

External Affairs in Parliament

STATEMENTS OF GOVERNMENT POLICY

The purpose of this section is to provide a selection of statements on external affairs, by Ministers of the Crown or by their parliamentary assistants. It is not designed to provide a complete coverage of debates on external affairs taking place during the month.

White Sulphur Springs Conference

The Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, made the following statement in the House of Commons on April 9 regarding his visit to White Sulphur Springs:

... This visit took place at White Sulphur Springs on March 26 and 27 between the heads of governments of the United States, Mexico and Canada. The host at this meeting was the President of the United States who in his invitation and subsequently emphasized that it would be of an informal character without agenda for the purpose of exchanging views on matters of mutual interest and of getting to know each other better.

In view of the character of the meeting, no decisions were reached and none was expected. It was, however, from my point of view, both helpful and agreeable to be in a position to discuss current international affairs with the presidents of the United States and Mexico in this informal way. There was also an opportunity to bring up one or two subjects of specific Canadian-United States concern with President Eisenhower and Mr. Dulles.

No Basic Differences

The general discussion centered largely upon the comprehensive report which Mr. Dulles made on his recent visit to Asia. It has been stated in the press that in the subsequent exchange of views there was an emphatic expression of policy difference between the United States and Canada in respect of communist China. The reports in that form are without foundation. It is quite true that both President Eisenhower and Mr. Dulles explained very frankly the reasons why recognition of the communist government at Peking could not be contemplated under present circumstances and why they felt their support should be continued to the government of Chiang Kai-shek. However, there was nothing said about the Canadian position which would suggest any change whatsoever from that stated in the house by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Pearson) on January 31 either in respect of recognition or of our attitude toward the islands of Quemoy and Matsu off the coast of China.

Each government is fully aware of the position of the other in these matters as indeed they were before the meeting at White Sulphur Springs. It is true, however, and this was recognized at our recent meeting, that there are many countries which have recognized the Peking regime, and that this has created a problem as to which regime should represent China at the United Nations, a problem which may be expected to grow more acute as time goes on.

There was considerable discussion over the position in the Middle East, the seriousness of which, of course, everyone recognized. It was agreed that, while all possible steps to reduce immediate tension should be taken, peace could only be secured there by an agreed political settlement between Israel and its neighbours. In this connection, the three governments welcomed the