

*Report by External Affairs Minister*

• (3:20 p.m.)

## EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

### REPORT BY MINISTER ON DISCUSSIONS WHILE ABROAD

The house having reverted to the order for motions:

**Hon. Gordon Churchill (Winnipeg South Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a suggestion; but may I preface my remarks by saying that when I drew attention to a press release issued by the Secretary of State for External Affairs I did not want to embarrass him, although I may have done so unintentionally. I much prefer to embarrass him intentionally. I suggest that we revert to motions to allow the minister to make his statement. I have already read it, and it is a good statement, considering its source. I shall limit my reply to five minutes, and if other hon. members agree to a similar limitation we will not be using up much of the time of the house. Then on a subsequent occasion we shall be able to have more time for a lengthy debate on external affairs.

**Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I had intended on the estimates of my department to make the statement which I shall now make. Naturally, on the estimates, I had intended to go into certain phases of my report more extensively. However, I accept the suggestion made now, in view of what is alleged to be a misunderstanding as to the order of business for today.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order please. Is there unanimous agreement that we revert to motions? This will be for the purpose of hearing a statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin).

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. McIlraith:** Mr. Speaker, surely we could finish the question period first and revert to motions then.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it agreed that we have concluded the question period? I believe there are only three or four minutes left of it. Is it agreed that after we have heard the statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, and comments on it, we shall go on to orders of the day?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, on motions it is not the habit of the house to have anything but a brief statement and I hope that the statement I make, while it may be a little longer than one would normally make on motions, will not be so long as to transgress the practice we have observed in our procedures at this particular point.

I should like to take this opportunity to make a report to the house on the talks I had during my recent official visit to Poland, the Soviet Union, and to Italy. When in Rome I concluded my exchanges with a valuable talk with the Pope.

I may say how with expressions of thanks that in both Poland and in the Soviet Union I was cordially received, and I thank the governments of Poland, of the Soviet Union and of Italy for their invitations to make this visit.

The leaders in Poland and in the Soviet Union listened to the Canadian views I presented. I think we made progress on a number of bilateral matters. On some major international issues there was evidence of common interest. However, I would not want to hide the fact that there is still a considerable distance between us in many areas.

In all three countries while my most extensive discussions were with the foreign ministers, I also had an opportunity to meet and talk with many other leaders. In Poland I was taken by the foreign minister for a talk with the Prime Minister and later with the Chairman of the Council of State, President Ochab. In the Soviet Union I talked with President Podgorny, Prime Minister Kosygin, the First Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Polyansky, who was in Canada during last summer, and with General Secretary Brezhnev. Finally, in Italy I was able to exchange views with President Saragat, Prime Minister Moro and Deputy Prime Minister Nenni.

The Polish government is desirous of settling the long outstanding matter of the claims of certain Canadians arising out of post-war nationalization, and in the very near future we expect to enter into detailed negotiations to that end.