The most malicious lie of recent years is one that touches the very heart of the British Commonwealth of Nations and, more intimately, the United Kingdom itself. We have often heard the Communists from Russia or her satellites, or even, unfortunately, at times, misguided people inside Australia saying that England is a great imperial power deliberately keeping subject peoples under the control of its Colonial office.

This statement, often repeated, has, unfortunately, been believed by some people. It could not, however, be further from the truth. It could not be more completely and utterly false. These are the facts.

Since the war, the United Kingdom has given self-government to colony after colony - India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Rhodesia - in this year, Ghana, formerly the Gold Coast of Africa - and plans are well advanced to give the Federation of Malaya its full independence very shortly. This is no accident. It has not come about by chance. It has been the purpose and the object of what has been called British Colonialism, to teach people the art of self-government so that they may look after their own affairs and guide their national destinies. This is not something that is taught lightly or in the space of a few short years.

The former colonies that have become Dominions - full partners in the great British Commonwealth of Nations, have made their transition to self-government, on the whole, smoothly and without any untoward incident. The Federation of Malaya is, perhaps, an exception to this but Malaya is a special circumstance. It was occupied during the last war and the Communist subversives who now fight there were trained during the war and as the Japanese retreated, they were left behind.

Britain has granted self-government to over six hundred million people since the end of the last war. Surely this fact and the ever-growing number of Dominion partners in the Commonwealth of Nations throw the lie right back in the face of people who say that Britain is a Colonial power wishing to keep Colonial peoples under her own rule.
Ghana, the latest addition to the Commonwealth family has overcome many difficulties in reaching Dominion status. Nevertheless, it still obviously has problems as has every country of the world but these will be tackled in the future. Australia was represented by our Minister for Air, Mr. Osborne, at the ceremony which marked the beginning of the new Dominion. The Duchess of Kent represented the Queen who was recognised as the Queen of Ghana. It was a most important event in the history of Ghana, a new Dominion, but it is also an important and significant event for the rest of the Commonwealth. It could well be even more significant in the at times turbulent history of Africa. The example of Ghana will, we hope, in the right time be followed by other additions to the Commonwealth from that great Continent.

The people who say that England is still the power behind the colonies are, in fact, themselves the greatest imperialists of all times. While England has granted six hundred million people self-rule, Russia has denied six hundred million people the freedom they once had. And there is a marked difference between the activities of England and Russia. Great Britain has taught us the art of self-government, the art of democracy, and when the time has been ripe, Great Britain has gently retired from the scene. Russia, on the other hand, has enslaved many millions of people in all the countries of Eastern Europe, people who were highly civilised, who had self-government, who knew freedom and who have now been enslaved by Russian barbarism.

It would be better for us all if we remembered these facts. No Australian, whatever his political party, should be deceived by the intentions of England or by the intentions of Russia. England has given to many countries of the world the greatest possession they have - their own freedom and their own self-government. Russia is doing everything it can to take freedom from the people, to rob them of their self-government. Let us remember this story when we hear the subject mentioned in the future, as I am quite sure it will be.

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