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Title:

ALP 5KA broadcast regarding 'custom of the opponents of Labor ... to resurrect the cry that the Labor party is pledged to nationalise everything'.

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A.L.P. 5KA 25/1/60

Good Evening.

It is the custom of the opponents of Labor - the Liberal party and their hangers on, who travel under various guises - to resurrect the cry that the Labor party is pledged to nationalise everything and confiscate everybody's bank balance at any time, when they can't think of anything else to say.

I can remember the Member for Onkaparinga, Mr. Shannon, writing an article in the News in which he said Labor's aim was the nationalisation of all the means of production, distribution and exchange. The Premier in his William Queale Memorial lecture said the same thing. Liberal party advertisements have often carried some such statement.

All of these statements are quite untrue. The Labor Party does not propose the nationalisation of everything - never has done and never will do. The Labor Party has a lengthy and detailed program and what it is committed to is quite clearly and specifically set forth. Of course L.C.L. members are well aware of this - they have copies of Labor's proposals. But as telling the truth about Labor's aims would not suit their book - they prefer falsehood.

Now, in this time of comparative political calm let me quietly and carefully deal with just what Labor does believe on this matter. The Labor party believes that the organisation of our business activities is something which concerns us as a community. It is not the case that government - the officially organised community - has no concern with business activity. We are concerned and must be concerned with the security and welfare of all our citizens - that they may be able to earn their livings, develop their lives as they wish. Since the lives of every one of us is affected by the economic organisation of Australia - we are concerned with economic

activity as much as with which side of the road a driver should drive on.

In government concern with the economic organisation of the community it has to see that the social needs of the community are met. That is the only justification for government action.

The Labor Party therefore says that it believes that Government action is to be taken as far as is necessary to ensure the life, livelihood, liberties and development of the Australian people. It does not believe there is any particular magic about public enterprise - nor about private enterprise either. Its concern with any part of the means of production distribution and exchange is simply - does it work for the good of the Australian community? If it does not, then some action should be taken to see that it does.

What sort of action - that again depends upon the particular problem - it may involve a system of licensing, it may mean government acquisition of the enterprise, it may mean government entering the field in competition with the private enterprises concerned. All these forms of governmental activity are part of Labor's socialisation aims - indeed there are very few cases where Labor believes that straight out nationalisation government acquisition of an enterprise - is necessary. Labor does not believe that interference should take place merely for interference sake - the only occasions on which the A.L.P. advocates some action by Government in relation to industry are when the industry is not meeting the social needs of the community.

Thus it is that Labor's socialism has been called "Socialism sans doctrine" - socialism without dogma.

The dogma, the hidebound doctrine applied to Australian politics is not that of Labor but of the Liberal party.

The Liberal party does believe that public enterprise is undesirable and where it has to occur it only receives

Liberal support with reluctance. If the L.C.L. can see its way clear to sell public enterprises when in office, it does so. It denies any virtue to public enterprise and claims all virtues for private enterprise.

Let me give you an example to contrast the attitudes of the two parties.

At the time of the last Federal Labor Government, there was only one major Australian airline - A.N.A. owned substantially by overseas shipping interests. It had only continued in existence with the assistance of Grant. The Labor Government then set up an airline owned by the community - T.A.A. to operate in competition with A.N.A. Now, while it is true that public enterprise does sometimes develop undesirable features in administration, and get the civil service red tape instead of individual initiative spurred by desire for personal gain, this has been proved mainly a matter of administrative organisation, and the Liberals horrified cries that T.A.A. would be another costly failure, that public enterprise was never efficient, were proved false.

T.A.A. became a very efficient airline, making profits for the community and maintaining a high standard of service to the community. It had the advantages of public enterprise, and they are real advantages which should not be overlooked - the backing of all the necessary capital funds for development and the immediate availability of the official government business.

Now, let us see what the Liberals did when they came to power. They gave half the government business compulsorily to A.N.A. - the shipping company's airline. Now, we, the people of Australia are the shareholders in T.A.A. Imagine if we were shareholders in say John Martins and the directors of that firm were to come to us and say, "We have discovered a terrible thing. Our shareholders are doing all their business

with our own company. That is most unfair to Myers down the

street, so we propose to alter our articles to compel our shareholders to do half their business with Myers." Directors who suggested any such thing would be likely to be lynched or certified - you may be sure the directors of John Martins would never do any such thing. Yet that is what the effective directors of T.A.A. the Menzies Government, did to us the shareholders in T.A.A.

But they didn't stop there. Under successive airline agreements they provided that T.A.A. could not reduce charges to the public without consent of A.N.A. - they eliminated competition in which they profess to believe.

The action of the Labor Government was socialisation - providing for the social needs of the people. The action of the L.C.L. was to cripple the enterprise and eliminate its effectiveness in meeting that social need.

Thus it is that when Labor governments have set up successful community enterprises - C.O.R., A.W.A., The Commonwealth Shipping Line and the like, Liberal governments have sold them off, despite the benefits they gave to the community.

And although there has been a most alarming tendency to monopoly and restrictive trading in Australia - L.C.L. parties both in the Federal and State spheres have indicated horrified opposition to Labor's attempts to enact anti-monopolies and trust-busting laws of the kind which have been in force since the 1890's in the U.S.A. - that home of private enterprise.

It is only the Labor party which is concerned to maintain competition and to see the social needs of the people and the L.C.L. is concerned merely to maintain minority business exploitation at the expense of the rest of the community.