

Give me an old commie any day

As the end of their era draws to a close
These folks are all aging and fading away
Taking memories of a spirited cause.
Young things will never meet
The cream of our countries left thinking elite
Unless lurking in their fortunate dna.
They wanted a society more equal
To live with respect, a job, a decent wage
And a secure roof over your head.

The nineteen twenties is a long time ago
A depression before another bloody war
Left a worker with no work poor,
From street to country he begged
For a piece of bread, 'Could you spare some more?'
No welfare payments kept the wolf from the door.
The rich got richer as is always the way.

A revolution from Russia might settle the score
Overthrow the ruling class,
Allow men and women to control the seat
Of the power, the law and industrial beat.
A dispute, the party declined to a sect
It gets messy around Stalin and Trotsky
I urge you, go back and read tomes of history.

I saw a film on the movement, women embraced,
Rights for all, the vote, abortion, no to fascism
Indigenous Australians hold your head high.
I was worried about the nuclear threat, armed US boats
About to berth in my town port.
No jobs for the girls that paid the same as the boys.
I joined them on the march for Nuclear Free Zones,
At the meetings in Trade's Hall where the placards
Were painted and the strategies to change the law
Debated, discussed, heated and nailed to the door.

My mind was engaged like never before
Hearts beat to one cause, we lived, breathed
And spoke with one voice. The parties such fun
The bonds round a threat to take the world out
We rallied, we drank, protested and shout
'What do we want, no nukes
'When do we want it, now.'
The signs went up to warn armed submarines not welcome
The council finally agreed.

I loved them for their commitment and warmth,
They cared for humanity with some flaws
In an ideology that got up the craw
Of Robert Menzies and his right wing mates.
I know who I'd have chosen over an ailing monarchy.
Our culture was richer than ever before
The writers, the painters, poets and feminists
Drawn to the vision of what could be
If we all shared instead of wanting everything for me.

I don't expect our current leaders will extend an apology
For the spying, the files, the malice, the vilifying
That still raises its ugly head to shout about
'A red hiding under the bed', causing climate change
Stirring up strife on a building site or the wharves.
Every worker in the country owes a legacy for life
To these brave men and women I met by pure chance
And grew to admire and want them back for some more,
As the radioactive menace is about to rise once again
To power the factories, the houses and cars
From the bottom of our gardens and by the seashore.

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