

## External Affairs

The record of the government on this matter in the answers that it has given in the House of Commons has been a hodge podge of inconsistency. The government had one policy one day and a different one the next day, and the answers given to parliament were totally removed from the realities of the situation. On March 6, when asked this question, at page 1928 of *Hansard*:

May I ask the Prime Minister whether the United Nations force going into the Gaza strip and to the shores of the gulf of Aqaba will be subject to being ordered out by Egypt at any time?

The Prime Minister replied:

That is a question I cannot answer.

Nasser has the last word just as we in Canada have the last word about the placing of any armoured forces of other nations in our territory.

With that statement I am not in disagreement, but the Gaza strip is not the territory of Nasser, and has not been at any time. It is territory that was occupied during the war; it was the territory whose boundaries were drawn for armistice purposes, and at no time was there any recognition that the Gaza strip was in fact Egyptian territory.

The Prime Minister's answer continued:

This is something upon which we are very insistent, and I am not surprised that the government of Egypt would be just as insistent.

What is going to happen there? Well, all of us can pray that the optimistic hopes expressed by the Secretary of State for External Affairs that Egypt is suddenly going to become repentant and will adopt a reasonable attitude are true. He says he hopes that Egypt will do that. Is there anything in the record of Egypt particularly since Nasser took charge that in any way would lend credence to the idea that from now on Nasser will become a docile lamb instead of a ravenous individual to whom appeasement is simply support and encouragement to a further challenge of the free world.

I also wish to quote from some of the subsequent answers that were given, indicating the attitude of the government day by day. On March 8 the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra (Mr. Green) asked this question, as reported at page 2006 of *Hansard*:

What is the position of the Canadian government? What does the Canadian government think should be done about this question?

The first question asked by the hon. member as follows:

Will the Prime Minister tell the house the stand of the Canadian government on the latest blackmailing move by Nasser that only ships paying toll to Egypt will be able to use the Suez canal?

The Prime Minister's reply was:

I do not believe that what the Canadian government thinks matters very much until some Canadian ship is required to pass through the canal. The Canadian government does think that the

proposal made by the principal users is a reasonable proposal. It is now before the Egyptian government and there has not been any answer yet from the Egyptian government.

The Prime Minister gave further answers, but none of the answers to the questions asked were given today as to the current situation. What right has Nasser to determine the question as to whether or not ships shall be permitted free passage through the canal? What stand has Nasser taken relative to the attitude of Egypt since 1949 in refusing the use of the Suez and Aqaba to Israeli ships? These things have not been answered. These were the questions that were asked the other day; these were the questions that the Secretary of State for External Affairs, with evasive agility, managed to back away from in not answering them. These are some of the things we want to know. What are the assurances that have been given in recent days that bring about the hopes of the hon. gentleman that changes will take place on the part of Nasser? We have heard nothing of that, nothing to indicate this change of heart, this contrite attitude, this decision on the part of Nasser to become a responsible member of the United Nations and to live according to international law. Has he given any such representations? Has he made any such promises? And yet, day after day, we hear expressions in the house of the possibility that all will ultimately be well there. It is because of that that I ask the minister to answer this question unequivocally. Has Nasser been given to understand by the United Nations, has Canada taken any stand in that behalf, similar to the stand taken yesterday by the foreign secretary of Britain, that in the interest of maintaining peace and preserving the situation that now exists in consequence of the cease-fire, the United Nations civil administration will continue to occupy and maintain the administration of the civil responsibilities until such time as, in the light of circumstances, the free world may conclude that the challenge by Nasser will indeed have ceased to exist? Yet, we have no such representations and no suggestions. There has been no communication.

When the Prime Minister was asked what representations were made to Nasser the answer was that none had been made.

Then, on March 7, the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra asked the Prime Minister this question, as recorded at page 1958 of *Hansard*:

May I ask the Prime Minister whether the Canadian government agrees with the stand taken by the Egyptian government or whether it does not?