

External Affairs

to the membership of the United Nations, because it was felt that if that organization was to succeed all countries must be members.

What we did not realize at the time was that the timing was bad. It is well known that the United States objects to communist China coming in, as do the rest of us, I think, because it is realized that that would affect the balance of power in the United Nations. I think we all realize that the United Nations is not the idealistic affair that it should be, but is rather a cynical group playing power politics, which I am afraid seems to be necessary at the present time.

When those 20 new countries were brought in the membership was raised from 60 to 80, with 14 of the new members being communist or pro-Asian countries. That upset the whole balance of power in the United Nations. When we look back at it I think we must realize it is most unfortunate that those countries were brought in at that time. I realize it is quite easy to see that now, but I maintain also that the Department of External Affairs, with its knowledge which the rest of us do not have, with its confidential information, with its great experience, with its head being the Secretary of State for External Affairs who it has been said so often is a great authority on world affairs—and I do not say that with my tongue in my cheek because I think he is a most capable man—should have realized the consequences of this move. Those consequences should have been foreseen by the Department of External Affairs with the knowledge it had at its disposal, knowledge that the rest of us did not have. It should have been foreseen that these Asian countries would side with Arab countries and probably with the communist countries who like to stir up trouble.

I think it is common knowledge that at the time the United States were not anxious to have a number of these countries admitted. Apparently the United States state department may well have envisaged such a situation as has arisen. But Canada had her way, the countries came in, and in the long run I think we would all agree that it might have been unwise for a number of those countries to have been accepted at that time because it has upset the balance of power in the United Nations and put the western nations in an inferior position.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of questions I would like to discuss further, but I would not wish to deprive the Secretary of State for External Affairs of some opportunity to reply.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed that the minister should now conclude the debate?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, during this debate the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra called attention to the seriousness of the situation in the Middle East. Indeed, it was referred to by them as being dangerous and critical; and they complained, as they had the right to complain, that I did not deal with many of the more important points related to that situation. They demanded further enlightenment in regard to these important matters, and said the answers to those questions should be given, and given at once.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have six minutes in which to do that unless the house is so anxious to get this information, to which it is entitled, that it will agree to sit after six o'clock for that purpose.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Churchill: Not necessarily. We will see what sort of answer you give, first.

Mr. Pearson: The hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra said he had no apology to make for participating in this debate, and I am sure no apologies are expected of him or of anyone else, because this is an important subject and it is well that we should debate it, and debate it at length.

He did, of course, in the course of his remarks accuse us on the government side of arrogance—this has been referred to by other hon. members opposite, so I have to mention it—because of our reluctance to deal with questions asked in the house. But our reluctance, Mr. Speaker, is only with regard to attempting to answer questions on important and sensitive international matters without notice when notice, even of two or three hours, could easily be given which would make it possible for the minister in charge to get the desired information.

Mr. Green: That objection was never raised by the Prime Minister.

Mr. Pearson: Because the Prime Minister is a very courteous member of this house and tries to answer questions even when he has not been given notice. The Leader of the Opposition, and I regret to have to mention this, said with reference to myself:

My hon. friend sunk to a new low when he said that had the attitude of this party—

That is, the Conservative party.

—been adopted last fall the situation would be different for world peace.

And then he went on to say:

I say to him that this statement is false, and ask for a withdrawal.

I said at the time that I had made no such statement. I have had the opportunity to go