

"TALK TO THE NATION"
BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE RT. HON. R.G. MENZIES
28th NOVEMBER, 1961.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I appear to be back once more at the schoolmaster's desk but I hope you'll forgive me. But there are various aspects of the election that I want to cover, so far as I can, in these little talks.

Now in my Policy Speech, if you were enthusiastic enough to listen to it, I said something about Foreign Policy and the Treaties that we've made with other countries. This time I thought I might say something to you about four outstanding problems in the international situation in the world.

The first of them is Disarmament. I have a map here and I'll refer to it a little later on, but for the purpose of talking about disarmament perhaps I don't need a map very much, because there can be no disarmament in the true sense unless you can have the Great Powers of the world, facing up to the realities and agreeing to something that is practical. Now the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, of whom I was one, earlier this year met in London and we passed unanimously a resolution about disarmament, indicating the broad terms on which we thought it might be achieved and, in particular, we said that the beginning should be a suspension of nuclear tests. In other words, that none of the great Nuclear Powers - and there are three of them - four of them now including France - should make any further tests, until arrangements had been made to suspend them altogether, with proper inspection, with some feeling of assurance on both sides that the other side wouldn't be playing a trick. That's fair enough. Well the discussions went on about the suspension of nuclear testing. The Western Powers held up; Great Britain didn't make another test; the United States didn't make another test; and after months of this, all of a sudden, Khrushchev announced that the Soviet Union was going to resume testing and since that day they've "fouped off", I think the expression is, about 30 bombs including some bombs of a size unparalleled in modern history.

Now that is a tremendously serious problem. What are we to do about it? I for one would like to say to you, that I see no reason why the United States of America should consent to sit quietly while the Soviet Union goes on, and on, and on, testing weapons. The time comes when the United States of America, our powerful friend, will have to say, "Well we must defend ourselves. We must not fall behind." Otherwise the great deterrent of the bomb will cease to be a deterrent. But I think the important thing, is that the Great Powers should once more meet. They ought to meet before the end of this month in Geneva, and get back into the Conference Room, because so long as nations are testing these horrible weapons, so long will there be a great tendency to provide them for other powers and the more nations who have these weapons, the greater will be the risk of an explosion. Now that broadly represents our approach to this matter.

Now the next matter that I want to mention to you is one of the "hot spots", as they call it, of the world, and that is the problem of Berlin and West Germany. If you can see this

map, it shows in hatched lines here, West Germany; East Germany is here; Berlin is inside the area of East Germany, like an island, with an air passage from it to the Western world, and with railway access to the Western world. But in itself, it's an island in the middle of what is now called East Germany.

Now I don't want to go into the history of this matter, but I do want to say this to you, that the Western Powers have precisely the same rights, and for precisely the same reasons, in Berlin, as has the Soviet Union. They were the victorious allies in the war, each of them assumed responsibility for a Sector of Berlin with the right to have troops, with the right to maintain contact and access. This is beyond argument. Khrushchev himself doesn't endeavour to argue about it. But of course, what has happened is that the Soviet Union has, in effect, incorporated East Germany in the Soviet Union. They pretend it's an independent country. Of course it isn't. It's a satellite country. The best proof of that is that in these recent disturbances, there have been Soviet troops to the number of many thousands, on the perimeter of Berlin, and now, fortifications between one part of the city and the other, are being set up. If Khrushchev

If Khrushchev wants peace, as so many of his friends in Australia pretend they want peace, he can get it quite easily. He can say to the West "All right we will leave Berlin as it is. Each of us with his own rights. Each of us with his own access. We will not prevent the people of East Germany from leaving East Germany if they want to, because this is their right under the Treaty of Human Rights." (Under any conception of humanity a man ought to be allowed to leave his own country). "And therefore we will agree to free emigration from East Germany into West Germany", an emigration which you know has been going on, until stopped by him recently, at a tremendous rate. And above all, he can say "We can settle the question as to whether Germany ought to be re-united. We'll agree to an election. A free election, in which both West and East Germans will vote."

Now this may seem to you, or to me, pretty simple. Those are the conditions of peace. He won't have one of them. I tell you quite plainly, that in my view, in the view of my Government, the responsibility for the tension in relation to Berlin in Germany lies squarely at the doors of the Soviet Union. And if you want our position summed up I'll say we are completely on the side of the Western Powers, on this matter.

Now in the meantime, down here in the south east of Asia, in L- A- O- S, most of us call it Laos, but I believe correctly it ought to be called "Louse", but anyhow there it is, and this country is a peaceful rural country. Only wanting to live by itself, and yet it is bedevilled today by civil war, by Communist pressure from the north, by all kinds of agitations, which I've no doubt are designed to make that country a satellite of the Communists, whether of the Soviet Union, or of Communist China, perhaps is no great matter. We of the West, if I may so describe us, but we include we of the South East because if we include the SEATO - the South East Asian Treaty Nations, Pakistan, Thailand and the Philippines and Australia and New Zealand - to say nothing of Great Britain and America, and France - we have said that we don't want Laos to be a satellite of any group in the world. We want that country to be free, to be completely independent, to be neutral and not to be aligned with

any other Power. There again, that's pretty simple, isn't it? That's pretty straight forward. You couldn't find any fault with that. But for months at Geneva the Soviet Union has prolonged the negotiations and after all this time we now are not much nearer to achieving that peaceable result than we were three or four or five months ago.

The same kind of trouble arises in relation to South Vietnam. A very gallant little country. An outpost of defence against Communism. While nearer to us we have our other problem, I hope that it's one that will be fixed up, and that's the problem of our attitude towards West New Guinea and the position of Indonesia in relation to it.

Now I just want to make it clear to you - you'll read some heated statements occasionally - we are on friendly terms with Indonesia. We ought to be! We want to be! There is a country which has development in front of us; a country that we can help; a country, thousands of whose students we take into Australia, we have every reason to be friendly with Indonesia, but we have one difference of opinion, and that's about West New Guinea, which Indonesia claims, and the sovereignty over which is at present in the Netherlands.

Now I'll make a long story short - you've heard politicians say that before today, but I have to because the clock is moving on. Our attitude towards the West New Guinea problem is exactly the same as our attitude towards our own section of New Guinea. We believe that it is the duty of the occupying power to bring the people, the native, indigenous people of this island up to a state where they can govern themselves. We want none of this Congo business in New Guinea. We as Australians are paying many millions a year to build up Papua and New Guinea on our side of the island. The Dutch have agreed that they are all for self-determination in the West, but Indonesia has said this is not a case for self-determination, "this part of New Guinea ought to belong to us and we are not offering self-determination to the local inhabitants."

That's our difference. And you would think very poorly of me, or of my Government, if I didn't take the opportunity of making it quite clear that this business of self-determination, of bringing people to a point where they are capable of governing themselves and then letting them make their own choice as to where they are going, ~~This~~ is vital to us, because in a strange and rather democratic world, we Australians are democrats. We believe in democracy, and we believe that in due course, not too soon and not too late, but at the right time when we've brought education to the right point; health services to the right point; some understanding of local self-government to the right point; when the day comes after all those things, when the people of that island, or our section of it, are able to determine their future, we say they must and they should, and that's our view in relation to West New Guinea. And all I need say is that, so far as we understand the position, the Government of the Netherlands has exactly the same attitude towards that problem in West New Guinea as we have in the East.

And so you see in brief, peace, peace, the problem of peace. We are on the side of peace. The little survey that I've given you will, I hope, indicate to you that if there is any desire to break the peace, it resides outside this country, and outside those other great countries whose friend we are.