

BROADCAST:

3HA Sunday, 9 July, 1972

3YB Thursday, 13 July, 1972

3LK Tuesday, 11 July 1972

Recently, the Australia Party released a booklet setting out its policy in several areas. Among the party's proposals as reported in the national press were the abolition of all forms of censorship, legalisation of abortion, repeal of legislation prohibiting the advertising of contraceptives, repeal of laws relating to sexual acts, legalisation of prostitution and relaxation of our attitudes towards drugs.

It is the release of these policy proposals which has prompted me to discuss community attitudes to these matters.

Young people today are perhaps more idealistic than ever before, showing an immense concern for world problems. This is one stream of development - the attitudes of our young - of which Australia can be proud.

However, there is another stream in the community which runs concurrently with it, but is very different and which gives us no cause for pride - an unwillingness to accept the minimum discipline that is necessary for an ordered society, an unwillingness to work within the framework of the law in our efforts to change that law.

We see riots at universities as a means of seeking to change the law rather than working through the normal processes. The deplorable fact is that these things can only be encouraged by statements from leading public figures advocating a course that could lead to mutiny in the armed forces or declaring that defiance of the law is no crime. These things are all part of a discernable trend which can only lead to the breakdown of the law and all respect for the society in which we live.



In Australia there is a very great change in social attitudes - a permissiveness, if you like - a change in the material newspapers publish, a change in the films that are seen on the nation's cinema screens. Those who support these changes would do so on the grounds of freedom, of sophistication, of allowing individuals to choose and set their own standards. But this is not the end of the matter, because there are certain standards and disciplines within a community which must be maintained if the strength, vigour and ethic of that society are to be protected.

I believe the Government and other leaders of the community should, by their attitudes and public statements, work towards the preservation of these standards.

I know that this whole issue presents enormously difficult problems. But should we really be proud of changes in attitudes and in the law which have led to a doubling of the legal abortion rate in twelve months in South Australia - from 1330 in 1970 to 2519 in 1971, so that last year there were 105 abortions for every 1000 live births? Other State Governments have not found it necessary to change their laws on the matter. It ought to be understood that abortion is possible if a mother's health is significantly threatened. The reformists, however, want abortion on request, an entirely different matter.

Should we be proud of attitudes that mean there is barely a theatre within our capital cities providing general exhibition films, where R films dominate our cinemas?

Should we be proud of attitudes which result in people hawking things like the Little Red School Book, that untidy, insidious and dirty little publication? It was not only the contents of that



particular book that were so important, but also the fact that its publication was deliberately aimed at young school children.

Nor can we be proud of the circumstances in which school teachers, who are most involved in the education and upbringing of our children and to whom students ought to look for an example, are called out on strike by their association leaders, perhaps the first of the professions to use strike action as a matter of course. What kind of example is this for the students they teach?

I don't want my remarks to be misinterpreted, as can so easily happen when one discusses issues such as this. Nobody would want a return to the attitudes of the Victorian era and the hypocrisies that accompanied it. But there must be maintained a minimum of discipline without which schools, and society generally, will not function properly. I believe that in some areas, there is less discipline than the required minimum. While I am greatly encouraged by the intensely idealistic strand of thought and action in our young people pressing their elders to achieve a better standard, I voice my concern at the other strand running contrary to these traditional values which are essential to the strength, vitality and determination of any community and to the family unit.

Attitudes and practices which tend to damage or weaken the strength of the family within our society are attitudes and practices that should not be condoned. Mr. Whitlam said on 24 June last year: "I believe in abortion on request". That attitude is not good enough.



The family remains central to the Australian community and policies and actions of governments should be directed towards maintaining the strength of the family unit.

The attitudes to which I have referred would weaken that strength.

A society cannot survive without some minimum of discipline, without an element of self restraint, without a high regard of one person for another. Unlicensed sexual behaviour, abortion on request, a less rigorous attitude in relation to drugs, legalisation of prostitution, the pandering to the lowest community tastes in literature, all these strike at the heart of values which are important to Australia and which every decent Australian and every family will want to protect.

There are greater freedoms in our community. Young people have more opportunity to express their views, to argue for them. There is greater opportunity to work to change and improve the basis of our society. There is a greater desire for more equality, to achieve for all Australians an equal and proper place.

However, while change and evolution of our society is necessary and inevitable, there are traditional values which we must fight to protect.

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