

*External Affairs.*

we do not yet know here in this House of Commons, and something which we are entitled to know, or the pattern of criticism emerging from the office of the Secretary of State for External Affairs is related to personal pique or some other motive with which our international policies should not be concerned at any time.

When I speak of this pattern emanating from the office of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, I am referring to the similarity in a number of the speeches I have mentioned, and to the very much wider and more frequent statements which are being made to the knowledge of most hon. members of this house by those officials who remain anonymous but are quoted from time to time, and quite properly, by the press of this country.

There has been a tendency to engage in smug criticism of the discussion and the debates which are taking place in the United States at the present time, and to suggest that we would not be guilty of conduct of that kind, or what the Secretary of State for External Affairs has described as hoop-la diplomacy. It is suggested that much of what is coming out of Washington at the present time will greatly aid and comfort the men in the Kremlin. That criticism is being made not only in Canada but in the United States and in other countries. I question very much, Mr. Speaker, whether any of the information that is coming out from Washington, after censorship of the discussions which are taking place behind closed doors, is really disclosing anything that was not fully in the possession of the men in the Kremlin before these meetings began.

One thing has been conveyed, however, to the men in the Kremlin which may have a very valuable effect. With all its faults, with all its tendency to magnify apparent mistakes for political advantage, with all the embarrassment there undoubtedly has been to high-ranking officers and government officials, the mighty processes of democracy in the most powerful democracy in the world today are demonstrating to the rulers of Russia that free men and women are not afraid of free speech.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that there is much more to fear in the suppression of discussion in the United States, in Canada, in Great Britain, or in any other democracy than there is in complete freedom of democracy so that out of the exchange of ideas and the examination of weaknesses there may be greater strength for the long struggle which lies ahead.

All the records that related to that subject which were so fully disclosed in the trials at Nuremberg showed beyond all question that the greatest weakness of the German dictatorship was the fact that, with their suppression of free speech, a nation which has boasted great scientists, yes, and over the generations great humanitarians as well, had so completely suppressed freedom of speech that neither were the scientists able to develop the strength of which that country was capable nor had the humanitarians, who had lived there and had sacrificed life for their humanitarian ideas in the past, had any opportunity to check the bestiality of that vile regime that was in power and which visited so much horror and destruction upon the world.

As between too free speech and too little freedom of speech, the choice is all on the side of freedom. And I think that we in this country would be well advised not to be unduly critical of those who seek full information on matters of public concern, but rather to examine our own affairs and see whether we are quite as fully informed here in regard to all matters of public importance as we should be, at this extremely critical time.

I think there are many issues which call for very free and frank discussion here. Our method is different; we pride ourselves on the effectiveness of our parliamentary system. I think it would be well for us to demonstrate that our parliamentary system is receiving the full opportunity it should have to examine every fact of public importance which is not limited by genuine terms of secrecy.

Actually we in this country are not being informed as to details of the activities of the government in a way which would suggest that the Department of External Affairs and the Department of National Defence are really dealing with the issues of the day in the belief that there is the great emergency of which we were told at the beginning of this session. Either we are being made ridiculous by being called upon to give such vast emergency powers to the government, and to vote such enormous sums to meet an emergency, or we do face grave and urgent threats to our freedom which demand the most vigorous and most effective action.

We are being lulled into a sense of false security. The statement of the Secretary of State for External Affairs gave no impression of the compelling demands upon every Canadian, if the emergency is really what it