

External Affairs

Mr. Martin: If it is offensive to the hon. member for Oxford I will be glad to withdraw it, but I do say that as a result of what has gone on the Secretary of State for External Affairs is prevented from giving answers in connection with this matter about which we were urged to permit further debate.

Mr. Nesbitt: The government instituted this debate, and I see no reason why it could not have it continued on another occasion, thus giving the Secretary of State for External Affairs ample opportunity to answer any questions which have been put to him. If the government wish to have the Secretary of State for External Affairs answer these questions I do not see why they could not do what I have suggested. However, I shall endeavour to give the minister a certain amount of time. As I have already mentioned, the more I am interrupted by backbenchers on the other side—I say this as a backbencher to backbenchers—the longer I will have to continue.

I am glad the Minister of National Health and Welfare has corrected the impression and has indicated that he does not object to hon. members of the official opposition offering certain criticism on foreign policy. I am glad that has been cleared up, because that was certainly the inference I drew from his remarks and those of the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I am glad that has been fixed up. While the minister denied it, I still cannot help feeling that the government is upset over anybody deciding to criticize what has been regarded as a sacred cow for so many years, namely the Department of External Affairs.

It is easy to offer criticism of what has already occurred, but sometimes it is a good idea to offer something which may act as a guide in the future. Unlike my hon. friends opposite I do not think the Department of External Affairs is always right. I submit that this department must bear a considerable share of the responsibility for the conditions which led up to the present unfortunate situation in the Near East. I should like to explain this and it may take a little time, but I shall try to cut my remarks as much as possible so I will not be accused of precluding the Secretary of State for External Affairs from answering the questions which have been asked.

There has been a great deal of discussion about the inclusion of the phrase "consent of Egypt". In reply to a question of mine earlier today the Secretary of State for External Affairs stated that the particular resolution sending the UNEF to the Near East was based on the "uniting for peace" resolution which was passed in 1950 during the time of the

[Mr. Green.]

Korean war. I do not intend to take up the time of the house by reading all of that particular resolution, as I am sure hon. members either know what it is or can easily look it up.

The resolution was divided into two parts, part A and part B. Part B provided for the setting up of an observer corps which could go into a place with the consent of the country concerned if some future breach of the peace was to be expected. Apparently the United Nations emergency force was not set up under part B, but was set up under part A of the resolution. That part of the resolution reads as follows:

—the general assembly shall consider the matter immediately with a view to making appropriate recommendations to members for collective measures, including in the case of a breach of the peace or active aggression the use of armed force when necessary, to maintain or restore international peace and security.

There is nothing there about the consent of the country being required. Various viewpoints have been expressed in various publications. A confidential publication of the commonwealth parliamentary association points out that those words were certainly not in the resolution, that the reason they have been used is rather vague, something to do with generally recognized law.

I suspect that the reason the words "consent of Egypt" were put in was that it was necessary to have the support of two-thirds of the general assembly in order to pass that resolution, and that would not have been obtained without the support of the communist nations in the United Nations, of which there are 10 approximately; and without the support of the group of Asian countries generally known as being strongly nationalistic, of which there are approximately 20. At that time there were 80 countries in the United Nations; today there are 81, and a two-thirds majority would mean 54 votes. If one adds up the countries which would have supported the resolution without the term "consent of Egypt" in it he would have found that no more than 45 at the outside would have voted for the resolution.

It will be asked what Canada has to do with this. A year and a half ago there were 60 members of the United Nations, and since that time 20 more countries have come in, 14 of which are Asian nationalists or communist countries. Canada was largely instrumental in bringing in those new countries. I had the privilege of being an observer with the Canadian delegation at the time this went on. I think at that time everyone felt encouraged with what was being done. Perhaps ignorance was bliss in that case, because some of us were quite inexperienced and did not know what was going on. It seemed to be a good idea, a very idealistic way of adding