

*Communist Activities in Canada*

Columbia took a Sunday evening off to speak at an open forum in a church to justify the purge trials in the Soviet union in 1936, 1937, and 1938. He went over the evidence to prove that these trials were completely justified. The trials, Chief Justice Farris believed, showed that Leon Trotsky headed a vast plot to set up a fascist government in Russia and hand over vast areas of Soviet soil to Germany, Poland and Japan. He believed the trials showed that Trotsky plotted to kill Lenin and Stalin in 1918, and that he and his quislings had intended to enter into active negotiations with Germany in 1921. But he did not tell his audience that Stalin not only intended but did negotiate and make a treaty with Hitler. Then he said:

Is there any wonder, when Stalin's closest associates plotted against him, that he has a suspicious nature, or that he is hostile to the Polish government in exile.

It is that sort of inane thinking on the part of peoples who should know better that is responsible for the lack of understanding in this country of what communism means, and what should be done to combat it.

What should be done to overcome communism? I agree very much with what was said this afternoon by the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent). I said in my speech on April 13, 1948, what I would say here today. Let me read from that speech a short paragraph which sets out my idea of how we can combat communism:

What is needed in this country is not a law to make illegal parties and ideas that we do not like, but that we should as quickly as possible improve the quality—I emphasize that, improve the quality—of our democracy by abolishing social inequities and making our economic democracy as pervasive as our political democracy. That is what this parliament has to do, and when we do that I have sufficient confidence in the common sense and good judgment of the Canadian people to be satisfied that we shall not need any repressive laws such as this bill would put into effect.

If I were to change the words "this bill" to "this motion" these same sentiments apply today.

Where do communists get their following among the various strata of society? They get a following among intellectuals who feel that their contribution to society is not being appreciated. These people get a feeling of inferiority; then they gravitate to the communist party where they are made much of.

Only a few days ago I was talking with a lady from the United Kingdom who is visiting Canada. She told me, and a few others, what the Labour party in Great Britain was trying to do, or was doing, to raise the standard of living in the colonies, particularly among the coloured people. She said they were bringing thousands of them to Great Britain for

education in the schools and universities. But, she said, as the government brought them over they would be met at the boat by members of the communist party and taken to some home for a social evening. Before the evening was over they would be given a little pep talk on the evils of the Labour government and, of course, on the glories of communism.

Of course the solution to a situation of that kind is that we who believe in democracy should be as active in support of it as is the communist party in support of communism. And until we believe in democracy so that we shall be as active, we shall be losing the fight for democracy.

The most amazing thing of all is that church people, ministers of religion, should remain in the church and in the communist party at the same time: It is a most amazing thing to me. I think it must be because they have lost faith in the efficacy of their spiritual teaching or their hold on spiritual things, and have not the courage to make a clean break with what they have lost faith in and embrace their new found religion.

When we come to another section of society, the working class, it is the poverty-ridden, the people who have no say in their own particular industries, who are affected, workers whose employer has the last say in everything. These are the people who grasp at the communist promises of freedom and power in the world of affairs.

As long as we have either here or anywhere else wealth and poverty, luxury and squalor, learning and ignorance side by side without doing our best to change their position and bring about equality, so long shall we be carrying on a losing fight with communism. Free people will not be content to remain merely free with limitations. As long as they are prevented from gaining the heights where they see other people, they will strive to reach those heights by whatever means may seem to be available to them.

I do not intend to take up much of the time of the house because I did not know that a matter of this kind would be raised. Had I known, and if I had the time, I have sufficient material available to keep me going the rest of the afternoon and evening. However, there is one other point I should like to raise before I sit down. The leader of the opposition said that he thought the government should not meet delegations from communist or their front organizations. I believe it would be wrong for the government not to meet such delegations.

I am glad that I can tell my communist friends that conditions are better here because we have more democracy, because it is much