



AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

NEW SOUTH WALES BRANCH

Circular 11

369 George Street

SYDNEY

18th June 1951

READING AND DISCUSSION GROUP

NOTICE OF MEETING

There will be a meeting of the Reading and Discussion Group at the Institute Office at 5.15 p.m. sharp

on WEDNESDAY, 27th June 1951

when Mr. C.K. BLISS

will open a discussion on

SEMANTOGRAPHY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND THE MAN IN THE STREET

Lord Russell and Senor de Madariaga have been much impressed with the work of C.K. Bliss who, it appears, has worked out the first practical realisation of a theoretical speculation, made 300 years ago, by the great mathematician and philosopher Leibnitz.

Semantography comprises a Semantics and Logic, so simple, that the man in the street, and even the illiterate should have no difficulty to adjust his own thinking, and the assessment of utterances by others, in a more logical and rational way than it is done nowadays.

Mr. Bliss will show that Semantography could be used to draft treaties, or business agreements which thus will be made free of vague and ambiguous words, which might be interpreted differently six months hence. Moreover, a "War of Words" is going on in every family and every community. Semantography may prove the antidote to this and therefore be of practical use to everyone. Mr. Bliss is a graduate of the University of Technology in Vienna. He will illustrate his lecture by means of slides and diagrams.

JOYCE RITCHIE
Secretary New South Wales Branch

SUMMARY NOTES FOR THE LECTURE

"Semantography, International Affairs and the Man in the Street."

More than 9 years have passed since my lecture, and I am writing this page in order to give the interested reader an idea about the content of my lecture.

Re-reading my lecture notes I can only marvel about my enthusiasm and my naive belief at that time that I will be understood. I tried to show that a new simple logic and semantics when taught in the primary school could indeed help the man in the street not to be taken in by the fallacious word propaganda of demagogues and dictators. Of course, the audience might very much wonder whether Semantography is indeed that simple symbolic logic which can indeed help the man in the street. Today I know that no audience will be enough conditioned to understand my system - at least not during my life time.

I gave my thanks in the beginning to the officers of the Institute who not only made this lecture possible, but who also were instrumental in enabling me to have a talk with Lord Bertrand Russell and Senor Madriaga, the two Dyason lecturers of the Institute. I told the audience of the tests which Russell and Madriaga chose for sampling my symbols. I told them too of the praise they both gave to my work.

I proceeded then to show on simple examples how the man in the street becomes the victim of ambiguous statements of the political rulers. One "time-honoured" device which politicians and their henchmen use against each other is the accusation of inconsistency. If a politician maintains a stand, it is easy to look up texts of some of his speeches made some years ago, and find there statements which seem to contradict the present stand of that man. Usually, these statements are taken out of their context, or not even quoted in full sentences. The simple man has no possibility to check the speech made years ago, in order to find whether or not it deals with the same subject. Quite often it does not. Politicians themselves like to use vast words with vagueness, which may mean this or that and which do not pin the speaker down to a definite action. Consequently such words can easily be used to mean something quite different.

On the other hand, a politician may indeed have changed his mind about a certain subject. Years ago he may have believed that we can come to terms with Russia, and he may have advocated a policy of conciliation and appeasement. Today, he might have changed his mind completely. There is nothing wrong in that I explained, and showed my symbols for the human being and for his mind and the simple rule of Semantography that a man may change his mind within a few seconds even, and still be sincere.

This, of course, is not easy to swallow for our present-day generation. We have been brought up to believe that a man must be consistent in his belief, and if he is not then he is an opportunist who sells his soul to the highest bidder. In short, the simple rule of Semantography discussed above could make people refrain from trying to show the contradictions in statements made years ago and today. I showed furthermore how words which contain the mind symbol and which are usually what I call "human evaluations" do change from person to person in meaning, and even change with the same person.

Another example is a political rhetoric trick often used by men of all countries. Stalin or anyone else in the Russian hierarchy said (and he may be quite sincere about it) that "The Russian people is peace loving". Indeed from all the Russian literature we know that the Russian people is indeed peace loving. But so are the German people. So are the French and the British people. So are the simple people everywhere. They want to stay at home and till the soil. They don't want to go out and kill and be killed. They are peace loving indeed.

In order to show the fallacy in this statement I proceeded to write down the formula showing "the Russian people" all being human beings which can be numbered like $\lambda_1 + \lambda_2 + \lambda_3 + \lambda_4 + \lambda_5 + \lambda_6$ and so on, meaning Mushik No. 1 and mushik 2 and mushik 3, up to the last of the 170 million Russian people. Equally we can write the formula for the German people showing Hans No. 1 plus Hans 2 plus Hans 3 and so on. We can write this formula in another form showing the mind symbol instead of the human symbol, like $\sigma_1 + \sigma_2 + \sigma_3 + \sigma_4 + \sigma_5$ etc. Applying now our simple rule discussed above, we can now take a simple American who is peace loving, and of course is against war of any kind. Then he reads of the wanton torpedoing of the Lousitania and he immediately enlists and goes to Europe to kill as many Germans as he possibly can. Yet, he is peace loving still.

But there is a worse fallacy in the above statement. We may assume that everyone of the Russian people is utterly peaceloving and against any war - all, except one Russian: Stalin himself. Then he could sincerely say that the Russian people is peace loving. But he himself dreams of war and conquest. Equally, we can say that all the German people are peace loving, all except one, Adolf Hitler.

These few lines will indicate the content of my lecture, in which I discussed other and similar political statements and showed their inherent fallacy. The End.