

*Communist Activities in Canada*

procedure, then by the same token we have to admit that this is the proper procedure in society.

What I am afraid of in regard to a resolution of this description is that legislation flowing from it may be used either now or in the future to prevent free discussion, free consideration, and activities that should be of a proper nature. Let us remember that in the long struggle for freedom of action and freedom of speech ideas have arisen from time to time which have not been acceptable to a majority of the people where they have arisen. That was true to a large extent of religious ideas a few short centuries ago. I recollect that in 1671 a man who became famous in the story of the great republic to the south, William Penn, and his colleague William Mead, became Quakers. They were execrated by the country in which they lived. They tried to propagate their ideas. They were arrested for preaching openly, on the street, to some three or four hundred people in the city of London. The magistrate who tried them instructed the jury to convict for causing a riot, although no riot had taken place. The jury—that safeguard, in my opinion, of the rights of the common people—refused to accept the instructions of the magistrate. Though the jury were confined by the magistrate, habeas corpus proceedings were instituted and they were released. The jury's verdict of acquittal then had to be accepted.

It is through age-old methods, old and historic customs which have grown up in our society, that we can protect it against subversive activities. We have the laws on our statute books today—and I have no doubt the Minister of Justice (Mr. Garson) can, and perhaps will, point them out to us in this debate. We have adequate laws dealing with sedition, seditious conspiracy and the committing of overt acts. But I believe we endanger the effectiveness of our laws when we drive underground the activities of subversive elements, whether they be communist or fascist.

I venture to say we would have heard very little of one or two of the leading men in the present Labour-Progressive party in this country had they not been arrested during a time of grave unemployment and difficulty in the thirties, and sentenced to terms of imprisonment. We created for the communist party—or the Labour-Progressive party, if you care to call it that now, for it is the same thing—certain martyrs. That martyrdom was held up across the country in order to attract attention and to bring persons

[Mr. Coldwell.]

of ill-founded sympathy into their movement to support their cause. Consequently I say the house would be well advised to vote the amendment down.

Let me repeat that we have on the statute books in my opinion all that we require in order to meet this menace of Soviet communism in Canada. Let me also point out that Canada's representative approved the universal declaration of human rights of the United Nations. Looking at the preamble of this document, in the second paragraph I find this:

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and—

And then these words:

—the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people.

Then if I look at the actual articles we have approved I find that article 19 of this declaration says:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Yesterday we heard the suggestion that there should be some limitation of certain parts of the press of this country. Let me repeat my belief that our democratic institutions and our democratic ways are sufficiently strong that we do not need to fear a handful of people who are circulating literature against our institutions, and who are engaged in propaganda against this institution of parliament and against those institutions which guarantee to us the freedoms we now enjoy, provided, of course, they do not propose their violent overthrow.

Then, article 20 states:

Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

Assembly or association to discuss, to criticize, to plan, to forward and to promote our ideas within the law. Then, article 22:

Everyone as a member of society has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each state, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

And article 23(1):

Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

If we fulfil the articles of this declaration of human rights, then that, in my opinion, and not by legislating against activities of the