



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

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ADDRESS AT A PUBLIC RALLY AT THE ESPLANADE PERTH

There are two great issues in this campaign. One is economic and one is foreign affairs and defence. Today, I am going to speak about foreign affairs and defence.

In 1976 in a major statement on foreign affairs, I warned the nation of the dangers of Soviet power. I warned Australia that Soviet military might was expanding inexorably. That the Soviet Union was devoting 12-14 per cent of its annual income to defence. When American defence expenditure had gone up, Soviet expenditure had gone up. When American expenditure was down, Soviet expenditure was up further. Through all the years of detente, the expansion of Soviet forces continued.

In the years since the war, the Soviet Union has had conventional military superiority. The use of that conventional military superiority was restrained because for many years the Americans had nuclear superiority. Now, the Soviet Union can match American power in nuclear arms, if not exceed it.

I said in 1976 that, if the Soviet Union really wanted peace, it was up to it to give a sign to the whole world that that was its objective. We have had certain signs from the Soviet Union: the building up of military facilities in Vietnam; the signing of a defence treaty with Vietnam, shortly after which, the Vietnamese invaded Kampuchea with the moral and physical support of the Soviet Union; and, direct support for the invasion, which is now running at a cost of \$1,000 million a year.

Less than a year ago, the Soviet armies marched into Afghanistan; the largest and most powerful army in the world into an inoffensive and non-aligned country. The apologists for the Soviet Union said this was a defensive move - defensive against what? What possible danger could Afghanistan pose to the might of the Soviet Union? That move southward took the Soviet Union nearer the Indian Ocean, putting it in a strategic position to exert its power against Pakistan or Iran if opportunities later presented themselves.

The United States issued a solemn warning to the Soviet Union that any further move would be regarded as a direct threat to the vital interests of the U.S. We have supported the United States in what it has done. We have supported them because we are an ally; because we have common and shared objectives; because we are free societies which jointly recognise that freedom carries with it obligations and responsibility.

Although we are only 14 million people, we support the U.S. because we cannot expect the U.S. alone to take those actions upon which all our freedoms ultimately depend. We must be concerned for our own future and for our children, and that is why we have offered to allow the U.S. to home port or base port ships at Cockburn Sound; to use transit facilities through our airfields.

On the other hand, Mr. Hayden has indicated plainly that if he had the opportunity he would repudiate any arrangements that we might make with the U.S. to home port in W.A. major elements of the U.S. navy. Such a view would strike seriously at the defence relationship with the U.S. Because of our need to contribute to a common effort, we are undertaking greater surveillance in the Indian Ocean. Because of our need to work with our allies, we have offered the United States access to our airfields under conditions which will maintain Australian sovereignty.

We have given agreement in principle to the passage of B-52s through Darwin. At the moment, American crews are on surveillance missions which extend for over 30 hours. Fatigue is considerable. The use of Darwin Airport will greatly assist the U.S. Air Force.

The Deputy Leader of the Australian Labor Party has made it plain that he opposes such an agreement. Because of the need for regional defence, we have revived the five power defence treaty with Singapore, Malaysia, Britain and New Zealand. All this is working in co-operation with our friends and allies to maintain peace, to show that there are free people prepared to defend liberty, because we want to avoid war; because we want to avoid the mistakes of the 30s; because we want security for our children. So we are expanding our defence forces.

We are providing greater arms for all services; substantially expanding the reserves; and building up basic infrastructure, especially in Western Australia - at Cockburn Sound, at Bearmouth, and with a new strategic airfield at Derby. Our attitude is clear. What then is the attitude of the A.L.P.? As I have already shown, theirs is far from clear. It is far from supportive of the U.S. and our common causes.

In 1978, speaking at a press conference in Manila, Mr. Hayden said: "The only Russian threat that I could see in the South East Asian areas was if Russian merchant ships withdrew from the Singapore shipyards and undermined the local economy somewhat".

What an apologia for the Soviet Union. What foresight he had. Tell that to the Kampucheans denied their liberty and freedom by the combination of Vietnamese armies and Russian material support. Tell that to the Afghans dying from Russian steel. Tell that to the Poles who are struggling to establish some degree of freedom within the monolithic communist empire, but under the shadow of the kind of retaliation which occurred against Hungary and Czechoslovakia. What foresight the Leader of the Opposition had. What an understanding of the course of international events.

Let the Leader of the Opposition explain his attitude to all those citizens of Australia who came to us from Eastern Europe; who have seen freedom destroyed in their own lands by the Soviet Union. But it is not only Mr. Hayden. Mr. Keating asked, after the invasion of Afghanistan: "who would want Afghanistan?". The Soviet Union certainly did. Mr. Keating cares not one bit for the lives and liberties of one more country absorbed into the communist empire. What about Senator Georgos who says there is more morality in the Soviet Union than in Australia? Are we allowed to ask whose side he is on? And what about Mr. Hayden again who accused President Carter of reacting to the invasion of Afghanistan because there was an election in the U.S.; as though the President had been responsible for the invasion.

What a surly way to treat a friend and ally. It was a shabby and cheap crack at the Presidency of the U.S. which indicates the thrust of Mr. Hayden's thinking. Did Mr. Hayden adopt that attitude to prevent the A.L.P. from reacting in full-blooded opposition to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

And this thinking exists with a number of N.S.W. members of the A.L.P.; Parliamentary supporters of Mr. Wran; the so-called moderates of the Labor Party. They put their signatures to an advertisement which called upon the termination of the ANZUS alliance; which demanded that Australian military expenditure should not be increased. Such an advertisement demonstrates that these feelings run deep within the A.L.P.

They indicate further that the A.L.P. is not a Party which can secure Australia's partnership with our friends and allies in the difficult years ahead of us. And what of Senator Wriedt, and Mr. Scholes, who said that, "instead of concentrating on largely peripheral issues in Indo-China and Iran, the Prime Minister would be better advised to concentrate on Australia ... neither issue could ... affect Australia's strategic position..." What do they say now of the war in Iran and Iraq? What would they say if the Straits of Hormuz were blocked and all that oil was prevented from getting to the consuming countries of the world?

What of Joe Berinson who is well known in Western Australia and for whom there is a great deal of respect. He said that, "... (his Party's approach to Russian involvement in Afghanistan had mostly been superficial and misleading". That, "the A.L.P. could not be proud of its stand on what was a threat to the stability of the Middle East and to world peace". No doubt, it is because of that kind of attitude that he has failed to win pre-selection for a seat in the Federal Parliament.

The attitude of the Labor Party is clear enough; but there are other factors that we need to look at apart from the statements of those leaders. The Socialist Left have gained great dominance in the Party in Victoria. The Socialist Left and Mr. Bartley, the leader of the Socialist Left, have always been against the alliance with the United States. They are people that Mr. Hawke calls the canker in the Labor Party, but whom even Mr. Hawke is now accepting as influential within the Party. They are the people who have said Mr. Hayden is the best leader for the Socialist Left.

The Bulletin has said, "Mr. Hayden has done more for the Socialist Left than they could ever have done for themselves". The Socialist Left controls the branches and policy committees in my State. They will influence and control the directions of foreign policy of any Labor Government, as they have already influenced Mr. Hayden. And the statements of Mr. Hayden, Senator Friedt, Mr. Scholes and Mr. Keating made it perfectly clear that this is true. That is why Mr. Hayden could not speak on defence in his policy speech. That is why he cannot commit himself to a full-blooded support of the U.S. where their objectives are shared and their interests are held in common. That is why Mr. Hayden tried to undermine our approach to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. That is one reason he will be condemned on October 18.

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