

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): One must look carefully in order to assess the real importance of these meetings for Canada. What are the real and tangible achievements for the country? How significant are they?

I would like through you, Mr. Speaker, to congratulate the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) on having been in exceptionally fine voice on Sunday night. He, as you well know, Sir, is second to none in public life in his ability to carry a tune, but I want to echo what the Hon. Member for Oshawa has said. I would have thought that, having represented this country in imperial, almost presidential style over the weekend, he would have been here in the House of Commons to reply to the motion of the Hon. Member for Oshawa.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): I grant that in strict jurisdiction, the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark), who is here with his small, carefully huddled coterie behind him, has jurisdiction over the debate, but the Prime Minister should be here. I want to draw to the attention of Your Honour that the Prime Minister has not participated in a debate in this House of Commons since Leader's Day at the opening of Parliament. It is all very well to have the photo opportunities with the new presidential seal. I suppose the reason he does not want to come in here for debate is that he cannot put that seal, under our rules, on his desk to speak. It has been tried before.

One is left wondering if there was not in all the events of last weekend somewhat less than might have met the eye. There was surely an event programmed primarily, in the words of a former President of the United States, to play in Peoria—Peoria, Illinois. My question is will it work in Weyburn, Saskatchewan? Will it resonate in Rimouski, Quebec?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): I have looked over the lists of the so-called agreements arising from the singing summit, and I would say that had there been another duet at the close of the meeting—and I am not surprised there was no encore—the song would not have been “When Irish Eyes are Smiling”, but rather another well-known song, not Irish but American, “I Got Plenty of Nothing”.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): From the attitude of the Government, the second line of that song would have been especially appropriate, and I wish the Prime Minister would have broken off into one of the well-known solos of his. That second line is “And nothing's plenty for me”. You got it, Mr. Speaker!

In a more serious sense, with the greatest respect, we have witnessed in the past two days another example by this Government and this Prime Minister of what I call cosmetic politics where appearance takes precedence over reality, style

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over substance and package over policy. It is an approach to government that seems directed more by desire to placate, a need to please, an urge to be loved, than the ability to order priorities and a willingness to make choices.

There is no doubt that in an increasingly dependent world, Canada and the United States enjoy a special, unique relationship. Many would say that that relationship is not only unique, but historically very special, and I agree. Our two countries share similar values, many interests and, while geography has made us neighbours, as the late President John Kennedy used to say, history has made us friends. We do not, however, share every interest. There are differences and they too are real and important. Underlining those differences should not be interpreted as traces of anti-Americanism, but as a real regard on behalf of the people of Canada to exercise our own priorities and our own preferences.

With respect to what President Reagan wanted for last weekend's meeting, what did he want? Clearly he wanted a continuation of what he had already got from this Government over the last six months—the abolition of FIRA, the dismantling of the National Energy Program, a renewal of our Radar Distant Warning System in the North, whether it is part of star wars or not only history will judge—

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Lloyd Axworthy has already judged it.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): We have an amendment where we have taken our judgment because we believe what has happened, but you have not shown us—more Canadian troops for NATO; more study but no action on acid rain; and an example in Canada that the so-called nuclearology, and I am using American words, does not extend from New Zealand to North America.

● (1140)

We know what the President wanted because he told us. We know what he obtained. He obtained some of those things he perhaps deserved, and I do not criticize all of them in all of their aspects. But the question before this House is, what did we get? What did Canada get? For that matter, what did we want? We were not told what it was we wanted. We never saw the agenda. We in the House were never given a statement regarding Canada's priorities. Perhaps we should have wanted real and tangible progress on trade relations, but clearly the Government has not got its own act together regarding how far it wishes to go with the United States on free trade. Our country was not in a position to push this matter.

We on this side of the House, members of this Party, are in favour of enhancing and advancing our goal of better neighbourhood. We are in favour of improving our trade relationships and exploring new relationships with the United States in a way that does not yield or sacrifice our Canadian manufacturing base or employment base. Those things are vital for jobs.

If we had a choice of neighbours, looking around the world, who would we rather have as a neighbour? Would we rather