

External Affairs

great leaders with whom we are associated and whose example we should follow.

My own feeling, Mr. Speaker, is that we should be proud of our North American partnership; we should be proud of our commonwealth partnership, and we should be thankful that Providence has placed us in the position where we can play a great part in both.

Mr. Erhart Regier (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, unlike the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Macdonnell) I do not wish to offer any apologies for lengthening the time for this debate. I am sure if my people back home wanted me to rise in this house and speak on any debate it would be on this one. I do not believe the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Pearson) is overly anxious to end the debate. I have full confidence that he wants to have placed before him in as full a measure as possible what goes on in the minds of the Canadian people.

However, having said that in regard to the hon. member for Greenwood, I wish to underline everything else he has said. I was very pleased to see the Conservative party, through that hon. member, make some attempt to amend what I believe has been some of the harm they have done during the past few days.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I notice some inference drawn from speeches made by hon. members in this section of the house and the term "fellow travellers" was used in regard to these members. I would like to place on record that these things the Canadian people have been reading about in the newspapers about the evils of communism have been known to some of us for many, many years before our newspapers published what they considered to be news.

I have personally lived side by side with refugees from communism since the year 1923. In fact, our home was the home of a considerable number of refugees over quite a number of years and I regret to have to admit that the stories told by refugees in 1923, 1927 and 1947 are all the same. It is one and the same song of persecution beyond the point of endurance. I hope no one will ever attempt to label me a "fellow traveller". However, I also learned from many hundreds of refugees I got to know that Russia today has no more and no less of Christianity than she had before the revolution of 1917. I believe most hon. members in this house will agree with that.

The common, ordinary peasant of Russia today has to live under the most terrible conditions in exactly the same way as he had to live before that revolution. When we

[Mr. Macdonnell.]

think of the Soviet union I do not believe we can lay all the blame for the conditions under which these people unfortunately have to live under the system of government they now have. There have been a lot of other forces at work. For confirmation of that other than from refugees one has only to read a few of the books of the great Russian writer Tolstoy. We realize that people there have lived under these horrible conditions for a long, long time.

I will admit that what our newspapers say about the slave labour camps in the rugged north of Siberia is only too true. However, slave labour camps were not invented by the communists. They were merely extended by them for they were favourite resorts to which these czarist rulers used to send their undesirables.

Another thing that does not fool me is the eternal attempt on the part of the communists to form a united front. I maintain that the great tragedy of Spain would possibly never have happened if a lot of the liberal-minded people had not been taken in by the communist offer of forming a united front. Whenever communists have formed a united front with liberals and with progressives, they have deceived and have managed to upset the arrangements. They have not kept faith. The same could be said of Czechoslovakia and their rape of that country. The condition maybe was unavoidable there. At this time I should like to endorse the statement that our Secretary of State for External Affairs made on Sunday last in referring to what happened in Czechoslovakia. The same story applies to the history of the Baltic states. I regret to say that the same story may some day apply to some of the states of India and to a great nation such as Italy. There is no such thing as forming a united front with any dictatorial political organization, be it of the right or of the left.

Where have we failed the cause of democracy? I think one of our earliest failures of the cause of democracy was when we let down the Weimar republic of Germany. That let-down was responsible indirectly for the rise of communism and nazism in Germany so that by 1933 there was nothing left for the German people but to choose what they thought to be the lesser of two evils. Another let-down in more recent years of the cause of democracy—and I am not too sure just what our share of the blame is—has been the actions in British Guiana. Surely a nation in South America that has been under British rule for as long as has British Guiana should not have found that the only alternative to the state of things as they existed there was