

External Affairs

Mr. Green: My followers are all right.

Mr. Chevrier: They are interrupting all the time.

Mr. Green: What was happened is that the hon. member for Richelieu-Vercheres has either been consulting the Liberal brain trust or he has been reading some columnist—

Mr. Cardin: I just listened to the debate.

Mr. Green:—who intimated that the Prime Minister had been pulling the rug out from under me.

Mr. Cardin: I read the Prime Minister's speech and that was enough.

Mr. Green: Perhaps when I tell the hon. member what actually happened he will not be so suspicious.

Mr. Cardin: If we can get the truth now, all right.

Mr. Green: Do not start talking about getting the truth.

Mr. Cardin: We have not had it so far.

Mr. Green: That is really hitting a little low.

Mr. Cardin: Telling the truth is hitting low?

An hon. Member: You cannot take it, eh?

Mr. Cardin: Who cannot take it?

An hon. Member: You.

Mr. Green: Hon. members will recall that when the hon. member for Essex East (Mr. Martin) was speaking about disarmament he wanted to know all the details—

Mr. Pearson: Oh, no, he did not.

Mr. Green:—of the instructions to General Burns who is representing Canada on this very important disarmament work. This plea was made several times during the course of his speech. The Leader of the Opposition made similar suggestions and I think that they were also made by the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. Winch) and possibly by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam (Mr. Regier). The Prime Minister and I are old parliamentarians. We have a deeply ingrained respect for the House of Commons and the suggestion that we are not being fair to the House of Commons, that we are trying to conceal things, is an anathema to both of us. We discussed the situation, and you will find that in the evening the Prime Minister, during the course of his speech, said as recorded on page 989 of *Hansard*:

The hon. member for Essex East, on the other hand, seemed to advocate competitive alternative programs to be placed before the disarmament commission. I do not believe we should engage

[Mr. Chevrier.]

in such competition. We in this government believe that the western world should endeavour to integrate its thinking for peace—

I repeat those words, "should endeavour to integrate its thinking for peace".

—that peace cannot be obtained if each nation goes its own way and presses its own thinking to such an extent that agreement through compromise cannot be arrived at.

On the next page we find this further statement by the Prime Minister:

The hon. member for Essex East apparently believes that each nation should produce a collection of competing plans. What we believe in is that there should be an agreed western position to serve as a point of departure in the negotiations with the U.S.S.R. in the 10-power talks which start next month in Geneva, and this is what we are aiming at, to make a contribution by the submission of proposals and comments which will assist in bringing about a plan for international disarmament which will be realistic, negotiable, and at the same time not imperil national security.

As found on the next page the hon. member for Essex East had this to say:

What I said was that we should place before parliament our concepts in the form in which, for instance, the United Kingdom presented theirs, in the open and public assembly of the United Nations.

Then the Prime Minister said:

I accept that correction. The hon. member says that we should give a general idea of the concepts, if I understand him aright. I could summarize them in this way. These are views expressed in summary which I think represent the thinking of Canadians as a whole on this matter.

Then the Prime Minister proceeded to give a general idea of certain concepts. He did not give all of the concepts but he went as far as we thought we could properly go in giving the general background. We did not give the details because it would be highly improper to do so. Our objective is to get a proper disarmament agreement, and were the Canadian government at this stage to go into all these details in public it would very seriously prejudice the chance of the five western nations to bring about a proper disarmament agreement.

Mr. Pearson: Would the minister permit a question on this point? He has suggested, in fact he has stated, that we asked for all the details. He has said that twice with respect to the hon. member for Essex East and myself. Will he point out any place in *Hansard* where we asked for the details of the Canadian proposals for disarmament?

Mr. Green: Throughout the whole of the speech of the hon. member for Essex East he kept badgering us for a statement as to Canada's disarmament proposals. If the Leader of the Opposition says now that they did not mean the details of the proposals, I accept his explanation.