ELECTORAL STATEMENT BY THE HON. MALCOLM FRASER, M.P.,

In the last week or so there has been some tragic news from the Middle East. I think some of us might have expected that the hostilities would be resumed between Israel and the Arab powers. There had been a build-up of armaments. The Russians had trained and re-armed many of the Arab nations. I believe that Russian activities in withdrawing from Egypt and, as I understand it, from some other Arab nations shortly before hostilities began, was a move merely to allow the Russians to appear to be uninvolved in what had happened, but I am suspicious of their ultimate motives.

I believe that most Australians will be sympathetic to the cause of Israel. The Jewish people have been pilloried around the world. They have suffered more hardship than any other group that can be named, and the one chance of a home, their one chance of a national identity was to be allowed to survive in Israel. They know what they are up against. They also know that this is probably the only chance that our world will give them for an independent existence. As a result of this they are tough, they are determined to survive. As their Prime Minister, Mrs. Golda Meir, said; "They must fight or die." If they give in to the forces against them it means the destruction of Israel.

But the tragic part of what has happened is that now we have the Soviet Union pouring additional arms into the Arab powers and this has compelled the United States to re-supply Israel so that they can continue to defend themselves. What the outcome of this conflict might be I do not know. But I have always believed and still believe that one of the cardinal Russian objectives in this area is to establish the circumstances in which the Suez Canal will be re-opened to the Russian Navy.
and once that occurs the Russian Navy will dominate the Indian Ocean.

What Australians need to understand and need to realise is that many people had thought that life in the Middle East had settled down. Many people had thought because of the alleged detente between the Soviet Union and the United States that there would not be a further outbreak of hostilities in the Middle East. What has happened in the Middle East shows how fragile peace can be, and it is not only in the Middle East that there is a prospect of serious disturbance. Those who say that Australia is entering a decade of serenity, those who say that the world is a more peaceful place as a result of the Soviet Union/United States detente, have been proved, I believe, to be quite and categorically wrong. Unfortunately the world is not a safe place. Australia can be thankful that this particular disturbance is taking place a considerable distance from our own shores, but the tumultuous world in South East Asia is far from settled and far from secure, and could easily become a scene of great power rivalry, particularly between Russia and China, and Japan could also be involved. Under those circumstances the alleged security that Australia is meant to have, according to the Government, for the next 15 years could very quickly be shattered.

We must all hope that the hostilities in the Middle East are ended, that reason will prevail, that all countries will be allowed to work out their own path, pursue their own independence without interference from neighbours. But in the present state of hostilities it would seem that it will take a very long while to achieve that.

The A.L.P. looks to be in difficulties, or perhaps it would be more true to say that Bob Hawke seems to be in some difficulty because he is not only President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions but also the Federal President of the A.L.P., and one would therefore have thought that as Federal President of the A.L.P. Mr. Hawke ought to support the Prime Minister and the Labor Government in trying to get passage of two referendums - one to give the Federal Government complete
over all prices, and two to give the Federal Government complete power over all incomes.

Mr. Hawke, as we all now know, has decided to prefer his A.C.T.U. hat to his A.L.P. hat, and he has made it quite plain that the A.C.T.U. is going to campaign very strongly indeed against the incomes power being given to the Federal Government and that means he will be campaigning against the Prime Minister.

It is an odd situation when you can have political arrangements which enable the Federal President of a political party to campaign against the Prime Minister who comes from the same political party. But I do not really think that this tangled skein has been properly unravelled up to this point because the Prime Minister himself said that there was very considerable legal opinion which believed power over prices would include a power over wages, because wages can be regarded as the price of labour.

Now if Mr. Whitlam is right in having that view, then it is highly probable that all those who support or who voted for price control power being given to the Federal Government, would also in fact be giving the Federal Government complete control over wages in addition, and it is this, of course, which the A.C.T.U. oppose bitterly, strongly and vehemently, and if there is even a legal doubt in this area concerning this matter then in logic the A.C.T.U. ought to oppose both branches of the referendum and not just one, because if they support power over prices there is a very real probability that at the same time they will be giving the Prime Minister power over wages in addition. It is going to be hard to tell what happens as a result of these two referendums. My personal view is that both referendums will be lost and they will be lost in large measure because of the clash within the A.L.P. on the issue.
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