

Inquiries of the Ministry

and frightening statement made by the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Fulbright, to the effect that what is taking place now may very well lead to war with communist China.

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the right hon. gentleman will appreciate that, much as I would like to be able to deal fully with his question, it is not possible on the orders of the day to do so. In any event, as my talks with Mr. Rusk must necessarily be regarded as having been of a nature which cannot be fully disclosed, I cannot really answer the question in the detail I should like.

I may say that there were certain aspects of this problem which I frankly discussed with him, ten days ago. My main concern had to do with the Canadian proposition that there should be a negotiated settlement, and that the international control commission was the vehicle which I felt was more calculated to serve this purpose at the present time than the United Nations or any other available medium.

I think the Secretary of State agrees fully that the situation must be brought within the Geneva framework. I indicated some of the steps which Canada has taken to try and bring about understanding in this area along with our two colleague states on the commission. The observation made by Senator Fulbright was one which appeared in the press over the week end, and it undoubtedly covers an area which concerns not only Senator Fulbright but the government of the United States, as it must concern all people in the world at the present time.

I hope there will be an opportunity very soon for the external affairs committee to meet, and I hope my right hon. friend will understand if my answer does not satisfy his question. He will fully appreciate that our procedures as well as the circumstances of the question, important as it is, do not really offer me the opportunity to make a more extended reply.

VIET NAM—SENDING OF CANADIAN TROOPS

On the orders of the day:

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I am glad that my question did not get a more affable reply than it did get. I would ask the minister whether there is any foundation for the statement, made by one of the ministers of the cabinet in a television appearance the other evening, that Canada made its own policies

and did not fall in line with those of the United States. Then the minister went on to say that Canada resisted being pressed into a position of supplying troops for Viet Nam.

Is there any foundation for that suggestion, particularly in view of the words of the communique, which would indicate that if that were so in the past it is not the case now?

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I can only say that at the press conference on Saturday afternoon Secretary Rusk himself, without any prompting or questioning, volunteered the statement that the United States had not pressed and was not pressing Canada to occupy a role other than that on the commission. I can tell my right hon. friend, in view of what we have been endeavouring to do in this regard during the past three weeks, that I am sure it would not be in the interests of a negotiated settlement for anyone to press Canada to play a role other than the one we are now seeking to maintain on the international control commission.

INDUSTRY

HAMILTON, ONT.—CESSATION OF OPERATIONS OF STUDEBAKER COMPANY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Industry. In view of the announcement that the Studebaker company will be closing its auto manufacturing plant in Hamilton, I should like to ask the minister two questions. First of all, has he looked into the reasons for the proposed discontinuance of the company's operations? Second, are the reasons in any way connected either with the United States economic guide lines or with the Canada-United States auto agreement?

Hon. C. M. Drury (Minister of Industry): Mr. Speaker, we have had a preliminary look into this problem and have been able to find no evidence whatever that the decision taken by Studebaker to close its operations in Hamilton was in any way related to the operation of the United States guide lines. Second, so far as the automobile agreement with the United States is concerned, it would appear that the effect of this agreement has largely been to enable Studebaker to continue its operations longer than might otherwise have been the case.