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Title:

ALP broadcast regarding 'basis of Labor Policy and ... policies of parties which oppose it'.

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A.L.P. BROADCAST. 18th July, 1960.

Good Evening:

I have been asked to reproduce tonight a short account of the basis of Labor Policy and to contrast it with the policies of the parties which oppose it, which I wrote for the newspapers some time ago. I think it is a good idea to make a fairly succinct analysis of one's views - so here it is.

I support Labor's belief in Democratic Socialism.

By "Socialism" we Laborites mean something vastly different from what either Communists or Liberals mean by that term.

Democratic Socialists believe:-

1. The prime aim of government should be to ensure to everyone an equal right to work out his own life as he wishes, so long as he does not interfere with that same right in other people. To ensure this right each citizen must be protected from disaster beyond his control which would make his existence over-difficult or impossible.
2. For that purpose government here should be by parliamentary democracy, with adult suffrage, one man one vote, one vote one value, liberty of speech and assembly, freedom from arbitrary arrest, the right of fair trial before an independent judiciary and the right to hold unpopular opinions and to organise opposition to the government of the day.
3. For that purpose, too, the workings of our complex national economy must be planned for the national good - not left to the haphazard whims of seekers after private profit. That implies that our institutions of finance and credit and our basic supply industries must be under public control. Otherwise, in the manipulation of these

institutions and industries to make profits for the few, unemployment and insecurity may be the miserable lot of many.

4. There is nothing essentially good or bad about either public or private ownership. The only criterion as to which should apply is whether the thing owned is used to social or anti-social ends. The criticisms levelled at these beliefs are, really, few.

The first is that public enterprise must always be inefficient. That is a myth. There are many efficient public enterprises in Australia. The fact is that the many inefficiencies of private enterprise receive little publicity. The inefficiencies of public enterprise receive, rightly, glaring publicity.

The second is that to give the government the suggested power over investment and employment policy, through the control of banking and supply industries, would mean "regimentation". I would answer that through the concentration of private control of commerce and industry the power already exists - in the hands of a few company directors not responsible to the people.

The question is simply whether the legislators or the company directors should exercise that power. I opt in favour of the legislators, whom the people can control, as against the directors, whom the people can't control.

The third is that Labor's Socialism is a step to Communism. That is absurd. It is in the countries with strong Democratic Socialist governments that Communism has been at its weakest. For it to be a step to Communism the very *raison d'être* of Democratic Socialism - a belief in human liberty - must be overcome. One might as well say "Christianity is a step to Atheism - one only has to overcome God."

The excesses of Capitalism have fostered the excesses of Communism. The only road ahead to Liberty is Labor's Democratic Socialism.

Australian "Liberals" (with a capital "L") do not hold the beliefs of English "liberalism" (with a small "l"). The great writers of the English "liberal" tradition - John Stuart Mill and L.T. Hobhouse, were believers in liberty, and became, in effect, democratic socialists.

Australian "Liberals" are a breed all of their own and no authoritative statement of their beliefs is to be found. But from the arguments they use against their opponents I deduce that they believe as follows:-

1. "Free Enterprise" is a system of trade and commerce where all who engage in it, both buyers and sellers, are so numerous and compete so much with each other that no one has any control over the activities of anyone else and the best service is automatically selected by the market.
2. This is an ideal system which exists in Australia today wherever the Government has not intervened.
3. Under "Free Enterprise" no one has any power over anyone else, so everyone is free. Where "Government Enterprise" exists, the Government has power over people, and no-one is free."

In addition to these, Australian "Liberals" usually hold other more lunatic convictions in varying combinations. But I shan't bother with such nonsenses, as they are not essential to the "Liberals" fundamental tenets.

The "Free Enterprise" argument is quite unreal. A state of perfect competition, where buyers and sellers are so numerous that they cannot individually affect the market exists in hardly any sphere of trade or production today. Each section has formed a group to further its own interest - Union, Employers Federations, Retail Trade Associations, etc. These groups can exercise very real power over us today. Moreover, in Australia the process of interlocking companies and company directorates has gone on to a greater extent than in almost any other capitalist nation. Through this process of Banking (and with

it our credit and investment policy). Oil, Iron, Steel, Sugar and Brick Production and the bulk of the Australian Press is in the hands of a tiny coterie of individuals - company directors answerable for nothing but producing a dividend. In the absence of Government intervention this small group can and does effectively control the nation's economy, and with it the lives and destinies of us all, and makes a useless sham of the decisions of the electors at the ballot box as to their own future. The motive for the decisions of this small group is not our welfare but their own private gain and they are the greatest supporters of the Australian "Liberalism" I have described. You may well ask why it is called "Liberalism"? The answer is that they had to find a nice name to conceal something nasty.

The question facing Australia today is not "Free Enterprise" or "Government Enterprise". It is whether the people should control the monopolists, or the monopolists control the people.

In, short, I believe that there is only one essential difference between Australian "Liberalism" and Australian "Communism". The "Communists" are genuinely unselfish and dangerously insane. The "Liberals" are genuinely selfish and dangerously sane.

Now let me say something about Communism and why I oppose it.

The Communists are disciples of Marx and Engels. According to them ~~and~~ all history previously has been a history of class warfare. As new techniques of production arise, so classes with vested interests in controlling them arose, and in due course they would, as their techniques became outmoded, clash with classes having vested interests in substituting new methods of production. The whole of society, its religion, its manners, its art, its culture is based on these clashes of interest. But now they believe a new situation has arisen with two classes - the capitalists or bourgeoisie and the dispossessed workers or proletariat.

In the resulting clash of classes the proletariat will overthrow the bourgeoisie and assume common control of the means of production. This will produce a classless society - since there will be no separate class to have a vested interest in the means of production - and the State will wither away and there will be left merely some form of co-operative society, for they hold, all the ills to which our society is subject - crime, greed, oppression, injustice, which call for State intervention merely stems from the unjust class relationships which our society allows. There will be no more class warfare, but merely sweetness and light.

In the fight to overthrow the bourgeoisie, they believe, that is no morality but the class warfare - the end justifies the means. They subordinate their policies to those dictated by countries which already have Communist Governments - looking for the time when all countries will be similarly organised.

Now all this is an extraordinary fantasy. The change in the techniques of production is not the only basis of class organisation - the will to power is a greater activating force in human affairs than the will to *possess profit*.

In the attempt to put this hopelessly Utopian pipe-dream into operation, the result has been that in the name of ultimate liberty one of the worst tyrannies in the history of the world has been established. Where democracies existed before - as in Czechoslovakia - rule by Communist party oligarchy has been substituted. Communist States have been productive of classes with vested interest - the vested interest in maintaining its own power. The difference between Labor's Democratic Socialism and Communism is not just a difference in means - Labor's policy of evolution and parliamentary change as opposed to the Communists revolutionary change and expousal of violence - it is a difference of ends. It is the difference between freedom and slavery.

~~Last of all I should say something about the Democratic Labor Party - although this is something of a misnomer -~~
for it is ~~neither democratic nor Labor~~. This is a small

group of fanatical sectories led by Mr. B. A. Santamaria. Mr. Santamaria decided to use the Communists' tactics to try to gain control of the Australian Labor Party which he would then use as a front to put into effect certain sectarian practices of his own. He would do what he did in the name of fighting Communism - although fighting Communism was only incidental to his aim - which was his own power. When the Labor movement refused to succumb to his dictates, he formed a new party aimed at polling sufficient potential Labor votes which he would then hand to the Liberals by the means of the preferential system, so as to keep Labor from power. And he intends to go on doing this in the hope that the Labor Party will be blackmailed into accepting his group on its terms - and its terms are that Mr. Santamaria and not the brood rank and file of Labor men and women, shall determine Labor policy. The day when that happens will never come.