

what took place at the meetings of the general assembly. If those hon. members opposite who attended the conference want to see the draft reports prepared by the officers of external affairs before they are published, they are welcome to do so. I have had to go over them, and it is quite a bit of work. I found, as one might expect from the staff which had been assembled in the Department of External Affairs before I got there, that this work has been ably done; and I am sure the officers of the department as well as myself would welcome the interest other hon. members of the house who were on these delegations might take in the drafts before they are published. But I think it would be going rather far to ask the leaders of the other parties to approve in advance documents to be put out by the government. We have felt that we should do our best to put them out in such form that they would not deserve criticism; but we did not think we could reasonably ask the leaders of the other parties to approve them in advance.

Mr. GREEN: They were delegates to the united nations assembly.

Mr. ST. LAURENT: They were part of the Canadian delegation, but they also happen to be leaders of other parties in the house. If either of them will say to me that he would like to share with me responsibility for the report before it is printed, I shall be very glad to accept that offer.

Views have been expressed here which require some explanation of the pertinent facts, but by and large, up to the difference of view which I have indicated with respect to the last part of the speech of the hon. member for Vancouver South, there was fairly unanimous approval of the policy of the government in this matter of the peace settlements in Europe; and I thought that was very much as it should be. Of course the government has to take responsibility for the decisions made with respect to external affairs, just as it has to take responsibility for the decisions it makes in domestic matters. But we have endeavoured to make only decisions of the kind that would commend themselves to the Canadian public at large, and we felt that it would be very much to the interest of Canada to have Canadian policy with respect to external affairs, not the policy of a party government but the policy of Canada, and we have endeavoured to form our delegations in such a way, and to make our decisions along such lines as would carry out that intention. We have frequent opportunities to manifest

[Mr. St. Laurent.]

our differences of views about matters of domestic policy. I hope that will suffice, and that we shall not have to divide on these matters which affect our external relations.

The position being asserted by the western allies, other than the great powers, with respect to the peace settlements should not surprise three or four of those great powers, but apparently it has come as somewhat of a surprise to our Russian friends. As the hon. member for Vancouver South has pointed out, to a certain extent that may be understandable if one recalls the sequence of events from the beginning of the war to the final surrender of Germany. Poland, Holland, Belgium and France were soon overrun and their armies, as armies supported by independent states, ceased to exist. For a time the United Kingdom and the dominions stood alone against the axis forces. There were detachments of resistance members of the Polish army, the Dutch army, the Belgian army and the French army, but they were based on the soil of the United Kingdom and fought as part of the forces that were coordinated in the United Kingdom.

Then the U.S.S.R. was attacked and constituted a separate front. The United States was attacked, sent troops both to the orient and to the European front and was looked upon as a third group.

Of course we all realized that you cannot fight a war without coordination of efforts, and to achieve coordination there was a conference between Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt in the early days. There had even been a conference between them on the high seas even before the United States got into the war, and the document known as the Atlantic charter followed as a result of that conference.

Then, after the United States were attacked, a solemn declaration was signed in Washington on January 1, 1942, by the allied nations to the effect that they approved the Atlantic charter, and stating:

Each government pledges itself to employ its full resources, military or economic, against those members of the tripartite pact and its adherents with which such government is at war;

Each government pledges itself to cooperate with the governments signatory hereto and not to make a separate armistice or peace with the enemies.

That was signed by, I believe, twenty-five allied nations, including all the twenty-one who were at the peace conference. And that undertaking, not to make a separate peace, implied, I think, the other undertaking that there would not be a peace made which had