

*Crisis in Cuba*

Meanwhile the security council is to meet again at four o'clock. There the formal discussions will be resumed. Perhaps by that time the replies of President Kennedy and Chairman Khrushchev will have been received.

There is a debate going on throughout the world regarding the legality of the quarantine measures which the United States has imposed. To my mind such arguments are largely sterile and irrelevant. We have a situation to face. Legalistic arguments, whatever they may be, cannot erase the fact that the Soviet union has posed a new and immediate threat to the security not only of the United States but of Canada as well.

Chairman Khrushchev's apologists say "What is the difference between Soviet missile bases in Cuba and United States bases on the periphery of the Soviet union?" The United States bases abroad have been installed only in response to the threatening pressures from the Soviet union, and have never been concealed from the public. The west, moreover, has refrained in recent years from any move to upset the world balance. There are countries in all parts of the world in which nuclear weapons could have been installed by the west. A deliberate decision was made not to do so. We in Canada have shown responsibility in this connection in order to avoid the proliferation of these dangerous weapons throughout the world. Sir, to compare the western activities with the provocative, clandestine arming of Cuba is to ignore the calculated restraint which has characterized western policy. In this light the call for the dismantling of these new, threatening facilities in Cuba is not unreasonable. It is the Soviet union itself which has disturbed the balance, and it is for it and Cuba to restore that balance.

The fact that we find ourselves in this dire situation may well have some salutary effect. Surely it is not too much to hope that some good will come out of the present dangerous situation. If these facilities were dismantled this would represent a first practical step on the road to disarmament, and if some such suggestion as I made a few days ago were coupled with international inspection of the process then we might well find ourselves taking the first steps away from the dangerous abyss that we have faced for so long in the world.

**Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I think all members of the house will have welcomed the statement made by the Prime Minister in informing the house of developments in this very serious situation. It is not an exaggeration to say that it is more than serious, it is grave. While

the gravity of the situation has certainly not increased in the last 24 hours, nevertheless the threat to peace remains and will remain until we can be satisfied that steps have been taken to remove the threat with which we are now confronted.

That threat, as the Prime Minister has pointed out, is in the extension of nuclear bases from those countries which now, unfortunately, have them to a country which has not had such a base, a country which this time happens to be in the western hemisphere. This constitutes an immediate threat to the peace and security of the hemisphere, especially in view of the circumstances under which these bases in Cuba are being constructed.

This extension, Mr. Speaker, has important implications going beyond this immediate emergency, implications which are important in the formulation of our own policy for defence, and implications which underline the importance of all countries, which do not now possess nuclear weapons doing what they can to prevent their extension. Perhaps this can be done by these countries at the United Nations agreeing on a self denying ordinance to prevent such extension. However, there is no chance as I see it, of lessening tension generally in respect of this and related matters, easing tensions in the cold war itself, until we can remove this immediate threat to peace which has been provided by the extension of nuclear bases to Cuba.

The vital question, therefore, as has been pointed out by the Prime Minister is, are these bases being constructed? Are they a threat to security and peace? Are they under Soviet control? I think the evidence shows, without any possibility of doubt, that the answer to all these questions must be in the affirmative.

This is a new development and it is a new danger. It is a danger of which the President of the United States warned us on September 4 and again on September 13, when he said, on September 4, that there was no evidence of Soviet military bases in Cuba or the presence of offensive ground to ground missiles. Then, and perhaps we did not attach as much importance to these words at the time as we should have, he went on to say "were it otherwise the gravest issues would arise". Well, Mr. Speaker, they have arisen. So the President of the United States felt compelled to act in the interests of the security of his own country, and indeed the security of the hemisphere.

As I have already ventured to say we who are the closest neighbour and in some ways the closest friend of the United States, at this time of grave emergency and threat to peace