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A STUNNING COLLECTION OF ESSAYS THAT ANALYSES THE MAJOR ISSUES FACING AUSTRALIA TODAY.

This nation has a lot of unfinished business. Will we become a republic any time soon? How can we honour our Indigenous peoples and tackle the intractable disadvantage they face? What does our treatment of asylum seekers reveal about us? Will we have a proper debate the next time we go to war?

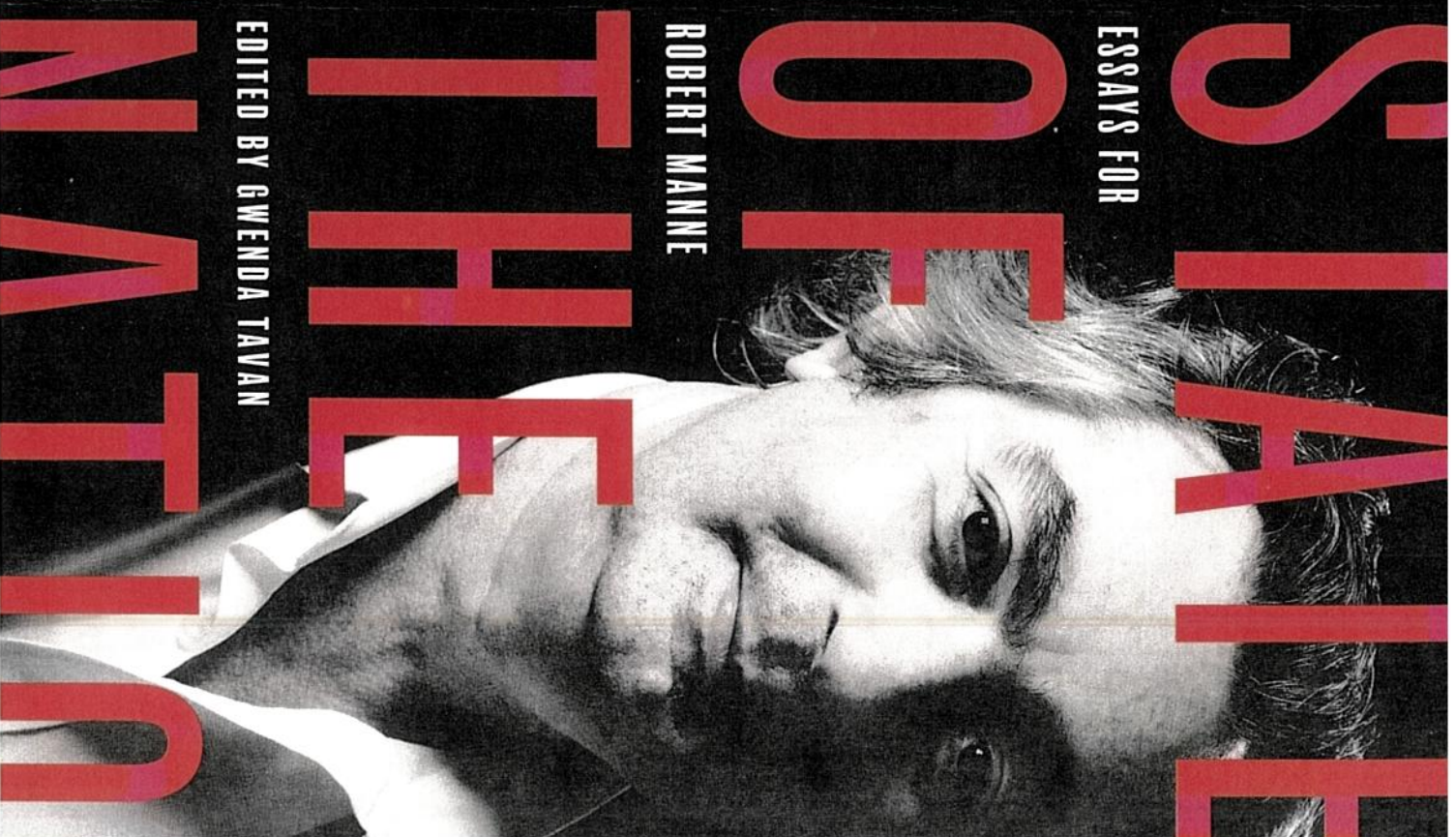
In early 2013 La Trobe University held a conference in honour of Professor Robert Manne, at which papers were presented by thinkers Manne has worked or argued with, and whom he most admires. *State of the Nation* compiles these original essays. They include innovative explorations of multiculturalism, social democracy, the future for Labor and the challenge of climate change. This is a book that shows how Australia is faring, good and bad, as it enters a new era of politics.

GWENDA TAVAN is a senior lecturer in politics at La Trobe University. Her books include the award-winning *The Long, Slow Death of White Australia*.

STATE OF THE NATION

ESSAYS
FOR
ROBERT
MANNE
EDITED BY
GWENDA TAVAN

Bla



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ROBERT MANNE
EDITED BY GWENDA TAVAN

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INTRODUCTION

GWENDA TAVAN

In February 2013 a conference was held at La Trobe University, in Melbourne's northern suburbs, to honour the work of one of Australia's most eminent public intellectuals, Professor Robert Manne, who retired from his academic post at the end of 2012. The conference brought together many of Australia's finest scholars, public intellectuals and social commentators. Some were close friends of Robert's; some had worked alongside or been taught by him; some had crossed paths with him in public forums over the years. They represented a wide variety of disciplinary training and political and ideological beliefs. What they all had in common, and what was the basis for their invitation to the conference, was Robert's belief that, individually, they had made an important contribution to Australian public and intellectual life, and that their work had in some way shaped his own thinking. They, in turn, were keen to celebrate Robert's enormous influence on Australian social, political and intellectual life throughout a career of some forty years.

As Robert explains in his prologue, the title of the conference, 'Thinking for Yourself', was chosen as an appropriate summary of his opinion about the values that should guide the participation of scholars and intellectuals in the public sphere – critical thinking, independence and fearlessness. Participants were invited to present papers on topics of interest to them, but which also related to the broad themes and concerns that have shaped Robert's work over the course of his career: Australian politics, culture and climate change, contemporary social

THE GOLD
WAR AND THE
HOLOCAUST

INTELLECTUALS AND COMMUNISM: A PECULIAR OBSESSION

MARTIN KRYGIER

Whoever takes it upon himself to write an honest intellectual history of twentieth-century Europe will need a strong stomach.

Mark Lilla, *The Reckless Mind: Intellectuals in politics*

Over the last twenty-some years, Robert Manne has had a deep influence on what I think about politically and how I think about it. Often he broaches a subject I've not thought of before, and takes a position with which I initially feel unease, at times alarm. I then find myself, dragging my feet but with increasing conviction, coming to that position, or at least close. I arrive at much the same place as he, but a bit late. And by the time I'm there, he's moving again.

It was not always so. On communism, I got there first. Whereas Robert had to think his way into the issue and his position, mine was a genetic endowment. I was born, indeed conceived, an anti-communist. My father, Richard Krygier, founded *Quadrant*, in its heyday (long now passed) an anti-communist magazine of distinction. Robert wrote for *Quadrant*, becoming its editor in 1989, just when, as we were happily surprised to learn, we 'antis' lost our noun. It just disappeared. I revisit it here, and specifically the intense engagements that intellectuals had with it. It's a strange story, in some ways unique.

Shortly after the French Revolution, Joseph de Maistre observed that 'for a long time we did not fully understand the revolution of which we

were witnesses ... we took it to be an event. We were mistaken; it was an epoch.' The same, but more so, could be said of the Russian Revolution. The end of European communism, in turn, was also not just an event but the end of that epoch, not just in Europe but across the whole world.

One of the peculiarities of that epoch, not the only game in town but distinctive of it, was the engagement of intellectuals with (and against) communism. Whether it is modernity that moves legitimacy from origins to results, and/or democracy that demands public justifications, contests over political ideas became an unavoidable and historically distinctive part of political practice during what Eric Hobsbawm called 'the short twentieth century', between 1914 and 1991. That gave special importance to political thinkers as well as to intellectual middlemen, those whom Friedrich Hayek called 'second hand dealers in ideas'.

The importance of such types – thinkers and dealers – was nowhere greater than in relation to communism. They were involved in its conception, they participated in and supported its delivery and then that of several progeny, and many were later liquidated by their charges and offsprings; some of those who remained contributed, in turn, to those offsprings' own demise, while others were inspired to oppose them, some for all their lives. A few, though fewer than had welcomed its birth, mourned its passing.

MARXISM

I start, as one does, with conception. Not only was Marx an intellectual *par excellence*, his writings – though not concerned much with intellectuals – combined several key features that were calculated to appeal to them.

One was that he gave a place, a meaning and a story to *everything* in that bewildering historical churning we now call modernity. He synthesised many of the features and dynamics of modern societies and post-Enlightenment preoccupations into a story of remarkable scope and power. Everything was connected to everything else, everything was explained, and everything could be predicted because the wave of History had been caught in the mind by Marx, and would be in the

world by the proletariat. New conceptions of possibility and progress, prefigured by the French Revolution and enlivened by the Industrial Revolution, new forms of wealth and power, squalor and hardship, and a newly conceived historical dynamic that would bring freedom from unfreedom were all swept into this capacious evaluative/explanatory machine. Tony Judt speaks of Marx's 'sheer epistemological cheek'; it's a good phrase, appropriately combining rebuke with admiration.

Marx's combination of explanation with indictment and promise of deliverance was powerful – intellectually, morally and rhetorically – though I believe it was also tragically flawed. It reeked of hubris, had no time for fences or brakes, and placed all bets on an institutionally empty fantasy of universal cooperation, which the laws of history would guarantee and nothing should be allowed to prevent. Still, despite or because of these features, and linked to the intellectual power of the work that seemed to explain it all, the package has beguiled and convinced many. Combining exposé with analytical power, and both with a philosophy and mechanism of progress, it lifted critique from a matter of attitude and preference to science, and prophecy to prediction. Leszek Kołakowski called Marxism 'the greatest fantasy of the century'. Both the adjective and the noun count.

Finally, for all its modernity, Marxism hooked into powerful religious sentiments, with its story of unavoidable suffering issuing in equally unavoidable progress and ultimate salvation. Yet it had the modern attraction too that, in a religiously ever more complex and disenchanted world, the salvation it promised would not depend upon heavenly favour or ascent. It would be delivered here, if not quite now, and by purely secular laws of progress.

There were other prophets in the nineteenth century, but Marxism was rare in its ability at once to satisfy intellects, moral passions and spiritual yearnings. And for people in a hurry, it offered the advantage that it didn't take long to master, at least at a vulgar level. *The Communist Manifesto* put it in accessible pamphlet form, and if you didn't have time for that, the preface to the *Critique of Political Economy* squeezed it into a couple of pages. And then there was Engels, Marx's workers' education officer, whom Lenin confessed he found much easier to read than Marx. I think that was true of many communists. From an activist

perspective, it was all there, ready to be repackaged as 'dialectical materialism' (*diamat*), even if scholars have ever since argued over the 'authentic' interpretation. Revolutionaries didn't need to spend the time, but they were gratified to be backed by thought of that stature.

REVOLUTION

This might go some way to explain Marxism's attractiveness to the relatively few people, among them some obscure Russian revolutionaries, who took to it in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. But what about the Revolution? For everything changed after 1917. No other great state had ever before been constructed with the manifest intent of realising the secular intellectual project of one thinker. Certainly, communism's imperial, monarchical and liberal-capitalist opponents were nothing like that: no one had invented them, and while there were texts and ideologies, none was canonical and most came well after, or at any rate during, the events. Communism was an ideological regime, and we don't have many of those. Indeed, as François Furet argues in *The Passing of an Illusion*, it was the first. Nazism came second.

However, what becomes truly remarkable about October 1917 is not so much the animating thought – there have been other smart thinkers – nor even the event – there had already been revolutions in Russia in 1905 and in February 1917. Rather, the extraordinary thing, as Furet also observes, is that this 'successful' putsch by a Communist sect, directed by an audacious leader in the most backward country of Europe, was transformed by circumstance into an exemplary event, destined to influence the direction of universal history as 1789 had done.

Why imagine that a coup, even a revolution, in a country which has never found it easy to feed its citizens or build a road, which has often sought to learn from the West but rarely had the compliment reciprocated, would be anything but a local affair, still less one of universal significance?

How, in other words, to explain the migration to the relatively backward outskirts of civilisation – as Europeans, among them Marx, understood it – of a project drawn from and designed for the development of the most highly developed Western societies, then its return

– with a vengeance – to the centre, and far beyond? Marx's predictions, after all, depended upon capitalism reaching the peak of its productive potential and only then breaking down. No one thought that was what had happened in war-torn, peasant-ridden Russia in 1917. This indeed was a source of anxiety for many communists at the time, but those whom Lenin drove to seize power in October 1917 soon got over it. Very soon Russia came to be seen by many to be universal in authority, its leaders infallible in judgement, and its practices exemplary for the world. How so?

THE PARTY

Some of the explanation is internal to communism; part has to do with the context in which it emerged. First, and the source of much else, was the reification and idealisation of 'the Party', and its transformative historical mission. Kolakowski has observed that Lenin thought of himself as 'an organ of the Party, and not an individual. He talked as the Party and not as a person.' And all those communists who endured torture and faced death, often from other communists, were not doing it for fun or money. For many Party loyalists, there came to be no truth, indeed no life, outside the Party.

'Our Party is not like other parties,' members used to tell each other, and that was doubtless true. This 'Party of a new type' contrived, as Philip Selznick's *Organizational Weapon* shows, to transform recruits into 'deployable agents'. That is a rare accomplishment. Part of that strategy depended on harnessing intellectuals, even though the revolution could never be theirs. It was, after all, to be a *proletarian* revolution. Many intellectuals were at first attracted to the Party precisely because it drew them closer to 'the masses' and made them think that they, too, at last, could do something useful, practical, in the world. And they didn't all manage to shed the charm-free capacity that Just describes, 'to be both humble and patronizing at the same time, combining a complex of inferiority with a sure sense of noblesse oblige.' But they couldn't avoid their suspect status. Many intellectuals attached to Communist Parties came to suffer from it; in communist countries many died from it. There, it often required self-abnegation even when it did not end in

extermination, as it often did under Stalin, more systematically in the Chinese Cultural Revolution, and categorically and virtually universally in Kampuchea.

But that was for the radiant future. In the beginning, though he didn't much like intellectuals, Lenin insisted the Party had to be led by them. For they were key, first in bringing about revolutions – by disabusing workers of their 'trade union' and raising their 'socialist' consciousness – then in spreading them. The second role was more for fellow travelling intellectuals than for Party members: to make communism palatable to a wider public. This was a central part of the role of Comintern and Cominform. Both jobs were indispensable, and huge efforts were devoted to them. Both were part of Lenin's organisational genius: to develop a machine and strategy for gaining and holding power.

That is an extraordinary phenomenon. Marx's texts were elevated by the Party from relative obscurity to sanctified universality, and then that sanctity – 'charisma', in Weber's term – came to be institutionalised in the Party, which then claimed and got unquestioning obedience from communists, among them many intellectuals, throughout the world. Indeed, such was the authority of the Party that you needn't go to the texts at all, and many didn't, as with the church, only what the Party said the texts meant mattered.

CRISES

The Party was not only an extraordinary organisation, however. It also arose at an extraordinary time. Hobsbawm's short century starts in 1914, not 1917. But those dates proved inseparable, locally and globally. World War I was like nothing that preceded it. With over 16 million deaths, the scale of carnage buried the optimism of the nineteenth century – and, for many, even the possibility of optimism. It shredded the map of Europe, stripping it of much that had been around, as if natural and irremovable, for centuries. New players arose as a direct result of the war, none more consequential than Soviet Russia, which no one had imagined a moment before it came into existence, courtesy, in large part, of the war. There were new resentments as well, among them those that fuelled Nazism.

Not long afterwards, into a world haunted by the despair of that war, and including many who resented its consequences, came the Depression, with which flabby liberal capitalism seemed unable to cope and muscular Nazism promised to, and with which communism was thought by many already to be dealing successfully, heroically and scientifically. And one thing many believed they knew about communism (at least until September 1939) was that it was anti-fascist.

Compared to these two dynamic engines of transformation, many saw liberal democracy as a loser. Given the despair of the early twentieth century, the weak roots and weak performance of capitalism and democracy in many countries, and the profound shock and malaise that followed the war and accompanied the Depression, none of this should be surprising, at least in retrospect. As Furet puts it, for many in the 1930s and 1940s, the Depression 'made the contrast between capitalist anarchy and communist organization look like that between carelessness and willpower'. And then came another world war, even worse than the first.

Afterwards, when the Soviet Union took over Central and Eastern Europe, it was as the allied victor of a terrible war, as the liberator from murderous Nazi occupation and, many thought, from unattractive indigenous governments as well. Of course, there were careerists and cynics from the beginning of the takeover, and more as time went on. But one should not be surprised or outraged that many brilliant Central European intellectuals, some of whom later became eloquent anti-communists, were ardent communists at that time.

EASTERN CAPTIVES

Here we need to distinguish between intellectual trajectories within and without the communist empire. Though their original engagements with communism were often connected and parallel, subsequent developments followed distinct paths. In the West, communism could remain fantasy. In the East, it soon became painfully real. Within communist states, messianic passions were soon spent, intellectuals were not solicited or fooled but coerced, and illusions faded, often in painful stages, though of course not openly. Everyone spoke the same language

in public, and if they thought differently it was for their desk drawer.

Many intellectuals, including those who began as dreamy poets and/or unworldly idealists, committed worse acts of betrayal and destruction than were ever available to their Western counterparts, but there were reasons for that. There were more opportunities to behave badly, worse things could be done to people, and it was harder to behave well. The higher you rose, the greater the opportunities and the harder it was. It was also true, particularly when repression eased somewhat, that many people showed virtues of courage, decency and friendship, which were not so easy to demonstrate in the West either.

Nineteen sixty-eight was a key year both in the communist and the non-communist worlds. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, the Polish Party's anti-Semitic purges and attacks on dissenters coincided with the peak of New Left dissidence in the West. But while Western students in the 1960s imagined that they were involved in the same movement as their Eastern counterparts, the differences were stark. The Western New Left, though no longer attached to Moscow (though there was still Peking), spoke a *marxisant* and utopian language, and denounced what one prominent guru, Herbert Marcuse, called the 'repressive tolerance' of the West. In the East, they wanted a bit of that. They had had enough repressive intolerance. They would settle, dream even, for the benefits of life in what they called 'normal countries', like those in the West. Indeed, one of the great frustrations of intellectuals under communist regimes was how difficult it was to make Westerners, who generally were by now quite well disposed, understand a word they were saying.

After 1968, particularly in Poland, the hope of dialogue with communists was abandoned. The attempt was to develop life 'as if' one lived in a free and normal country, without consulting or asking permission from the Party or the state. It was still not easy to say or do, but things were moving. The romance had gone. And finally, in 1989, it all collapsed.

Stephen Kotkin, in *Uncivil Society: 1989 and the implosion of the communist establishment* (2009), has disputed how much intellectuals contributed to the ultimate collapse of communism, which manifested itself more as dissolution at the top than as insurrection or even obvious

dissidence from below. On this view, Poland, with its unprecedented alliance between intellectuals and workers, is an exception.

It is a live question, however, how much the erosion of elite self-confidence, even in societies with no noticeable dissident movement, stemmed from the circulation of ideas generated by dissident intellectuals in the bloc who were no longer answerable to, or even interested in, what the Party might have to say. Ideas spread and have influence, even when their bearers are not on the barricades. Once expressed somewhere, they become thinkable elsewhere. And there were some intellectual giants in this period, several of the best of them ex-communists themselves or children of communists. Their guiding ideas – 'no experiments', 'self-limiting revolution', 'anti-political politics', 'civil society', 'democracy without adjectives', the rule of law – were deliberately not new, not millenarian and not violent. Above all, they were principled contraries of what they had grown up with. Many of them were influenced by the writings of Western anti-communists, particularly Orwell, Koestler and Aron. Today, Chinese dissidents translate and read Havel and Michnik.

WESTERN APOLOGISTS

In the West it was different. Mark Lilla observes: 'History dealt a bad hand to thinkers and writers who lived behind the Iron Curtain; some played it well, resisting the tyrant's bribes and threats as best as they could, others joined the chorus.' He then asks the central question:

... how are we to explain the fact that a chorus for tyranny also existed in countries where intellectuals faced no danger and were free to write as they pleased? What possibly could have induced them to justify the actions of modern tyrants or, as was more common, to deny any essential difference between tyranny and the free societies of the West?

At its worst in the first half of the century, the most dramatic demonstration, from countless, of Moscow's extraordinary authority was the global double reversal (in Australia as everywhere) of the 'Party line' on

then, in 1941, reversed again by Party faithful all over the world when the Nazis attacked the Soviet Union. Even after their Eastern counterparts had come to be instructed by what Manne has called 'the epistemology of the tank' after the war, hordes of Western intellectuals exhibited a loyalty to the Party that was outspoken, frequently fanatical and for a long time unshakeable.

Many Western intellectuals until quite late in the century were prepared to believe *anything* good, however absurd, about the Soviet Union and, later, China, Cuba and North Vietnam. George Bernard Shaw, who only made it to the Soviet Union once, on a heavily guided tour when he was seventy-five, delivered the wisdom that 'Stalin is a good Fabian. That is the best that can be said for him.' Those other good Fabians, the Webbs, published their two-volume *The Soviet Union: A new civilization?*, first in 1935 with a question mark, and again two years later without it. Unlike Shaw, they did some research, but that makes it worse, since it was the height of the Stalin-imposed famine that killed millions in Ukraine, but which they overlooked.

When it was revealed that Communist Parties in power were responsible for multiple horrors, it was intellectuals, again and again, who denied that such horrors had occurred. Some did not even deny but approved. The show trials of the 1930s, and then their vicious copies in the Sovietised states of Central Europe after the war, forced victims repeatedly to recite what were, as the Polish writer Antoni Stonimski put it, 'not words from this world'. But faith was high in the West, and many, such as Wilfred Burchett, with obscene enthusiasm denounced people who were 'tried', tortured and murdered for non-existent crimes. Many of the most prominent accused had committed many other crimes for the Party, among them torture and murder, for which they were not charged or denounced, but that is a separate matter.

Show trials were for leading communists, but scores of millions of ordinary citizens were exterminated without any such fuss. Millions more were ground into lives that were stunted, hopeless, 'poor, nasty, brutish, and short'. And, yet another peculiarity, both in relation to the Soviet Union and China, there was a direct relationship between the brutality of the regime and the enthusiasm of many intellectuals for it.

Stalin, and then Mao, who killed many more people than Stalin, were heroes; Brezhnev, under whom all Soviet citizens lived better and safer lives than perhaps ever before, was just a dull old bore. Deng Xiao Ping was of no interest to supporters of Mao, of whom there were legions when he was killing overtime. Deng and his successors gained a new constituency, it is true, among businessmen and Australian politicians, but that is another story. Perhaps it can be explained in rational terms, though less obviously moral ones, but the other story fails on both counts.

At least after the late 1930s, what Lilla calls the 'tyrannophilia' of Western intellectuals presents intellectual, spiritual and moral puzzles. Intellectually, it is pretty simple, but that only means one needs to look elsewhere. There is no cognitive explanation for it. Of course, dates matter; the earlier the more plausible and the more innocent. And yet Bertrand Russell and André Gide understood what they saw, each after one visit, Russell's in 1920, Gide's in 1935. Orwell knew the score without ever visiting at all. They didn't have to wait for the invasion of Budapest in 1956 or Prague in 1968. Anyone who waited till then to break with the Party because of 'revelations' must have some explanation other than ignorance.

Strangely symptomatic was the belated shock that greeted Khrushchev's 'secret' anti-Stalin speech to the 20th Party Congress, which shook the faith of so many. It was striking as much for what it did not mention, which it was easy to know, as for what it did. After all, Khrushchev focused on the 'harm done to our party' by Stalin's imperious habits and particularly his liquidation of so many 'prominent party leaders and rank-and-file party workers, honest and dedicated to the cause of communism'. He said nothing of the millions of non-Party members who had been deported, degraded and destroyed by Stalin and Lenin during the forty years in which he had been an enthusiastic Party member, and in which he also participated as Party boss in Ukraine. Indeed, he endorsed these campaigns against 'class enemies'. When you recall what actually happened throughout the country over the preceding forty years, this 'revelatory' piece of evasion was, to say the least, little and late. Of course, given where he sat, it would have been hard for Khrushchev to say more, whatever he thought. But the global reverberations of his speech need to be explained psychologically, not intellectually.

The subjugation of Budapest a few months later, which was the last straw for many communists and fellow travellers, though not all, was a late and small chapter in this protracted horror story. Where had Sartre been all that time? Moreover, as Judt observes of him and Merleau-Ponty, for many intellectuals 'the true crime of those years was not its treatment of people but the harm it was doing to its image and its own ideological foundations'. When post-disillusionment faith migrated to China, similar resistances, reluctances and denials were repeated while scores of millions were destroyed. It started later, of course, but it ended later too.

In *To Jerusalem and Back* (1976), Saul Bellow observes that 'a great deal of intelligence can be invested in ignorance when the need for illusion is deep' – but whence the need, and why has it been so common? It is very hard to say. Some intellectuals, we know and Orwell observed, were drawn to power. Others might have been excited by violence in service of an idea; this might explain why, when the violence decreased, so did their excitement. Others might have made too great a psychological investment to cut their losses. Others, and this deserves separate treatment, were driven by loathing of their own society or of America, where these differed. With many, I suspect, we are dealing with the tenacity of faith in an exalted future, radiant enough to redeem even the most horrific of presents.

Whatever the sources, there is an inescapable moral aspect to intellectuals' sustained exculpation of tyranny. Judt, in *Thinking the Twentieth Century* (2012), puts it well:

It is one thing to say that I am willing to suffer now for an unknowable but possible better future. It is quite another to authorize the suffering of others in the name of that same unverifiable hypothesis. *This, in my view, is the intellectual sin of the century.*

ANTI-

While communist and sympathising intellectuals were central parts of the century's story of engagement with communism, they were not the

whole of it. There were also the 'antis'. For much of the century and most of the Cold War, they were treated as untouchable by *bien pensant* Western intellectuals, whether pro-communist, fellow travelling or just anti-anti. Even when, or perhaps especially when, anti-communists were proved to have been right about communism, some for a very long time, they were not thanked or forgiven for it. Thus Sartre's proud and stupid boast: 'An anti-Communist is a dog, I don't change my views on this, I never shall.'

Of course, there were many ways to be anti-communist and many reasons, some better than others. Nazis – among them, in the 1930s, many intellectuals – were anti-communists, other right-wing dictators too: the problem with communist despotism was the adjective, not the noun. But even among committed democrats, reasons for anti-communism varied.

Thus, conservatives are typically anti-communist. No surprises there; they would be – indeed, they *should* be. That is not a criticism: though there are many unpalatable forms of conservatism (and anti-communism), at its best and deepest conservatism embodies precious wisdom about many things, including unintended consequences and the dangers of revolutionary hubris, which Marx, not to mention later communists, ignored. And many values cherished by conservatives and attacked by communists deserve conserving. But while conservatives might well be anti-communist for good reason, it is not especially interesting that they are (except when their anti-communism led to conservatism, as with James Burnham, say, rather than the other way round). It goes with the territory.

More interesting, and much more central to intellectual anti-communism, particularly in the early years, were its liberal and social democratic versions. Communists hated such rivals even more than they did conservatives. Thus, for example, Weimar Social Democrats were derided as 'social fascists', and interwar communists fought them more fiercely than they fought the Nazis. Liberal and social democratic anti-communists returned the hostility, often simply for the good reason that they valued liberty and democracy, as communists didn't.

Ex-communists were often among the most vocal and eloquent anti-communists, an interesting though not universal trait among 'antis'. It

is interesting because, as John Fleming has noted, 'it will not be easily assumed that most anti-Semites, anti-racists, anti-vivisectionists, or anti-Americans are former ...' – and that is a difference worth thought. I think it is partly the quasi-religious element: the apostate hates the church more than anything (and vice versa). Sometimes his patterns of thought don't change much when he leaves it. Often, though, it was just what these anti-communists said it was: they knew from the inside the incompatibility between civilised values and those that led to 'really existing socialism', even if it was hard, often excruciatingly hard, to get anyone to believe them. In any event, it is wrong to think, as Fleming seems to, that all the best anti-communist intellectual writers were ex-communists; many were not. They simply knew the score.

Of course, there are pathologies that can and, more than once, did become attached to anti-communism, central among them that noted by Hannah Arendt:

The greatest danger of recognising totalitarianism as the curse of the century would be an obsession with it to the extent of becoming blind to the numerous small and not so small evils with which the road to hell is paved.

Blindness is one problem. Willed ignorance or indulgence are others. And not all the evils were small. Of course, politics is a tough business, and communists were harsh opponents globally as well as horrible rulers, so there were certainly occasions where even the most decent political leaders would have to treat their enemies' enemies as their friends. The alliance with Stalin against Hitler, after all, was a lesson of that sort. But supping with the Devil is a dangerous business, as are Faustian bargains. When anti-communism morphs into endorsement – or, worse, encouragement – of *anything* done by a supposed ally – coups, purges, massacres of innocents – if the enemy was or was alleged to be communist, then it is not obvious that anti-communists are in any better moral position than communist apologists.

And yet while these dangers, these temptations, are real, they were not inherent in anti-communism or inescapable, as many of the best anti-communist intellectuals, among them Arendt herself, Camus, Aron,

Hook, Orwell, Judt and Manne, made plain. Their anti-communist commitment was admirable; more than admirable, it was inevitable for anyone who would see reality clear and straight.

POST-

And then, in a moment, it was all over. European communism simply and unpredictably dropped away, itself a fascinating and singular achievement. Its rise was without precedent, and so was its fall. With it, and not coincidentally, the role of intellectuals in framing alternative social imaginaries has all but vanished, at least for now. That, as Judt observes in *Reappraisals* (2008), 'is in large measure because Lenin and his heirs poisoned the well'.

And so to 'post'. That is a new story, to be dealt with in new ways. For now, it is enough to note that there are many forms of this too. In Central Europe, 'post-communist' is the derisory term for people who used to be communists, but we should treat the prefix more liberally. There are many ways of being post-communist. I commend 'post-anti-communism', a position neither elegant nor comfortable but, I believe, apt. Post- but still anti-, and so post-anti.

A post-anti-communist has a somewhat Hegelian relationship to his past: it is now, or should be, *aufgehoben*, transcended but not denied. Not everyone has found that combination easy. Some lament the dated character of their hard-won certainties, others the loss of their best lines and audiences for them. Some don't behave as though anything has changed, and still others start to forget what it was all about. It is, after all, hard to know how to respond to the passing of an epoch in which one was deeply engaged. Thus, the Hungarian émigré George Urban reflected that, with the demise of communism, he felt 'a curious pang of loss ... Having a great enemy had been almost as good as having a great friend ... A friend was a friend, but a good adversary was a vocation.'

These feelings are not unknown to me, but they're not ones I commend. There is a better way to be post-anti-communist, and Robert Manne exemplifies it. So let me conclude with a passage from the first page of *The Shadow of 1917*:

By coincidence I was appointed sole editor of *Quadrant* on the very day, 9 November 1989, that the world celebrated the end of the Cold War with the overthrow of the Berlin Wall. As the first post-Cold War editor of a journal as deeply rooted in this historical period as *Quadrant*, it was obvious to me that I had to come to terms with a new intellectual landscape, where the old Cold War alignments of left and right were certain to dissolve and where the persistence of that peculiarly embattled tone would be nothing more than lazy mental habit. I was convinced that now new political alignments and new lines of conversation between former antagonists were possible. I was also convinced that if these new political conversations were to flourish they could only do so if at their beginning the subject matter of Cold War conflict – the meaning of 1917 and the dark shadow it had cast across our century – was neither to be fudged nor forgotten.

TWO MODELS OF ANTI-COMMUNISM: POPULISM, PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL ENGAGEMENT AND LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE

WILLIAM MALEY

For those Australians under the age of about forty, it must be difficult to grasp just how significant for Australian intellectual life were debates about Marxism and communism before the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991. In Australian universities now, one encounters nothing like the atmosphere of radicalism that was prominent, if not pervasive, in the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s. This is partly because the nature of the student population in Australian universities has changed dramatically, but it is also because of the collapse of Marxism and states purporting to give effect to Marxist visions.

Yet when one looks at the kind of critiques that sought to bring Marxism down, it is clear that at least two of radically different character can be found. One might be called populist, and one might be called intellectual. It is my thesis that, in virtually every respect, the intellectual critique was and is vastly superior to the populist alternative, and that the work of Robert Manne provides a very fine example of the intellectual critique at its most powerful. The following remarks are divided into four sections. The first discusses the nature of populism, and the second populist anti-communism. The third outlines the intellectual alternative to populist anti-communism, as it developed in both the wider world and in Australia, while the fourth examines the contemporary relevance of the intellectual approach.