

External Affairs

Mr. Nicholson: Mr. Speaker, in this part of the house hon. members cannot hear what the hon. member for Bellechasse is saying. I wonder if he would mind using another microphone.

Mr. Picard: Well, I complained the other day because I could not hear the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent). I shall try to do better, and shall move to another microphone.

An hon. Member: Take the front microphone.

Mr. Picard: I shall do that. They are promoting me day by day.

I think most hon. members will agree with me that this debate was initiated by a most comprehensive statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Pearson) and an exceptionally candid clarification by the Prime Minister of whatever he may have said abroad concerning our relations with communist China. The country at large will welcome both statements as a clear expression of government policy, that leaves no grounds for misunderstanding. And I have reason to believe that this policy is one which will meet with the approval of Canadian citizens.

Canada's position has often been expressed as that of a peace-loving country that has no desire of aggrandizement, but that is determined to assume its share in all the moves devised to guarantee the peace of the world, as it may be threatened at any time by any world powers.

The hopes of western democracies and their allies that the post-war period would be one that would bring about a brave new world, or "one world" as it was then hopefully popular to call it, have been too soon shattered. The blunt attack on South Korea has, fortunately, wakened the world to the gravity of the situation and the urgency to face the impending menace that hung over all of us. And I am of the opinion that the sacrifices made by all who shared in the opposition to the invaders of South Korea will be recognized by historians of the future as having been of invaluable importance in ensuring a more healthy state of affairs in the world. Had not the United States, Canada and many other countries in the United Nations taken the stand they did take, the whole of southeast Asia would have gradually been brought under the tutelage of the Moscow-Peking alliance.

Strange as it may sound to many I am one who today entertains hopes that as a result of the action taken by the United Nations, and our attitude on the Korean venture, there is a better chance for the world to remain at peace than there would

have been if we had taken an attitude of *laissez faire* as some people suggested at the outbreak of the Korean war.

As I said at the beginning of my remarks, in company with my wife during four and a half months I have visited all the free countries of the Far East and southeast Asia, as well as the three Asian members of the commonwealth, India, Ceylon and Pakistan. During the course of this trip I was privileged to have interviews with heads of states, prime ministers and/or foreign ministers of all the countries I visited, plus the administrative heads of Malaya and Hong Kong. I hasten to say that I have encountered few who were of the belief that there would be a war provoked in the near future either by communist China or by Soviet Russia if the rest of the world remains on its guard and maintains the present firm attitude. However, most of them recognize that any weakness or complacency on our part might give rise to a potential danger of war.

I believe, and this belief is confirmed by the opinions of many Asian statesmen I have met, that the consent by the communist group to the armistice in Korea as a result of a stalemate on the battlefield indicates a change in tactics, whatever may be the length of its duration. The effort, particularly in China, but also in Russia will, according to me, bear for some time to come on the consolidation of internal conditions, on the development of the country's resources, communications and economy, in the case of China; on the betterment of the standard of living in the case of Russia, while not lowering their present standard of armed equipment and carrying on their experimenting in other forms.

This new policy is evidently aimed at strengthening the regime internally. As a result of this, the world may enjoy a respite. If the western world is wise, wise enough not to be fooled by this apparent relaxation; if it remains ready and determined to face all and any eventualities, our generation may be spared a further conflict.

The most important thing to understand about Asia is that the period of colonial domination and of the exploitation of the peoples of other races or other customs is gone forever, and fortunately so. Asia has reached its majority; and it is in our interest and in the interests of the whole world, as well as the security of the whole world, to support her effectively in the elaboration of a system of government which will permit her to develop her resources for her own benefit, if we do not want her to join the communist bloc.