

Supply—External Affairs

Martin) with a view to finding out why the Minister without Portfolio, the hon. member for St. Jean-Iberville-Napierville (Mr. Dupuis) has been away since—

Mr. Martin (Essex East): May I answer the question immediately? He has gone to represent the Canadian government in Ceylon.

Mr. Rondeau: We know he has gone to Ceylon; as a matter of fact, we knew this before he left. On the other hand, we would like to know—we have noted that he has been away from the house for over a month—if this mission has lasted for a month for, as representative of a department, a one month trip would imply that the mission is very important.

I feel that the Secretary of State for External Affairs should give us additional information concerning the mission to Ceylon of the Minister without Portfolio. We were given a lot of explanations a few weeks ago with regard to the hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Thompson) who is now in Africa. At that time, we were told that the mission of the Minister without Portfolio was the same. We also learned that the Minister without Portfolio was to spend a few days, if not a few weeks, in Africa. Now, we would like to know the nature of the mission which the Secretary of State for External Affairs has entrusted to the hon. member for St. Jean-Iberville-Napierville.

We are right in asking questions, for we know the Department of External Affairs is paying the Minister without Portfolio's travelling expenses. We do not know whether it also pays those of his wife—because we know that she is accompanying him—and we would like to have more details on the trip of this minister who has been conspicuous by his absence for over a month. If he has a mission to accomplish in Ceylon, I think that the Secretary of State for External Affairs should provide us with more details. We would like to know what is the exact nature of his mission, when he is expected back and what success he has had with the authorities of Ceylon or of the other countries—

Mr. Chrétien: Certainly more than you have here.

Mr. Rondeau: Mr. Chairman, I would point out to you that if the hon. member for St. Maurice-Lafèche (Mr. Chrétien) has anything to say, he could at least be brave enough to stand on his two feet and to express his opinion in the house.

[Mr. Rondeau.]

Mr. Chrétien: Very well.

In answer to the hon. member, I should say that when I speak, I say sensible things and, unlike the hon. member for Shefford (Mr. Rondeau), do not make any insinuations.

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Mr. Gelber: Canada must pursue a ceaseless search for peace. As a member of the United Nations and a partner of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and a member of the commonwealth our commitments and wide associations give us a unique opportunity to exercise a force for well-being.

Through the commonwealth we are in company with nations old in the arts of statecraft, and with newly emerging nations in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean. This provides special scope and affords us an intimate relationship with peoples seeking to establish their roots in freedom. It also affords us a particular tie with one of the powers which has given leadership in the emergence of western civilization. The strength of Britain is our interest. The progress of the developing countries is our concern, and we are pleased to participate through the Colombo plan and through other agencies in their development.

In the United Nations we seek the widest rule of law, and respect for international authority. Canada's role has been out of proportion to our numbers and to our power, but through the wise counsel which we can offer a place among the leaders has not been denied us. The problems of the United Nations stem in part from its deep commitment to situations where it might have been more effective by playing a lesser role. By plunging into the Congo much of the substance of the United Nations has been committed to a situation where UN leadership was not certain of the road along which it was travelling. It is a paradox that United Nations forces which were sent to the Congo upon the urgent request of the government of Leopoldville to stem the tide of Tshombe rule in Katanga have now been withdrawn, while Tshombe himself has been invited back by these very same rulers to take control of the government of Leopoldville. One of the problems of the League of Nations was that it was seized with problems much beyond its capabilities. Instead of allowing it to grow and develop, all the legacy of the Versailles treaty was placed on the doorstep of the league. Now we note that the United Nations finds that the deep commitment in the Congo exhausted much of its resources, in order to save the Congo from Tshombe