

External Affairs in Parliament

Statement on Canadian Policy

The following statement was made to the House of Commons on November 24 by the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable L. B. Pearson :

I think China is the subject that I should deal with first, because it is one that has been touched upon . . . by those speakers representing the various parties who have preceded me I think that, if the statement made yesterday by the Secretary of State for External Affairs is examined in detail by those who are interested, they will find that what has been said in the House of Commons is not in contradiction to what the Secretary of State for External Affairs said in New York yesterday. The Canadian position in respect of this very important matter of the representation of China at the United Nations, I believe, was very clearly outlined in the statement made yesterday. The Secretary of State for External Affairs . . . outlined the essentials which we would consider would constitute a reasonable solution to this problem. I know it is difficult to formulate an important matter in a word but, in a word, the proposal was that the Governments of both the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China should be represented in the General Assembly in respect of the territories under their effective jurisdictions and that the Government of the People's Republic of China should be the permanent member on the Security Council, representing the territory over which it effectively has had jurisdiction for 15 or more years now and which includes 700 million people.

The position embodied in the Minister's statement was framed specifically to avoid interference in what must be considered as internal Chinese affairs and, in particular, to avoid prejudging the question of China's being a single sovereign entity, as both Chinese Governments claim at the present time. Of course, we know this. Therefore, this proposal or suggestion is not an attempt to create two Chinas; it is an attempt to outline what might be a reasonable interim solution to the problem of Chinese representation, strictly limited to the United Nations context, with no implications in respect of the questions of sovereignty or territorial rights which one day will have to be settled by the Chinese themselves, including those who live on Taiwan. That was the purpose of the statement. The policy embodied in that statement has been given to this House by the Secretary of State for External Affairs and, indeed, by myself, on more than one occasion. It is a policy based on the desirability of universality in a world organization. In that statement of yesterday, we have not abandoned the belief that the policy of universality should be implemented in such a way that it would not expel a present member government from the United Nations.