This week the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Bill 1956 was passed about which I wrote a few words in my last article. The debate on this Bill did not begin until very late in the evening and it continued until after 2 o'clock on Wednesday night.

During all-night sittings at the end of a Session everyone tends to get a little bit on edge and I think it can easily be seen why, when members are in the Chamber from half past ten in the morning until half past eleven, twelve, one or two o'clock or even three in the following morning. That I think is more than a fair day’s work by anyone’s standards. However, these hours are not normal practice. Towards the end of a Session when the Government is trying to keep to a certain timetable it occasionally becomes necessary to have one of these all-night sittings. When it does occur the House gets up for a few moments at 11.30 when the Government, that is the Cabinet, provide at their own expense supper of eggs or sausages for all the Members on both sides of the House.

These last few days were to have been the last week of this present Session before the House adjourned until next year.

As you will now know the sudden and dramatic events of the Middle East have made it necessary for us to re-assemble again for reports from the Prime Minister on this rapidly changing scene.

Events are too confused and there is too little real information of a positive character for us to form an honest and true judgment of what has happened so far, as I write this.

However, the earlier events of revolts in Hungary and Poland do present a clear picture and a grim reminder of the ugly menace of communism and the cruel tyranny that it imposes on subject races. It is quite clear at the present time that the Soviet Union under the guise of spreading communism has become the greatest imperial power the world has seen, but Soviet imperialism differs in a most important respect from what has been called in the past British imperialism. In the old days England in search of trade and markets would colonise a country but in colonising a country she would teach
the local people the art of self-government, she would raise their standard of life and teach them how to manage their own affairs. They were primitive people in most cases who were being brought up to what we regarded as a higher standard of civilisation.

The story and the picture in Russia and the satellites is entirely and completely different. The Hungarians, Poles, Rumanians and Czechoslovakians are not in anyway primitive people on a lower civilisation. They are highly intelligent and have old culture backed by centuries of development and progress. Under the guise of spreading communism the Russians have destroyed the freedom of these people. They have kept Communist puppets in power through the presence of their own armies in these foreign lands. They have not sought to teach these people the art of self-government for they had that already. They have merely sought to impose upon them a dictatorship of Government by one party where free elections are not allowed. The revolts in Poland and Hungary are a cruel reminder that these are people who knew freedom and lost it. We cannot yet say what is going to be the outcome of their struggles, but it is significant that official reports from Peking from Communist China have offered the insurgents of Hungary and Poland their best wishes in their struggle for freedom and self-government. Quite clearly all is not at peace in the Communist world.

We hope and pray that Hungary and Poland will achieve what they are fighting for with great courage, but even if they do not, even if Russian tanks and armour destroy the insurgents, their revolt has served to remind the free world of the true nature of communism and of the cruelty with which it is imposed upon subject peoples. It is a lesson we must never forget.
Author/s:
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Title:
30 October-1 November

Date:
11 November 1956

Persistent Link:
http://hdl.handle.net/11343/40293

File Description:
30 October-1 November

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