

The Address—Mr. Trudeau

anti-boycott legislation as it was before and that legislation has been pushed back to the bottom of the government's list of priorities.

Through inexperience or naïveté, I do not know, the Prime Minister did not realize how very significant the move of our embassy was in all countries of the Middle East. He seemed to believe that what pleased the Conservative voters in Toronto would please the rest of the world. But once he was faced with a strong opposition from the rest of the world, he retreated with a rapidity worthy of an Olympic champion. The Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Atkey) did not do much to make up for the foolish antics of the government. On the contrary, he thoughtlessly stated that the Arab world's barks were worse than its bites. Well, Mr. Speaker, those are the bites which now cause serious injuries to exporting companies and Canadian workers.

It is one thing to make formal statements on a matter of principle and to accept with lucidity the repercussions involved. It is another thing to defend obstinately a highly controversial position although it might have been conceived rapidly without taking into account all its possible repercussions. However, after it became obvious even to the Progressive Conservatives that their position on the move of our embassy was dangerous, that it would be harmful to the fragile peace talks in the Middle East and that it was jeopardizing the economic interests of our country, one would have expected that the government recognize its error by trying to save face as best as possible.

Nothing of that happened. On the contrary, we saw one of the most painful sights in the political annals of this country. To evade any personal embarrassment, the Prime Minister chose to humiliate his former leader. Like a scapegoat, Robert Stanfield was dispatched to the Middle East where he is dragging himself miserably from one capital to another, supposedly to win time for the Prime Minister when in fact he is only gathering contempt for a government which is inexorably lurching toward a reversal of position all the more humiliating that it will have been delayed so long.

Mr. Pepin: Another Suez!

An hon. Member: Spending millions for nothing.

Mr. Trudeau: The third example of the confusion of this government also has to do with foreign policy. The Secretary of State for External Affairs (Miss MacDonald) went before the United Nations Assembly and urgently appealed for greater generosity and better co-operation from all countries in the area of human rights and social justice. Several people, including us, think that secret and discreet diplomacy is more efficient than great speeches to ensure those rights. But we are not for that matter reproving the generous intentions of the minister. What we are reproving is the contradictory statements made by this government, because at the very moment

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the hon. lady was urging the other countries to have more compassion for the plight of the oppressed and presumably help them with their money, as without economic justice human rights have no meaning, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Crosbie) was warning the poorer nations at the Malta and Belgrade conferences not to come and beg for increased help from Canada whatever their needs. The Minister of State for the Canadian International Development Agency (Mr. Asselin) who is sitting in the other place with his carrier pigeons said to the press of this country that the government intended to reduce the amounts to be spent on foreign aid.

The net result of all this, Mr. Speaker, is that Canada's solid and established reputation as an open, committed and generous ally of the Third World in the fight for greater economic and social justice has changed overnight to one of hypocrisy. Canada will support any initiative to further the cause of social justice and economic development in the Third World provided we are not asked to contribute a single penny. We will support any action that could prove useful provided somebody else foots the bill. That is the hypocritical message this government is sending abroad. Even the Secretary of State for External Affairs is going against her own urgings at the United Nations when she suggests that Canada should perhaps concentrate its help on developing countries which are making real economic progress and reduce its help to poorer countries. That is like being in favour of medical insurance for healthy people, Mr. Speaker, while leaving to private charity the task of looking after seriously ill people.

No wonder the poorer countries which had considered Canada to be one of their strongest and most dedicated allies are beginning to view us as not so reliable friends. Mr. Speaker, when the Progressive Conservative Party came to power, Canada had very few enemies throughout the world. Within a few short months, this government has managed to set against us Argentina, Pakistan, several African countries and every Near Eastern nation. Quite a success, Mr. Speaker, which does not lead us to expect much from this government.

This recital of confusion could go on and on, Mr. Speaker. How many times did we hear before the election that if the Progressive Conservatives were to take power, they would restore the supremacy of the House of Commons. Ever since the election, the Progressive Conservatives have taken every opportunity to reiterate their commitment to a more open and more effective Parliament. However, there was but one problem—they had no desire whatsoever to convene this Parliament, Mr. Speaker. And while the House was not sitting, they have transferred senior portfolios from the House of Commons to the Senate; they have set up what they called parliamentary committees, on which actually only Progressive Conservative members sit; they have disclosed to the Progressive Conservative caucus, long before they were published, the results of ministerial research on energy and transport; they have spent some \$10 billion through mere Governor General's warrants