

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

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STATEMENT



BY

The PRIME MINISTER, the Rt. Hon.  
R. G. MENZIES, C.H., Q.C., M.P.,

ON

**INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.**

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[From the "Parliamentary Debates," 20th October, 1960.]

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**Mr. MENZIES** (Kooyong—Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs) [8.0]. —by leave—Sir, I arrived at the United Nations General Assembly on the afternoon of Friday, 30th September. The general debate was on. President Soekarno spoke for two hours. He circulated a copy of his speech. The speech consisted of 66 pages of foolscap. There was an added slip circulated. It was marked "Vital", and was to be inserted at page 65. This sheet contained the terms of the proposed five-power resolution, of which I became aware for the first time, the five powers being Ghana, India, the United Arab Republic,

Yugoslavia and Indonesia. The terms of the proposed resolution were these—

The General Assembly

Deeply concerned with the recent deterioration in international relations which threatens the world with grave consequences

Aware of the great expectancy of the world that this Assembly will assist in helping to prepare the way for the easing of world tension

Conscious of the grave and urgent responsibility that rests on the United Nations to initiate helpful efforts

Requests, as a first urgent step, the President of the United States of America and the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to renew their contacts interrupted recently so that their declared willingness to find solutions of the outstanding problems by negotiation may be progressively implemented.

For some reason my distinguished friend, the Prime Minister of India, rose at the end of President Soekarno's speech and formally moved the resolution. I was, I confess, greatly concerned about the terms of the resolution, not because of its opening paragraphs, with which everybody would agree, but because of the operative clause, that operative clause being the request that the President of the United States of America—named as such—and the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics should renew their contacts.

That was a very, very important proposal. First of all, it had defects and it had dangers. "To renew their contacts, interrupted recently" was a clear reference, if to anything, back to the Paris conference when there was to be a summit conference, when the four people were to meet. That was the only period of interruption, and the contacts which were interrupted were interrupted at Paris when those four great men were to meet. Yet, Sir, the resolution moved by Mr. Nehru did not call for a summit meeting of the four; it called for something quite different. It did not call on the four great men, the four responsible men, the four men who led atomic powers, to meet again; it called on two people out of the four. That seemed to me to lend colour to what I believe to be the false but not uncommon propaganda that the real world issue is between the Soviet Union and the United States of America.

The first real step was to get the four atomic powers, the four powers which have, beyond all understanding, the great powers of peace and war in their hands, to meet. I would have thought that that was the first thing—to get those four people to come together, not because of some oddities about Great Britain or the United States or France—not at all—but because they happened to be the people who had atomic weapons and who, therefore, had enormous powers of life and death for all the rest of us in the world. Something could come, from my point of view, of a meeting between the four; nothing could come of a resolution which said that two out of the four ought to meet together.

That resolution was moved, and then the distinguished Prime Minister of Great

Britain, the Right Honorable Harold Macmillan, and I—he very naturally, and I by some chance—were invited to come to Washington to see the President of the United States early on Sunday morning, 2nd October. Very naturally we agreed. We said we would go.

On Saturday, 1st October, I had lunch with Mr. Macmillan and with Lord Home. We had a little talk and we then flew to Washington. I dined with them at the Australian Embassy, with our Ambassador, Mr. Harold Beale. We dined, and we talked about these matters. Like me, they were troubled about the resolution—and they were troubled about it for very obvious reasons. Straight-out support of the resolution would be travelling, we all thought, in the wrong direction. Here was a resolution which said, "Let two people get together and then everything may be arranged". But, on the other hand, straight-out opposition—if we all voted "No"—would be misinterpreted. People would look at the first three or four recitals in the resolution, all in favour of peace, and then, if we voted "No", we would be told that we did not want peace. Therefore, straight-out opposition would be misinterpreted.

That was a very difficult problem, Sir. I suggested on the Saturday night that an amendment in positive terms might be put, and my distinguished friends, Mr. Macmillan and Lord Home, having heard what I had to say about this matter, said that they would like to think it over. On the next morning at 9.30—a rather intolerable hour on Sunday morning—we went to the White House. My former colleague, our distinguished Ambassador, Mr. Beale, was there, and we had a close discussion—President Eisenhower; Mr. Herter, the Secretary of State; Mr. Macmillan, the distinguished Prime Minister of Great Britain; Lord Home, the Foreign Secretary, and myself.

I think, Sir, that I might be allowed to say that that morning, and under those circumstances, the Americans were worried about the position that had been created by the five-power motion. The President himself had received letters from the five powers—India, Indonesia, Ghana, Yugoslavia and the United Arab Republic—enclosing the resolution. The President had

been working on a draft reply setting out reasons why a personal and special meeting with Khrushchev was not, in the then atmosphere, acceptable. I would not wish honorable members to believe that this was a rather dour attitude on the part of the United States of America. All who have witnessed these things know that Khrushchev had made it just about as difficult as anybody could make it for a meeting to occur.

In the course of the talks on the Sunday morning, I said—and let me say at once that I take full responsibility for this—that I thought it quite useless to be coming down in favour of a resolution which, on the face of it, did some wrong things, as I understood them, or to be coming down flat-footed against the resolution, in which case a lot of people would misinterpret the vote and misinterpret the views. Therefore, for better or for worse, and I still think for better, I said, “This kind of resolution is not one that you can flat-footedly oppose or flat-footedly support. Why do we not have an amendment of this resolution which will bring the whole of the United Nations back to the realities of the position?”

I say this, because I understand there are some people who think that I was a sort of “fall guy”—I think that is the term. On the contrary. I have great pride in being the Prime Minister of this country and in having views of my own on behalf of my country. Therefore, I said, “Well, why not have an amendment? Why meet this thing full face? Let us have an amendment which in positive terms will say what we believe to be the truth?” We had a discussion about that. I do not want anybody to believe that they all agreed at once with what I had to say, but at least I said it.

I want honorable members to understand that the United States of America was itself deeply concerned about this matter. It knew that to have a resolution passed which put the whole onus on the President of the United States was wrong. The Americans knew that this was putting the whole situation out of balance. They knew, as I believe, that this idea that the whole conflict in the world is between the United States and the Soviet Union is a false idea, a wicked idea; something that has been devised and promulgated by

people for no good purpose. Therefore, they were deeply concerned. So, Sir, after an hour and a half of discussion that morning, I said that I thought we ought to have an amendment. I did not care very much who moved it, but we ought to have an amendment. There we were—the President of the United States of America; Mr. Herter, the Secretary of State; Mr. Macmillan, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom; Lord Home, the United Kingdom Foreign Minister; and myself. We were all discussing this matter to and fro.

In the meantime, President Eisenhower had received a letter from the five powers, signed by Dr. Nkrumah of Ghana, and containing the resolution, about which I will say something later. The President himself had been, for the previous 24 hours, discussing with his advisers the problem of how this letter ought to be answered. For better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, I came in with my idea that you could not deal with a problem of this kind by saying “Yes” or “No”; that you might deal with it by saying, “Here is a positive proposal”. And the positive proposal that I had to make was that there ought to be a renewed effort to get a Summit meeting of the Four—not some theoretical meeting of the Two, but a positive Summit meeting of the Four.

We debated that and they said, “Well, do you have an amendment in mind?” I said, “Yes”. They said, “What is it?” I indicated it in a rather vague way, and said, “All right. I will go away and draft it.” This is very interesting. We finished at 11 o'clock on Sunday morning. I went off, having promised to draft an amendment and to send it to the Secretary of State, Mr. Herter, at lunch-time, and to Mr. Macmillan and Lord Home. They got it by lunch-time. There it was. With some small amendment, that was the amendment that I moved in the United Nations General Assembly. They received it at lunch-time, and after lunch we met at the British Embassy—the British Prime Minister, Lord Home, Mr. Herter and I. They had the terms of this proposed amendment. By the time we had talked it out on the Sunday, I understood—I have no reason to believe now that I had been wrong—that they approved of it.

I think it is proper, Sir, to tell this House in my own country what the proposal was.

In the early part of the five-power resolution there had been three paragraphs with which nobody could quarrel. My amendment was designed, not to omit the earlier paragraphs, which were quite good, but to omit the last paragraph. The amendment was in these terms—

Omit the last paragraph of the draft resolution submitted by Ghana, India, Indonesia, the United Arab Republic and Yugoslavia (A/4522), and substitute therefor the following:

I must ask honorable members to forgive me for this strange form of words used in the United Nations—

RECALLING that a Conference between the President of the United States of America, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the President of the French Republic and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was arranged to take place in Paris on 17 May 1960, in order that these four leaders should examine matters of particular and major concern for their four nations,

I think that is something that every honorable member would agree with: Recalling the fact that the four great leaders had met, not to discuss all the problems of the world, but to discuss matters on which they, as the leaders of the four great atomic powers, might have something to say. The amendment continued—

RECALLING FURTHER that the Conference did not actually begin its work,

NOTING that the President of the United States of America, the President of the French Republic and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland thereupon made a public statement in the terms following:

I quote the words of three out of the four—

“They regret that these discussions, so important for world peace, could not take place. For their part, they remain unshaken in their conviction that all outstanding international questions should be settled not by the use or threat of force, but by peaceful means through negotiation. They themselves remain ready to take part in such negotiations at any suitable time in the future.”

I think it is not a bad idea to recall the minds of honorable members to the fact that three out of the four leaders of the powers at Paris used those words, and meant them. I went on from that to say in my amendment—

Believing that much benefit for the world could arise from a co-operative meeting of the Heads of Government of these four nations in relation to those problems which particularly concern them,—

Obviously, those problems were, for the atomic powers, Berlin and all those things which are flash-points of international affairs—

BELIEVING FURTHER that progress towards the solution of those problems would be a material contribution to the general work for peace of the United Nations,

URGES that such a meeting should be held at the earliest practicable date.

I would have expected, Sir, speaking in my own Parliament and among my own people, that nothing would be said against that view. Here it was. Here was a call to the four great powers to sit down together and try to make the world more safe for ordinary people.

I put in my amendment. That was on a Monday. At that moment, it was well known that Khrushchev was not going to meet Eisenhower—unless, of course, Eisenhower went through the remarkable performance of apologizing about the U2 incident and withdrawing all his claims about the RB47 incident—and that the President himself had said that he was not going to meet Khrushchev on those terms. Therefore, the position was that the current President of the United States and the current—if that is the right word—head of the Soviet Union were not willing to meet personally without conditions which mutually were completely unacceptable. On top of all that—and let us be sensible about this matter—at the very time at which we were having this debate, a new President of the United States was about to be elected, and what he would do or say, who would know?

I want to pause here, Sir, to make a few observations, because I have been told by my friends—nobody is so frank as a friend—that some complaints have been voiced in Australia. I have tried to understand them, because I am really a tolerably broad-minded fellow. I understand that the first complaint is that I was being used by the United States and the United Kingdom, which happen to be the two greatest powers in the free world and our most powerful and devoted friends. I hope I have answered that complaint. For better or for worse, the proposal for an amendment was mine, not theirs. I thought, in my new-found innocence, that Australia was entitled to a mind of its own. Indeed, I have been told by some of my friends opposite in the past

their great complaint is that we do not have a mind of our own. As I have said, I thought we were entitled to a mind of our own. Believing that a certain course was right, I advocated it. I need not add any words to that.

In the second place, I gather from the critics that, in the interests of Australia, I should have preferred pleasing the five nations which I have named by supporting something with which I strongly disagreed—and with which I utterly disagree at this moment—to acting in concert with our most powerful and most unambiguous friends. If that is the price of admiralty, then I resign from admiralty. I have learnt, perhaps, very little in my life, but I have learnt to know who are our friends.

Contrary to my expectation, it was ruled that the five-power resolution and my amendment should be discussed separately from the general debate, on Wednesday morning, 5th October. My major speech—which appears to have missed fire here, for some reason or other—had been listed for the afternoon. Therefore, unlike anybody else at the United Nations, I had to make two separate speeches instead of one. Therefore, on Wednesday morning—knowing that on Wednesday afternoon I had to make my most considerable speech—I moved my amendment.

At question time this morning, when I was treated so kindly, my distinguished friend, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Whitlam) said to me, "I would like to know what you said on your amendment". I want to say at once that I have arranged that the full text of what I said will be made available to members, because, unhappily, it does not appear to have been rather widely reported. I will permit myself the luxury of quoting a few of the things that I said that morning to the cold and unresponsive audience of the United Nations General Assembly. I think I should do so. A motion had been put down in the name of five powers, and I was moving an amendment. Among other things, I said—

Let me say at once, that nobody can more warmly appreciate the high motives of the sponsors of the resolution than I do. They feel, no doubt, that it would be a bad thing if all the Heads of State and Heads of Government departed from this Assembly without leaving behind some visible evidence in the shape of a decision. They believed,

no doubt, that the people of the world would be disappointed and perhaps disillusioned if we all departed and nothing at all emerged. They therefore introduced this resolution and part of its purpose, as it has been explained to me, was to try to take advantage of the presence in North America at the same time of President Eisenhower and Mr. Khrushchev. But if I believe, as I do, that the effect of the resolution, if carried, would be undesirable, then I am bound to say so.

I hope that honorable members will realize that that was an authentic Australian voice upon this matter. I went on to talk about the conference in Paris—the conference which did not occur, the conference which broke down because of Khrushchev's attitude. I said—

Many of us had thought that the discussions about nuclear tests could have been brought within reach of finality.

I still believe that. I continued—

After all, the great nuclear powers were not so widely separated on this issue that some effective lead could not have been given. But the Paris conference failed even to begin, because the leader of the Soviet Union would not participate. I have my own view about his stated reasons, but at this moment I would not desire to debate them.

This was said in the morning.

The material and relevant fact was that the leaders of the United States, the United Kingdom and France, promptly made a statement in which they said:—

I trust that this will be remembered for years, but not, I hope, with tears—

"They regret that these discussion, so important for world peace, could not take place. For their part, they remain unshaken in their conviction that all outstanding international questions should be settled not by the use or threat of force, but by peaceful means through negotiation. They themselves remain ready to take part in such negotiations at any suitable time in the future."

My speech continued—

This, it will be agreed, was a fair enough proposition, good-tempered and tenacious in the cause of peace. Should it be rejected now? If we have now reached a point in our discussions when we feel that talks of this kind should proceed, why should we not say so? Why should we, by carrying the five-nation resolution, dismiss the United Kingdom and France from the first act?

Then I went on to say this, and it is worth remembering—

Mr. Nehru himself has frankly stated that there are serious limits to the usefulness of bilateral talks; but what I would wish to know is whether any valid reason can be advanced for supposing that in some way the President of the United States was the stumbling block, and that therefore

in any renewed discussions he should be the one leader of what we call the Western World to be brought under persuasion or pressure.

My own view is that we should encourage the resumption of these summit talks. No doubt, a meeting at the Summit cannot be arranged quickly or without preparation. We shall have to feel our way forward, and a way may be found. But it will not be found in the next few days, and I doubt whether it can be found by trying to rush at it. The Australian amendment reflects what I believe is the view of the majority here, that we should try to recapture the hope that was offered to us in the early part of this year when we were moving towards a Summit meeting.

I concluded this excerpt by saying—

There may indeed be other amendments. I should like to say for myself that I am much less concerned about the details of draftsmanship than I am to avoid the perpetuation of the notion that the world conflict is between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Well, Sir, before the morning session ended, in the course of which I regret to say that my distinguished friend, Mr. Nehru, made a somewhat remarkable commentary upon my amendment and my speech, the President indicated that two further amendments were being circulated and that the matter would be concluded at the night session. This was on the Wednesday. I will by-pass, for the moment, the afternoon session. At the night session Cambodia, which after all is an Asian country, indicated that it would have supported my amendment as a separate resolution. This was a merely technical objection to its form. For some reason or other, and I still do not understand it, because in these United Nations affairs I am a new boy, the foreshadowed further amendments that had been referred to by the President in the morning were not submitted.

So, the first thing which happened after Cambodia had said this was that we voted on the Australian amendment. Of course, the result has given immense pleasure to a few people. I do not know why they should be so pleased that an Australian amendment should be defeated. Still, one lives and learns. So the Assembly voted on my amendment. It was supported, on the vote, by France, by the United Kingdom, by the United States of America, by Canada and by ourselves—not a bad voting group, I think. There were 45 people who voted “No” and 43 who abstained. Very interestingly, among the people who abstained and so said neither “Yes” nor “No”

were the Soviet Union, the entire Soviet bloc, Japan, Laos, the Philippines, Thailand, and Cambodia—for the reason I have referred to. It was then proposed that separate votes should be taken—this is a highly technical but fascinating problem for us who are parliamentarians—on the inclusion in the five-power resolution of the words “the President of”. See what I mean? The President of the United States of America—and then “the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of”. This, of course, is something which we in our innocence in this Parliament know nothing about. Anyhow, it was proposed that separate votes should be taken, and my distinguished friend, the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Nehru, objected, I thought, with great force, that if these words were omitted the five-power resolution would be meaningless because, of course, diplomatic relations had not been cut off between the United States of America and the Soviet Union. They had never been interrupted.

I might say I thought he had a great deal of force in that but, as I did not like the five-power resolution, I remained relatively unmoved, except intellectually, by this argument. Sir, what happened? Separate votes were put to the vote of the Assembly. I want to mention this to honorable members because some people rather foolishly have tried to make it appear that I, representing you in this Parliament, had done something foolish and had been left out on a limb. But when the separate votes were put to the vote those in favour of separate votes—in other words those who must be regarded as being not in favour of the five-power resolution as a whole—were 37, and against them were 36, with 22 abstentions. It is lovely, you know. Some of you have been there, but I had not been there before. Somebody says “abstention” in English and somebody, being brought up in the French language, says “abstention” in French, but it amounts to the same thing. There we were, 37 in favour of separate votes, 36 against and 22 abstentions. Those in favour of separate votes,—and I mention this because some silly fellow who tried to pretend that I am becoming bad friends with the Asian countries suggested the contrary—included Pakistan, China, Japan, the Philippines and Thailand.

And if I may permit myself to say so, I do not mind finding myself standing, as to three of these countries, alongside our colleagues in the South-East Asian Treaty. When the separate votes were taken, because it had been decided there ought to be separate votes, those in favour of retaining what I will call the "separate phrases"—the President of the United States of America, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union—numbered 41 with 37 against and 17 abstentions. The President ruled that there should be a two-thirds majority. There was not a two-thirds majority, and the President's ruling was upheld. All this was going on in the one day when oddities of all kinds—Heaven help me!—were being published in my own country. Those who voted against the retention of these personal phrases, in other words those who voted against the idea that we should be telling President Eisenhower and Chairman Khrushchev to get together, included all of the South-East Asian countries. That, I think, is something worth noting.

After all this argy-bargy—I think that is the expression—Mr. Nehru, the very distinguished leader of India, stood up and said that, having regard to the voting, the five-power resolution would be withdrawn. So at one o'clock in the morning of the same sitting day the five-power resolution had gone. You may ask what had happened to my amendment submitted on behalf of Australia. Many people have been eager beavers to say that my amendment was just ridiculous and that I had made a fool of my country. When I make a fool of this country I hope that you will expel me.

The fact was that by one o'clock in the morning the resolution to which my amendment had been an unsuccessful alternative had been withdrawn—withdrawn because other amendments had been moved or other procedures had been adopted which persuaded its sponsors to withdraw it.

I want to stress to honorable members that this is not a party political matter. All of us are Australians and we want to feel that our country counts. The fact is that by the end of that day two remarkable things had occurred. First, the proposal sponsored primarily by Yugoslavia, the United Arab Republic, Indonesia and others

had gone. It had been withdrawn. In the meantime, in the course of the voting, four atomic powers—the only four atomic powers—had been called to the ballot. You may think that I am rather foolish, but at any rate I called them to the ballot. Four of them, Great Britain, France and the United States, had voted unhesitatingly for a convening of the Summit conference as contained in my amendment, and the Soviet Union had not voted "No", but had abstained from voting.

Four days later, under circumstances which vex the honorable member for East Sydney (Mr. Ward), I had a talk with the head of the Soviet Union, Mr. Khrushchev, in which he made it abundantly clear that he wanted a Summit conference. That was why he had not voted against my amendment. He wanted a Summit conference and by one o'clock—after midnight that day—I went back feeling in my simple vanity that at any rate we had now got to a state of affairs in which there would be, after the American presidential election, a Summit conference. It is very difficult, even for such an old hand as myself, to understand why this achievement—because it was something of an achievement—should be regarded as in some way discreditable to our country, to which most of us were born.

To sum up, Sir, my amendment was lost, but the resolution was withdrawn. Three atomic powers had voted for a Summit meeting and the Soviet Union had abstained. Not one of the four atomic powers was opposed to a Summit meeting.

I pass on from that. I made a speech that afternoon. In my simplicity I thought that that was the major speech, and my distinguished colleague, the Treasurer, who was present probably—God bless him—thought likewise, because the speech in the morning was on this technical problem. As I have said, I made a speech in the afternoon. It lasted for about 40 minutes. It is very interesting for an Australian to go abroad and make a speech on the great United Nations platform. This was the only occasion in my life when the American press swept a speech of mine into its columns. But that did not happen here in Australia. A pity! It is a pity that we should have this inferiority complex because after all, Mr. Speaker, in my speech in the

afternoon I had made up my mind that if Mr. Khrushchev were to come and bully people—taunt people, and beat things on the table, including his shoes—it was really high time that somebody speaking for 10,000,000 people—that is all—should make it quite clear to him that we are not frightened. Therefore I let myself go, as you might say. But of course, what happened in the United Nations Assembly, apart from all the beating on the table and the wearing out of boot leather which was all very funny from our point of view? I think that Mr. Khrushchev wanted to persuade or terrify new nations into coming into his camp. We know nothing about that. We are not easily persuaded, and we certainly are not easily terrified into somebody else's camp. But that seemed to be his idea. He had his heelers with him. There were with him about half a dozen representatives from his satellite nations who would not dare to applaud without first looking round to see whether he gave the high sign. Wonderful! I wish that I could organize that sort of thing some day! Mr. Khrushchev talked about colonialism. He tried to read into the minds of some of the delegates a bitterness about their old status. He was talking for the most part to people who represented countries in Africa which, by wise providence on the part of the United Kingdom, had ceased to be colonies and had become independent nations. I thought that was a monstrosity. Anyhow he did it. Therefore, I thought on your behalf—if you do not agree with what I did you will say so—that I ought to use a few words mildly about this situation. Let me quote one or two of the words that I used, because apparently there has been some difficulty in reporting them in Australia. I said—

I beg of all these distinguished representatives—

I was referring to the representatives of the new countries, primarily in Africa—

to put bitterness out of their minds. So far as they are concerned, the past has gone. The dead past should bury its dead. It is the present and future that matter. Most of them know that political independence can be won more swiftly than economic independence.

I pause here to repeat the last sentence because some rather silly fellow has said that I was not on the same wave-length as

the new countries. I leave it to the House to decide. I said—

Most of them know that political independence can be won more swiftly than economic independence. And yet both are essential to true nationhood. Under these circumstances, nations which are older in self-government should not be looking at new nations as people whose support should be canvassed, but as people who need objective assistance with no strings if the material prosperity of their people is to be improved.

It is one of the significant things in contemporary history that the advanced industrial nations are, because of their scientific and technological advantages, improving their standards at a phenomenal rate; while less advanced countries, lacking the same techniques on the same scale, are advancing at a slower rate.

This is not one of the facts of life which one may observe and, having observed, forget. Its significance is that the gap between the advanced and the relatively unadvanced tends, unless we do something about it, to grow wider every year. It is not a state of affairs which civilized and humane thinking can indefinitely tolerate.

I said this on Australia's behalf, and I am sure that no honorable member will disagree with it.

If in this Assembly and in the nations here represented we will constantly remember that our trust is for humanity and that, indeed, the United Nations itself has no other reason for existence, we will more and more concentrate our efforts on providing economic and technical help for new nations to the very limit of our capacity; not because we want, to put it crudely, to buy them into our own ideas of things, not only because we really and passionately believe in independence and freedom, but also because we believe that our fellow human beings everywhere are entitled to decent conditions of life, and have enough sense to know that independence and freedom are mere words unless the ordinary people of free countries have a chance of a better life to-morrow.

This point of view seemed to me to underlie the temperate and persuasive speech of Mr. Macmillan and other speeches made by democratic leaders.

But there are others who have so far misunderstood the spirit of the United Nations as to resort to open or veiled threats, blatant and in some instances lying propaganda, a clearly expressed desire to divide and conquer. They should learn that "threatened men live long", and that free nations, however small, are not susceptible to bullying.

I am still quoting myself, which is an ill business. I continued—

I will permit myself the luxury of developing this theme, though quite briefly, in the particular and in the general.

I hope honorable members will not think me boring but this was a phase of my



speech which, I believe, had an immense impact on the Assembly. I said—

In his opening speech, Mr. Khrushchev made his usual great play about "colonialism". As Mr. Macmillan reminded us, the answer to much of his story is to be found in the presence in this Assembly of many new nations, once colonies and now independent.

Mr. Khrushchev said among other things: "Nations who oppress other nations cannot themselves be free. Every free nation should help the peoples still oppressed to win freedom and independence." This was, in one sense, a most encouraging observation. It made me wonder whether we were perhaps about to see a beginning of an era in which the nations of Europe, which were once independent and are now under Soviet Communist control, are going to receive the blessings of freedom and independence. What a glorious vista of freedom would be opened up by such a policy! How much it would do to relieve the causes of tension, and promote peace!

I venture to say that it is an act of complete hypocrisy for a Communist leader to denounce colonialism as if it were an evil characteristic of the Western Powers, when the facts are that the greatest colonial power now existing is the Soviet Union itself.

This brings me now to the point. I said—

Further, in the course of this Assembly, Mr. Khrushchev was good enough to make some references to my own country and its position in relation to the territories of Papua and New Guinea. He calls upon Australia to give immediate full independence and self-government to New Guinea and Papua. As a piece of rhetoric this no doubt has its points. But it exhibits a disturbing want of knowledge of these territories and of the present stage of their development. Nobody who knows anything about these territories and their indigenous people could doubt for a moment that for us in Australia to abandon our responsibilities would be an almost criminal act.

I am quoting this part of my speech because, subject to correction, I feel that these words impressed themselves upon our friend. I said—

Here is a country which not so long ago was to a real extent in a state of savagery. It passed through the most gruesome experiences during the last war. It came out of it without organized administration and, in a sense, without hope.

It is not a nation in the accepted term. Its people have no real structure of association except through our administration. Its groups are isolated among mountains, forests, rivers and swamps. It is estimated that there are more than 200 different languages.

Probably my distinguished colleague, the Minister for Territories (Mr. Hasluck) would tell me that I underestimated the number. I continued—

The work to be done to create and foster a sense and organism of community is therefore enormous.

But, with a high sense of responsibility, Australia has attacked its human task in this almost unique area.

Since the war some form of civilized order has been established over many thousands of square miles which were previously unexplored.

We have built up an extensive administration service . . . . .

Really, I do not need to trouble honorable members about this. I told them the simple, dramatic and moving story of what has been done in Papua and New Guinea, and I ended by saying—

I could go on like this almost indefinitely.

The achievement has not been without cost. We have put many more millions into Papua and New Guinea than have ever come out.

We have established many local government councils, democratically elected on an adult franchise, and we have set up a Legislative Council on which there is a growing number of indigenous members.

Mr. Khrushchev includes us in his diatribe against "foreign administrators who despise and loot the local population". I have shown how exactly opposite to the truth this is in our case. His further extravaganzas about "the overseer's lash" and the "executioner's axe" must relate to areas with which he is more familiar than he is with New Guinea and Papua.

We do not need to be lectured on such matters by a man who has no record whatever of having brought colonial people into freedom and self-government. We indeed are proud to be in the British tradition of the 20th century—a tradition which has by sensible degrees and enlightened administration brought the blessings of self government and a seat in the councils of the world to many former colonies.

I also spoke about neutralism, and I inflict this on honorable members—

Neutralism is, of course, one of those rather rotund words which does not readily admit of definition. If, when we say that a nation is neutral, we mean that it will not under any circumstances take arms in any conflict which does not concern the protection of its own immediate boundaries, it seems to be a notion hard to reconcile with the Charter of the United Nations which contemplates under certain circumstances the use of combined force in terms of the Charter itself.

Mr. Nehru, the distinguished leader of India, has not, I think, used the word "neutral" in this sense. He and his government maintain large defences in their own country, and are active supporters of the Charter. What he has consistently made clear is that he stands for non-alignment, in the sense that he will not engage in any special military or quasi-military alliance.

My own country does not subscribe to this view, since we are party, for example, to the South-East Asian Treaty with the military associations which are either expressed or implied in it. But we do not quarrel with each other about these matters. I would think it impossible to believe that some of

the greatest leaders of so-called "neutral" countries would regard themselves as being neutral in the great conflict of ideas.

Sir, having said all that at, I am afraid, too great length, I now turn, quite briefly I hope, to some general observations about this rather historic General Assembly meeting. First of all, a determined attack was made by the Communist powers upon new nations to encourage what I have already described as "retrospective bitterness". I do not think that on this matter the table-thumping succeeded.

In the second place, attempts were made to defeat or to undermine the Secretary-General. In particular, a very remarkable proposal was put forward that there should be three secretaries-general instead of one; and for some very odd reason, one ought to be from what we would call the Communist group but what Mr. Khrushchev—I apologize to my friends opposite—calls the socialist group, a second from the neutralist group and a third from the capitalist group of which, no doubt, I was one of the representatives. There ought to be three secretaries-general, and everybody would have a veto on everybody else, and therefore, of course, nothing would happen, and therefore the United Nations would come to an end. He did not get very much success with that remarkable proposal.

But there are some aspects of his general campaign about which I think I should report to this Parliament. First of all, I believe that what he has been saying and what he has been doing are designed to divide the United Nations into the disunited nations. After all, if there is one thing about the United Nations that matters, it is that it possesses a sort of universality. As I said in my own speech, he wants to produce a result like ancient Gaul—according to our late respected friend, Julius Caesar, all Gaul was divided into three parts. This man wants to divide the United Nations into three parts and therefore into the disunited nations.

One of the groups that he wants to produce in this disunited body is what he keeps on describing as the neutralist group. What is a neutralist group? Sir, one of the things that I beg all honorable members on both sides of the House to avoid is this fallacy of easy classification. So-and-so is an African, therefore he must think like all other Africans! If one African is neutralist, there-

fore he must be neutralist! This is an insult to people. Does anybody suppose that because people were born west of the Soviet boundary in Europe, whether they are Germans, Frenchmen, Englishmen or Italians, they are the same kind of men with the same kind of ideas? This, of course, is utter nonsense. You may go over the whole zone of Africa and tell me that so-and-so, so-and-so, and so-and-so must think the same way because they are all Africans and they are all African leaders. Sir, I tell you that the greatest speech made at this General Assembly was made by the Prime Minister of Nigeria. He is a most remarkable man, and his speech made an unforgettable impact on the minds of all of us. It would insult this great man—the head of the Government of the greatest single nation in the whole African continent, a nation of 40,000,000 people—to be told that his country must be classified, along with other countries, in a group or a bloc. No one could have been more explicit than he was about the need for every nation to live its own life, to face its own future, to accept its own responsibilities. The people who want to denigrate the whole of modern independence, and to treat new nations as if they were merely groups to be bought like bunches of bananas, make a very great blunder. That was perhaps the greatest blunder that Khrushchev made.

Let us consider the ways in which Mr. Khrushchev failed. He failed to undermine the Secretary-General. He failed to destroy the work that has been done with regard to the Congo. He failed on occasion after occasion, and I will not take up the time of the House in recounting them all, because I have already taken up too much of its time. He had some success, no doubt. He may have frightened somebody and he may have weakened a little the position of the Secretary-General; I do not know. You and I in this House are fortunate to have grown up in such an atmosphere that we can laugh at nonsense and not be frightened by it, so how am I to know to what extent Mr. Khrushchev succeeded in frightening people? He tried to disunite the United Nations. He tried to introduce some strange dogma about neutralist groups.

He had some point, I suppose. He said that when the United Nations was established it had 50 member nations, that now it

has nearly 100, and that therefore there ought to be some reconstruction of the structure of the organization. I do not object to that suggestion, so long as it is understood that one of the dangers that have grown up in the modern world is that the General Assembly, which has relatively little power, has become tremendously important because the heads of governments attend it, whereas the chief executive body—I am not using the word “executive” in a technical sense—the Security Council, has been put rather on one side. The Security Council, Sir, must continue to include in its membership people who represent the great powers, which themselves are the backbone of the United Nations and which themselves carry the major responsibility for peace. But, subject to that proviso, I do not object to the suggestion that a reconstruction of the United Nations should be considered.

I want to say only one or two things more. I had the very valuable opportunity of seeing, on your behalf, a number of world leaders. I would not wish any member of this Parliament, on either side, to believe that I was being exclusive, talking to this side and not to that side. In the course of rather less than three weeks I had the closest discussions with President Eisenhower, with the American Secretary of State, Mr. Herter, with Mr. Macmillan and Lord Home and with Mr. Nehru. I had a long interview with Mr. Khrushchev. I sought the interview, and I tell you quite frankly that the main reason why I sought it was that I thought that if I came back here and my friends, or friendly opponents who sit opposite, asked me whether I saw Khrushchev and I replied that I had not, they might think it rather odd. So I sought an interview with Mr. Khrushchev.

I had already expressed myself, as honorable members will have gathered from what

I have already said, with a certain degree of clarity. Nevertheless, I had 70 minutes with Mr. Khrushchev. I want to say to the House that I came away from the interview quite satisfied that he would like a Summit conference. Being more interested, as I am, in substance than in form, and as what I was trying for from the day I arrived at the United Nations was the substance of a Summit conference, I am very pleased to say that three of the atomic powers voted for a Summit conference on my amendment, and that the fourth, through Mr. Khrushchev, has indicated to me in the clearest possible terms that a Summit conference is considered a good idea.

I saw, of course, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, who is an old friend of mine. I had a talk with President Tito. I spoke to Mr. Luns, the Foreign Minister of the Netherlands. Dr. Subandrio, of Indonesia, was a guest of mine, and I had a long talk with him. Indeed, one would be surprised at the number of people who concern us in this world with whom, in the course of a fortnight or three weeks, one can have useful talks.

I have occupied the time of the House long enough. Having said that I believe that Mr. Khrushchev wants Summit talks, and that I think something might come of them, I would like to conclude by saying that I have by no means been disposed to defend myself on the matters about which I have spoken. I believe in my heart and my mind that I pursued the right course at New York, and that I spoke and acted in the best interests of my country.

I lay on the table the following paper:—  
United Nations—General Assembly—Ministerial Statement.

and move—

That the paper be printed: