

*Supply—External Affairs*

That attitude of the hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs is for us a relief after those chain demonstrations which seem inspired, in most cases, by professional rioters, anarchists who today take advantage of this occasion to rebel against authority, to promote all kinds of violent and sometimes bloody riots and who, tomorrow, will find a pretext to instigate trouble in the social classes of various countries.

I say that the attitude of the hon. minister is also a relief from the unjust and unrealistic propaganda which is spread throughout the world, according to which the United States alone is to blame in that dirty war waged by the Vietnamese people, at the present time, and which concerns all the people of the world, because we know that a spark would be enough to set off an international and world-wide catastrophe.

However, it is exaggerating to say that the United States alone is to blame. Even if the newspapers do not give all the publicity they should to the atrocities which are perpetrated by the North Vietnamese, they do exist, not to mention the murders in series committed by those so-called North Vietnamese soldiers in South Viet Nam. They systematically murder the mayors and councillors of the municipalities, the members of the clergy, in an attempt to demoralize the people and win them over to their viewpoint. However, those atrocities should be emphasized and we should remember that even if Hanoi said, at a given time, that should the bombing stop, it would be prepared to open negotiations, it has always refused, up to now, to commit itself to stop the infiltration in South Viet Nam of its emissaries who go there to perpetrate the atrocities I mentioned earlier and to try and demoralize South Viet Nam.

Mr. Chairman, I should like to quote the testimony of a prominent member of the Catholic clergy who lived in Viet Nam for 22 years, and who recently came back to Canada. While we discussed the Viet Nam situation with a prominent member of the American clergy who belonged to the category which we call the hawks—the member of the Canadian Catholic clergy would rather have been on the side of the doves,—he explained to us that following his 22 years experience, in Viet Nam, he would consider it a catastrophe—and that is the word he used—if the United States would withdraw from that part of the world without first securing certain conditions as they seem determined to require at the present time.

[Mr. Mongrain.]

● (9:20 p.m.)

It is true that we are all concerned about this war, that we find it dreadful, that we wish it would end as soon as possible, but we must be fair and I think it is dishonest to be always blaming the Americans only for its length and atrocity.

However, Mr. Chairman, this injustice could perhaps incite the government of Canada, which cannot do much at the present time, to act as the guiding light, as it were, of the nations involved in this conflict. This is perhaps the time for us to re-examine to some extent our international policies and our military commitments to other countries.

This may be the time for us to ask ourselves whether Canada, instead of intensifying its war effort, would not be better advised to take the necessary steps to gain credit with the nations of the world, as a peace agent or as a foster-father to the underdeveloped countries, as a neutral arbitrator in international disputes.

In order to do this, Mr. Chairman, we should of necessity revise not only our present military commitments with other countries, but also, and to quite an extent, our economic policies, because we know that to a large degree our economy is based on the production of war machinery, ammunition and equipment. I know this could not be achieved on a short term basis; I know it might entail a revolution of sorts in methods we had reason to adopt until now; I know it would probably entail planning a revision of our economy and our scientific research, which is also based to a large degree on the war industry; and orienting them towards peace industries.

This is a process which may not materialize before ten years, because I know that it is a field where drastic changes cannot be made overnight. We cannot change our habits so rapidly and reduce the military estimates to nearly nothing; I know that, on the contrary, it will require a systematic and extensive review. But I wonder, Mr. Chairman, whether the time has not come for Canada to take such action, because there are, in fact, very few countries that could enjoy the confidence of all the countries in the world, that could act as neutral arbitrators, peacemakers, in such conflicts, and not be suspected of having favoured one of the parties involved.

I understand, Mr. Chairman, that it implies a kind of revolution which cannot be