

CO-OPERATION AND DISARMAMENT

Statement to Press by Rev. A. M. Dickie, Chairman.

Melbourne, 4/6/59.

Gentlemen,

As a Christian minister and as Chairman of the A.N.Z. Congress for International Co-operation and Disarmament, I desire to make the following statement:-

All sponsors and fellow workers in the peace movement may not agree with what I say as a Christian minister, I know they will agree with what I say about the motives, organisation and methods of the Congress. I ask your forbearance with the first and your questions about the second.

We live in dangerous times, but also in times of glorious opportunity. It is acknowledged by scientists that in the event of nuclear war, destruction, sudden only for the fortunate few, will come upon mankind. It is apparent that if the new power harnessed by man is used for the good of man nothing but good can come to man.

This I have recognised for the past sixteen years and more. Consequently, during those years, I have devoted myself both as a Christian minister and a citizen to the prevention of war and the reconciliation of the nations.

The stage is set for what will prove to be one of the most widely based and fruitful congresses for Peace to be held in any part of the world, whose findings we trust will find an echo in the heart of most Australians and New Zealanders, and make a vital contribution to peace in the world, peace in Australia and peace in men's hearts.

The burden of the attack on our Congress is that it is "communist inspired", "communist controlled" or "that some organisers are communists".

Gentlemen, we must, as a nation, face this issue of association with communists. We must face it on at least two grounds: Firstly, Theological: "The activity of loving service on the part of Christians to men involves collaboration and a measure of identification with those who are outside the

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fellowship of believers ... who are created in God's image, are under his Lordship, brothers for whom Christ died and whose consciences bear witness to him". Such collaboration raises many perplexing questions for the Christian; but none more perplexing than that raised by his refusal to co-operate with non-Christians in the achievement of world peace and a peaceful society".

Secondly, Democratic: Our traditional freedom of assembly and speech are precious to us - I hope. I am sure that the public of Australia would like to be assured that the Security service of this country is not going beyond its purpose of keeping Australia secure and using dossiers, the contents of which are known only to the service itself and against which there is no defence, to interfere with the free assembly and speech of citizens.

Furthermore - I have always believed that the condemnation by a people of any minority of its citizens is the measure of it's movement towards dictatorship - be that minority, Jew, native or communist. A Melbourne broadcast seems to have a list. Woe betide Australia, if McCarthyism becomes a feature of Australian life.

NOW ABOUT THE CONGRESS ITSELF. This conference has been called because of the publicity it has gained from the withdrawal of the very Reverend, the Dean of Melbourne, from the sponsorship of the Congress. As I have said elsewhere, " We deeply regret that he saw fit to withdraw his sponsorship." Something which he has a perfect right to do. I would have been happier had he discussed the matter with us before he wrote his letter of withdrawal, and if he had attended a meeting of ministers of religion to which he was invited to discuss the warning of Mr. Casey concerning the Congress. However, this was not done. We regret his withdrawal and would welcome him back if we are able to convince him of our bone fides.

When Mr. Casey gave his warning concerning this Congress, we immediately wrote to him asking him to meet with us to discuss the motives of the Congress and thereafter to appoint his nominee to sit with us on the planning committee of the Congress. To my knowledge, no reply or acknowledgement has been received to this invitation. I repeat the invitation! We likewise

issued an invitation to Mr. Casey to be present at this conference today. I have to inform you that his representative is not present. The Congress is just beginning to take shape, the constitution of the conferences and their office-bearers are just being finalised - what better examination could Mr. Casey make himself than at this early stage of the Congress's history?

In regard to the Congress itself. The Congress will take the form of a series of conferences arranged according to the special interests of the people. Scientists, churchmen, writers and artists, educationalists, women, youth etc. In a letter to Prof. Sir Marcus Oliphant, who suggested that the scientists conference should consist of some 35 to 50 scientists (in his opinion a workable number), I wrote before the withdrawal of Dean Babbage, that the scientists themselves, in organising their conference, would be free to determine the number attending as well as the programme and procedure of the conference. Churchmen on the other hand want to gather their conference from the churches themselves and have suggested the principle that the members should be duly accredited churchmen drawn from the State, regional and local levels of the churches. The same principle of autonomy will apply, from the beginning to other conferences which may be arranged, as will the principle that the Congress plenary sessions will be unable to alter the decisions of any conference. If any conference feels the validity of any point raised in a plenary session of the Congress, it may, or may not, alter its findings as it sees fit.

If any statement is to go to the public from the Congress, it will be framed by duly appointed members from the various conferences together with others appointed by the Congress plenary session itself.

Let me make perfectly clear, gentlemen, the relationship between the Congress State Organising Committees on the one hand and the various conferences.

As I have already indicated, each of the conferences are autonomous and will appoint their own secretaries and office-bearers. The organising committees (both Congress and State) on the other hand are appointed from

the sponsors in various states, and their role is simply to create and keep moving the organisational machinery which will facilitate the holding of the various autonomous conferences. In no way are they able to predetermine the composition, procedure, agenda or findings of the conferences.

That this is the role of the organising committees is clear from the current developments in Sydney which is a pattern for the other states:

The following officers were elected to the Executive positions of the Preparatory committee at a meeting held in Sydney on May 25th, 1959:

Chairman. Reverend Alfred Clint.

Joint Secretaries. Associate Professor S.E. Wright.
Mr. W.J. Latona.

Treasurer. Mr. D. Howitt.

The following convenors of Sub-Committees were elected to undertake special responsibilities for the Congress preparations in their respective spheres:-

Science Committee.

Associate Professor S.E. Wright, Dr. J.H. Green,
Dr. W. G. Whittlestone, Dr. H.D. Rathgeber,
Dr. R.E.B. Makinson.

Cultural Committee.

Mr. W. E. Pidgeon, Miss Pixie O'Harris,
Mr. R. Hanson, Miss M. Brand.

Trade Unions Committee.

Mr. J.D. Kenny, M.L.C., Mr. J. Heffernan,
Mr. D. Howitt, Mr. D. Thomas,

Education Committee.

Dr. N. R. Nay, Miss E. Mattick, Miss L. Woodcock,
Mr. W.E. Gollan.

Churches Committee.

Rev. N. Anderson, Rev. A. Clint,
Rev. A. Brand, Rev. Dr. E. Collocott, Mr. W. Latona.

Women's Committee.

Mrs. G. Melville, M.L.C., Miss E. Rivett,
Mrs. P. Latona, Mrs. B. Purse.

Youth Committee.

Mr. G. Broadhead, Mr. W. Sanderson, Mr. K. Simmons.

Business and Professional Committee.

Associated with the Congress is a FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS. This is designed to make possible an interchange of art between the various countries in our region, and to promote art within our own country. The result of the competitions in the fields of art, music and literature, will result in a cultural visit of the winners in these sections to Indonesia, India, China and Japan.

Art knows no barriers and the mutual promotion and enjoyment of it between countries is a positive contribution to peace.

Finally, to ensure the widest possible value from the Congress, a number of invitations have been issued to overseas personalities. To date the following have accepted our invitation.

Professor Linus Pauling: One of the best internationally known American chemists who for many years was head of the California Institute of Technology. He is a Nobel Prize winner and Foreign Member of the Royal Society of London.

Professor J. Rotblatt: Professor of Medical Physics at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London. Also one of the U.K. representatives with Sir Edward Bullard and Professor C.F. Powell on the Pugwash Continuing Committee.

Gentlemen: Our case rests here. I invite your questions.