

Business of the House

We know that at one time Japan and the United States were meeting, yet war broke out. It appears from the events of the past week which saw the resumption by the U.S.S.R. of nuclear testing that the moral indignation of the world may not really be enough to forestall the end for all of us, but while the two nations are negotiating the chances are relatively slender that the end will come. Therefore, perhaps the policy enunciated by the Secretary of State for External Affairs this afternoon was the wisest kind of policy in that the hon. gentleman did not take a rigid position except in terms of that for which Canada stands. He did not say what Canada is against. The minister was careful, discrete and cautious. Mr. Chairman, I am not careful, discrete and cautious. I am a different type of person. It was for this reason that I chose to listen to the debate this afternoon and did not intervene.

I have listened to and spoken with the people of Canada whose understanding of the facts confronting us is perhaps imperfect but whose emotion and feelings will have to lead them to follow their leaders in this administration or another or hold back. The people with whom I have spoken feel that perhaps the best Canada can do is not to permit the boat to be rocked, not to permit the door to be closed.

Perhaps we thought in Canada a few years ago that, with our increased status in the past 20 years or so as a large industrial nation, one recognized internationally, we enjoyed and could maintain a position in which everyone would listen to us. We have told ourselves over and over again that this was the case. Our leaders in the universities, in politics and in other fields have assured us that we are not a colonial power and never were and therefore we are the rightful people to lead the uncommitted and non-colonial free nations.

I heard one hon. gentleman refer this evening to Canada's destiny. He spoke of manifold destiny and of viewing the future with alarm. These are imported terms and really mean nothing. No nation has a destiny that is preordained. The nation has what the guts and blood of its people cause it to have. At every course there is a turning for nations as there is for individuals. Sometimes, as a great poet once said, they also serve who stand and wait. Perhaps what is necessary for Canada now, Mr. Chairman, is to stand waiting as a nation holding open the door. Perhaps at this time we should not call for a definite flaming policy to follow. Per-

haps part of our maturity lies in the recognition that we are largely a Christian nation which believes it has right on its side and in not seeking to impose our will on others. Perhaps we should only ask those we have befriended in the past in war and peace and those we are prepared to befriend in future, whether they lie to the north, south, east or west, to join hands and continue talking in an effort to seek constructive settlement.

It may be that the people of Canada will find their destiny, in this hour at least, not in shooting or in standing toe to the line and daring others to cross it, or in rattling sabres, or in increasing military might, or in deciding to prepare ourselves for a great war, or in hiding our people in holes in the ground, or in deciding to use a bomb, but in deciding that the whole moral and spiritual force of this country must be brought to bear in an effort to keep open all avenues of negotiation. Perhaps all we can do is to assist in having the protagonists in this gigantic struggle continue negotiations. We must do all that we can to prevent the increase of tension that can lead to inevitable destruction.

The thoughts I have endeavoured to express may be viewed by some as muddled thinking. There are those who call on the government to give us not just a policy but a detailed plan of action involving means by which we can impose our policy on the world. There are others who take the position of saying, let us become neutral; let the big boys decide this one; we will survive or perish with them. Let us be this link of which the hon. member for Leeds spoke, this linchpin, I think Mackenzie King called it, at a time when Britain and the United States were engaged in an equally critical struggle. Let us be the linchpin between the two forces and let us pray God, Mr. Chairman, that nothing breaks asunder that linchpin.

Mr. Macquarrie: Mr. Chairman, I wonder whether you will call it 10.30 o'clock?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Progress reported.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Martin (Essex East): What is the business for tomorrow?

Mr. Churchill: We will continue tomorrow with the discussion of the estimates of external affairs.

At 10.30 p.m. the house adjourned, without question put, pursuant to special order.