represents a break with the "dogmatic" line hitherto adopted by the CPA. There is little doubt that it will be fiercely resisted as part and parcel of the overall "liberal" approach in which the question of Soviet Jewry is a symbolic representation. It is therefore no accident that those groups opposing dogmatic bureaucratic trends and neo Stalinism within the Soviet Union, have also been vocal on the question of anti-semitism. Seen in the perspective of major developments within

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175 *Jewish Chronicle* December 4, 1964 (London).

176 *Guardian* December 3, 1964.

The statement by Mortimer and the shorter one by Taft appeared at the same time and were not condensations. Both Messrs. Taft and Mortimer personally checked and approved the complete texts prior to publication by the Jewish Press. Not a single word was omitted or added.

177 *Sydney Jewish News* December 17, 1964.

*Australian Jewish Herald* December 24, 1964.

*Australian Jewish News* December 24, 1964.

the international Communist movement—the growth of polycentrism, Italian style "liberalism", and the Sino-Soviet conflict—Soviet Jewry is basically only a marginal issue. But as a result of this new constellation, the Communist Party of Australia now occupies a particularly important role in the Pacific and South-East Asian international Communist movement. Hence, if Mortimer's approach were to be adopted, the CPA could have a much greater influence on Soviet leaders with regard to the Jewish Question than its numerical size and influence would suggest under normal circumstances.

#### **Australian Progressives and Soviet Jewry.**

The attitude of Communist Party members to specific issues is largely dependent on the type of leadership and policies laid down by the Party at a specific time. Inner Party democracy has never been extended to enable individual Communist Party members to take up issues freely in a "personal" capacity. Such restrictions of expression do not apply to pro-Communists and progressives. Their lack of initiative on the question of Soviet Jewry is therefore all the more disappointing and shameful.

To their credit, Australian progressives have been prominent in agitation against South African Apartheid, civil rights for Negroes in the United States, and the question of the Australian Aborigines. But with regard to the plight of Soviet Jewry there has been a virtual conspiracy of silence and deliberate evasion of any form of critical analysis of the question. When from time to time the suggestion was made that human rights are indivisible and that anti-semitism in particular, warrants progressive interest, the syndrome has invariably operated bringing back the response that those promoting the question are obstructing an easing of the cold war. In a similar vein, progressives tended to dismiss the Jewish community's agitation as a "provocation," and the case presented was usually labelled "hysterical and exaggerated" without further examination.

It is significant that proven friends of the Soviet Union like Britain's Bertrand Russell and America's Linus Pauling, who have publicly identified themselves with efforts to induce the Soviet leaders to put an end to anti-Jewish discrimination, do not have their counterparts in the Australian progressive camp. It is noteworthy that since 1958, not a single progressive journal even saw fit to publish a serious article analysing the question.

Racists and reactionaries like Eric Butler and the League of Rights, and their associates, are pernicious elements on the local scene. But it is a sad state of affairs in Australia when those identifying themselves as progressives become obsessed with the

necessity of exposing the above mentioned, yet at the same time reject any suggestion that the plight of three million Jews might also justify action.

It is a remarkable reflection of the cultural and political situation in Australia, that the people who militantly raised the question of Soviet Jewry outside the Jewish community were from sectors of the Liberal Party and organs of the NCC and DLP. This helped progressives ex post facto, to justify their silence on the matter because to their way of thinking, anything supported by Sir Robert Menzies, Mr. Santamaria or Australia's U.N. representative must automatically be unworthy.

This was taken to grotesque proportions during a Parliamentary Senate debate on the question of Soviet Jewry in 1962, when ALP Senators found themselves in the ludicrous position of opposing the move to raise the issue on a United Nations level.<sup>178</sup> The ALP has since brought its policy into line with its previous attitude and that of all other Democratic Socialist Parties.<sup>179</sup>

There is also no doubt that certain sections within the "Progressive Establishment" in this country still harbour conscious or unconscious neo-Stalinist tendencies. Mortimer's statement is known to have caused considerable resentment within these quarters. To have a leading Australian Communist contradict their dogmatic belief that Soviet authorities should only be approached by back door silent diplomacy, rather than open protest, was regarded as imprudent, irresponsible and adventurist.

As late as November 1964, Australian progressives appeared to be more dogmatic than ever. At the Australian Congress for International Co-operation and Disarmament held in Sydney on October 25, 1964, "the criticism of the Soviet treatment of Jews was challenged and it was claimed that the danger to Jews and to the world came from a re-armed Germany."<sup>180</sup>

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178 The less said about this episode the better. The debate took place in the Senate on October 18, 1962 and appears in *Hansard* of that date pp. 1008-1020. The equally bizarre conflict which followed this, between the ALP Victorian Central Executive and the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies can be assessed from the *ALP Confidential Circular*, November 5, 1962 (widely circulated "confidentially" throughout the Jewish Community), and the statement issued by the President of the Victorian ALP, Mr. Holt, on November 13, 1962.

179 See ALP letter to the Soviet Embassy reproduced as an appendix in *International Socialist Study Group Report on Soviet Jewry* published by *Dissent*, p. 42.

180 *Outlook* No. 6, December, 1964. The attitude of *Outlook* in publishing this without comment contrasts sharply with the policy the journal maintained during the 1957-1958 period when a series of articles critical of the Soviet

Bertrand Russell and Linus Pauling are leaders of the Peace movement in Britain and the United States. Yet Lord Russell could write to M. David Mayer, President of the International League for the Rights of Man, in October 1964, stating that:

The treatment of the Jews in the Soviet Union causes great worries. It is intolerable that Communist Party publications in a number of different republics should contain anti-Semitic material comparable to that of the "Sturmer". The denial of the usual cultural facilities as well as the harassing and the charges of 'parasitism' which only serve as pretexts for anti-semitic campaigns have made a strong impact on all those who oppose the cold war and are active in favour of international understanding.

It is a duty for the Left-wing movements especially to publicly make their voices heard so as not to let the cold war partisans have the exclusive moral responsibility for protests directed against the intolerable persecutions which seem reserved for Soviet Jews.

The absence of similar public expressions of concern regarding the question of Soviet Jewry by Bertrand Russell's Australian counterparts require no emphasis.

The Australian progressive attitude to Soviet Jewry is more untenable today than ever before. After Mortimer's clearcut statement, progressives no longer have an alibi for isolating themselves from a human rights issue involving racism—especially anti-semitism. To continue doing so would be tantamount to making a grotesque parody of standards of morality and political integrity.

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treatment of the Jews was published (e.g. *Outlook* Vol. 1 No. 4, November-December 1957; *Outlook* Vol. 2 No. 3, June 1958; and the publication by *Outlook* about May 1958 of a special roneoed pamphlet entitled: *Documents on the position of the Jewish people in the USSR*).