sum of $2,000 was raised from a very enthusiastic and
generous Jewish audience. On another occasion Bernie
Taft braced himself with great nervous tension and
in Yiddish, a language he had not spoken publicly for
years.

The execution of leading Jewish writers and
the closing down of Jewish cultural institutions in
the Soviet Union in 1948, — a tragedy. of Stalin’s later
years which was contrary to the whole policy and spirit
of communism, — left a mark which time, and the
Union in later years, have not wholly erased. On top
of this calamity we have had to face in more recent
times a campaign run by the imperialists and their
conscious and unconscious servants, a campaign that
has seized upon certain remaining manifestations of
anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union to paint a wholly
false picture of Soviet policy. Soviet policy is, in fact,
directed to extirpating anti-Semitism which was an age-
long curse of the old Russia.

A Progressive Jewish Centre now exists in
Melbourne, largely based on more recently arrived
Polish migrants and discussing various subjects of
Jewish and general interest, from time to time inviting
Communist speakers along with others of different
persuasions. Meanwhile Jewish communists them-

MARXIST STUDY CLASSES
A special feature of the early postwar period was
the many-sided educational work of Marx School, an
institution with rooms in Howey Court, Collins Street,
and with Bernie Taft as its enthusiastic and capable
full-time director.

This school, well fitted out with attractive rooms
and a good library, gave the Party’s educational work

a standing that it did not possess previously. It was a
lively and vigorous centre. Apart from its simultaneous
running of many classes (giving a wider choice of
classes and tutors), it ran well-attended Sunday evening
lectures over a long period.

I was asked to lecture from time to time and was
glad of the pressure this placed on me to brush up my
knowledge and thrash out new questions. I remember
tracing my hand on the English and French Revolutions,
on primitive communist society, on the history of the
Party in Victoria, on the People’s Democracies in
Eastern Europe (on which I made some errors, I think)
and on a variety of other questions.

During the life of Marx School (1945-1950) I
prepared more lectures of this kind than in any other
period. The disappearance of Marx School as it then
operated was perhaps inevitable for a number of reasons
among other things it tended to separate Communist
education from the life and problems of the Communist
Party local or factory branch. But the setting up of a
Marx-Lenin Institute in some form or other should
undoubtedly be one of our aims for the future.

Theory — the summing up of past experience to
light the way for the present and future — is the very
life-blood of all the Party’s activity. The basic philo-
sophical and social theories outlined by Marx and Lenin
remain the only true compass for steering through the
stormy political seas of our time. These theories need
to be closely studied and their essence firmly grasped,
more than ever before. They need to be not merely
echoed, but creatively applied to new situations, as the
81 Communist and Workers’ Parties proceeded to apply
them to the world situation of 1960. We need to study,
for example, new phases in the course of the capitalist
economic cycle, in the competition between the two
social systems, in the development of the national
liberation struggle, in the development of socialist
democracy. We need to analyse more fully all the
implications of automation, cybernetics, nuclear power
and other basic features of mid-20th Century society.
A Marxist-Leninist analysis of these matters is of deep