

Communist Activities in Canada

That is the end of the quotation. Then I went on as follows:

They—

That is to say, the *Globe and Mail*.

—do not pretend to have found a solution for it in an absolute manner but they do say this which I also read without feeling any revulsion in my mind.

And I quoted this further paragraph:

Any law which merely forbids communism as such is objectionable; but there can be no argument against a law defining the opinions and preaches the community will not tolerate. Recently the communist leaders in France, Italy and other countries have said, directly or by implication, that their followers' duty in any future war would be to work and fight for the Soviet union.

Then I went on:

With that I fully agree. That is or would be, if said or attempted to be practised in our country, treasonable conduct for which we have plenty of laws to protect ourselves and laws with plenty of teeth in them to prevent that from going on here but I do not like the kind of laws that you put in the statute books and then put the statute books away and forget about them. That is not the way to maintain respect for the law in a free country.

I also expounded then the same theory, that the best antidote to the spread of communism was to make our free institutions really work, and work in a manner that would give satisfaction to all sections of the population. I repeated that statement recently in Toronto, citing this paragraph from Dr. Vannevar Bush about the prevention of a shooting war:

It need not come if we fully maintain our strength. It need not come if we realistically enough and with enough determination resolve that it shall not. It need not come if we really learn to make our democracy work. It need not come at all, for if the strength of free peoples prevents it for a generation, that same strength can then produce a new sort of world in which great wars will no longer occur. For this consummation we face a task that will test us as we have never been tested before, that will test whether we really mean it when we say that we believe in human dignity and human freedom, whether we can really submerge selfishness and petty motive, and bring our enormous latent power to bear, to make our way of life function with true effectiveness for the good of all.

With that expression of confidence and with the methods indicated as necessary to justify that confidence, I think most members of this house would be in full agreement.

I will not trouble hon. members by citing any more of my own speeches; they are of the sort that many of them have been making themselves.

Let us make democracy work, and work in such a manner that practically all of our people will feel its benefits; that they will then wish to retain it and defend it because they will know that it is not only a much

[Mr. St. Laurent.]

better system than what communism realizes but better even than what communism promises.

We must maintain a fair balance between the rights of the human individual and the abuses that human individuals may commit against society. But I would be sorry to see it become a crime to hold opinions unless, as a consequence of those opinions, one did something that threatened the security of the state.

Mr. Angus MacInnis (Vancouver East): I imagine, Mr. Speaker, that most of the members in this house would agree with much of what the leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew) said before he introduced his motion at the end of his speech. But I would be sorry indeed if a majority or even a small minority of the members of the house had agreed with the motion. The motion, if you will examine it, is extremely broad. If it were carried and if legislation were founded upon it, how it would be interpreted and enforced the legislation might be a sorry thing for this country indeed. Let me read the motion so that we can get it better in our minds. It reads as follows:

That all the words after "that" to the end of the question be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

"this house is of the opinion that appropriate legislation should be introduced so that communist and similar activities in Canada may be made an offence punishable under the Criminal Code."

We may be able to define a communist, legally, as a member of the communist party; but who is going to define "similar activities" and what would be similar activities? The leader of the opposition, early in his speech, made the following statement. I think I have it correctly; but even if I have not the correct words, I am sure he will agree that I have what he intended to say. He said: "The strongest weapon of democracy is freedom of speech." Then he went on: "A discussion of public issues based upon a full disclosure of all essential information." If the strongest weapon of democracy is freedom of speech, surely any curtailment of freedom of speech curtails or lessens that democracy. We cannot have it both ways.

I believe that I am just as much opposed to the communist party and its philosophy as is the leader of the opposition, or as far as that goes, as anyone in this house can be. I abhor the communist party and all its works. I abhor its policy of force and violence; I abhor its policy of dictatorship and suppression of every freedom; but above all, I abhor and reject it because it has reversed human values. It has raised dissimulation, lying and deceit to the eminence of virtue. On the other hand, it has degraded truth,