

*Communist Activities in Canada*

Runnymede to find a precedent for it. I am not overlooking the fact that it was mostly a question of procedure and perhaps not purely a question of law, but I suggest most earnestly that the Prime Minister's own words indicate this is not an open-and-shut matter, that it is one which should be considered carefully by all of us and not in any party fashion.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs also gave us some good advice. He made reference to keeping our heads, and gave us a couple of pages of advice about not indulging in witch-hunts such as they have had in the United States. I think we shall be able to follow the advice he gave us with quite considerable success, because nothing was further from our thoughts than either to lose our heads or to start witch-hunts, such as they have had in the United States. What he said about that was very true, if irrelevant.

He then made a statement which interested me greatly. In answer to a question as to what had been done about this matter at Colombo, he said that the point had been made there that communism was not as great a menace as Soviet imperialism, of which communism is the instrument. I found that interesting, but I also thought it was a little above my head. I had the feeling that that might be the kind of dialectics in which senior diplomats can indulge, but to ordinary people it does not mean very much. Assuming that communism did us grievous injury, I should think it would be very cold comfort if somebody said: Oh, don't worry; it is not communism that is the enemy; it is Soviet imperialism that is doing all this. I do not believe that would comfort us very much. Indeed I am inclined to think that the ordinary man would say it was the difference between tweedledum and tweedledee.

It remained for one or two of our C.C.F. friends, notably the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. MacInnis), to get on to the old question of freedom of speech. He took from his quiver that well-worn arrow and dispatched it again. I am sorry he is not here, because I really would remonstrate with him, that a man whose name begins with "Mac", a man who was brought up on the shorter catechism, should deal in such irrelevancies. I hope the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart (Mr. Coldwell), the leader of the C.C.F., will tell him that I venture to suggest his reference to freedom of speech was no more relevant than if he had told us he was against bigamy. It had nothing to do with this debate. We are just as much in favour of freedom of speech as he or anyone else.

Now I come to the hon. member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Stewart). In a way

I liked very much what he said, except that it seemed to me it was a little unrealistic. He said we ought to rely on our spiritual strength and not fear communism, if I understood him correctly. I will agree with him that all the laws we can make will not be of any value unless we have spiritual strength on which to rely. I propose to try to say a word about that myself. But I also suggest to the hon. member for Winnipeg North that we rely a good deal on the good sense of our people not to indulge too widely in the practice of murder; nevertheless we have laws about it, and we take considerable pains to see that people are not encouraged in that direction. I suggest to the hon. member that he went a good deal too far when he suggested that we need not be concerned about laws but should rely merely on our own strong moral character.

Let us look for a moment now at the resolution. I have stressed already that it deals with activities. We are not indulging in any process of psychoanalysis. We are not going to try to analyse people and see if they have dangerous thoughts. We are not going to make thought a crime. What we are trying to do is to make certain that activities, overt acts, are sufficiently guarded against by our legislation. Going back to what I said a moment or two ago about labour, I would say the purpose of this legislation, if it is strengthened, would be to make it easier for labour to deal with its own situation, not to step in or try to interfere, but to create a climate which would be more favourable to labour looking after its own problems.

I come back for a moment to the C.C.F. and the use of the word "similar". Apparently that was a most alarming proposition to them. I hope they were reassured last night when the leader of the opposition reminded them that to some extent at least this was taken from an amendment they themselves had moved, and that in fact by the word "similar" was meant "fascist." I take it that, with the word "fascist" interpolated, the great alarm which was apparent would to some extent disappear; at any rate I would hope so. In passing, just as a matter of interest concerning our own party, I would remind the house that this resolution comes within the four corners of one we passed at our convention a year ago last autumn. If there are any who wish to see the light, I have copies of those resolutions here, and can give them to any who would like to read them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, for a moment I should like to turn away from the domestic aspect of this problem and ask that we consider the problem very earnestly in its broader aspect,