



FOR PRESS

P. M. No 42/1970

DR. CAIRNS' CALL FOR DEMONSTRATIONS

Comment by the Prime Minister, Mr. John Gorton

Dr. Cairns is a leading member of the Labor Party and a member of the Executive of the Parliamentary Labor Party in Canberra.

The Victorian President of that Party recently chaired a meeting which called on Australian Troops, fighting the Communists in Vietnam, to mutiny.

Now Dr. Cairns, in alliance with the Communist Party, calls for the streets of Melbourne to be taken over, for all traffic to be halted and all business stopped, as a protest against Australian troops fighting Communists in Vietnam.

He threatens that if the Police seek to maintain order, and to protect the rights of citizens going about their lawful occasions, he and his followers will become violent.

The significance of this is not that the call for anarchy was made, for the call is likely to have negligible effect.

The significance is that it comes from a man who is a Shadow Minister in Labor's Shadow Cabinet.

The question to be asked is whether this policy of anarchy, of the use of force to gain ends which could not be gained through the ballot box, is the Labor Party's policy. We know it is the policy of a significant sector of the Labor Party - but is it the policy of the Party as a whole?

Mr. Whitlam owes it to Australians to clear this matter up.

I hope that Australians will treat this excursion into storm trooper tactics with disdain and disgust.

---

CANBERRA  
26 March 1970