CELEBRATING THE ALOR’S 71ST YEAR OF THE NEW TIMES

What a happy and special occasion the 71st year of the New Times Dinner (incorporating the Frank Bawden Memorial Dinner) and Annual Seminar turned out to be for those who attended— and appreciation was expressed from the many overseas messages received at the Dinner. It was such a delight to ‘catch up’ with old friends and colleagues from ‘far and wide’ at this annual event.

The three Papers presented at the Seminar were first class and we highly recommend our readers place their orders for the DVDs with Head Office by phoning 8387 6574. After being edited and placed on DVD, they will be available early in the new year - $50.00 posted.

“WHY IS OUR ELECTRICITY SO EXPENSIVE?”

First speaker at the Seminar was Dr. Alan Moran who drew on his recent book “Climate Change : Treaties and Policies in the Trump Era” to present the case against ‘climate alarmists’ such as Tim Flannery. Dr. Moran pointed out “Australia has been more aggressive than most other countries in forcing decarbonisation”.

As a result we have moved over the past decade and a half from enjoying the cheapest source of electricity (and gas) in the world to one of the dearest. Subsidies to wind/solar, and those sources favoured access to the electricity grid, cause coal stations to operate in an uneconomical stop-start mode.

The outcome of loss of stable generation has been a doubling of prices, loss of energy intensive industries like smelting and reduced reliability.”

The good doctor insisted “We must announce and implement an immediate cessation of the subsidies in place and a return to an electricity market that is neutral between different supply sources thereby allowing industry to heal itself and once again play a vital part in Australian living standards.”

Book available here: https://www.bookdepository.com/Climate-Change-Alan-Moran/9781925501407
“AGRICULTURE: WHICH WAY FORWARD?”

Drawing on the work of Dr. Christine Jones (www.amazingcarbon.com) Donald Auchterlonie, a retired Gippsland farmer, explained that an increase of carbon in the soil provided much better fertility and improved the soil’s capacity to hold water.

Not only is carbon dioxide in air an essential element for plant growth, but carbon itself is also a desired element, he insisted.

Don went on to ask the question: “Have the proponents of “global warming” overlooked these important factors?”

“I found the photos and explanation of the soil’s mycorrhizal fungi just fascinating. It shows how little we know of the natural world around us or in the soil.”

“CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF THE EAST-WEST RAILWAY”

Peter Davis took time away from his Island - just a hop-step-and-jump off Port Lincoln’s coastline - to remind us of an important event in our nation’s history. For a short period of 11 years our nation broke free from the shackles of the privately controlled financial, banking system.

Peter was reminded of these eventful eleven years when he heard former Deputy PM Tim Fischer being interviewed on radio. Tim Fischer was talking about the centenary celebrations of the Transcontinental rail line which was completed on the 17 October 1917. It was out on the Nullabor Plain at a remote location known as Ooldea, the two ends of the railway line were joined.

“A nation is joined: The first eastbound train leaves Kalgoorlie on October 25, 1917”
Ooldea is roughly 620 miles, or 1000 kms, east of Kalgoorlie, and about 430 miles west of Port Augusta.

Peter went on to connect the celebration of the 100-year-old event in his mind by recalling that it was the Commonwealth Bank under the governorship of Sir Denison Miller that financed the East-West Railway – with no national debt!

The Commonwealth Bank financed Australia’s effort in the First World War and by 1917 it financed construction of the East-West Railway enabling the whole project to be completed free of debt! Why do we not repeat the financial policy of the railway construction in today’s economy?

This is an important time in Australia’s history that needs to be known far and wide. The DVDs will be available in the new year. Don’t forget, phone Head Office today – 8387 6574 and place your order.

THE FIRST ESSENTIAL IS TO GET AT THE TRUTH… By Betty Luks

Whilst recently referring to Whittaker Chambers’ Letter to My Children in the Introduction to his book “Witness” (1952), I was reminded of my first contact with the Australian League of Rights. The year was 1963 and I had recently read two of Rumanian Pastor Richard Wurmbrand’s books, “Tortured for Christ” and “In God’s Underground” and went searching for people who could help me understand what it was that turned men into such cruel and inhumane monsters whilst operating such a system as the then Soviet system.

It was to the Australian League of Rights that I turned for help. Eric D. Butler and those whom he had gathered around him in the Australian League of Rights soon made me realise that while I was anti-Communist, I had yet to examine myself and give deeper thought to, and gain a greater understanding of, just what was I ‘pro’?

It was as I began to realise why the land that I lived in still enjoyed the ‘fruits’ of those who had gone before me, and that I was really living on that ‘diminishing capital’, my Faith and understanding grew. Just as many have said before me, the League of Rights changed my whole life outlook, and the direction it took.

And now back to former communist Whittaker Chambers and his book “Witness”.

Daniel J. Mahoney of The Intercollegiate Studies Institute, reviewed Chambers book in the Spring 2002:

Whittaker Chambers: Witness to the Crisis of the Modern Soul

Whittaker Chambers’ “Witness” was published fifty years ago during the coldest days of the Cold War. It tells the story of a brilliant man driven by despair over the “crisis of our time” into the arms of the Communist Party. After playing a prominent role in the Communist underground in Washington, DC, in the 1930s, Chambers painfully broke with communism in 1938, rejecting all its works and ideological presuppositions. He resurfaced to become a distinguished writer and editor for Henry Luce’s Time magazine.

The story of Chambers’ descent to the Communist underground and return to the human world is told with remarkable eloquence. The most famous part of the book is Chambers’ gripping account of the two perjury trials of Alger Hiss in 1949 and 1950, which pitted the cerebral if somewhat disheveled Chambers against the worldly Hiss, a man who had been Chambers’ friend and protégé in the Washington Communist underground. The former State Department official and sometime president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace categorically denied Chambers’ allegations that he had faithfully served the cause of Stalin and the Soviet Union during many years of government service. Chambers provided abundant documentation, including the so-called “Baltimore” and “Pumpkin” papers and the most detailed personal information, to support his charges. Despite everything, Hiss would go on lying for half a century—right up to his death in the late 1990s.

The collapse of the Soviet empire and the resulting revelations from Soviet bloc archives and the so-called Venona intercepts, however, would finally make Hiss’ guilt clear enough even to his most determined partisans. These recent revelations confirm what Chambers’ initial testimony and evidence ought to have made clear.

Hiss had been a faithful Communist, a spy for Stalin’s tyranny, and an inveterate liar, all of his adult life. Chambers, who despised the role of informer, testified reluctantly and only from a sense of duty to an imperiled free world.

(continued on next page)
He would pay mightily for his witness.

Chambers was subjected to calumnies by the sorts of journalists and intellectuals who thought—and still think—that McCarthy-ism was a far graver threat to human liberty than Communist totalitarianism ever was.

But Whittaker Chambers believed that his witness was about much more than an espionage case or the sordid realities of Communist subversion, no matter how much the dramatic details of the ‘Hiss Case’ engrossed his readers. If the Hiss Case were merely about espionage, then ‘it would not be worth my writing about or your reading about’, he wrote in the “Letter to My Children”, which provided the thematic introduction to Witness.

In “Cold Friday”, his posthumously published collection of essays, letters, and book fragments, Chambers wrote “two points . . . seemed to me more important than the narrative of unhappy events” which preoccupied his readers. These two capital points dealt with “the nature of communism and the struggle against it.” For Chambers, the “crux of this matter is whether God exists. If God exists, a man cannot be a Communist, which begins with the rejection of God. But if God does not exist, it follows that communism, or some suitable variant of it, is right.” This thesis is at the centre of Chambers’ understanding of the conflict between communism and Western freedom.

The second proposition follows from the first. The West must either ‘develop or recover’ those spiritual and moral resources that constituted its superiority over communism or risk irrevocably losing its soul. Even if the West turned out to be successful in its secular struggle with totalitarianism, it still risked revealing itself to be a mere frère-ennemi of its great rival. For Chambers, this seemingly lucid proposition was no simple matter. He did not proffer a simple-minded religious orthodoxy as the alternative to the secular religion of communism. Nor did he ignore the degree to which the West had already lost its soul and was deeply complicit in the great movement that he, like so many others, called ‘the crisis of our time’.

According to Chambers, communism itself was symptomatic of a much larger crisis—a ‘total crisis’, as he called it—that was convulsing the entire world. The crisis was simultaneously spiritual and social. Its defining trait was the West’s loss of confidence in its animating principles. What were the original principles that no longer called forth the loyalty or assent of the enlightened elites of the Western world? Above all, the ‘advanced’ thinkers of the West had forgotten that political freedom presupposed the reality of the soul. Properly understood, ‘external freedom is only an aspect of interior freedom’. For Chambers, “religion and freedom are indivisible. Without freedom the soul dies. Without the soul there is no justification for freedom”—there is only the positing of necessity as the governing principle of the human world. Chambers believed that political freedom “as the Western world has known it” is best understood as “a political reading of the Bible.” Only the Christian account of the soul could make sense of the human aspiration to responsible freedom. There can be no coherent defence of freedom without a recognition of the integrity of the human soul. The soul, irreducible in its mystery, transcends necessity and the understanding of causality put forward by a mechanistic science. And the soul cannot ultimately be explained without an appreciation of the created character of the world.

The Fundamental Conceit of The Enlightenment

At the heart of Chambers’ moral vision is a rejection of the fundamental conceit of the Enlightenment: the self-sovereignty of ‘autonomous’ man. This is the ‘revolutionary heart of communism’ that grounds its revolutionary fervour and makes sense of its Promethean desire to remake human nature and society radically, communism rejects the givenness of the world. For Communists, the goal of thought is not to understand but rather to ‘change the world’, as Marx famously put it in the eleventh of his Theses on Feuerbach. This desire to transform the world, to conquer the soul, to overcome creation, is what allowed Communists to ‘move mountains’. It gave them what was lacking in the democratic West, namely, “a simple, rational faith that inspires men to live or die for it.”

In his “Letter to My Children” Chambers links the Promethean faith of communism both to the enlightenment project of a world directed solely by ‘rational intelligence’ and to man’s original or primordial revolt against the Lordship of God. The promise of the serpent in Genesis that ‘Ye shall be as gods’ is older than enlightenment philosophy, older than the so-called modern project. ‘It is, in fact, man’s second oldest faith’.

The Communist ‘vision of Man without God’ is a transformation and intensification of the age-old pride of man, who imagines a world without God. The project of human self-deification is a means of restoring man ‘to his sovereignty by the simple method of denying God’. Atheism is at the core of radical modernity, a modernity that is broader and deeper than the Communist revolution…’

Source: https://home.isi.org/whittaker-chambers-witness-crisis-modern-soul

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AUSTRALIA’S EXPERIMENT IN COMMUNISM
from “I Remember”, an autobiography by J.T. Lang  
first published by Invincible Press 1956

Communism is tied up in most people’s minds with the Russian Revolution. They think of it in terms of Lenin and Trotsky, the death of the Czar and blood running in the streets of Moscow. It is always regarded as being a blood-thirsty affair. Hordes of marching men and women. November 7, 1917 is regarded as the birthday of the Communist spectre that has hovered over the world ever since.

It was a Military Revolutionary Committee of the Soviet that seized power on that historic day, and ever since it has been maintained at the point of the bayonet, the terror of secret police and armed aggression by a new kind of Russian Imperialism.

But Communism has not always been thus. Neither have Communists always been grasping opportunists and self-seeking individualists. It was Karl Marx and Freidrich Engels who first gave Communism its military manifesto when in 1848 they declared that their ends could only be attained by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions.

But there have been others, who have believed that Communism can be attained without resort to arms. Many of the early Christians were true Communists, if by Communism we mean “from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.” They were Communists in the true sense when it came to an equal sharing of their worldly goods.

It is interesting to recall that Australia had an experiment in Communism, 24 years before the Russians achieved their present subjection to Communist Bureaucracy.

But the particular brand of Communism which had its origin in the very fertile brain of an Australian journalist, and led to more than 500 Australians leaving their own country for what was to be a Communist Utopia in South America, had very little in common with Russian Communism.

It was a gentle kind of Communism. It resembled early Christianity much more than the modern brand. It had its origin in the books that were being written on Socialism, telling of the earthly Paradise that could be achieved if all men and women were equal.

It was in the early nineties that I first heard of the plan in McNamara’s Bookshop (Sydney, NSW-ed). Quite a number of those who frequented the shop were arguing whether it could be a success. There was great social unrest in Sydney at the time. We had been through the Big Strike. There was much unemployment. There were runs on some of the banks. About 20,000 were without work in Sydney alone. The Active Service Brigade started a hostel to house homeless and provide a soup kitchen.

Arthur Desmond, a real revolutionary, ran the hostel, collecting money in the Domain and elsewhere. Cardinal Moran was one of those who helped. Many families were lucky to get a threepenny meat ration a day. When Desmond got into strife with the law over one of his demonstrations in the city, I had the job of running his hostel for some days. That was the background against which we first heard of the plan to establish a New Australia which was to be free of all poverty, without capitalism and with equality for all. It was going to take its followers away from all the hatred, the petty jealousy and the exploitation of man by man. It was to be real Communism.

The whole idea had its origin in the brain of William Lane, a very active Labor journalist who had settled in Brisbane. Lane was a dreamer who had roamed the world before coming out to Australia in the eighties. He was only 21 at the time. but was well read and had a vigorous pen. He did much to start the Labor Party in Queensland, and after writing articles in support of the new party for one of the Brisbane papers, started his own paper, which he called The Boomerang. He later sold it, and became the first editor of the Brisbane Worker.

We soon heard of him. He wrote many pamphlets which were sold in Mac’s Bookshop. He was one of the new intellectuals who were going to lead the Labor Party into the Promised Land. There was even greater interest in him when it became known that he was prepared to buy working class poems and articles for his paper. Henry Lawson soon became one of his contributors, and Lane at one stage gave him a job at £2 a week. That made him Lawson’s hero.

After The Boomerang ceased publication, Lawson came back to Sydney with glowing reports about Lane. It seemed that he was a man of considerable personal magnetism, who influenced people with whom he came into contact. He even persuaded Sir Samuel Griffith, then Queensland Premier, to write an article for the Christmas issue of his paper, extolling the virtues of giving the worker the proper share of his labour.

Lane had started out as a follower of Henry George’s “Progress and Poverty” and Single Tax, but later became a confirmed Socialist. But he didn’t derive his inspiration from the ponderous works of Marx. He owed more to the gentle philosophy of William Morris, H. M. Hyndman and other British Socialists. McNamara was all for Hyndman.

Lectures on Socialism were given on Sunday nights at Leigh House by George Black, W. G. Spence, J. D. Fitzgerald, W. M. Hughes and W. A. Holman, and soon there was a group of followers who wanted to put their ideas into practice instead of merely talking about them.

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They were the people who found their dreams crystallised in the plan put forward by Lane. Incidentally, the caretaker at Leigh House achieved notoriety on his own. His name was Butler, and he murdered a Captain Lee Weller at Glenbrook on the Blue Mountains. He escaped by sea but was arrested at San Francisco, extradited and duly hanged in Sydney.

We first heard of Lane’s plan for a New Australia in 1892. He had just published a Socialist novel which he called “The Working Man’s Paradise” and became so wrapped up with the idea that he decided to start one of his own. When it came to swaying people to his ideas, Lane was a regular Savonarola.

After intensive reading, he decided that the only way Utopia could succeed was by setting it up well away from the contamination of the capitalistic world. Australia was not big enough. So his attention turned to South America. He used the A.W.U. and W. G. Spence to promote the idea through its various branches. In Sydney the unofficial headquarters of the venture were in McNamara’s Bookstore. Most of the followers were recruited personally by Lane in Brisbane.

That was how the New Australia Co-operative Settlement Association came to be formed. The basis of it was to be communal ownership, that is pure Communism. The means of production, distribution and exchange were to be owned by the community. All were to be equal. There was to be no capitalism. Lane was going to show the world that Socialism could be achieved before the 19th Century closed.

Those joining up were required to pay a deposit of at least £10, and another £50 before they sailed. More wealthy converts put in bigger sums. There were varying accounts that Lane put in £100, and up to £1000. Lane elected himself Chairman.

Although believing in Socialism, Lane was also very color conscious. He was against black labour, and had helped to inspire the White Australia policy, which had its origin in the sugarcane fields of North Queensland, where Kanaka labor was introduced. He had to find a white man’s country for his settlement. He decided on South America.

Some of my friends tried to persuade me to join up. But there were two obstacles. In the first place I didn’t have the necessary £10. In the second place, I saw no reason why I should leave Australia for some foreign country.

Hughes, Holman and leading members of the Labor Party turned down suggestions that they should abandon politics and test out their theories in a new land. They were just getting on their political feet, and were quite satisfied to keep their Socialism for Hyde Park, the Domain and Leigh House.

Many young people were attracted to the band of Utopians.
Property was to be shared equally and there were to be no private possessions. That was the theory.

When they left Australia, there had been a Depression. There were to be no Depressions in this New Australia under the Southern Cross. They landed in their New Australia in October, 1893. Within a few weeks, trouble had started.

The Communists found that under Communism there still had to be overseers. It was agreed to hold a secret ballot. Then the foremen started ordering the rest around, just like capitalists. There was more trouble. There were stop-work meetings and family squabbles. Jealousy extended to the womenfolk.

On Christmas Day a number of the men went into a native village, drank too much liquor and started to fight on their return to the settlement. Lane called in the Paraguayan police and expelled some of the settlers for drunkenness because they had signed a teetotal pledge before sailing. There was trouble indeed in the Working Man’s Paradise.

Crops failed, and they started eating the stock they had brought with them for breeding purposes. Rations began to drop. Some of the settlers suggested that if it was to be a workers’ paradise, they should hire themselves some colored labour, which would be cheap. Lane objected and the proposal was dropped.

But the Communists still couldn’t agree amongst themselves. Instead of Utopia, New Australia was turning out to be worse than the old Australia. Some of the original settlers returned to Sydney on the Royal Tar, minus their savings. Still a second contingent was raised. But faction fighting had started in earnest. Those who objected to Lane’s wowser ideas, and despotic ways were in the majority. So he was deposed from the leadership.

Lane then decided to leave New Australia, and start a Second Earthly Paradise a few miles away. He had 46 disciples still following him, and about a dozen children.

They called the new settlement Cosme, and it was supposed to regain all the ideals that had been lost in the first venture. But the society that hated capitalism found that it didn’t have sufficient capital. At one stage they were literally starving. But they were the true idealists and Lane had undisputed sway over the new settlement. A few Socialists from Britain came out to join them.

Lane stuck it out until 1899 when he resigned his leadership. The settlement struggled along for a few more years. Gradually the settlers either straggled back to their homes in Australia, or married into South American families. Some of their descendants are still there. But they are no longer Communists. They are now firm believers in Capitalism, and according to reports some have become quite large landowners, employing labour.

On his return to Australia, Lane became editor of the Sydney Worker, but soon drifted off again to New Zealand where he became leader writer for an anti-Labor paper and an ardent conscriptionist. One of his brothers, Ernie, who was with him at Cosme, was a leading Communist, and died quite recently in Brisbane, being a contributor to the Communist Press.

Many of his disciples later played prominent parts in Australian politics and literature. One became Professor of Oriental studies at Sydney University. Some of them remained Communists to the end.

But as an experiment in Communism, New Australia was a great disillusionment. They searched for the equality of mankind and could not find it. The theories did not work out in practice. Even Lane found himself drifting into dictatorship. The weak went to the wall while the strong survived. Human nature could not be changed even under conditions that should have been ideal. Still Australia had given the world its first working experiment in Communism. It ended in disaster. Was it to be a premonition of things to come?

Taken from: “I Remember” Autobiography by JT Lang

SOCIALISM’S (Communism’s) PAST HISTORY – “FROM UNDER THE RUBBLE”

Published in the West in 1975, Alexander Solzhenitsyn and six dissident colleagues (still living in the USSR at the time), six men totally vulnerable to arrest, imprisonment, or execution by the Russian authorities - joined together in writing an attack on the Soviet regime, a moral indictment of the liberal West and called for a new society whose dominant values would be spiritual rather than economic.

After reading the book I must say it comes as no surprise to be reminded that socialist ideas are very ancient. Mesopotamia in the twenty-second and twenty-first centuries B.C. are two such examples. The city-states were formed on the basis of the economies of separate temples collecting large masses of peasants and craftsmen around them.
Turning to socialist doctrine a similar picture can be seen and these teachings did not arise in the twentieth or nineteenth century A.D.

Socialist ideas were well known in antiquity. Through Platonism, socialist ideas penetrated to the Gnostic sects which surrounded early Christianity and also Manichaeanism. In the Middle Ages the ideas were circulated among the masses. Their influence was particularly strong during the Reformation and traces can be seen in the English Revolution in the 17th century.

Beginning with the 16th century, socialist ideology took a new direction. It threw off its mystical and religious form and based itself on a materialistic and rationalist view of the world. The ideas changed yet again when the preachers who had addressed themselves to craftsmen and peasants were replaced by philosophers and writers who strove to influence the reading public and the higher strata of society. This movement came to its peak in the 18th century and was known as “The Age of Enlightenment”.

One essential conclusion is beyond doubt: socialism cannot be linked with a specific area, geographical context or culture. All its features, familiar to us from contemporary experience are met in various historical geographical and cultural conditions. They attacked marriage, the family, and property.

These features appeared still more clearly in the heretical movements after the Reformation.

In 1516 appeared the book which started a new stage in the development of socialist thought, it was Thomas More’s Utopia. Being in the form of a description of an ideal state built on socialist principles, it continued, after a two-thousand-year break, the tradition of Plato, but in the completely different conditions of Western Europe of the Renaissance. The most significant works to follow in this new current were The City of the Sun by the Italian monk Tommaso Campanella (1602), and The Law of Freedom in a Platform by his contemporary in the English revolution, Gerrard Winstanley (1652).

The very end of the eighteenth century saw the first attempt to put the socialist ideology which had been developed into practice. In 1786 in Paris a secret society called the “Union of the Equal” was founded with the aim of preparing a revolution. The plot was discovered and its participants arrested, but their plans have been preserved in detail, thanks to the documents published and its participants arrested, but their plans have been preserved in detail, thanks to the documents published.

Among the aims which the plotters had set themselves, the first was the abolition of private property. The whole French economy was to be fully centralized. Trade was to be suspended and replaced by a system of state provisioning. All aspects of life were to be controlled by a bureaucracy:

“The fatherland takes possession of a man from the day of his birth…” ***