

THE RED FLAG RIOTS

A fortnight before the "February Revolution" of 1917 erupted in Petrograd, the Director of Queensland's Intelligence and Tourist Bureau wrote confidently to Queensland Premier, [T.J. Ryan](#), that he anticipated the early migration of "a Russian colony of selectors" into the State, who would engage in "tropical production" at various centres, extending from Mackay to Cape York. These "hardy pioneers of the Russian farmer type", he predicted, would "gracefully face initial difficulties ... with the same cheerfulness and pluck which characterised the early settlement of our developed scrublands." Encouraged by a positive response from the Premier's Department, the Director added on 17 March that these "excellent types" of colonists emanated from "the cereal producing province of Saratov", but that other parts of Russia might equally supply them. On the day he prepared this postscript, however, news of the Tsar's abdication reached the Australian press. The fall of Nicholas II did not provide the same impetus towards the inspired visions and grim forebodings which would be unleashed by the Bolshevik insurrection in October - largely because Russia's new Provisional Government anticipated no alteration in its war commitment to the Allies. Yet, with that fall, a fresh tide of revolutionary events had begun to flow which would soon prove inexorable. Within several months, the idea of renewed migration from Russia to anywhere in Australia would seem neither practicable nor welcome, but, rather, utterly unthinkable.

Indeed, the events of February 1917 were to ensure that many more Russians left Australia that year than entered it. In July, Queensland's Immigration Officer noted that of the "301 souls" arriving since January, a mere 35 were Russian, disembarking from the East. Prior to the outbreak of the Great War, almost two thousand Russian refugees - many escaping Tsarist persecution and imprisonment following the abortive 1905 uprising - had entered Queensland between 1911 and 1914, joining some eight hundred Russians already enumerated there in the 1911 census. As the total Russian-born population in the Commonwealth was recorded at only 4,456 in that 1911 census, this meant that Queensland had rapidly emerged as the state with the largest Russian component in Australia, recording a seventy per cent increase in its numbers between 1901 and 1911, and an unprecedented three hundred and fifty per cent increase between 1911 and 1914. By 1915, however, the annual influx via Manchuria had fallen to only seventy-two (i.e. five hundred less than the previous year) - a consequence of wartime domestic and maritime conditions - and in July, the precautionary Federal practice of asking "Asiatic Russian" [sic] migrants to produce passports was quietly dropped. Concurrently, almost one thousand Russian settlers left Australia for their homelands between 1914 and 1917, many impelled, no doubt, by patriotic sentiments.

The February Revolution induced a further outward surge, although the motives of these ebullient revolutionaries - whether Menshevik or Bolshevik - contrasted sharply with those of the loyalists who had preceded them. On 27 March, the Russian Consul-General in Australia, [A.N. d'Abaza](#), received orders from his country's London Embassy to assist "all Russian political prisoners ... desirous of returning home" by providing "funds for their passage" if necessary. For a time, d'Abaza would use his position to finance the repatriation of liberals and Mensheviks rather than Bolsheviks. Though the direction of this funding undoubtedly affected these return migrations, however, this is not meant to imply that enthusiastic Bolsheviks were thereby utterly prevented from leaving Australia at this stage. In early May, for example, members of the "all-Russian" [Industrial Workers of the World](#) (IWW) local at Cairns announced their intention of returning to their native land to fight for "Industrial Unionism" and to oppose the prospect of counter-revolution there. Before departing, they held a huge farewell gathering attended by several thousand well-wishers, celebrating under large red banners and proclaiming "Long Live the Russian Revolution".

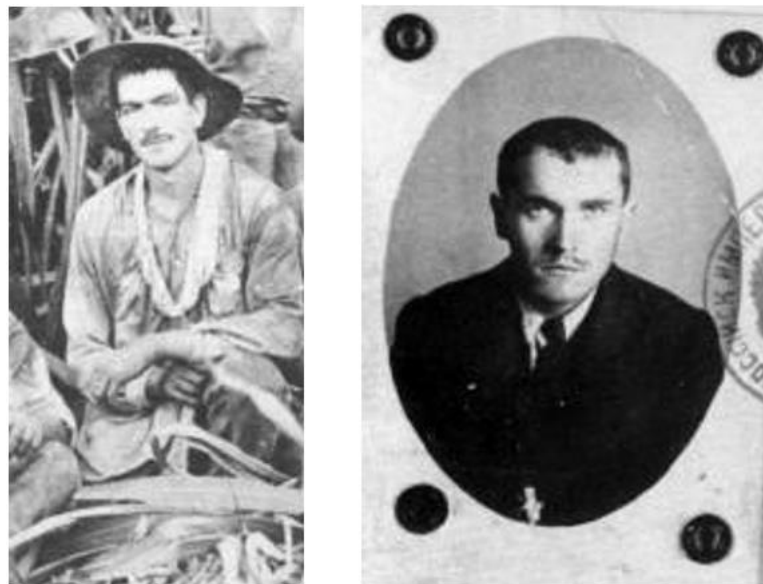
Similarly, on 25 June 1917, the Japanese mailboat *Aki Maru* sailed from Brisbane carrying the Socialist Revolutionary Peter Utkin, retiring secretary of the Brisbane Union of Russian Workers (originally named the Union of Russian Emigrants) and - in his own words - "many of my mates". After an emotional farewell from a throng of Russian supporters at Brisbane's wharves, Utkin wrote: "one of the most touching incidents occurred as our boat passed the Cannon Hill meatworks. All the employees assembled on the wharf with red flags singing revolutionary songs." Utkin, a former meatworker himself, was profoundly moved. At this time, too, the fervent Leninist, [Fedor Andreevich \(or Tom\) Sergeev \(alias Artem\)](#) - a founding member of the Brisbane URW in 1911 - left Australia, "literally aflame with emotions", to assume a crucial role as a member of the Bolshevik Central Committee planning the October rising in Russia, and subsequently served as a revolutionary activist in the Kharkov region and in the Ukraine. Concurrently, Boris Skvirsky (alias Taranoff), a supporter of Kerensky's regime, resigned his position as Chairman of the Union of Russian Workers (URW) and continued negotiations for the return of political exiles. Although the new regime in Russia was not "a real revolutionary body", Skvirsky admitted in March 1917, it was developing a "very progressive" republican, democratic program, which all workers and peasants should support. Consequently, when a ship carrying more than four hundred refugees from all Australian states and the Northern Territory sailed from Sydney with Skvirsky on board in mid 1917, the majority of these expatriates were once more hand-picked Mensheviks, in accord with Skvirsky's own political predilections.

The departure of such "moderates" exemplifies the manner in which reactions to the February Revolution healed old divisions in the URW, whilst creating new ones. Prior to this Revolution, John Paul Gray, then secretary of the URW and John Cook (also known as Alexander Kuk), from the literary staff of the Queensland Russian newspaper, *Izvestiya* [Bulletin], depicted the Brisbane organisation, along with its branches at Mt. Morgan and Canungra - as being composed of a melange of Social Democrats and Socialist Revolutionaries who, during their daily December "meetings, lectures and social evenings ... from ten in the morning to eleven at night - with real distinguishing Russian enthusiasm ... were debating worldwide questions". By mid 1917, however, such debates had become increasingly heated, after the publication of Lenin's "April Theses" opposing "a predatory imperialistic war". While the Bolshevik wing of the URW vigorously promoted Lenin's line, Menshevik supporters continued to uphold [Kerensky's](#) adherence to the war effort (or, at least, to a "defensive" war policy for Russia). Hostile denunciations of Menshevik "traitors" were only allayed by their substantial repatriation, leaving behind - according to Eric Fried - "a solid Bolshevik nucleus."

Although Menshevik influences were substantially muted by such departures, it might equally be argued that the exodus of former leadership figures like Skvirsky, John Paul Gray (along with his father Paul, and his two sons), Sergei Alymov (the "People's Poet"), and particularly the Bolshevik, Tom Sergeyev, created a power vacuum among the remaining activists which various commanding personalities then competed to fill. Peter Simonoff, who returned to Queensland from Broken Hill as secretary of the URW in June 1917 and who was soon to be appointed Soviet consular representative in Australia, first came to the attention of the Brisbane censor on 9 October 1917, due to telegrams he had sent to Melbourne and Bundaberg indicating "much trouble" in the URW and calling for support. Although the nature of this "trouble" was not specified, several suggestions regarding its character may be made. During the subsequent Red Flag riots of March 1919, a loyalist mob wrecked a fruit shop and restaurant in Stanley Street owned by a Russian, John Shouinpoff, on the grounds that Simonoff had once held workers' meetings there. But, as Shouinpoff angrily attested in the Brisbane Courier several days later, Simonoff's group, prior to his consular appointment, had actually met in the Hargraves & Atlas Buildings, Stanley Street, not at his fruit store. Instead, Shouinpoff belonged to a group of liberal Russians, antagonistic to Simonoff, and they regularly held their meetings at the Alliance Hall, Woolloongabba. Thus, to some degree, local opposition had probably survived the mid 1917 repatriations.

Challenge to Simonoff and his supporters from the moderate right was paralleled by challenge from the ultra-left in the form of Nicholai (Nicholas) Lagutin, an Ipswich waiter and anarchist who had arrived in Australia in August 1913. Lagutin's open advocacy of extreme physical force

- including political assassination, in the style of the Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party - was clearly disquieting to Simonoff, whilst his succession to the secretaryship of the URW, after Simonoff became Consul-General, indicates a significant leaven of support for his zealous methods within the movement. Subsequently, Lagutin's editorship of *Knowledge and Unity*, the new Russian workers' newspaper, would be successfully challenged by [A.M. Zuzenko](#), a leading ally of Simonoff who would arrive in Brisbane from cane-cutting activities in Halifax, North Queensland, in late 1917. In addition, the Simonoff/Zuzenko ascendancy over the Russian radical movement was to be further questioned by a "revolutionary Maximalist", Herman Bykov (alias Resanoff), who had only recently arrived in Australia as a fireman aboard the SS *Mallina* in March 1916. Upon Simonoff's appointment as Bolshevik representative in February 1918, Bykov broke with the URW and attempted to establish a rival Russian Group of Workers at Ipswich, complete with its own newspaper, entitled *The Torch*. When the attempt floundered, Bykov then abandoned his secretaryship of the new group, rejoining Zuzenko and the *Knowledge and Unity* collective. Similar dissension and vacillation may also be charted within the Melbourne Russian Association. Though not as militant as the Brisbane URW, distinct factions could still be discerned within its ranks centred around the "Liberal", A.N. d'Abaza, the Mensheviks, N. Leonard Kanevsky and V. Petrachenya [V. Petrouchini], and the "thorough-going Bolshevik", John Maruschak. Thus, although the main phalanx of radical Russians was decidedly Bolshevik by the time of the October Revolution, the solidity of that "nucleus" is somewhat open to question, given an apparent, internal tendency towards substantial factionalism, in terms of both personality and ideological commitment.



Left - Zuzenko on a sugar cane plantation in 1916; right - Herman Bykov

Yet to Anglo-Australian war supporters and Empire loyalists, externally viewing the Russian community, whether in Brisbane, Sydney or Melbourne, the movement increasingly appeared as a formidable union of like-minded militants, insidiously linked to both the internal "war enemy" - the German-Australian minority - as well as to the burgeoning anti-war campaign. An alleged German/Russian conspiracy had been publicly mooted as early as February 1916, when *Truth* newspaper published "Hun Intrigues in Queensland: Russian Political Refugees as Defenders of German Culture" - a sensational article which induced an angry reaction from the URW executive. By mid-1916, Queensland police were receiving reports that the URW was really a subversive front organisation for German intrigue and that Gray, Cook and Skvirsky were all German agents. At the same time, the Queensland censor, university lecturer J.J. Stable, noted worriedly that many Germans were passing themselves off "as Swedes, Dutchmen or Russians" to gain employment. His guarded conclusion was that no non-Britisher could apparently be trusted. Assessing this situation from an opposite perspective, the Swiss Consul to Australia would later record from Melbourne: "... Anyone with a German sounding name is treated as a German, who

are looked upon as worse than criminals ... My office has never seen so many bayonets and prisoners as two years ago, and I would rather have got out of the country. The Australian people are too lazy to study the difference between the Nations”.

Thus, between 1916 and the Armistice, a climate of war-enhanced xenophobia encouraged a consistent blending of anti-Hun hysteria with Russophobia. Echoing the predilections of *Truth's* 1916 report, the returned soldiers' newspaper, *National Leader*, continued in early 1918: “... Who are the Bolsheviks of Australia? Supporters of treachery, murder and incoherence ... working splendidly for Germany ... [They should be] treated in a hospital instituted for the politically unsound.”

Similarly, the revolutionary potential per se of the Russian migrants had been suspected and feared well in advance of the October Revolution. As early as June 1915, according to *Direct Action*, “a minion of the Government” had warned Jack Burke, secretary of the fledgling IWW local in Brisbane, “not to let those Nihilists from barbarous Russia lead the IWW astray, for those fellows are only here for murderous purposes.” During 1916, Australian military censors maintained close surveillance over all Russian correspondence, intercepting hundreds of mailed items, including postcards, letters, pamphlets and books from such far flung centres as the United States and Brazil, France and Switzerland, Japan, China and Manchuria. In particular, radical newspapers such as *Novyy Mir*, *Golos Truda* and *The Free Word* from New York, *Solidarnost'* from Chicago, *Russian Life* from Detroit, *Pracia* from Brazil, *En Avant* and *Biblioiheque Russe* from Geneva, as well as *The Social Democrat* from Bern - a number of which were written in Russian - were seized and confiscated. Following complaints from d'Abaza about its “vile” and “disloyalist” tone, the URWs own newspaper *Izvestiya* was suppressed by the Minister for Defence in late February 1916, only to be superseded rapidly by a new production, entitled *Rabochaya Zhizn* [Workers' Life].

Despite such official interference, Russian radical mobilisation developed swiftly from 1916, especially in North Queensland where links were forged with the expanding IWW organisation. Early that year, the Russian Labour Group of Cairns became a Russian IWW local, under the leadership of J. Zaremba, W. Yudaiff and M. Panfiloff. By November, Alexander Petroff, a dismissed railway worker, was reporting the IWW progressing well among Russians at Innisfail, whilst at Townsville, Max Baranoff and B. Radchance were involved with a Russian Workers' Group, in direct contact with the Sydney IWW local. Such organisations quickly fell under police and intelligence surveillance, as attempts to outlaw the IWW in Australia escalated during 1917. For instance, several police accounts from the Townsville district, reporting substantial numbers of young Russian meat and sugar workers attending open-air IWW meetings, prompted the new Commissioner of Police, [Frederick Charles Urquhart](#), to issue his first request that action be taken “to decrease the influx of an undesirable class of Russians into this State”. The Commonwealth Government should be encouraged “to deal with this matter under the Aliens Immigration Restriction Act [sic]”, the Chief Under Secretary responded - alluding to legislation conventionally used since 1901 to debar non-whites from entering Australia.

Thus, the welter of Anglo-Australian resentment, progressively unleashed against local Russians following the Bolshevik Revolution of 25 October 1917, had already been well rehearsed before that date. Rather than originating as a reaction to external Russian events, its initial impetus arose from such internal disturbances as the Australia-wide anti-conscription struggle and the 1917 New South Wales General Strike, as well as the nagging fear of local German or syndicalist uprisings. The October Revolution, however, cast these events and prospects into the shade, providing the surge of post-revolutionary antagonism with a vehemence and persistence which could hardly have been anticipated. Still reflecting domestic preoccupations, the *Lone Hand* in December 1917 compared Australians with the “ignorant and selfish Bolsheviks of Russia”, after military conscription was again rejected, whilst the Rockhampton *Morning Bulletin* blamed dramatic declines in voluntary enlistment upon Russian “anarchists”. Yet more forceful instances of anti-Russian hostility now began to be recorded. For instance, at Halifax, North Queensland in mid December, a Russian interpreter, Andrew Konchiz, was beaten by police in a lock-up cell and his arm broken. This sparked a protest meeting of thirty-two local Russians, led by Zuzenko, who

argued: "... we cannot get justice here as they will not allow us to speak ... give us justice otherwise we will be driven to make our own ... We cannot stand it any longer ..." In support, Peter Simonoff commented pointedly from Brisbane in early January 1918: "Lately in North Queensland, a good few cases have occurred in which Russians have been somewhat specially treated with enmity because, whenever arrested, Russians are punished heavily ... They are the same Russians and probably did the same drinking, but they are not now treated like they were before."

The main reaction from the Queensland Labor Government to Simonoff's complaint was an unsympathetic silence. Several days previously, the Commonwealth Defence Department had also suppressed *Workers' Life*, of which Simonoff had been editor. At Zuzenko's instigation, thirty-six Halifax Russians again met to protest the banning of "the only sole Russian newspaper in Australia". But the official State response was once more dismissive - a reaction which would be duplicated by Federal authorities when they ignored Simonoff's appointment by Leon Trotsky in February as Soviet Consul-General, after d'Abaza's resignation on 26 January.

The signing of the [Brest-Litovsk peace](#) treaty on 3 March 1918, heralding Russia's official withdrawal from the war, was received with new outbreaks of Russophobia in Australia. For instance, successive Queensland State election riots against Nationalist candidates at Townsville on 13 and 16 March were blamed specifically upon local Russians. Soon afterwards, public denunciations of Russian "parasites" holding jobs at the Ipswich railway workshops began. Yet the main upsurge of loyalist passion at this time was provoked by a URW inspired International May Day celebration, held at the Centennial Hall, Brisbane, on 1 May 1918. Chaired by Nikolai Lagutin, the meeting of four hundred radicals was composed of forty per cent Russian men, women and children, as well as other "comrades" from the Finnish, Polish, Greek, Belgian, German and Anglo-Australian communities. In microcosm, therefore, this gathering represented a public display of the pro-British war loyalists' worst fears: a spirited interplay of revolutionary symbolism, international sentiment and unabashed cultural pluralism.

Red flags framed the stage as Russian women walked among the audience "pinning red bows to the clothing of the persons present". After the "Internationale" was sung in Russian, Lagutin introduced "Comrade" Sargent, who spoke on behalf of the "Greek Red singlet" movement and "Comrade" Holken, a Belgian, who delivered a speech in Esperanto about "International Brotherhood". Representing Anglo-Australian radical interests, labour organiser Joseph Silver Collings spoke as a member of the militant Brisbane Industrial Council (BIC) welcoming any German man or woman present as a "comrade". He was followed by Gordon Brown and Ted Stewart, recently arrived from Sydney, on behalf of the syndicalist Universal Freedom League (UFL) - a front organisation for the outlawed Brisbane IWW local - as well as Kathleen Hotson and Jennie Scott Griffiths, appearing for the pacifist/socialist Queensland Peace Alliance (QPA). After further recitations, songs and the performance of a revolutionary tableau, speeches were delivered in French, Polish and Finnish. The meeting was then brought to a close by a rousing rendition of "The Red Flag" from the standing audience.

"What are the authorities doing when this sort of thing is permitted to go on under their noses?" the editor of the conservative *Brisbane Courier* demanded angrily the following morning: "A polyglot gathering" had expressed and "heartily applauded socialistic, anti-capitalistic, anti-militaristic and, indeed, disloyal sentiments" in a "babel of tongues", brogues and accents! The Federal "authorities" *had* covertly attended the meeting, however, in considerable numbers, and their summaries re-echoed the same tones of distaste as the *Courier* report. "Speeches were delivered by ... foreigners ... in their own tongues ... at a gathering of the Red Raggars of the community," one Military Intelligence officer wrote: "I regard it as quite the most ludicrous gathering I have ever attended." Much of this scorn was reserved for the Russian tableau, entitled "Breaking the Chains of Bondage", performed by "comrade Ruski". "The lights were turned out and the premature explosion of a flashlight powder caused many to think for a moment, that a Bolshevik had dropped something," the *Courier* jibed. The Federal agent disdainfully added: "A Russian rushed about the stage reciting and gesticulating close to a group of three - one of whom was manacled and another held an upraised hammer. At the conclusion of the aforesaid

Russian's gyrations, the hammer came down and the chains fell to the floor. Limelight ... slow curtain ... (loud and unrestrained applause)."

Conservative ridicule soon turned to rage, however, at the apparent success and crude effectiveness of the gathering. Major Carter, President of the Brisbane Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA), tendered an "emphatic protest" to the Defence Department and called for a loyalist "indignation" meeting to be held. Brisbane's Mayor, Alderman McMaster, expressed "great disgust" and amazement that "a meeting ... by a number of animals in the shape of men ... could take place in the city". The matter was also urgently raised by the Chairman of Committees in the Federal House of Representatives.



A cartoon in the Daily Mirror newspaper (26.03.1919) depicting the stand-off between a demobilized ANZAC and a Russian revolutionary

Such loyalist unease over Russian activism is indicative not only of a local sense of betrayal concerning the war effort, but also of mounting anxiety about the dissemination of a viable revolutionary message within Australia. Conservatives watched the commingling of aliens and dissenters with escalating alarm as, in the absence of dependable press accounts of the Bolshevik revolt, the Russian emigres came to be seen by the Australian left as a crucial medium for conveying the significance of this towering, though clouded historical episode. Local radicals - in accord with global left-wing reactions - responded to the Revolution as though it were some fiery beacon, gleaming at the end of the long, dismal corridor of total warfare, and beckoning them forward, while yet eluding their grasp. Their eager endorsement of its presence was both unreservedly visceral and chiliastic, as when the Australian Socialist Party called from Sydney for the formation of southern "Soviets" of workers in mid May 1918. "May what happened in Russia be not so far off in all the world," a group of Sydney Christian Socialists calling themselves The Free Australians Association wrote emotively to the Queensland Premier in May 1918: "what answer shall you give to Humanity or to your Maker for your pan? Answer, Mr Ryan!" Percy Mandeno, a New Zealand IWW member active in Brisbane since the 1913 Free Speech campaign and reputedly "of Russian nationality", told a crowd at the Domain in June: "The workers in Russia had awakened. They had not gone to the Czar with a cap in hand . . . They had taken the matter

into their own hands, and were now working everything for their own benefit." Romantic expectations ran high, as in the Railway Union's journal, *Solidarity*, which proclaimed, in the full flush of Utopian anticipation: "All workers must learn to act when the hour comes. Then we shall be able to free ourselves of ... the millions ... of parasites who at present keep the working class in slavery ... Russia today is in a state of revolution and already is seeing gleams of light dispelling her mists. Russia's lead may possibly produce a state of unrest throughout the other nations. Are you, Australians, ready for the advance?"

Yet, although numerous Australian radicals and revolutionaries heeded the "Russian ... Maximalist" message of Herman Bykov to "unite together for the class revolutionary struggle against international capitalism and militarism", this image of "insurrection on the horizon" was by no means the only interpretation which local Russians were offering. In contrast with the unqualified excitement of committed Bolsheviks, other Russian residents exhibited diffidence and confusion, as well as anger at and even overt opposition to recent events in their homeland. A Russian worker at Selwyn, a western Queensland mining community, wrote despondently to Zuzenko in late 1918: "... the comrades are taking very little interest in social life here and are mostly spending their time behind the card tables. Times are becoming difficult and dangerous for our Russian colony; darkness hangs over our grey Russia, [and] a great deal is demanded of our strength and energy."

Concurrently, another Selwyn Russian, W. Komaroff, confronted the *Knowledge and Unity* collective more provocatively, demanding "a true version" of Bolshevism from its columns. "We do not want to go on killing all the time," he complained: "Russians are looked upon as I.W.W. which has been all through your doing... How can we have a man like Simonoff to represent us? ... Has he ever occupied an official position in Russia? Does he know what we Russians really want and what ideals of labour are?..."

Accompanying such criticism came more open resistance. In the Cairns district, for instance, a farmer named Nillin, reputed formerly to have been a Russian magistrate, organised a petition among Russian selectors condemning Bolshevism, which was forwarded to d'Abaza in Melbourne in late 1917. Following this, Nillin attacked certain clauses of the Brest-Litovsk treaty in an article sent to *Knowledge and Unity*, only to be counter-attacked by Simonoff. Then, in October 1918, he composed an emotive piece for the *Cairns Post*, entitled "A Russian on Russia", charging the Bolsheviks with "barbarous conduct" in killing the Tsar. According to another Cairns Russian, S. Tokaroff, the outcome was further incitement of Anglo-Australian hostility against his countrymen, and he wrote indignantly to Zuzenko, urging him to give Nillin "a hiding" for producing such "astounding rubbish".

Even among those departing emigres who had returned expectantly to their homeland in 1917, there were clear indications of both equivocation and disillusionment. John Paul Gray, former secretary of the URW, wrote to a friend at Kingaroy in December 1917 that his father, Paul, had been appointed by the Bolshevik Central Executive Committee as Chief Commissar of the Transbaikai. Although conditions had deteriorated since the October Revolution, Gray was still hopeful of "prosperity". By September 1918, however, after this unstable eastern region had been assailed by British, Czech, Japanese and US military interventions and the notorious anti-Soviet Cossack raider, Ataman Semenov, had become its new Commander-in-Chief, Gray wrote despairingly from Vladivostok - by then an Allied military base - to a firm of Brisbane solicitors: "... to tell you the truth, I am quite sick with ... Russian affairs and am anxious to return to our sunny Queensland ... local affairs ... are so mixed up ... there is hardly any chance for me to be able to express my opinion or to state numerous facts in a letter." In December, Gray appealed for help from John Hunter, a State Labor Minister, to return to Queensland - a plea which induced Premier Ryan to cable the British Consul at Vladivostok directly on his behalf. After the interception of this cable by the censor - who believed that Gray's return was "connected with the Bolshevik International movement". Federal authorities contacted the British Colonial Office about the "irregularity" of Ryan's action. The Defence Department called for cancellation of Gray's British naturalisation and even the British Foreign Office intervened in the matter. Yet Gray eventually managed to return quietly to Brisbane, where in late 1919 he was instrumental in establishing an

"apolitical" Russian school at Woolloongabba - portraying himself at this time as "a loyal British subject".

Russian repatriation had also been unfortunate for Michael Zadorsky, a selector from Queensland's Chadford district, who described himself as a "Liberal" landowner. Soon after resuming ownership of a Russian estate, Zadorsky's life and property had been placed in jeopardy by the Bolshevik Revolution. As he wrote bitterly to a contact in Roma: "I ought not to have left Australia ... As an exile I should be hunted if the old Government i.e. Tsarist came into power, but as a landowner I am dogged by Socialists. Liberals and landowners have been proclaimed outlaws in our parts. I came only to see homesteads robbed and burned, woods confiscated and demolished, officers bayoneted and torn to pieces, and Liberals slaughtered like cattle." Fearing arrest or summary execution, Zadorsky eventually fled the property and drifted once more "towards Harbin from where I could get to Australia". Upon his return in 1918, he began a campaign to help Australians escape what he sarcastically termed "the blessings of socialism" by preparing a series of graphic and sensational articles about Russia, firstly in *The Queensland Farmers' Union Journal* and then in the columns of the *Brisbane Courier*. Additionally, he presented damning anti-Soviet material to [G.F. Pearce](#), the Minister for Defence.

Thus, Anglo-Australians were made privy to the interpretations of some quite discordant Russian voices during 1918-19, each one claiming to convey the essence of the revolutionary experience. Some would heed the words of Peter Simonoff as he spoke to the third Queensland Trade Union Congress in August 1918, informing working class delegates: "The Russian workers ... had ... complete ... political and industrial control ... and the Soviet had laid it down that robbery and profiteering were the highest crimes ... It is quite evident that military intervention is wanted only by the captains of finance, unscrupulous politicians and all kinds of parasites ..." Yet many more, it seems, believed the interpretations provided by Russian selectors like Nillin, or Zadorsky, writing instead of "The Russian Nightmare" - of people tortured and thrown down mine shafts, and of the pathetic funerals of butchered clergy and other "peaceful" citizens.

Such highly seasoned accounts, ironically, carried the greater plausibility, for they simply added "authentic" Russian voices to the welter of anti-Bolshevik propaganda already reaching Australia via the United-Reuter-Times cable service, before being disseminated internally by a predominantly conservative press. "Bolshevik swine are mere bloodthirsty cutthroats," reported the *Brisbane Courier*, as its column headlines blared:

BOLSHEVIK ATROCITIES

WOMEN AND CHILDREN KILLED

CHINESE EXECUTIONERS USED

"The Bolsheviks have no pity on the wounded," reported returned soldier Leo Berk to the *Daily Mail* in November 1918: "Most of them had their skin pulled off their necks and face [sic], and hung loosely, with frightful bloody taters [sic]. Some with their tongues cut out ... The Japanese army find their wounded killed with their eyes picked out and their stomachs turned out". Significantly, Berk was himself of Russian origin and was, at this time, acting as an informant to the Commonwealth police on local Bolshevik activities.

Clearly, the atrocity propaganda machine which had reshaped the German war enemy into "the Bestial Hun" had now been turned upon a new target. And, in a very real sense, the Russophobic, antirevolutionary rhetoric it brought forth signified a fresh process of enemy denigration. For, after February 1918, interventionist Allied forces (including some Australian troops) were operating upon a war footing against the Soviet regime. As a Russian settler at Canungra in south-eastern Queensland noted astutely in October 1918: "... the Bolsheviks are openly at war with the Allies and therefore people here are beginning to look upon us as enemies ... If they do not actually flaunt their hostility before our faces, they discuss it amongst themselves in unflattering terms".

One potent strand of this enemy stereotyping was the depiction of Russians as purveyors of "repulsive bestiality, lawlessness and lust", based upon the false assertion - later traced to the concoctions of Britain's Major-General Poole at Archangel (Arkhangel'sk) - that throughout eastern Russia all women were to be given forcibly as "breeding animals ... to the use of the whole nation". As the *Courier* reported authoritatively on 8 November 1918, "a system of promiscuity or free love had been officially set up, with a scale of penalties for its non-observance." A credulous wave of "horror and disgust" greeted such news.

In an atmosphere of mounting hysteria over the alleged universality of Bolshevik fanaticism, savagery and licentiousness, calls for counteractive measures against local Russians grew more widespread and insistent. "Cannot you do something to rid the country of these parasites?" a concerned Britisher of North Ipswich asked the Acting Prime Minister, [W.A. Watt](#), in early January 1919: "Are we to be allowed to drift, with our eyes open, into a state of savagery? Why, even a savage will [stand] up for the morals of the female whom he claims as his partner in life. I have a growing family, so you cannot be surprised at my anxiety ..."

Echoing such concerns about the continuing Russian presence, a perplexed Federal agent demanded of the Governor-General on 17 January, "why are these people not allowed to go? To my mind every facility should be given them to get out of the country and none should be permitted to come in." Thus, with loyalists urgently seeking their removal and Bolshevik Russians themselves in many cases anxious to be repatriated, an immediate answer to these exhortations might simply have been Federal encouragement of such migration processes - but this was not to be. For, in accord with Britain's anti-Soviet policies, particularly its various naval and military forays into Soviet territory and the renewal of Allied "zones of operation" there in late December 1918, Russian Bolsheviks in Australia were actually to be restrained by passport refusals rather than encouraged to depart.

Furthermore, while Commonwealth authorities refused "to allow the Russians to leave Australia", control over their internal activities began to tighten, and, from late 1918, gradually escalated beyond the former bounds of covert censorship and surveillance. On 19 September, a Federal prohibition against any public display of Sinn Féin colours, issued in March, was extended to include the "Red Flag", which was now depicted as the emblem of an "enemy country". Consequently, after vigorous loyalist protests to the Minister for Defence, a red flag which had flown from the Brisbane Trades Hall since July was hauled down on 2 October by two Commonwealth Intelligence officers, whilst trade union officials "looked glumly on". Observing that Brisbane workers had recently taken "immediate action" over an increase in the price of beer, yet had not raised "a single voice of protest" over this red flag confiscation, a local Russian lectured them in the *Daily Standard*: "If the rank and file do not realise the real meaning ... which ... in Russia is protected by Bolsheviks at any price ... - then the time is not ripe yet for its hoisting on the Trades Hall ..." With the revolutionary symbol grounded, however, Russian voices were the next to be suppressed.

In late September 1918, Peter Simonoff was prevented, under section 17 (c) of the Aliens Restriction Order from further public speaking in Queensland, despite his appeals for recognition of diplomatic immunity. Circumventing the prohibition, he embarked on a lecture tour of Newcastle, Sydney and Melbourne, where he spoke throughout October to enthusiastic, capacity audiences of socialists, trade unionists and pacifists on the latest Russian developments. Although he complained bitterly of financial duress as well as Federal "spirits at my heels", he reacted buoyantly to his eager reception by leftists at every venue. "Let them accept me as I am - extreme revolutionist," he wrote theatrically to Norman Freeberg of the *Brisbane Worker*, whilst to Zuzenko he confided: "Tell the little ones that the slaves here [in Sydney] are alive and not sleeping. I simply can't get away ... I wanted to go yesterday but ... I was invited by the Labor Council to read a lecture ... I met the public again ... and they proposed to me that I should stay on another fortnight, so as to hold two or three more meetings."

Yet the "spirits" at his heels were closing in. The Brisbane censor, intercepting all Simonoff's correspondence, expressed mounting concern over the "tremendous reception" he reported

receiving. "Simonoff's vanity has been tickled," Stable wrote sourly on 29 October, "and he will - given the opportunity - be more aggressive and dangerous than hitherto. If he is anxious to join the ranks of interneers, he certainly is going the right way about it" In rapid succession, new restraining orders were placed upon both Simonoff and Zuzenko, preventing them "from taking part in any meeting or engaging in any propaganda whatever". Simonoff remained undaunted. He had already informed Freeberg, "I would prefer to hang myself on the first lamp-post than to stop my work, which is my duty to mankind." And following the dual suppression, he wrote defiantly to Zuzenko: "I congratulate you on the high honour of being picked out by the "democratic authorities" of this country as one of the most dangerous personages ... Well, well! We shall live to see... I am not going to write much, as this, of course will be read through by one of the Russian turncoats serving in the interests of plutocracy [i.e. a Russian translator]. But their festival will soon be over." Simonoff attempted to continue his lecture tour, but on Sunday, 3 November, after addressing another Melbourne gathering, he was arrested in the street and taken into custody.

Zuzenko's restraining order was also issued because of escalating fears about his political effectiveness. In the censor's grudging estimation, Zuzenko seemed "very earnest" and "a very fine artistic writer". "At first one would put him down as a morose Russian serf, brooding over some trouble." Stable observed in early October, "but when he talks, he loses the repellent feature and one recognises the reader and thinker quite capable of leading men - a more dangerous man than Simonoff." Such qualified praise for a radical activist from the normally scornful Captain Stable was a rare tribute indeed. When Zuzenko approached him in mid October for "permission to publish a monthly magazine in Russian", this was rapidly denied. Simultaneously, the censor learned that Zuzenko was promoting a scheme, entitled "Federation of Russian Groups", with the aim of uniting factions throughout Australia into one grand organisation - the Federated Union of Unions. In this pursuit, Zuzenko had met the rival Russian bodies at Ipswich, led by Kemmer and Matveichik in early October, as well as approaching associations in Sydney, Melbourne and North Queensland. "The Federation of Russian Groups is a step towards the One Big Union," Stable announced dramatically. Blithely confusing the revolutionary tactics of Syndicalism and Bolshevism, he added authoritatively: "... the Russians are the real I.W.W. ... its real live agents ... they never permit anything to take prior place in their thoughts to I.W.W.ism - they live and move and have their being in its revolutionary atmosphere - it is their very being."

Zuzenko's consequent muzzling - a sort of ideological "house arrest" - also prohibited his "contributing to any newspaper columns". So, although continuing his "behind the scenes" activities, he publicly deferred to the order by surrendering his editor's position on *Knowledge and Unity*, as well as his secretaryship of the URW, to Civa ("Fanny") Rosenberg, a remarkable young woman in her late teens whom Zuzenko was later to marry. Under the pseudonym of "Cane Mamena", meanwhile, Zuzenko still contributed articles to *Knowledge and Unity* and during December 1918 even launched a new Russian newspaper entitled *Devyatyy Val* [Ninth Wave]. With the help of a Russian informant, Dolzenko, the Commonwealth police soon succeeded in having both newspapers suppressed. In January 1919, however *Knowledge and Unity* resurfaced and from this time onward would be printed in English under Civa Rosenberg's apparent editorship.

The gaoling of Simonoff and the gagging of Zuzenko were soon followed by a more widescale suppression of Russians' civil liberties. Indeed, the decision to include Zuzenko with Simonoff in the restraining order of 1 November may well have been prompted by a final straw of defiance. For, in late October, Zuzenko had issued invitations to a range of labour organisations, summoning them to an evening's "celebration of the anniversary of the Russian Revolution" to be held at Brisbane's Centennial Hall on 8 November. On the day following Simonoff's arrest, the attraction was publicly revealed in labour's *Daily Standard* in an advertisement urging "all wage workers" to "roll up in style" to this "great rally", where "Russian music, songs and dances" would be heard. The appeal at first took Brisbane's Anglophile and largely middle class loyalists by surprise. Yet, enlivened by warnings from the *Daily Mail* that "some kind of madness" was about to be unleashed, they were soon petitioning State and Federal authorities to have this "enemy celebration" suppressed. Although Premier Ryan turned a deaf ear to their demands, the Commonwealth Government proved more understanding, and at the eleventh hour, the Minister

for Defence prohibited the gathering as "prejudicial to the public safety". Additionally, he cautioned the local Military Commandant that if the Russian celebration was "transferred to any other building, take possession of that building." Concurrently, the State Government, anticipating serious trouble, mobilised more than eighty foot-police for street duty, with its entire force of mounted troopers placed on standby.

When Russian and Anglo-Australian radicals arrived at Centennial Hall that evening, they found themselves confronting instead a "wonderful demonstration of loyalty" which had been spontaneously mounted in place of their own. With "God Save the King" ringing in their ears, they retreated in dismay from an angry and violent loyalist audience within the hall. Yet they quickly rallied and in marching ranks moved off through the city, with the Russian men and women at their head, singing "The Red Rag" and "Join the Army of the Toilers". At North Quay, they clashed briefly with returned soldiers congregating there, before finally assembling upon a vacant council allotment in South Brisbane. As the crowd, by now swollen to over one thousand, listened to speakers demanding freedom of speech and praising the "Russian peasants" who had "overthrown Capitalism", news that returned soldiers were coming to break up the meeting led to confusion and alarm. William Jackson, an IWW propagandist who held the platform, asked those present "to hold firm and close round the speakers; that they were there as orderly citizens ... but if force was shown to them, force would have to be shown in return." According to a police report, some two hundred returned men marched into the reserve and began singing patriotic songs. Kate Sauer, a member of the Women's Peace Army, claimed, however, that although they sounded like two thousand, there were really "about 25 all told (mere boys at that)". The crowd countered the soldiers' singing with a rendition of "The Red Flag" and this vocal duel continued for another twenty minutes. Finally, someone poured "Asafoedita" on the ground and the strong garlic stench dispersed the entire crowd. Back at Centennial Hall, a returned soldier announced from the gallery, to sounds of loyalist cheering, that his comrades had broken up the Bolshevik meeting in South Brisbane.

The following morning, the *Brisbane Courier* reported gleefully how "Brisbane Bolshevism" had sustained its "first memorable defeat". Yet members of the URW remained unbowed. In a strong letter of protest to the State Government signed by Civa Rosenberg and Michael Wishnevsky, Simonoff's arrest, Zuzenko's suppression and their own hounding by loyalists were all instanced. The statement continued: "Our meetings have been broken up by force with the benevolent permission of the military authorities. The lying Press pours out upon us its dirt and there is no right to freely reply to our misrepresenters ... We desire to propagate our economic ideas legally in Australia, and express our indignation to those who would take away ... this faith by brute force." Addressing *Knowledge and Unity* readers on 12 November, Rosenberg's editorial message was even more strident: "Peace has been declared so do not sleep brothers ... It is time to get ready ... They have been trying all the time to publish false rumours about Bolshevism and ... the most gallant of men, Lenin and Trotsky. Why should we be living here imprisoned in Australia? We are all brothers fighting one enemy "Capitalism" ... Fighting for liberty and for the "Red Rag"... The censor deleted more than half of this statement, before publication, from the galley proofs submitted to him.

These November humiliations were compounded in early December by the sentencing in Sydney of Simonoff, under the clauses of an extended War Precautions Act, to a fine of £100, accompanied by a surety of £200 against his re-engaging in any propagandist activities. Punishment in default of this payment (which Simonoff refused to make) was a year's imprisonment. As Simonoff pointed out, notwithstanding the Commonwealth's refusal to recognise his diplomatic status, he was still the accredited Australian representative of 150000000 Russian people, and his sentencing, therefore, was an intolerable international affront. No other consular representative, anywhere in the world, had been "subjected to the same indignities and persecution that I have suffered at the hands of the Federal Authorities," he complained. Yet, although the Australian Labor Party attempted to intervene on his behalf, communicating information about his imprisonment to both Lloyd George and Woodrow Wilson, his incarceration at Long Bay Gaol went ahead. He was not released until late July 1919, suffering badly from pneumonic influenza.

Before he was sentenced, Simonoff protested to Zuzenko that his Brisbane "comrades, whose interests he was serving" had given him insufficient backing. "If they at present refuse to support me, I will know what to think about them," he concluded curtly. In response to both his predicament and reprimand, therefore, Russian activists and their sympathisers next attempted to move onto the offensive, mounting a campaign for the abolition of the War Precautions Act in peacetime. As a Brisbane agent reported, after infiltrating meetings in the Russian club rooms during January, a major protest was being planned at Zuzenko's instigation, based upon a general consensus among members that: "Things are ripe for immediate action and fight." On January, therefore, Police Commissioner Urquhart conveyed "reliable information" to the Under Home Secretary that in ten days' time, certain Russians intended: "... to hold a demonstration by marching in procession from various points in the city to William St. carrying red flags and ... [then] hold a Meeting to demonstrate against the War Precautions Act and the Aliens Registration Regulations. They ... intend to do this without Permits from me..."

Although Urquhart exerted maximum pressure upon Acting Premier Theodore to suppress the procession, it went ahead as planned, albeit in a somewhat different form than the Commissioner had anticipated. Instead of a number of small processions converging on William Street, more than one thousand persons marched in a single parade from Trades Hall to the Domain, singing "polyglot socialist songs" and accompanied by the Labour Band playing "Keep the Red Flag Flying". Instead of an exclusively Russian demonstration occurring, members of the Brisbane Industrial Council (BIC), the Queensland Socialist League and the Women's Peace Army swelled the Russian ranks. After inspecting this cosmopolitan crowd, the *Courier* reporter stressed: "The dominating note in the procession was the splashes of red to be seen throughout the length of the line - patches of red on the dresses of the women, on the coats of the men, sashes of red worn by the children, several red flags and a number of large red banners, bearing socialist inscriptions." At the Domain, among other speakers condemning censorship, internment, deportation and military intervention, eighty-year old Monte Miller, the celebrated [Eureka](#) veteran and syndicalist from Western Australia, spoke on behalf of the Russians present, supporting internationalism and praising Lenin and Trotsky. At the conclusion of the speeches, the demonstrators again marched to Queen Street, where they quietly dispersed.

On the surface of events, it seemed as though the January protesters had successfully flouted the regulations, displayed the Red Flag and boldly proclaimed their revolutionary message without interference. Indeed, their cavalcade was more than twice the size of the later, notorious "Red Flag" demonstration of March 1919, but on this first occasion it failed to unleash the feverish level of loyalist outrage and violence which that latter event would precipitate. For one thing, demonstrators had somewhat circumvented the War Precautions prohibition by placing white lettering across their red flags, which bore such slogans as "Down with Allied Intervention in Russia". More importantly, however, in mid January, the various loyalist bodies were not yet poised for counter-attack - as they would be by March. Consequently, if the undercurrent of loyalist mobilisation, both private and official, which this initial rally provoked is considered, the Russians' January "victory" must clearly be viewed as no more than a Pyrrhic one.

In attempting to stop the demonstration, the Police Commissioner had forcefully informed the Home Secretary: "The presence of these Russians ... in view of their anarchical doctrines and revolutionary sentiments constitutes a menace to the peace and well-being of this city. I should be glad if steps could be taken, ... for the deportation or internment of these dangerous people." Such extreme recommendations seem to have been made in collusion with a leading Federal "secret agent". Major H. E. Jones, dispatched from Melbourne to Brisbane during late November 1918 to monitor the "revolutionary situation" there by the Special Intelligence Bureau (SIB). After "several chats" and an exchange of classified information with Urquhart, Jones similarly recommended "deportation of the most active" and "undesirable" Russians. In this respect, both Urquhart and Jones were simply reiterating conclusions already drawn by George Steward, the Governor-General's private secretary and covert head of the SIB. As Steward had informed the Acting Prime Minister as early as 22 November 1918: "... steps should be taken for deporting the Bolshevik ringleaders at the earliest possible moment. Nothing short of action on these lines will be sufficient ... in meeting what is really becoming a grave situation".

Thus, as State police and Federal bureaux gathered names and particulars of such "dangerous Russians", the convenient occasion to begin deporting them was all they seemingly awaited. During October, an initial "list of disloyalists in Brisbane", collected with the cooperation of the Queensland Loyalty League, contained only four Russian names and addresses among the forty-one persons enumerated. By 23 January, however, the number of "dangerous Russians" in another list sent by the Governor-General to London had grown to seven. Then, in the aftermath of the January protest march, successive military raids upon the Russian headquarters added significantly to evidence already gleaned by infiltration, with confiscated revolutionary literature, banners and printing materials, as well as "firearms and a powerful microscope". In another sense, these seizures began providing the necessary occasion for deportations to commence. As Russian sympathiser and radical returned soldier George Cuthbert Taylor testified, "the Military Authorities illegally raided ... and seized and destroyed property belonging to myself and other British Subjects. This was the main cause of the Second Demonstration being held on the 23/3/19." In a brash response to the Intelligence raids, the URW also reconstituted itself as a fully-fledged "Soviet" on 22 February.

Matching this sharp escalation of Federal intervention into local Russian affairs, private loyalist groups conducted a massive anti-Bolshevist mobilisation between January and March 1919. At the parliamentary level, anti-labour forces under the leadership of E.H. MacCartney, a solicitor and company director, were reconstituted as a "strong and undivided front... opposed to Socialism and Bolshevism." Beyond this sphere, Dr Ernest Sandford Jackson, a leading physician and former president of the Queensland Club, rapidly coordinated more than sixty local patriotic societies under the umbrella of a United Loyalist Executive (ULE), a massive federated organisation eventually boasting more than seventy thousand members statewide by March 1919. These loyalist bodies maintained an effective though unofficial contact with Federal bureaux - most dramatically, perhaps, via the agency of the Queensland Commissioner of Police himself. Urquhart, a man with a pronounced military and Imperial background, reported favourably of a meeting with the grand organisers of the ULE during February 1919: "... three of the leaders came along to ask my advice about joining problems and ... expressed a wish that I might like to take a hand in the business ..."

Without evincing any caution at the distinct prospect of illegality and vigilantism which these arrangements implied, Queensland's official upholder of "law and order" then added, "They wish to go pretty far - not only to uphold the Constitution by peaceful means but to have a formidable striking force ready if required." This "force" in turn was to be culled largely from the thriving ranks of the conservative, quasi-military organisations, the Returned Soldiers and Citizens Political Federation (RSCPF) and the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA, later RSL).

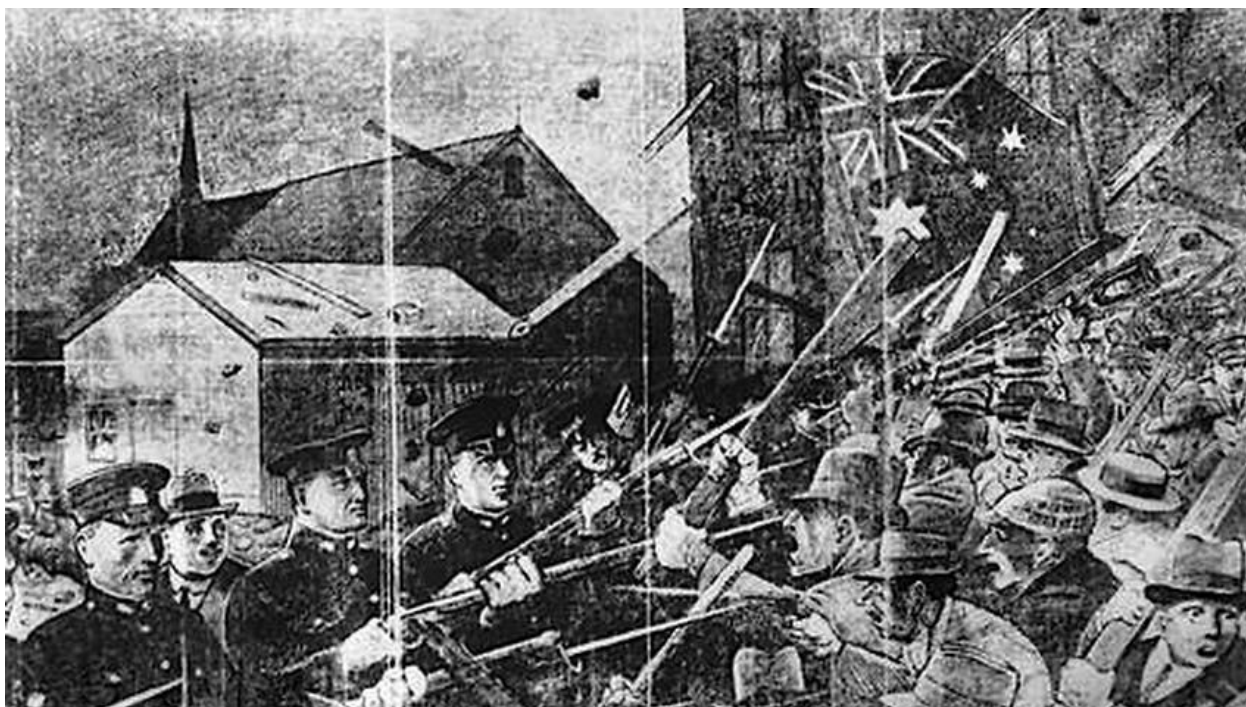
As these right-wing forces arranged their counter-offensive, Russian and Australian radicals resolutely maintained themselves on a strict collision course. On 20 March 1919, Bob Carroll, radical union organiser and *Daily Standard* board director, wrote to R.S. Ross, the Victorian socialist, confirming that "at all future demonstrations held under the auspices of ... [the BIC], the red flag [will] be flown." Somewhat prophetically, he concluded: "... the first demonstration since the motion was carried is set down for next Sunday afternoon 23rd. When we ... protest against the continuance of the WPA and will then give THE FLAG an airing. Subsequent events should be interesting ..."

Simultaneously, Peter Kreslin, acting now as secretary of the "Soviet of Souse [sic] of Russian Workers", wired Acting Prime Minister Wall demanding once more "our release from here". Kreslin, who argued that passport refusals amounted to detaining one thousand Russians who wished to leave "almost as war prisoners", also approached Frank Tudor, Federal Labor leader, on 21 March, urging him to cable the European peace conference concerning "our illegal detention". Consequently, when contacting compatriots at Townsville, Cairn, Broken Hill and Sydney a week after the Sunday demonstration, Kreslin would assess street action as "successful" in stirring up "a stagnant pool" and starting "an agitation for the deportation of the

Bolsheviks". Commenting upon Kreslin's interpretation, Captain Stable concluded, "The Soviet look upon [this] ... as a lucky incident, hastening as they expect it will do, their deportation."

If Stable's judgment is to be trusted, and Kreslin's views accepted as representative, a monumentally ironic convergence of design seems inescapable here. Those sworn enemies, the anti-Bolshevik loyalists and the exiled members of the Brisbane Soviet, even as they moved towards opposing battle positions, were seemingly intent upon a roughly identical outcome to this struggle. The desire to initiate deportation proceedings, viewed by one side as sweet purgation and the other as painful release, was a tenuous bond they were both about to seal in blood - as well as fury. Stirring in an added ingredient of provocation, already so apparent in the conservative press, Civa Rosenberg exhorted *Knowledge and Unity* readers on the day prior to the fateful Red Flag march: "Our capitalist masters eat too much, are lazy and have no liking for trouble. Let us worry them by ceaseless agitation. And let the rumblings come from the side streets as well as from the main street and the domains ... Let there be agitation, ceaseless agitation ..." Loyalists, however, were anxiously awaiting the onset of any such "trouble", and the eagerly solicited "agitation" was rapidly to give way to havoc, terror and suffering. In the balance of events, the deportation of some was to be "a release" very dearly bought by the entire Russian community of Queensland, and indeed, throughout Australia.

Had it not been for Russian insistence, supported by members of the One Big Union Propaganda League (OBUPL) - the refurbished IWW front organisation in Brisbane - the Red Flag would undoubtedly not have been carried in the civil liberties procession, from Trades Hall to the Domain that Sunday afternoon, 23 March. In return for a permit from the Police Commissioner, the Brisbane Industrial Council (BIC) had promised that the prohibited symbol would not be displayed and, thus, few police were initially in attendance. Yet angry disputation greeted the announcement and, finally, Zuzenko and Bykov together tore the paper wrappings from the three furled banners they carried. The large red flags were "raised on high and shaken out in glorious sunlight", as approximately one hundred other red pennants, handkerchiefs, ribbons and insignia materialised among the 300-400 protesters still prepared to march. As the eight police present moved forward to block the procession, a BIC representative dissociated Trades Hall from any further proceedings. Yet this man's cry of "The procession is off, boys!" went unheeded as the marchers pressed forward upon the police line. With little difficulty, Zuzenko and Bykov, wielding their flagstaves like lances and followed by a large body of Russian women and children, broke through the tiny police cordon.



A constable was told "to run to Roma Street and order the Mounted Men on reserve to come at once", as the procession moved jubilantly towards Edward Street singing "Solidarity Forever" and "Hold the Fort". Reinforced by four troopers, the foot-police made several unsuccessful attempts to halt the parade during its progress towards the Domain. Scuffles occurred and the mounted police charged again and again into the protestors' ranks, only to find their horses rearing away from the billowing red flags and the swinging banner poles of Bykov and Zuzenko. A final attempt to thwart the demonstrations by locking the Domain gates came to nothing, when an impromptu meeting began in the street outside. Sensing the mood of the crowd, Inspector Ferguson judiciously opened the gates, through which the throng passed, loudly taunting the police.

Within the Domain, numbers rose to more than one thousand as speakers ventilated those well-primed themes of militarism, civil rights and revolution. Skirmishes broke out between radical listeners and jeering returned soldiers as, all the while, Zuzenko stood resolutely before the podium, "holding aloft the Red Banner". That gnarled old veteran, Monte Miller, with a faded 1856 Miner's Right pinned to his lapel by a red rosette and sporting a red "kerchief as hatband", again lent the best perspective to the meeting as he recalled "the numerous fights" he and "the Red Flag ... he wore around his hat had been through during the past forty years, and the number of times it had been torn". Even as Miller spoke, however, loyalists had begun organising counteraction, circulating directives among returned soldiers and other spectators to attend the weekly North Quay meeting of the OBUPL that evening "for the purpose of breaking it up." Within a couple of hours, an unruly mob of several thousand had virtually swamped this radical gathering. As both Zuzenko and Bykov attempted in hailing English to address this noisy crowd, soldiers calling, "Let us clear this scum out of Brisbane," charged the rally from across the street, knocking the speakers to the ground and singling out Russians in the crowd for particularly violent attention. The large OBU platform was hurled into the river and Bykov almost followed it, being only narrowly rescued by police. Nevertheless, he sustained a knife wound and injuries to his head and spine during the melee. Other assaulted radicals were dragged away and bundled unceremoniously on to a tramcar by the constables. Zuzenko, however, managed to evade pursuers on Victoria Bridge and made for the South Brisbane Russian Association rooms to alert members there.

With the North Quay meeting put to rout, a raid on the "Bolshevist headquarters" was next proposed with the stated intention of "burning it down and assaulting the Russians connected with it". A crowd of "about 2000", singing patriotic songs, was very soon marching across Victoria Bridge and, as they approached the Russian rooms in Merivale Street, the leaders, crying, "Come on Diggers!" broke into a fast run. Within thirty yards of the Russian Hall, however, Zuzenko, accompanied by several others, emerged from a side lane and fired three shots in quick succession at the rioters, scattering them in panic. It was not until the soldiers had retreated some two hundred yards that the State police actually began to interfere, by holding back the crowd. Commonwealth Intelligence officers and Military police who observed the action did nothing. Approaching the Hall, two constables attempted to intercede with "thirty, or forty Russians lined up inside a wooden gate", several of them armed with "small calibre rifles and revolvers". The police were unequivocally told, "Send the mob away ... [or] we intend to fight here until our bodies are lying on the ground." At this news, the rioters were advised to "go home like good chaps ... if these men use firearms in defence of their home ... you will have no redress." Returned soldiers took little notice of the police, however, and it was not until heavy rain began falling and one of their number, Acting Sergeant Coman, suggested they retreat to the YMCA hut to seek reinforcements that they began to disband. When this plan collapsed, a further loyalist meeting at North Quay vowed to return "in full strength" the following evening to determine "who owns Australia - Australians or the Bolsheviks".

The next morning, the conservative press with a flurry of sensational headlines like "QUEEN STREET RUSSIANIZED" considerably escalated social alarm and indignation, as that evening's mammoth loyalist rally was also offered free publicity. During the day, returned soldiers of the RSSILA, while organising their assault, were told to bring "whatever kind of weapons they had" that night "to put down Bolshevism in Brisbane for good and all" with "the utmost force the could command". That afternoon, individual assaults upon Russian citizens by ex-soldiers were reported from South Brisbane. At the same time, Police Commissioner Urquhart, perhaps with a

growing sense of private unease about controlling the vigilante ferment he had helped to unleash, learned that while the demonstration was in progress, a covert "force of 40 Returned Soldiers ... armed with rifles would attack the Russian Association Hall". Consequently, all police leave in Brisbane was cancelled and the Enoggera military guard was placed on stand-by, equipped with machine guns and ammunition. Commonwealth agents also raided the Russian premises, virtually wrecking their library of "1,000 precious volumes", and interrogating fifteen Russians present. Many Russians from surrounding boarding houses, homes and shops had already taken flight.

On the evening of Monday, 24 March, a clamorous "sea" of seven thousand persons packed into North Quay, spilling back onto Queen and William Streets. Speakers could hardly be heard above the tumult, as they vowed "to take the law into our own hands" and to "clear out of Queensland all the dirty Russian mongrels". Other calls for restraint were ignored, as the impatient crowd rapidly created its own incentives and momentum, with cries of "Burn their meeting place down ... Hang them!" Suddenly, a large segment of it, possibly in train of the armed group of returned soldiers, broke away from the jostling mass. Flying a large Australian flag before them, they again rushed across Victoria Bridge, singing that militant anthem of more optimistic days, "Australia Will Be There". At Merivale Street, they were once more checked - not this time by Russian gunfire, but by a double row of sixty police, drawn up in military formation - rifles loaded with ball cartridges and bayonets drawn. Even as they breasted this bayonet line, the vexed crowd was attacked from behind by ten mounted troopers who charged into their ranks, trampling some to the ground, and, using their whips freely, scattering others "like chaff" into surrounding streets. As these mounted police wheeled to charge again, enraged loyalists began tearing hundreds of palings from surrounding fences which they then hurled at the horses, galloping back towards them. From this point onwards, revolver shots continually rang out, as bricks, bottles and fence-pickets flew through the air, striking the rearing horses, bringing one of them down and sending three others plunging in panic into the lines of the foot-police, knocking several officers and men to the street. As the soldiers later complained, the mounted police charges were "carried out without the reading of the Riot Act" and had thus evoked such a savage reaction.

Several groups tried now to penetrate the wandering police cordon at various points, backed by a fierce fusillade of missiles, bolts and rocks," and were subjected, in return, to indiscriminate bayonet thrusts. A "thunder of stones and palings" fell against the walls of the Russian Hall, shattering windows and reducing the premises to "a wreck". Throughout this pandemonium, the "fumes of liquor" hung heavily in the night air, which was punctuated continually by shotgun blasts, cracking whips, the clatter of hooves, breaking of glass, the thud of cudgels and rifle butts, the frightened cries of horses and the "yells, groans and curses" of the men. Several such charges by the returned soldiers apparently occurred over the next two hours, until a truce was called by the exhausted combatants, and a deputation of ex-soldiers led by W.A. Fisher, Queensland Secretary of the RSSILA, was allowed to inspect the damaged Russian quarters to "satisfy themselves there were no Russians there." The building had been internally gutted and nearby residences seriously defaced.

As the rioters started back towards the city, seven more premises were damaged in Stanley Street including two boarding houses, three shops and a refreshment room, mostly owned by "foreigners". Nineteen police had been injured in the fracas (although the press would list only fourteen of these), some seriously. Three troop-horses, one ironically named "Czar", also suffered bullet wounds, one fatally. Civilian injuries are almost impossible to enumerate. *The Brisbane Courier*, in attempting to understate the severity of loyalist violence, listed merely five civilian casualties, only one of whom had suffered "cuts" which might be associated with a bayonet thrust. The official police summary of the damage was even more peremptory, mentioning only two rioters injured, neither seemingly by deliberate police action. Yet, this hardly accords with the exuberant letter written by one of the bayonet-wielding policemen, who informed his brother that during the soldiers' "bonzer stunt", as they pressed "time after time" into the police lines, "there must have been over a hundred stabbed with the bayonets ... I know for certain I prodded 6 myself..."

Ironically enough, one of these casualties was Police Commissioner Urquhart, bayoneted in the left shoulder and taken in a weak condition to hospital, his uniform saturated with blood. The following day, he wrote with mounting alarm to Acting Premier Theodore that further loyalist attacks were anticipated that evening. The Merivale Street Russian quarter had once more been targeted, as well as Deshon Street, where a considerable number of Eastern Jews resided in the vicinity of their synagogue, the Russian *shul*. The *Daily Standard* newspaper office, which had criticised the returned soldiers' excesses, was to be attacked and even, it was rumoured, the Roma Street police barracks placed under siege. In this dispatch, the wounded Police Commissioner seemed even less enamoured with vigilante action than twenty-four hours earlier, referring disparagingly to "the returned soldiers with their *attendant rabble* [who] number many thousands". Yet he continued to direct his main barrage against the alien radicals. "Until this plague spot of pestilent Russian revolutionaries is eliminated in Brisbane," he warned, "there can be no peace or safety for this community." Fearing more violence on the evening of 25 March, he secured the closure of hotels and, recalling a precedent from the Brisbane General Strike of 1912, requested Commonwealth "military help in preserving the King's peace."

That night at Deshon street, police and apprehensive Russian residents, armed with "dynamite and shotguns", waited to defend their homes and synagogue from a threatening loyalist mob of returned soldiers, "hoodlums and larrikins". But the main action occurred in the city centre where, despite a driving rain, a vast concourse of twelve thousand assembled in Albert Square to hear RSSILA and other loyalist representatives denounce the "dirty, greasy Russians", and their Bolshevik doctrine as a "microbe", a "cancer" and a "noxious weed". As members of the crowd once more approached a pitch of excitement and fury during a call for "a revolution of loyalty" to begin, large numbers commenced a wild rush through city streets towards the *Daily Standard* office in Bowman House, Edward Street. Despite the presence of more than fifty police, windows were smashed with rocks, revolver shots fired and an attempt made to rush the doors, until the Fire Brigade arrived with hoses ready to turn on the rioters.

During this assault and dispersal, various hapless individuals were singled out by sections of the crowd for special treatment as "Bolshevist sympathisers" and roughly manhandled, until police intervened. This form of individual physical harassment appears to have become commonplace over subsequent days and evenings, as huge loyalty demonstrations continued and spread statewide. "WE WARN THE GOVERNMENT that unless [deportation] action is taken immediately RETURNED SOLDIERS WILL ARM and carry out the work we demand the Government shall perform," announced officials of the RSSILA brazenly. Supporting the veterans' unabashed vigilantism, the conservative press fulminated: "Our Russians are anything but peaceful and ... the dread of these undesirable people is daily becoming more apparent ... The soldiers ... will stand no more nonsense from Russians ... and if the Slavs are well advised they will cease flag flapping ... and ... make for home via Vladivostok and the Siberian railway. This would not be the first time they have deserted us ..."

Thus, during the ensuing days of agitation, as Russians were indiscriminately branded as "foreign scum" and "vermin" who stole Britishers' jobs, these victimised residents made themselves as inconspicuous as they could. Yet, even a hint of the Russian language could betray them and provoke violent retaliation. As one Russian wrote to a compatriot in hospital: "Many Russians were beaten ... I met a Russian ... and started to speak to him ... I was nearly beaten for speaking Russian - by Englishmen. We must be as far from Russia as we possibly can. There is danger for the Russians on every step and corner." Even hospitalised Russians were searched for weaponry, whilst a Russian engaged in mining Kuridala caused a stir when he ordered more explosives for blasting. A Russian workers' library at Selwyn in north-western Queensland was suppressed and Russian sellers of *Knowledge and Unity*, operating as far afield as Newcastle, Cobar and Broken Hill in New South Wales, were raided by Commonwealth police. It is again difficult to assess the degree of hostility unleashed upon individual Russians. According to one Russian, Charlie Galchin, the feverish Brisbane reactions seemed in the nature of "a pogrom", similar to the waves of anti-Semitic pogroms which had swept large areas of Russia up to 1917, and had been particularly virulent in the townships of the Pale of Settlement after the failed uprising of 1905. "Yes," Galchin wrote, almost maller-of-factly: "... it was a formal pogrom, exactly like the pogroms

of Jews, organised during the reign of Czar ... all the Russians are in a state of panic ... They are being dismissed everywhere from work. The soldiers thrash the Russians in the streets. They ... have all run away like rats ..." Significantly, Vere Gordon Childe, then residing in Brisbane and later to earn world renown as a classical scholar, was also to chronicle these incidents as "Riots and Pogrom by Soldiers" in his contemporary publication. *How Labor Governs*.

Accompanying this indiscriminate mayhem, concerted campaigns of job dismissal, boycott and eviction bit deeply into the Russians' precarious economic security, and brought more prolonged hardship. As Percy Brookfield, the radical Labor MLA, summarised their generally distressed condition from Sydney in May 1919: "... the injustice meted out to these people was surprising. There had been enough talk about what was happening in Russia ... but this was in Australia. These poor people had been turned down by their former friends and employers ... and were not allowed to leave the country. Looked at with suspicion by everybody ... as soon as they said they were Russians or their tongue betrayed them, they found themselves unemployed ... They had no official representation, their Consul being imprisoned ..."

Job dismissals of local Russians followed a pattern already foreshadowed by the mass sacking of German "enemy alien" workers during the war years. Reprisal efforts, both great and small, conspired to confront the Russian worker with desperate prospects. For instance, while the Brisbane Chamber of Commerce contributed to the "laudable work in rooting out Bolshevism" by promising only future "jobs for the boys" on 27 March, Pinkenba sewerage workers, that same day, did their bit by securing the dismissal of three Russian wage-earners who laboured alongside them. Reports of Russian dismissals at the Cannon Hill meatworks, at Darra, the Rocklea railway yards and the Ipswich railway workshops tended to complete the local picture of economic gloom. Anglo-Australian workers, however, did not always co-operate with employer initiatives in this regard. For instance, when the Brisbane furniture emporium, W.A. Hislop Ltd., advertised in storefront window, "To Returned Soldiers: ... This shop does not and Never has stocked Russian made furniture. All our furniture is made by Britishers ..." the General Secretary of the Furnishing Trade Society protested vigorously: "... We have members ... who are Russians working in the various factories throughout Brisbane and ... unless this is stopped at once, trouble of a serious nature will arise ... already Russian members have been payed [sic] off ... and we cannot place them in jobs. WHY? BECAUSE THEY ARE BEING VICTIMIZED..."

In a similar vein, the BIC in early April protested that four Russian workers "registered at the Government Labor Bureau whose turn it was to get a chance to work on a job where 95 men were required" had been passed over "under instruction from the Government". Yet, such protests seemed largely in vain as, across Queensland, the boycott became virtually total. At the Bingera Plains, near Bundaberg, the Russian community of forty-one souls complained bitterly in May 1919 of job discrimination and general destitution. Calling for passports, the community's spokesman, P. Boormakin, pleaded with the Acting Prime Minister "... hasten our departure without driving us to despair ... Soon there will be no other course left for us but to go to Local Authorities and ask them to gaol us ... let us go from this Babylon prison. We will spend our last money and very soon face family starvation ... Let us go from Australia to the old contry [sic]".

At Townsville, in an atmosphere of increasing tension over clashes with returned soldiers, unemployment and burgeoning industrial conflict at the local meatworks, some twenty Russians, led by Max Baranoff, protested against the censorship of Russian mail and the refusal of repatriation. According to an Intelligence report of a beach meeting held on 12 May 1919, the Russians further decided: "... unanimously ... to do all in their power to further the propaganda of Bolshevik principles and encourage ... the strikers to use force against the police ... hoping thereby to overthrow the present form of Government and form a Soviet. The meeting closed with the singing of revolutionary songs ..." At the peace celebrations in July 1919, it was rumoured that Townsville's Russians would again display red flags in an attempt to encourage deportation proceedings against themselves. Large numbers of police, present at a march which most unionists boycotted, seem to have deterred the display, however, as only a few Russians were detected "with large pieces of red ribbon flying from their coats." By mid August, Townsville's Russian "element" was depicted as "getting very desperate, as they have been out of work for

some time and no-one will employ them. Their sole subsistence is the Government ration of 10/- per week." A reckless resort to firearms was even anticipated.

The refusal to repatriate Russians en masse stood in stark contrast to official eagerness to imprison and deport individual Russian leaders in the aftermath of the riots. In a series of biased and expedient legal encounters held between 31 March and 7 July 1919, sixteen men accused of displaying the Red Flag were tried at the Brisbane Magistrate's Court, painfully presided over by Police Magistrate Archdall (bayoneted in the groin during the "battle of Merivale Street"). Only one of these, a Labor MLA, Edgar Free, escaped with a fine. The rest without the benefit of any defence counsel, were sentenced to various periods of imprisonment - three for seven months, ten for six months, one for two months, and the last for one month. Similar offences in southern states were merely resulting in £10 fines, but the occasion was readily seized upon to punish members of the camouflaged Brisbane IWW local, the OBUPL. In effect, these showcase trials represent a climax to the State's suppression of the IWW in Australia which had begun so spectacularly in New South Wales and Western Australia during 1916-17. Aware that the verdict was virtually a foregone conclusion, most of the defendants struggled to turn a political trial into a political forum to air their radical beliefs, with mixed results. Five of the accused were Russians and typical of their defence were the words of Herman Bykov, as he stated in halting English, amidst peals of derisive laughter from the body of the court: "As a Russian Maximalist... I consider I am not a criminal, but merely a political prisoner of Australian capitalists. I was stabbed and beaten with sticks by some ignorant and probably drunken soldiers who do not realise what Bolshevism really is ... I spent seven years in Tzar's dungeons and in exile in Siberia ... I am glad to come in prison again for the victory of the Red Flag ... As the dungeon door will be closed, I am going to declare a hunger strike as my last protest against the starvation of Russian citizens in Hughes' land."

During May, the other four Russians - Mark Ostapenko, Steve Tolstobroff, Paul Leischmann and Louis Roslan - joined Bykov in a hunger strike over gaol conditions which eventually won them the right to be treated as political prisoners. Due to untiring efforts by a Red Flag Prisoners Defence League, organised among concerned socialists and pacifists, as well as the intercession of Premier Ryan, who was greatly troubled by the civil liberties infringements embodied in the War Precautions regulations, the release of ten of the fifteen was secured as an amnesty provision of the peace celebrations in July. The other five were gradually released during August and September, on each occasion to a welcoming committee of supporters. Herman Bykov, however, came through the prison gates only to be apprehended a few days later by Commonwealth agents for deportation.

Deportation, unlike imprisonment, was not an easy option during 1919, due to the continuing opposition from British authorities to the repatriation of "dangerous" Russians. Yet deportation, utilised as an extreme technique of punishment and exclusion, operated quite differently from repatriation, and could proceed to countries like Egypt or Ceylon - or even Chile and the Dutch East Indies - rather than to the place of origin of the deportee. Although various Russians seemed prepared to take the risk, the point of disembarkation could conceivably present the deportee with a greater obstacle in achieving effective repatriation than the problem of Australian isolation itself. Amidst a cacophony of demands from leading establishment figures, chambers of commerce and primary producer organisations, as well as utterly unveiled threats from the RSSILA to continue their "drastic" actions until all Russian "traitors" were removed, Federal authorities moved rapidly, from 26 March 1919, to compile deportation lists of "undesirables". Following a telegram from Acting Prime Minister Watt on 27 March for expatriation processes to begin, A.M. Zuzenko was swiftly taken. On 28 March, he was conveyed to Sydney for deportation, and some ten days later he departed for Colombo on the SS *Bakara*. His pregnant wife, Civa Rosenberg, was left with no information as to his fate, as he was bundled away. Subsequently, her persistent attempts to rejoin Zuzenko led to her own deportation on 5 June 1919. She left Australia "in a state of distraction", having been given little idea of her ship's destination and, indeed, was eventually off-loaded at Alexandria, in Egypt, with her new-born infant, and thrown into prison there.

A deportation list of seven other "confirmed Bolsheviks" - Michael Wishnevsky, Herman Bykov, Konstantin Klushin, Peter Kreslin (alias Orlov), Frank Madorsky (actually Wolf Weinberg), Walter Markin and Michael Rosenberg (Civa's father) was forwarded by the Queensland Military Commandant to Melbourne for Cabinet approval on 29 March. Three days later - "before soldiers' meeting tomorrow" - the remaining members of the Brisbane "Russian Soviet" were expeditiously arrested, testimony to the effective pressure the RSSILA was exerting upon the Commonwealth concerning this matter. Simultaneously, the Governor-General contacted the Secretary of the State for the Colonies in London to ascertain that Britain's recent deportation of one hundred "Russian Jew Bolshevik Propagandists" could serve as a precedent for Australian deportations to proceed. Thus, on the morning of 2 April, the seven arrests began. They were announced as "completed" two days later. Six of the men (for Bykov was already in State custody) were forwarded for military detention in Sydney where, it was later alleged, they were: "... compelled to sleep on the cement floor of the cells with a few dirty undisinfected "blankets" to cover them. The food they received is NOT FIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION, and the men are debarred from BUYING FOOD at their own expense. Any PROTEST IS ANSWERED BY SOLITARY CONFINEMENT..." When the seven began a hunger strike in protest over such conditions, a "little forced feeding" was rapidly recommended.

Protest against vigilantism and repression in Brisbane by Russian groups located in Melbourne or Sydney proved either ineffectual or counter-productive. After the Melbourne Russian Association protested to the Acting Prime Minister in April, the leader John Maruschak was recommended for deportation. Meanwhile, in Sydney, an alleged plan to hold a sympathetic Red Flag demonstration at the Domain led to demands from Major-General Lee that these five Russians be interned and deported. This would strike their organisation "a blow from which it will with difficulty recover, if indeed it ever does," predicted Lee confidently. In the upshot, however, only one man, the revolutionary Peter Timms, was seized. Timms, who had already served extensive sentences under the Tsar between 1907 and 1913 at Riga, Vologda, Yaroslavl and Krasnoyarsk prisons for making explosives, joined the other interned Bolsheviks at Darlinghurst in early April.

In the interim, a renewed drive for "aliens" to be expelled from Queensland led Brigadier-General Irving to prepare a new listing of seventeen Russians, whom the censor had named as activists in centres as widely spread as Cairns (where Eric Karro had formed the Moolaba "Soviet"), Townsville, Ingham, Innisfail and Ayr in the north, Selwyn and Cloncurry in the west, as well as Brisbane and Ipswich in the south. When, on 4 April, the depleted ranks of Brisbane Bolsheviks rallied around a new "Soviet Executive" of nine, including the radical Dutchman Barend Meyer, recklessly calling for "future demonstrations and ... more drastic measures of revolt," this "Vigilance Committee" was targeted for "immediate deportation" also. All those listed, living commented, were "undesirables of the worst type and very clever propagandists." Various military raids on Russian residences had proven they were "working hand in hand with the I.W.W. movement" Irving added: "They have conjointly done everything possible to bring about a Revolution here and have so taught their fellow workers through their untiring efforts ... that Bolshevism is the only means of gaining their object..." Yet more moderate counsel seems to have prevailed at this point, and Irving's later lists were not acted upon for expulsion purposes. Perhaps an unsigned secret report prepared by Captain Ainsworth of the SIB after a series of raids on Russian homes on 30 March holds a clue here, for it observed, with an uncommonly blunt tone of realism: "The Russians as an entity do not threaten the disruption of Australia from any point of view. Suppress their paper and where are they? They have no money, no influence in the community - whilst in supposing them to be sufficiently extreme to resort to armed force, their numbers and cohesion are so ridiculous that they could do nothing ... if you dealt with a ... dozen ... the Russian menace would cease to exist." Perhaps with fifteen men imprisoned for extended sentences, a further nine males and one female interned or deported and the entire Russian community generally intimidated and terrorised, it was simply considered timely and appropriate to call a halt.

Furthermore, on 1 May 1919, the first Queensland death from influenza pandemic was reported, and less than a fortnight later, almost seven hundred cases had been recorded. All public

gatherings, whether for purposes of politics or entertainment, were prohibited and the anti-Bolshevik agitation temporarily waned. Yet populist mobilisations against aliens and radicals had received enormous impetus from the campaign. Dr Sanford Jackson's massive ULE reconstituted itself as the King and Empire Alliance in late April 1919 on a platform of fighting Bolshevism "to the bitter end". By mid 1920, the same organisation was operating in New South Wales. As governments were reluctant to deal with Bolsheviks, the Brisbane Courier editorialised: "An organisation such as this Alliance is needed to counteract ... the mischievous labours of those ... busily striving to undermine ... loyalty ... To the claptrap propaganda of Bolshevism and Anarchy, let the Alliance oppose the corrective of convincing exposure of their fallacies, their promptings to evil and the inevitable ruin and misery they lead to." The Queensland King and Empire Alliance thus provided the prototype for the New South Wales league of the same name which was to provide inspiration for D.H. Lawrence's *Kangaroo*, written in mid 1922. The "secret army" appurtenances of this organisation, which Robert Darroch has carefully traced, and of Melbourne's "White Guard" of 1923, perceptively studied by Andrew Moore, similarly owe their inspiration to an "Army to Fight Bolshevism", formed among more than two thousand RSSILA members at the Brisbane Exhibition Grounds on Sunday afternoon, 6 April - an exact fortnight after the Red Flag march.

The RSSILA's key role in this peacetime "call up", culminating out of two weeks of riots, rallies and loyalist ceremonies, gave a tremendous fillip to this organisation's growth and internal strength. Certainly, the entire anti-Bolshevik agitation was heralded as "the means of uniting the returned soldiers throughout the State". Sixty-eight sub-branches "fearlessly" endorsed the League's campaign, whilst more ex-soldiers enrolled in the next three months than during the previous year. As nearly 3,700 joined - almost doubling the RSSILA's size in Queensland - its President, Pearce Douglas, jovially complained that expansion was so rapid, "badges cannot be supplied in sufficient quantity". Thus hatreds aroused against the Red Flag as a revolutionary symbol left an abiding legacy. In November 1920, seven thousand RSSILA members protested against any Queensland celebrations of the Russian Revolution, while, as late as November 1924, another such commemoration was suppressed by Brisbane police on the grounds that "a riot might ensue".

Australian Russians during 1919 had effectively been caught in a loyalist crossfire, at a point in time marked by the convergence of Australia's First full-blown anti-communist scare with one of its latter-day xenophobic riots. Anti-Bolshevism and Russophobia had together inflamed popular prejudices, consuming for a time extant minority tendencies towards internationalism, working-class solidarity and revolutionary zeal. Yet it would be insufficient to conclude that the Russians were merely a sacrifice in this loyalist conflagration, although, clearly, they had become scapegoats, persecuted and punished in dramatic ways. For certain Russians were also very much activists in promoting social unrest and encouraging the deportations they hoped would release them from Australian thralldom. The fate of most of the ten deported is presently unknown, although it may be assumed that they all resolutely made their way back to Russia, usually via Odessa, from the various ports of call where deportation vessels abandoned them. Of the four about whom something is sketchily known, only one, Peter Kreslin, on his original Bolshevik enthusiasm, and found employment as an interpreter at the American Consulate in Vladivostok. A.M. Zuzenko, the central Russian figure in the Red Flag disturbances, became the captain of a Soviet cargo vessel, plying between Leningrad and London, but was also embroiled in Comintern activities overseas, returning as a courier to Australia during 1920, disguised as a Scandinavian seaman. In his capacity as a Comintern agent, he doubtlessly continued to liaise with Peter Simonoff who, upon returning to Soviet Russia, became controller of Comintern activities throughout the British Empire. Michael Rosenberg, too, carried out tasks abroad for Moscow. Finally and tragically, Rosenberg, Simonoff and Zuzenko, it would seem, were all liquidated in the Stalinist purges of the thirties. Yet Rosenberg's daughter and Zuzenko's wife - the only female Russian activist to be deported - Civa Rosenberg, is still alive in the USSR at the time of writing.

Russians remaining in Australia pleading to be repatriated, had longer to wait and, arguably, a harder time returning home than the deportees. In late July 1919, the Governor-General suggested that Russians "not of Bolshevik leanings" might be released, but this proved

impracticable, as only those accepted for Russian service by Allied Military Command were to be offered passports. Again, in March 1920, with Allied intervention in Russia drawing to a close, it was agreed that Russians might leave if in possession of a military permit, as well as having a return passage arranged via "a neutral country". This plan, however, merely resulted in various groups of Russians becoming stranded, in severe destitution, at Singapore, Shanghai and Hong Kong, as British and Chinese authorities complained of their presence, and the Japanese refused to accept them. The policy, in turn, affected only Russians with sufficient funds to leave and, as Nicholai Lagutin and John Paul Gray complained in February 1920, "workless and poor Russians unable to pay their own fares" were virtually marooned in Australia. In August 1920, Australian authorities candidly admitted there was "at present ... absolutely no means" of securing repatriations and, six months later, there were some seven hundred Russians, mostly without travelling expenses, still waiting to depart.

Meanwhile, the local Russians' campaigns to publicise their revolution, to celebrate its successes and, along with other radicals and workers, to struggle against their political and industrial "bosses" and a "lying Tory press" continued to be energetically waged. After the March riots, no Domain gathering of the "red ragers" was held until 8 June 1919. Yet, despite poor publicity, "quite the average crowd came - between 3 and 4 hundred." One of the speakers, Jennie Scott Griffiths, wrote to her nephew, Jerry Cahill, in Boggo Road Gaol: "The meeting was alive; alert among those present were ... quite a few Russian comrades - and pretty well all of our usual lot - as well as some new faces - and some returned soldiers who never said a word ... So the ball is started once more - "on with the dance, let joy be unconfined" ..." Renewed publication of *Knowledge and Unity* did not begin until 26 July, but it contained a spirited examination of "'Red' Sunday: Its History and Consequences" within its columns. Everything possible had been done by large organisations of "jingoists", the paper charged, "to make a small group of Russians the butt of their typically capitalistic and clumsily carried out schemes". Most indicative of continuing conflict, however, was a communication from the King and Empire Alliance to the Department of Defence in March 1920 - a year after the disturbances - claiming that a "very large number" of Russians was still active "in the dissemination of disloyalty all over the State" - a matter still causing the Alliance "much anxiety". "In some cases, the place is getting very hot for these disloyalists," the report stated: "Yet ... the contamination of these Russians with British workers is carried on largely and in most insidious ways."

In the meantime, details of the Third International (Comintern) had begun to spread in Australia, and Simonoff had commenced initiatives for the formation of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA). Indeed, as early as August 1919, Simonoff's close associate, John Maruschak of Melbourne, became the first person in Australia formally to submit proposals for the establishment of an indigenous Communist Party. Writing to the editor of *Knowledge and Unity*, he appealed: "to all socialists to sink all petty and minor differences and organise into one solid body to be called the Communist Party of Australia, based on the Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx and Engels. Let us join the 3rd International and have one Party, one Policy and one Paper, a daily if possible, to be called the "Australian Communist". In August 1920, the first issue of a new monthly magazine, *The Communist*, appeared in Brisbane, preaching the "inevitability of violent revolution". It was edited by Russian sympathiser and ex-Red Flag prisoner, George Taylor, under the auspices of the Australian Socialist Party. Following a divisive Sydney conference in October 1920 to form a CPA, Simonoff's "Trades Hall" group became dominant in Brisbane, with branches rapidly appearing in Townsville, Cairns, Childers and Innisfail. *Knowledge and Unity* soon became the party's official Queensland organ. An undercover, propagandist cadre, "the Secret Seven", which had emerged from meetings originated by Zuzenko as early as January 1919, and which was revamped by Simonoff in September 1920, became particularly active; meanwhile, by November 1921, Lagutin had formed an "Inner Communist Group" in Brisbane, consisting largely of Russians opposed to any cooperative action with the extant "political machine". By this time, regular Intelligence summaries of communist activities were being compiled by Major H.E. Jones, "Australia's master spy", and their substance conveyed monthly to M 15 at Scotland Yard. In these reports. Communism was invariably depicted as "spreading rapidly", particularly in North Queensland, where it was even suggested "whole districts have 'gone Communist'". J. Ostaschanko, farming near Innisfail, and K. Chuganoff of Mourilyan were named as local Russian

communist leaders, while the various "settlements of Russians" state-wide were depicted as "almost solidly Communist" in their political affiliations.

The Red Flag riots, imprisonments and deportations had hardly succeeded, therefore, in suppressing Russian militancy and resolve, despite their vehemence. Queensland's Russian emigres, who were certainly no strangers to persecution and suffering, had somehow managed to weather the storm unleashed upon them by violent Anglo-Australian conservatives. For some, their revolutionary idealism would sustain them in the face of a protracted scare campaign conducted against both foreigners and radicals throughout Australia well into the 1920s. For others, a simple, dogged capacity for survival continued to preserve them, much as it had previously done, against the Okhrana and Black Hundreds in Tsarist Russia.

Raymond Evans, "Agitation, ceaseless agitation": Russian radicals in Australia and the Red flag riots', in McNair and Poole, (eds), Russia and the Fifth Continent, Brisbane, 1992, pp. 126-71.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-04/red-flag-riots-and-islamaphobia-australia/10954220>