

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE RT. HON. R.G. MENZIES, C.H., Q.C., M.P., AT THE LIBERAL PARTY RALLY, OLYMPIC POOL, MELBOURNE ON THE 23RD SEPTEMBER, 1960

---

"THE MENACE OF COMMUNISM"

Liberalism and Communism are at the very opposite poles of thought and action. A victory for Communism would involve the destruction of literally everything we stand for.

This week sees the launching in New York, at the General Assembly of the United Nations, of the greatest propaganda campaign in history. What is it about? Is it for us just a distant event of rather less importance than who wins tomorrow's match? Does it concern us just academically, or does it concern us vitally?

The leader of the propaganda campaign is, of course, Khrushchev, the master of and the spokesman for the Soviet Union. But what is the remarkable character of this campaign?

The Communists have the most concentrated and aggressive record of imperialism to be found in modern history. They have pursued their territorial and ideological campaigns in the most unscrupulous and predatory fashion.

But in the course of their campaign they have actually and impudently preached against imperialism and have, I fear, persuaded many dupes that imperialism is the great characteristic of the Western world and that they are delivering many nations from it.

They have by conquest or by cunning converted many historic nations, which were once proud and independent, into subservient colonies of the Kremlin. They have done this in the most opportunist fashion. Thus, in the recent war, acting under an agreement with Hitler-Germany, they invaded Poland and Finland. They annexed Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, and compelled Roumania to yield some territory. When the Nazis attacked the Soviet Union in 1941, our war against Hitler, according to their propaganda, ceased to be an "imperialist" war - it became, once they were in it, a "war for freedom". When the war ended they continued their evil work. They absorbed the once free people of East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Roumania and Bulgaria. They inspired their Chinese friends and pupils, who had established Communist government in China, to absorb Tibet, Outer Mongolia and North Korea and to maintain tension in relation to neighbouring countries.

But at the very time of doing all these things they sought to enlist the sympathy of former colonies by denouncing colonialism as an evil characteristic of the Western Powers.

They have talked about freedom and expressed their sympathy with those struggling for it in other lands.

But they have reduced hundreds of millions of once free people to a form of regimented slavery; a kind of slavery prevalent in the Soviet Union itself where industrial conscription is the rule and where the movements of people inside their own country is subject to a close system of internal passports.

They have kept the world in a state of ferment and apprehension; they have imposed upon the free peoples of the world a necessity to maintain great armaments and of standing ready to use them in their own defence.

But they have all the time preached peace and have promoted so-called "peace" demonstrations in countries like our own, whose great ambition is to have peace, but who know or ought to know that the only threat to their own peace proceeds from the headquarters of Communism.

They have practised espionage on the grand scale; they have cunningly seduced from their allegiance western scientists and diplomats.

But they pretend horror at the U2 incident and are setting about the task of persuading the free democracies that counter-espionage is disreputable, and that nothing is further from the Soviet mind than a desire to penetrate the military and national secrets of any other land.

They have actively denied religious beliefs and pursued entirely godless and materialist aims.

But they have, through their agents, sought either to cultivate the friendship or to disarm the fears of people of religious faith in other countries.

They have in Russia destroyed true trades unionism by making it a subservient creature of the State; they have prohibited under violent penalties all strikes and direct action; they have eliminated all free choice of occupation.

But their devoted agents in Australia, for example, seek to use the trades unions for their own purposes; to creep into positions of union power; to proclaim the right to strike and to exercise it under circumstances which inflict the maximum of inconvenience and ultimately the maximum of danger upon our own people.

All of these facts are or should be well-known, but they need to be re-stated with precision because there is a grave temptation in the minds of all of us to escape from such problems and to regard all as being for the best in the best of all possible worlds.

In brief, the Soviet propaganda campaign is the most superbly organised piece of hypocrisy that the world has yet seen.

Because the Liberal Party of Australia stands four-square against the success of this campaign, I propose tonight, in a non-election period, to discuss some aspects of this great problem and to urge you to renewed understanding and effort.

Time, mercifully for you, is limited. But I am deeply concerned about some matters that we cannot or should not ignore:

The Khrushchev strategy and tactics

Our own security measures, and the attack upon them

Some of the sentimental fallacies which are distracting us

The duty of government

The duty of the people.

I now say something about the Khrushchev strategy. That strategy is to stir up mass agitations in non-Communist countries; to seek to lead those agitations in the great name of nationalism; to sow distrust of democratically established authority and to brand all those who reject and resist this kind of Communist activity as the enemies of peace and tools of capitalists; to avoid recourse to actual war on the grand scale, but to pursue all means of paralysing or confusing thought in non-communist countries.

Anybody with half an eye witnessing the events of the last twelve months can see this demonstrated to evil perfection. Take the Congo. Rightly or wrongly the Belgium Government handed over complete self-government to that country. The country was clearly not ready for it. It fell almost instantly into what may be described, not unfairly, as a state of primitive tribal warfare. Events became so terrible - and bloody - that the United Nations intervened, established a United Nations force and went in to try to restore order and to assist in the establishment of peaceful and economical viable Government. What did the Soviet Union do? It took the first opportunity to intervene: it sought to create hostility to the United Nations action: it provided weapons and other equipment for partisans: it offered its own form of economic aid. In short it proceeded at once to buy its way into a position in which it would be the deliverer, the price being that it should become the master. Unfortunately for the Soviet, the new nations of Africa outside the Congo have rejected this manoeuvre and have upheld the United Nations. But the story is of course not yet finished. If there was one thing generally accepted at the last meeting of Prime Ministers in London earlier this year, it was that Africa and the emerging nations in Africa are the prominent target for Communist infiltration. This means a great deal to us, for if Communism strikes a deep root in Africa both that continent and Asia, particularly Communist Asia and South East Asia, will represent the greatest accretion of strength to aggressive Communism that the world has ever seen. We, in Australia, cannot afford to witness these things unmoved. We would be guilty of the most suicidal blindness if we thought that an isolated position in the South Pacific could be long maintained by us, if we were confronted at close range by literally thousands of millions of people under Communist orders. But the Communist strategy goes further.

Look at Cuba, the repository of vast amounts of productive investment from the United States and from Great Britain. A fanatical dictator establishes himself and, to put it quite shortly, steals the investments. He defies the western world. But at the very moment when he is engaging in this defiance he is in close communication with the Soviet Union and is securing from them, on their own terms, economic aid and violent political support. Do you suppose that even if you lived in the traditional safety of the United States you would feel comfortable or secure if Cuba became in effect a Communist base? Khrushchev conducts all these operations with a mastery of propaganda and a capacity for abusive and truculent speech which even Hitler could hardly have hoped to rival. He takes the initiative: he presses for a Summit Conference in Paris and then torpedoes it on the most flimsy grounds: he goes barn-storming to the United Nations in New York; he peremptorily calls on the leaders of the other nations to meet him there: he professes to believe that, in a vast assemblage of hundreds and hundreds of people from scores of countries, he can have a Summit Meeting in an atmosphere of sweet reasonableness.

I never can understand how anybody who loves peace, as we all do, and would wish to see a true Summit meeting seriously and responsibly conducted, should fall for the present bullying tactics.

These are very grim thoughts but they are in no sense exaggerated. We will either take them into account and take steps to protect our own lives and ideals while we have time or the day will come when we will either live to regret it, or die without having any chance to regret it at all.

Let me now turn specifically to matters in Australia.

In recent times nothing has been more disturbing, and indeed frightening, than the organised campaign against Australia's Security Service. At the time of the Petrov Commission, and the antics performed before that body by Communists and their sympathisers, we became accustomed to hear and read attacks on an organisation which after all was properly set up by Mr. Chifley himself and carried on by me, and designed to be one of our protectors. When this propaganda proceeded from clearly Communist sources most people no doubt ignored it, or regarded it as a tribute to the Service's efficiency.

But the campaign has recently been renewed with great virulence and has been forwarded by various people and writers who would resent any suggestion that they were either Communists or fellow travellers. Thus a Sydney newspaper only this week permitted itself to say in a leading article that "the people's service, the Security Service, could become its masters - a new gestapo operating with the blessing of the law."

This kind of extravagant observation makes it necessary to remind the people of Australia that the Security organisation was established, and is maintained, not as the agent of any democratic Australian political party but as the skilled and zealous enemy of those who would seek to destroy democracy in Australia and bring us into the Communist orbit.

Is there anybody in Australia so naive as not to know the nature of the activity of the Australian Communist Party and its associates? They are not inhibited by considerations of patriotism. They follow the Party line; their leaders, from time to time, repair to Moscow for refresher courses and instructions; they have no more belief in democracy than has Mr. Khrushchev himself; their loyalty lies outside their own country. Anybody with the slightest knowledge of current events, both overseas and here, knows that the strategy and tactics of the Soviet leader are faithfully adhered to by his friends in Australia. It is therefore tremendously important to us who are here, and to our children and grandchildren who will hope to live in a free Australia, to realise what the Communist tactics are.

I say something about that because I believe that we are, in this very year, facing one of the crucial periods of history. I want to put one or two questions of sheer common-sense to Australian people, who are rich in that commodity. Do you suppose that the Australian Communists, not perhaps tremendously large in numbers, not electorally strong, but zealous, active and devoted, carry on their operations in public and according to the rules of Law? Do they publish their debates and their decisions or do they work underground, sneaking their way into Union control with the aid of unity tickets, putting themselves at the head of every new industrial demand, seeking at all times and by all means to undermine the authority of democratically elected Governments and always

directing their activities into places and positions where, in the event of a great War, they could do the greatest amount of damage in the shortest possible time on behalf of their foreign masters?

If your answer to these questions is in their favour, and if that represents the view of the Australian people, all I can say is that we are hell bent for disaster. But if your answer is against them, as every instinct in me tells me that it must be, then I ask you further would you wish to be without a Security organisation working quietly and secretly in the field of counter espionage? The Security Organisation must, in its very nature, be anonymous and unadvertised. Its activities must never be advertised for, if they were, it could not hope to deal effectively with the enemy's spies and agents.

My predecessor, Mr. Chifley, adopted the sensible practice of not answering questions about the Security Organisation which he established. I have pursued that practice. I will continue to pursue it. I decline to be put in a position where I may be called upon to handicap and indeed to render completely futile, the work of able and honest men who are in the true sense the protectors of our freedom.

The Sydney newspaper to which I referred earlier, in the very same article, affected to agree that the workings of our Security Service should not be made public and that, for obvious reasons, its sources of information should not be disclosed. But it went on to say "how would the Security Service be affected if not its workings but its accusations were made public!" Did you ever hear such a fatuous proposal? This indeed is a proposal for McCarthyism. Whenever the Security Service in pursuance of its duty reports to me what it has learned about Communist activities and about individuals involved in them, I am presumably, automatically, to name these people and to accuse them. Even a child could understand that if I resorted to such a practice, the very first question would be "what evidence have you to support these accusations?". And then to produce such evidence in any sense intelligible to our Law would involve a disclosure of all the relevant operations of the Service, the calling of Security officers as witnesses and a disclosure of their means of securing their information. If I were a Communist, I would like this!

I have a very great respect for the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation. Its honesty, its integrity and its objectivity are, in my long experience, beyond question. Of course the Communists distrust it and they occasionally induce some newspaper writers to spread their propaganda of distrust. But for myself I confess that the hostility of the Communists is something which I welcome. It proves the efficacy of the Organisation. It would be even more violently expressed if the Communists knew how much information we have, thanks to the Organisation, about their workings, their plans and their plots.

I seem to remember that when an iceberg is seen floating in the sea, its major bulk is under water. That is where the danger lies. What sort of a responsible Prime Minister of a free and democratic country would I be if, on your behalf, I insisted that our Security Organisation should conduct all its operations in the light of day, should be subject to public examination and the disclosure of all its activities, while the enemy worked in darkness and below the surface?

I take leave to warn you that this bitter campaign in

which so many decent people who have not thought the matter out may find themselves involved, not only represents a propaganda triumph for the Communists but, if it succeeded, would deprive us of a protective mechanism without which Communist propaganda would soon pass into Communist achievement.

There is another example of the kind of attack which is made on our national self-protecting measures, and the way in which people are misled about them. A lawyer was dismissed from temporary employment in the Attorney-General's Department after ten weeks' service. Even one of the greatest newspapers in the country saw fit in relation to this matter to criticise the dismissal on the ground that the victim, so called, had not been given any right of appeal or a chance to rebut any charges made against him. Now this, I confess, seems to me to exhibit a most careless attitude of mind. This was the case of a man temporarily employed. He had no rights of continuity. He was, on his own subsequent statement and on those made on his behalf in Parliament, engaged in work which gave him access to material of a security nature. He was assisting in the preparation of opinions relating to various Departments including External Affairs, C.S.I.R.O. and the Atomic Energy Commission. He therefore saw files covered by categories of "Confidential", "Secret" and "Most Secret." Those facts are admitted and therefore call for no rebuttal. It turned out, though perhaps it should have been discovered a few weeks earlier, that this man had been a very active Communist, beginning in 1947. I quote the words of his Champion in the Federal Parliament, who brought the case up, Mr. Ward, M.P. Mr. Ward said that this man "was a Communist Party candidate for the Lakenba electorate of the State Elections held in 1956. But in November, 1956 he was expelled from the Party". It might be said "Ah well, perhaps he was expelled from the Communist Party because he had repented, and had come out in opposition to their ideas." I must confess that if a man with that record came along to me, I don't think I would set him loose among my private papers! Would YOU? But it turned out, according to Mr. Ward, that he was not expelled because he ceased to be a Communist. Not at all! He was expelled for "criticising the people who were in charge of the Australian Communist Party for having suppressed the report of a speech by Mr. Khrushchev denouncing the Stalin regime." Here we have a man who is presumably a strong supporter of Mr. Khrushchev, and who objected to a speech of that gentleman not being published. I must say that under all these circumstances, which are proved by the man himself and his spokesman in Parliament, I can see no case for charges or appeal. I would have thought the Attorney-General's Department lacking in its duty if it had not taken the action which it did in fact take.

You may quite naturally say to me, after my brief observations on the Communist menace, "What are you doing about it?" To this first of all I reply that the greatest line of defence against the Communist manoeuvres is an informed, healthy and active public opinion. That is what I am tonight trying to urge you to create. But in so far as the question relates to the Government I will answer it. As you will remember, we passed Legislation on this matter some years ago, the particular purpose of which was to place a ban on the Communist Party and proscribe its activities. This legislation was challenged successfully in the High Court, which in effect held that legislation about Communism as such was beyond the legislative powers of the Commonwealth Parliament. We then sought constitutional powers by an amendment which was rejected by the electors at a Referendum. Being in consequence thrown back upon more limited and indirect measures we presented to the Commonwealth Parliament a law relating to secret ballots for union offices, because we felt that if union members were able

by properly conducted secret ballot to vote for union officers, the rank and file of the unions, who have no love for Communism, would by a free and un-threatened vote, have an opportunity of getting rid of Communist leaders who, while they profess to serve the interests of the union, are in reality serving the interests of their overseas principals. It is worth noting that although this legislation went through Parliament, the Labour Opposition unanimously voted against it. For a time the secret ballot law was remarkably effective. Many Communist officials were dismissed. The Industrial Groups, as they were called in the unions, men and women devoted to opposition to Communism, were able to put into operation legal machinery which gave all the members of their particular union their opportunity. But within a few years the Australian Labour Party, under its strange leadership, began an active campaign against these Groups. It sought to help the left-wing elements in the unions. Whether it realised it or not, its activities were designed to strengthen the position of the Communists and to weaken that of their opponents. This remarkable campaign by the leaders of Labour soon produced the formation of an anti-Communist labour group in the Federal Parliament, every member of which, as far as the House of Representatives was concerned, subsequently lost his Seat. The D.L.P. about which there is so much contention, was formed as a consequence of this remarkable A.L.P. policy. As a result of A.L.P. action, anti-Communist activities in the unions were frowned upon and discouraged. Those Communist union officers who had been dismissed found themselves coming back.

We have reaped the harvest of this fantasy in the form of some widespread strikes organised and carried through by Communist led unions, for example in the Railways. The A.L.P. ought to be proud of the results of its work. For that party has, in its anxiety to please the Communists, put itself in a position of ambiguity which is the major reason for its continued existence in Opposition. It has indeed developed a strange sense of national values. Even Mr. Calwell himself, who must personally have no sympathy whatever with the atheistic materialism of the Communist creed, was reported only a few years back as telling the New South Wales Labour Conference that "Capitalism was the No. 1 enemy in Australia and Communism only No. 2". If this means anything (and of course it may not) it means that he would regard the overthrow of capitalism and the institution of state socialism as a more important task than the defeat of our greatest external and internal enemy. Some of his Parliamentary followers have made even more astonishing remarks. Early this year a Labour Senator admitted that he would much rather support the Communist than support the D.L.P., while only in June the Secretary of the Melbourne Trades Hall Council told the Victorian State A.L.P. Conference "that he would choose the Communist in front of the D.L.P. or Liberal".

It is clear from this that in the fight against Communism no help is to be expected from the A.L.P. The position therefore is, in practice, that the great weapon of the secret ballot, conferred upon the members of unions for their own protection, has been in large measure sabotaged by our political opponents.

Again, we have waged an active campaign against the deplorable practice of the issue of Unity Tickets for union elections. In such tickets, the A.L.P. Candidate and the Communist candidate stand side by side and help each other to achieve victory. What is the attitude of Labour on this matter? I can only describe it as ambiguous and futile. Sometimes it says that there is no such animal as a Unity Ticket. When a few actual Unity Tickets are exhibited in all

their nakedness the reply is that "we really cannot do anything about it. It is a Union matter and we do not interfere". What a remarkable attitude this is! They did not hesitate to interfere in union affairs in an attempt to destroy the Industrial Groups. But they have no power or desire to interfere in union affairs to destroy the Communists!

The latest example of what we are in course of doing relates to the Crimes Bill recently introduced by the Attorney-General. It will be open to full public examination pending resumption of the debate in a few weeks' time. That the Communists are conducting a campaign against any law which proposes to increase the defences of the Nation against treachery and sabotage is something I can well understand. The Communist newspapers have already launched a full-blooded campaign, full of the usual vituperation. That campaign is to be expected, since in their very nature active Communists are to be expected to prefer the interests of their foreign masters to the safety of their own land. But I greatly fear that, as usual, a lot of people who are not Communists at all are beginning to be fooled by the propaganda. Part of that propaganda relates to the Security Service, about which I have said something. Part of it consists of allegations that the proposed legislation violates the normal rights of an individual who is charged with a crime. It is, I suppose, gratifying testimony to the traditions of British justice, whose principles are utterly rejected by Communism, that even the Communists should seek to obtain protection from British-Australian law while they go on with their evil work of undermining it.

You would be here for a very long time if I endeavoured to reproduce the speech made by Sir Garfield Barwick when he introduced the Crimes Bill. I hope that people who are really interested will read it, and will do so before committing themselves to public comment.

But I will take just one example in this Bill which shows how careful you must be not to be led away by superficial commentators.

The Bill contains a provision about sabotage, the elements of which are that an article directly material to the safety or defence of Australia is destroyed, damaged or impaired for a purpose prejudicial or intended to be prejudicial to the safety or defence of the Commonwealth. To most normal Australians that would appear to be a very proper matter to be dealt with. The clause goes on to provide that the Crown must prove all the elements of the offence. There is no question of putting the onus of proof on the accused. But there is a sentence to the effect that in establishing the offence the Crown may rely, for the purpose of inferring the purpose for which the proved act is done, upon the "known character of the accused as proved". This is where the critics leap to action. They point out that in an ordinary criminal case no evidence can be given about the character of the accused man, except in certain circumstances which are not relevant for my present purpose, and that consequently this proposed law departs from the normal criminal rule.

Now it is true that in ordinary prosecutions for criminal offences, the normal rule prevents the Crown from leading evidence about the accused's character. But in the Commonwealth Crimes Bill we are dealing with offences against the very safety of the Nation and, in particular, offences which in the present state of the world are more likely to be committed by potential enemies than by any others. Should the Nation under these circumstances be precluded from proving the



character and associations of the accused, not as a substitute for clearly establishing the acts which he performed, but as some evidence as to the purpose for which they were performed. Let me take a simple example -

A man is employed at say Salisbury on important work in connection with the construction of missiles or rockets. When a particular piece of very costly, complicated and significant equipment is completed and is being tested, one of the men engaged on the job drops a heavy spanner into the works, literally, and causes irreparable damage, throwing the whole programme out of gear and setting back the achievement of an important defence project. He could not, under the proposed law, be convicted of sabotage unless it was proved that he did the act complained of. It might be that there could be proved against him statements that indicated that he had the purpose of sabotaging the machinery. But in the absence of such evidence the man might well be heard to say, when charged with sabotage, that his hand was greasy and the spanner "just slipped out". Now suppose further that the Crown, having investigated this man, was able to call evidence and prove to the satisfaction of the jury that the man was an active Communist, closely associated with other Communists. Does anybody really tell me that the Crown should not be at liberty to prove these facts, which must have the most obvious bearing on the purposes which actuated the man in the act which he performed? That is what the provision in the Crimes Bill sets out to achieve. The onus of proof, I repeat, is in every aspect, on the Crown. If the jury has real doubts upon any element in the charge, the man will be acquitted. Yet we are going to be told, quite frequently, that the Communist activities of the man should be kept a dark and deadly secret from the tribunal. I have given you this example to indicate to you that the Communist propaganda in Australia is not always engaged in by Communists but is sometimes engaged in, innocently, by people who seem to be quite unaware of the grave problems which confront the world and the grave dangers which may well arise inside our own country.

I have chosen to speak on this great problem tonight, not only because it is in all our minds as a result of the activities in New York, but also because I do not desire that the issue of Communism should be regarded as something suddenly whipped up in the currency of an election. It is at a time like this, when no election is in the offing, that there is an opportunity for asking the people of Australia to study the realities of the great national issues, to beware of our enemies whether open or hidden, and to establish and maintain a healthy public opinion against which either the cunning or the violence of Communism will be unable to prevail.

---