

External Affairs

United Nations sponsored this loan to Egypt which contradicted the president's own statement and allowed Egypt to be in violation of international principles.

What is Canada doing? The minister spoke about some degree of independence. How can Canada speak in terms of independence when it accepts so blindly a breach of a United Nations decision. The minister and the house know that it is a United Nations decision that the Suez canal be kept open. I am just wondering what an outcry there might be if Canada should at one moment decide that it would not give access to the St. Lawrence seaway ships of certain nations, or if the United States said: we will deny passage to ships of certain nations through the Panama canal. These things have to be dealt with on an international basis and international decisions should be respected. When they are not, because of the moral standing and the great reputation which our country enjoys for fairness and justice, we should be the first to speak up. However, I must say, sadly, that this government has not done so on this question in particular.

Former governments have done so in the past, as I pointed out earlier. It took courage to make certain decisions which displeased many of our friends. But Canada did take those decisions. I call upon the government and upon the minister to give an answer, to speak and let his voice be heard where it will do the most good. Let him tell the government of Egypt: you come to us for assistance to authorize loans, but you are in breach of United Nations decisions; we want you to know that we do not think you should be in breach of those decisions; obey international law, obey international decisions, and you will deserve help.

Mr. Speaker: I must inform the house that if the minister speaks now he will close the debate.

Hon. Howard C. Green (Secretary of State for External Affairs): My first words this evening must be to thank those hon. members of the house who have taken part in this debate. I suggested that it should be a free-swinging debate. Sometimes, from the speeches that were made, I thought it was more swinging than free, but still there has been a very worth while discussion.

It has always seemed to me that these external affairs debates were much too formal and much too dry; that they did not reflect the thoughts of the Canadian people on foreign affairs and that they were of little value. One reason for this has been the history of external affairs debates in this house. The late Right Hon. William Lyon Mackenzie King did everything he could to dissuade

[Mr. Crestohl.]

members from even mentioning external affairs. He took the attitude—a totally unrealistic attitude—that if anyone here expressed an opinion that might annoy somebody in Timbuktu, Canada might cause a great war. Ever since then we have had what the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Pearson) calls a “hangover” from those days of Mr. King. I hope that from now on hon. members of the house will not only feel free but will feel it is their duty to get up and express their opinions about foreign affairs.

This country of ours faces too great a challenge in world affairs today for the hon. members of this house to fail to do everything they can to focus the attention of the Canadian people on world affairs and to help work out proper stands for Canada to take on the various difficult questions which arise. And so, I am very grateful for the fire that has been displayed in this debate. I do not mind being criticized because that is all part of the game, but hon. members across the way must not mind it either if they have a few bricks thrown back at them this evening.

The hon. member for Cartier (Mr. Crestohl) started out by discouraging me very much. If I heard him correctly he intimated that I was a do-nothing, say-nothing, be-nothing minister in so far as the Department of External Affairs is concerned, that my main objective is that Canada should have no enemies, and he rather scoffed at that plan. Let me remind the hon. member that the Leader of the Opposition agreed with me when I said that today Canada has no enemies. I refer the hon. member to page 976 of *Hansard* of February 11 where we find these words of the Leader of the Opposition:

He—

That reference is to me. I continue:

—indicated yesterday his views and they were characterized in the statement that everything is fine so far as Canada is concerned; that we have no enemies in the world, and I hope that is true. I think evidence can be brought to support it.

That is the Leader of the Opposition speaking. Then the hon. member for Cartier went on to say that the present government's new foreign policy was extremely changed from the policy of the great Lester B. Pearson; that the new policy is that Canada will offend nobody and aims to have no enemies. We do have that aim and the country which aimed at anything else would be very foolish. However, the Leader of the Opposition did not think it was a new foreign policy on the part of this government. He said these words, to be found on the same page of *Hansard*:

There was one other thing that became clear as the minister spoke. After the 2½ or perhaps 3