

PUBLIC MEETING, WHYALLA, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

24TH MAY, 1963

Speech by the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Sir Robert Menzies

Mr. Chairman, Senator Laught, prospective Member for Grey,
Mr. President and Ladies and Gentlemen :

I must say that that speech you just heard from the candidate discloses him to me, and I hope to you, as one of the best candidates I have supported on a platform. (Applause) I've never heard a clearer statement of his beliefs, of his point of view, of the qualifications that he has by experience and residence. I had the great pleasure of speaking with him at Port Pirie at the opening of his campaign and I thought he was good. Tonight I think he is very, very, very good. It goes to show how a man trains on. In fact, by the time he has been Member for Grey for three years - for six years - they'll be talking about him as, you know, one of the coming men. He is in the same position now as I was when I first went into Parliament when, believe it or not, I used to be referred to as a "very promising young man". (Laughter) (Interjector - "What about when you abdicated?") Thank you so much. I was so disappointed. I've been waiting for somebody to have a go at me, because I was prepared to point the moral of it, that they didn't have a go at him, and if you approve of him, I can put up with a little bit of disapproval of myself. (Laughter) (Applause) In fact, if you don't mind, ladies and gentlemen, that reminds me of a little event that happened some years ago.

Every time there is an election, I go down to speak for my friend and colleague, Hubert Opperman, in Geelong. (Interjector - "On a bike?") (Laughter) Oh, no. I am ashamed to say I was in a car, but he meets me on a bike. (Laughter) I will refrain from saying the make of it because you know, of course. But "Oppy" always arranges that I shall have a meeting at the Ford works and at the luncheon break I have two meetings, because the shifts vary, and I stand on the tail end of a lorry and, you know, give tongue and the boys look at me with a sceptical eye and eat their lunch, occasionally making a courteous remark (Laughter). One day, I had finished this exercise of mine and got down off the lorry and a big chap came across and dug me in the ribs and said, "I hate the sight of you, you so-and-so...." I leave it to the Whyalla citizens to fill in the gap.... (Laughter) "I hate the sight of you, you so-and-so, but I'll vote for 'Oppy' any tick of the clock," (Laughter) Now, here it is. The perfect analogy. Do what you care about me, but send Vern Dyason to the Federal Parliament which, I assure you, will be improved and added to by his presence. (Interjector - "He probably hasn't had his sins on your head yet") (Laughter) What do you think will happen in this election, brother? Do you think he won't win? Well, in the words of a famous statesman, you wait and see. You wait and see. If he is elected, the citizens of Grey will have good reason to be thankful for it in the years to come.

Now, Sir, when I helped to open this campaign in Port Pirie, I gathered there were one or two people who thought I had made a speech to the nation and not to the electors of Grey and that really I should have got down to other local issues. Well, I don't mind telling you that when I addressed the electors of Grey, I regarded myself as addressing the nation. I feel no obligation to treat Grey as something

inferior to the run of the nation because it isn't. The fact is that in this electorate you have the most tremendous variety of occupations and interests, from remote rural properties, from primary production of one kind or another to great smelters at Port Pirie to a railways junction town in Port Augusta, to the industries in Whyalla about which I will have a word in a moment, down to the fisheries and all the intervening industries at Port Lincoln.

This electorate is, in fact, a superb example of an electorate in which primary industries and secondary industries live together and depend upon each other and, therefore, this is a good electorate in which to address the nation. Anyhow, being Prime Minister, I have a duty to address the nation.

Now, Sir, I will just say something about Whyalla. This place has grown, of course, enormously, and it will continue to grow. I think that it was when - I am sure it was - I was Prime Minister for the first time, many years ago, in 1939, that the Premier of South Australia who, I don't need to say was then and is now and forever will be (Laughter) Tom Playford, discussed with me this great proposition about the pipeline, without which Whyalla couldn't exist. It was my privilege at that time to do what he asked me to do and the Commonwealth to do, in order to assist that project. In 1940 I was still Prime Minister and had established the Department of Munitions and had appointed to be its presiding man, Essington Lewis, one of the great industrialists in the history of this country. It was in that very year that the first orders were given for some craft to be built at Whyalla, so I can claim to have some foundational interest in the water supply of this city and in shipbuilding in this city. (Interjection inaudible) Now, if you don't mind, would you just listen to this. You would, I am sure, learn a lot. I am anxious, of course, that you shouldn't prevent your friends from learning a lot on this matter (laughter) because there is a lot to be learned.

Now, Sir, what is the position today. In ship-building, many, many ships have been built here. This has become the most effective and efficient shipbuilding centre in Australia, and with wisdom and good sense, it will increasingly be a shipbuilding centre but that will require good sense on the part of a few people and I will refer to the arguments a little later on. This afternoon, I went out to have a look at the development of the steelworks. I had been there before, but today I was astonished at the tremendous extent and quality of the work that is being done there. And this is the important thing from the point of view of this town of Whyalla and of this electorate in Australia.

Here we have already established a blast furnace. We have all the work going on and going on fast for the establishment of a complete steel activity. In its first stages, I gathered, it will be geared to produce half a million tons of steel and then in due course with another blast furnace, another million tons of steel, and so on until it is a million and a half tons of steel. Ladies and gentlemen, I seem to remember that when I was first interested in these matters and concerned about them in government, that total production of steel in Australia wasn't much more than a million and a quarter tons and you are going to have that in this place alone.

This place, Whyalla is going to be a place rivalling in its extent and its life and its expansion Port Kembla and

Wollongong. This is a most exciting place from the point of view of Australian development and, really, whatever party I might belong to, I would take immense pride in that fact and feel some of the excitement and feel how good it was to be living in a place whose future was so full of immense possibilities.

But, Sir, there are some people who are "knockers". I suppose that if you elect the Labour candidate, whoever he may be, there seems to be a mixture of....(Applause) I suppose that if you elect him, he may turn out to be..... He will have to go to Canberra and join in the anti-B.H.P. chorus and learn to denounce the Broken Hill Proprietary Company as if it were the enemy of mankind and then come back to Whyalla and say to the hundreds and hundreds of people and families engaged by the Broken Hill Proprietary, "Well, don't misunderstand me, of course. I did that because it was the party line. I don't mean it. I did it because the 36 chaps outside told me to do it. Not because I believe it." Well, this sounds funny and it is funny, but it is true. Is that what you are going to do on June 1st?

Now, Sir, having said that, I repeat: This place has the most exciting prospects of future development of any place in Australia. It is bound to become, very rapidly, more and more rapidly, the place of immense importance in the State of South Australia, and as what it is doing is of immense national importance to Australia, it will become one of the great significant things in the life of the nation. Now, Sir, I say that to you because I believe that's true and I believe that everybody in Whyalla ought to recognise it and be proud of it and be excited about it. But, of course, the more it succeeds, the more it grows, the more steel that is produced, the more people who are employed in producing, the more shipbuilding goes on - I'll come back to that in a minute....(Interjector - "Tell us why you bought those ships) My dear boy, there is nothing hidden that shall not be made known. You content yourself. (Interjector - "We could have built them here") Well, are you one of the fellows who doesn't want to have another tanker built here? Are you one of those? (Laughter) (Applause) I'll come to that. I'm going to tell a Whyalla audience the story of the P.J. Adams tanker because it is high time that people realised a great matter of political difference in this country. But I'll come to that in a moment.

I was at the moment addressing myself to the development of Whyalla and to what is involved in it and, quite clearly, this place can't develop whatever the position may be on steel or shipbuilding, unless it has an assured water supply. And it is therefore proper to point out to you that long before the Grey by-election, I had convened a meeting with Sir Thomas Playford and the Premier of Victoria and the Premier of New South Wales, as a result of which, the Chowilla Dam is to be built on the lower Murray which will, added to the existing facilities, absolutely ensure the water supply of South Australia in general and of Whyalla in particular. (Applause)

Now, Sir, there is an eager shipbuilder over there who wants to know about it (Laughter) and so I would like to tell him. The "P.J. Adams", the biggest tanker ever built in Australia - and I hope not the last - the "P.J. Adams" was built by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company at these yards. It meant an enormous development in the yards, it meant enormous employment, and it was built when the Company said, "Well,

we would like to have it built in Australia. We would like a Commonwealth subsidy." My Government has been subsidising ship-building for coastal business at the rate of 33 per cent. for the last seven years. Before that, it was 25 per cent. They said: "We would like a subsidy. We know that you don't subsidise the building of a ship except for the Australian coastal service. Are you prepared to subsidise the building of a ship for international trade, which will trade from Australia to a place outside and back," and so on. And we said, "Well, what's the proposition? This is terribly important. It is tremendously important for ship-building in Whyalla. It is tremendously important for ship-building in Australia. We are prepared to have a look at it. On what terms will you do this?" And they stipulated, and I quote their precise words: that they would be prepared to have the ship built here provided the Commonwealth Government agreed that they could register the ship as a British ship at the Port of London. Now that was their condition.

Now, to add to this, we having said, "Yes, we will accept this proposition" - we didn't do this in a hurry - we had to balance the impact it might have on the employment of seamen in Australia against the impact it would have on the employment of hundreds and therefore the livelihood of thousands of people in Whyalla. And, therefore Sir, we decided that we would play on these terms. (Interjector - £4 million) Don't bemuse yourself with millions. You are only imagining them. (Laughter)

Now, ladies and gentlemen, the company then proceeded to find out at which price it could get this tanker built overseas. It had quotations from Japan for a lower figure than the local price minus our subsidy. In other words, it would at that stage have paid them hundreds of thousands of pounds to get it built outside Australia, but they said, "No, we want to have it built in Australia" - it was an Australian Company - "we want to have it built here."

The price was a little over £4 million; we subsidised to the extent of £1 million. The ship was launched - I was here for the launching. It is the greatest single ship-building achievement in the history of Australia and when it was launched - all this had been known for years - an agitation began among the seamen, among the more intransigent of the relevant union, and they came to me at Canberra and they said, "Look, won't the Commonwealth compel the Company to register in Australia?" Now, you know, I don't care for this kind of thing. The Government had undertaken with the Company that if the Company would build the ship here, even losing something on it, and we subsidised it, we would agree to the company registering it in London because this was the condition on which this job would be done here and I am not in the habit of entering into obligations of that kind and then tearing them up because somebody threatens to call a strike.

Really, what all the people here engaged in ship-building have to consider is what side they are on in this matter, what would they have liked us to do. I put this to every man engaged in the ship-building business here. In our place, how would you have answered that question? Would you have said, "No, insist on the ship being registered in Australia although you know that if you do so insist the ship won't be built in Australia." Is that how you would have decided it? Now, ladies and gentlemen, think about it. These are facts

beyond the slightest chance of contradiction. These are well-known facts. These have been discussed with the trade unions and with the company, and the fact is that the question to be determined was: Should the ship be built here at all or should it have been built on terms that it should be registered in London? Now, I just say this, I repeat this to any of you gentlemen here tonight who are engaged in this activity. How would you have decided that matter? We decided in your favour. Would you have decided against yourselves, that the ship was not to be built here on those terms? (Interjector - "No, but.....") Now, don't say, "No, but.....". The only thing that interests me is that you do say "No"; you can save all the "buts" (Applause)

Now, the last thing I want to say about this matter, ladies and gentlemen, is this - because I am told that the Labour candidate or candidates were actively concerned in challenging this decision. It 's worth remembering. I wonder what the A.L.P. - or what remains of it here - I wonder what it really wants done about shipbuilding at Whyalla or, for that matter, in Brisbane, or for that matter, in Newcastle, or wherever it may be in Australia. Do they want to say to the world - "Look, we are not going to build a ship in an Australian shipyard for a foreign owner who wants to get one built or for an owner who wants to register his ship, being a foreign owner in a foreign port" - is that what we are to say? Is your ambition for this prospectively marvellous place so small that you want to give notice, that you are only interested in building for the local coastal trade and that you have no ambition to build large vessels for people who are outside Australia? That's the question that has to be answered and really it is not to be answered by getting excited about it. It is to be answered in a cold, clear, rational fashion by those who are engaged in this business, who depend on it and who want it to expand. (Interjector - "Why didn't you think of that before you bought these three new ships?") (Laughter) My dear sir, that's a very happy excuse for you. I don't think you know anything about these three guided-missile destroyers that we are building. There is only one place in the world that is producing them and they are very little - the most tiny fraction of them is the hull. It is what goes into these ships, many millions of pounds worth of it not made here that's the thing that makes the difference. A man who says that we could have produced one of these guided missile destroyers in Australia in our present state of engineering capacity knows nothing about it. That's all.

(Interjector - "The other night you said you had many shares in this company. It doesn't sound as if you've got many shares in it now.") (Laughter) I said I had a lot of shares in Australia Unlimited. That's right. Well I am glad to acknowledge it, sir, and I hope you have because the more you have by way of shares in Australia Unlimited, the more likely you are to become a warm-hearted supporter of mine in politics. (Applause)

Now, Sir, I don't want to say any more about that particular matter. All I say by way of summary is that in this very electorate of Grey, you have this tremendous conjunction of the planets. You have this wonderful development proceeding so rapidly in steel and in ship-building in Whyalla and you have Port Pirie and Augusta no longer at the tail-end of a transcontinental line now being worked on the West Australian section but on a line that will go clear across the Continent from Perth to Sydney to Brisbane and so on. Sir, I think myself that this is an exciting matter. I have no doubt whatever that the improvement by standardization and re-grading of the Port Pirie/Broken Hill line will serve to reduce the costs of transportation to the

smelters and to the rest of the world and in these days we in Australia must preserve our export capacity and we must do it by keeping our costs at a competitive level. Now, I am not one of these who says that we've got to keep costs down, that you ought to slash wages. I am one of those who have said, and said repeatedly, that in order to keep costs down, we must increase our efficiency by every possible means and improving the efficiency of transport is one of the ways of doing that.

My colleague, the Minister for Trade, is overseas. He's been working hard, tremendously hard as he always does on these trade negotiations. They are all intensely difficult. We went through the whole argument last year about the European Common Market - there's been a hitch there - and now he's been over discussing the problems that followed on that matter. He's discussing the initiative taken by the President of the United States of America and in all of these things, I undertake to say that he has been constantly keeping in mind how do we maintain a fair price for the things that we sell to the rest of the world, and how do we maintain a fair cost of production for that commodity in our country. This concerns everybody engaged in the mining or metal industries; it concerns everybody on the land and because it concerns them, it concerns us. It concerns the solvency of Australia in international trade and without that solvency, we won't have much health in our own economy at home. Therefore these are great matters and therefore a further step in the rendering more efficient of our transportation system is not to be regarded just as some election bid; it is to be regarded as a first-class step forward in containing the cost of production in our own country.

Sir, we have spoken....I have tonight and my friend has about these four main centres, all of them tremendously important, all of them very much in our minds, but we must never forget, and he certainly doesn't, that outside all these places there are thousands of people in the electorate of Grey who are living and working on the land in various forms of primary industry. We must think about them. Some people never think about them at all. I find it part of my duty to think about them constantly and for this reason - we have going on in Australia the most tremendous works of development.

I've been mentioning some tonight, but must also think about what goes on in minerals in the north of Queensland, in the Northern Territory and in Western Australia, what goes on in the export of coal from Australia, what goes on at the Snowy, what goes on in water supply and reticulation - all these are tremendous things, tremendous works of development, and we need them in Australia and we need them as fast as we can get them. But they all put enormous pressures on our resources. Tremendous pressures.

Immigration which we need so badly, and which goes along so well, puts an enormous pressure on our resources in the first place. In the long run it contributes immense power to the country, but in the short run all these things mean that there is a pressure on our resources of money, a pressure on our resources of materials and manpower. Anybody who, like myself, has been sitting in the middle of government for so long knows these things well. You must watch them all the time and unless you watch them, those pressures can produce an inflationary effect in Australia which will begin quite quickly to destroy the value of whatever you are paid by way of income - salary, wages or whatever they may be. And if that happens, what happens to the man on the land? His costs of production go up.

He can't pass them on to a customer. The wheatgrower can't pass on an increased cost of production to the customer because apart from the home consumption price, he sells in the world's markets. The woolgrower sells in the world's markets. His wool goes to auction, and it is what the world will pay for it that he will get. Therefore all increases in his costs by inflation in Australia are a net loss to him.

This goes for all the major primary production activities of Australia and therefore the enormously complex business of government, which I am afraid some people don't begin to understand, is to try to keep a balance between pushing on with development, getting that new job done, getting it forward, getting more people into the country, and at the same time not striking a blow at the primary producer of Australia who is still responsible for over 85 per cent. of our export income and is therefore primarily responsible (Interjector - "Did you realise that when.....") Yes, and I am happy to tell you, my dear sir, obviously a thinker about these matters (Laughter) - I am happy to tell you that every deputation I had from people representing farming interests in Australia warmly approved of what we had done. Warmly approved of it because they said, "Well, your Government at any rate has been concerned about our costs of production," and we were and we are and we will continue to be. Now this is a serious matter and I address myself to it quite seriously. (Interjector - "You weren't a cocky, Bob") Sir, I was born in the "cocky country" if you care to describe it as such and I'll undertake to say at a quick guess I've done three times as much work in my life as you will ever do. (Applause)

Now, ladies and gentlemen, this is the great problem of statesmanship on the economic front and it must be borne in mind, and you must be represented in Parliament by somebody who understands that that is the problem and is prepared to address himself seriously to it.

Now, Sir, I will just turn away from that because I have been speaking for some time, to say something about another problem which concerns our external relations with other countries. It has had a good deal of discussion of late. It was my Government, if you will forgive me for reminding you, which brought about the ANZUS Treaty with the United States and New Zealand. It was received in stony silence by the Labour Party, but we got it and it was written and it was passed and it is today just about the sheet anchor of Australian security - the United States, Australia, New Zealand entering into a mutual treaty to resist aggression against their countries from outside. This was one of the great events in Australian foreign policy history. We are also among the promoters of the South East Asian Treaty which involves some of the Asian countries as well as our own.

Now, Sir, that means that the United States is our ally. We have, in the South East Asian Treaty an alliance with the United Kingdom. I am happy to say we don't need formal treaties with the United Kingdom. When the day comes that we are not an ally of the United Kingdom, I shall have to resign in shame. I just take it for granted that we are allies of the United Kingdom and I hope that nobody in this hall will disagree with it but we have, and this is quite remarkable, this formal alliance with the United States which, before the war, was not willing to enter into alliances at all. These were regarded as something against the tradition of the United States and, therefore, Sir, the position is that we

have our ally in America. That country is the greatest nuclear power in the world - thank heaven - the greatest nuclear power in the world, because if it were not, we might not be here tonight. Say what you like about it, the one thing that has kept the peace of the world, in spite of the most blatant Communist aggression around the world.....(Interjector - "What about Cuba?") Yes, that was a superb example of what American strength can mean for us.

Now, Sir, does anybody here doubt that but for the possession of the nuclear deterrent, primarily by the United States and, to a smaller extent by Great Britain which hasn't so much of it - but for that, we would have been overrun by aggressive Communism. Of course we would have. People say, "Look, wouldn't it be a wonderful thing if there were no nuclear weapons." We all understand that. Nobody wants to see these wretched things employed. We all have our own hopes and family hopes for the future in our own country, but Mr. Chairman, if there were no nuclear weapons today, the Soviet Union would have more ordinary military strength than perhaps all the others put together. If there were no nuclear deterrent in the hands of our friends, there would be nothing to prevent the Soviet Union from marching clear across Europe in a few weeks because the strength of her conventional armaments is enormous. Therefore the existence of this terrible weapon of reprisal has been the thing that has kept the world at peace. So long as that is the state of affairs, so long as we live under this threat, then I am sure you will agree with me, we must see to it that whatever we do we will do in order to make the existence of the deterrent effective.

Certainly it is not for Australia to frustrate the existence of the nuclear deterrent in the hands of the United States of America. That would be a suicidal and a shocking thing to do, and so the day comes when the United States says to us - and all this was announced within two or three days, two or three years ago; it's been blown up lately, but it was all public property a long time ago. They come to us and they say, "Look, we'd like to discuss with you putting up a radio station in the North-West of Western Australia." "What for?" "Well, we want to have means of communicating on a very low frequency with our Navy, primarily," which, of course, obviously means "with our surface ships, with our submarines, with our aircraft carriers, because they are all involved - communicating with our Navy. This will make perfect our means of communicating with our naval forces all round the world. We have them in the Pacific, in the North Pacific. We have them in the Atlantic. We want one here if we can get it because this will cover the Indian Ocean and the South West Pacific."

And being allies of the United States of America and being profoundly dependent upon what they may do if we are attacked, we said, "Yes, we are quite prepared to discuss this and work out appropriate terms," and so we did and they are about to build the place and spend a power of money on it - £30 or £40 million. But they said, and I think they were dead right, "Of course, we can't have joint control in a matter of this kind. We want to be able to have communication with our naval forces not subject to a veto by whatever government may exist in Australia, but in our own right," and we said, "That's right. We would like you to consult with us on every conceivable matter," but we weren't going to put them in the position of being told if they became involved in warlike activities out of

the Indian Ocean - which could only be against Communist attack - we were not going to put them in the position of being told by us on that day - not by me but by my successors - "You can't use this station. Get out." Think of how that would handicap them in the deployment of their naval forces in the Indian Ocean. Think of how that would handicap them in delivering a stroke of retaliation against an attack made by the Communists, the Soviet Union.

Ladies and gentlemen, my opponents in Parliament are out of date on this business. They are thinking in a lost world. The Soviet Union, if it does decide upon the criminal folly of attacking the free world is not going to send a courteous letter and say, "Take notice that in a fortnight or three weeks, we are going to do something." If they ever got into this bedlamite condition of making an attack, the first thing that anybody would know about it would be when the tracking stations picked up the missile en route to the United States and that gives you what - five minutes, ten minutes, no more than fifteen minutes - to give orders to the people who have weapons of retaliation - "We are at war with these people. You go ahead." Because unless the return blow follows swiftly after the blow of attack, it is finished and finished unfavourably for us, for the free people in the world. These are serious matters and they deserve not hysterical consideration but serious consideration. I tell you quite plainly I will not be held accountable for rendering the deterrent power of the United States futile in the waters off the Australian coast and if the people of Australia disagree they know exactly what to do with me. But I think they will understand this position very clearly. This is essential to our success.

Well now, Sir, what does the Labour Party do about it? I am sure some of the people sitting opposite me in Parliament are all in favour of the establishment of this communications station, all in favour of it, but they had a great hullabaloo, you remember, and they had a special conference of what we now refer to respectfully as the "36 men" and they decided by 19 to 17 that yes, they could go ahead on condition that there was joint control. In other words, on condition that Australia would have a veto over everything that was done in the station. And so we got into Parliament. We introduced a bill, we attached the agreement to it and the bill was a very simple bill as a bill. It simply said, "The execution of the contract contained in the schedule is hereby ratified" and so therefore the matter of substance in the bill was the contract in the schedule. Well, they spoke on it. We have had the most fascinating debate in the Parliament about it. (Laughter) All the boys who hate the idea of this station and who hate the idea of the Americans and who always take an entirely different line, were disciplined into suitable silence. They spoke softly. They cooed like doves, if I may coin a phrase. And you've never heard anything so mild, mild as curdled milk. (Interjector - "Is that why you threw Eddie Ward out?") Oh, no, the House threw him out. (Laughter) You forget that. That's not without difficulty, but the House did. (Laughter)

Well, now, I just want to complete my narrative on this matter. One of the front-line spokesmen for the Opposition said what they were going to do, how they were going to vote on this bill and it was explained that they would not vote against the Second Reading because they wanted to make it clear that they were not, in principle, opposed to the matter. They would vote against the schedule because they wanted to make it clear that they didn't like the particular agreement and that when they came to the Third Reading, they would move an amendment that the

Third Reading would be deferred for six months. Well, they were better than their word because they didn't have a division on the Second Reading, but they divided the House four times before we got to the Third Reading. Really their friendship for the bill was magnificently concealed. They kept on voting against it in connection with this bill time after time and then we got to the Third Reading and up got the Leader of the Opposition and he made a powerful speech, very moving, that the bill be deferred for three months and he gave his reasons and I got up and gave my reasons.

And the Opposition found itself in such a state of confusion that for the first time in my Parliamentary experience, they forgot to vote for their own amendment. (Laughter) This is literally true. They forgot to vote for their own amendment. It was rejected on the voices and when they gathered themselves together - because it is a bit difficult for them, you know, they have a series of groups and caves and various different views and they meet each other distantly in the corridors (Laughter) - they got together a bit then and said, "Oh, dear. We did make a mistake there." So they voted against the Third Reading. No postponement. Nothing else. Just point-blank against the Third Reading of the bill. In other words, if people are to be judged by their votes, the Australian Labour Party in Canberra had voted against the ratification of this agreement and therefore against the establishment of this very important American radio communications station in the North West of Australia.

Indeed, if I may quote myself, and that's a very poor business for any man to engage in, I must tell you that on my speech on their amendment to the Third Reading, the one that died by the way, I pointed out to them that they need not pretend that they were really in favour of this bill because under Standing Orders of the Commonwealth Parliament, Standing Order 237, it is expressly stated that a motion to defer the Third Reading for six months, if carried, finally disposes of the bill and therefore I pointed out to them that it would be the end of the bill and the end of the session because the Americans were not going to dangle around for six months waiting for something to happen. They are in a hurry. They regard defence provisions as urgent. I therefore asked honourable members opposite to tell me did they really want to defeat this bill under the Standing Order because if they did, they ought to say so, they ought to vote against the Third Reading. They just ought to come clean on this matter. But were they putting the amendment up because they didn't want it to be carried, because they knew that it wouldn't be carried but they would have the kudos of having moved it with none of the risks of carrying it.

What would happen to them if two of my members failed to hear the division bells and failed to vote and they won their amendment. Where would they be then. They would have the shock of their lives. So I said they could take their own choice. They were either demonstrating that they were hostile to this installation which is favoured by the vast majority of the Australian people or they could admit that they were humbugs having put up an amendment of a fatal kind, knowing and believing that it would be defeated. And of course this choice, the only choice as I told you, so disturbed them that when it came to the point, they forgot to vote on it at all.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, these again are tremendous matters - the security of this country, what we do for our own defence about which I made an elaborate statement the other day, how we co-operate with our friends, whether we realise that the security of Australia depends, not only on our own efforts which can never by themselves be adequate, but on our capacity to have co-operation with our allies. These are the things that we have to understand and when you have allies, particularly a great ally like the United States, you can't say to it, "Look, you can't use a point of land in our country for signalling to your ships because somebody mightn't like it." Do we want them on our side? Do we believe that we must have them on our side? And if the answers to those questions are "Yes", what's all this nonsense that the Opposition is engaging in, the Opposition that wants you to give a recruit to its strength or weakness in the Federal Parliament on June 1st.
