

The Address—Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent

Mr. St. Laurent (Quebec East): I beg the hon. member's pardon?

Mr. Diefenbaker: You would not be free to describe it either, or give an *ex parte* explanation and so on.

Mr. St. Laurent (Quebec East): No, but I am going to say that any such assertion is without the slightest shred of foundation in fact. I am going to say that that is official correspondence which is going to remain of record, and if and when hon. gentlemen opposite are in the position which we now occupy and they choose to look it up to see if I was telling the truth when I said there was no shred of foundation for such assertions about it, they will have corroboration of the assertion I am making here today.

Mr. Sinclair: Would any other leader like to ask questions?

Mr. St. Laurent (Quebec East): The next paragraph of the amendment reads:

—have meekly followed the unrealistic policies of the United States of America and have thereby encouraged a truculent and defiant attitude on the part of the Egyptian dictator.

Well, on two occasions resolutions supported by the United States delegation have failed to get our support. If that is meekly following the unrealistic policies of the United States, then my understanding of words is not the same as the understanding of those who wrote this paragraph of the amendment to the motion for an address in reply.

The third paragraph reads:

—have placed Canada in the humiliating position of accepting dictation from President Nasser.

I believe I have dealt sufficiently with that to show that this is not a statement founded on fact, and whether there has been dictation to anybody from President Nasser there certainly has been none to us and there will certainly be none to us. The representations that have been made to our diplomatic representative in Egypt, whether they be sincere representations or not, are that Colonel Nasser was most anxious to maintain good will with the Canadian government and was most appreciative of the suggestions the Canadian government had made to deal with this situation. Whether or not that be true I do not know, but that is what he has said to our representative, who is not quite as gullible as this laughter from the other side of the house when I mention it would indicate.

The next paragraph reads:

—have failed to take swift and adequate action to extend refuge to the patriots of Hungary and other lands under the cruel Russian yoke.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

I am now going to disclose some correspondence that was not confidential correspondence. When these events in Hungary were at their unfortunate height I asked to have the Russian ambassador call upon me. I had a message conveyed to him that I thought it would be in the interests of his country as well as in the interests of this country that he come and see me. He did. I told him what I thought of what was going on. I said: relations had been improving, you know, with your country. I had not met the two of your ministers who were over here but I had met one of them and I got a very favourable impression of the kind of man that your minister of fisheries, who came over here to repay the visit by our Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Sinclair), last year, happened to be. After all, I said, it is none of our business what kind of government you have in your country if that is the kind of government your people want, and it is none of your business to determine what kind of government there should be in any other country if that does not happen to be the kind of government the people of that country want.

I said I would be glad if he would convey the following message from me to Mr. Bulganin. It was dated November 13, and I make it public at the present time because it was only yesterday that an answer came from Mr. Bulganin. You will hear the answer in a moment and you will see, with that kind of answer, there is no reason for me not to disclose the representations with which I had attempted to have him comply. This is dated Ottawa, November 13, 1956:

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I consider it my urgent duty to let you know that the people and the government of Canada have been profoundly shocked by the reports we have received of the actions your government has taken in Hungary during the last few weeks. We have made our attitude clear in the position taken by Canada in voting for the United Nations resolutions on this subject. I wish to add my plea not only for rapid compliance on the part of the Soviet government with these resolutions, but for a display even at this late date of moderation towards the unfortunate victims of these tragic events.

I can assure you, Mr. Chairman, that I speak for the whole people of Canada in expressing our horror at the suffering of the Hungarian people as a result of their efforts to obtain the freedom to choose their own type of government. It is not, however, my present purpose to attempt to pass judgment on the actions that have been taken but to ask you, in the name of humanity, to use your influence to alleviate the sufferings of the Hungarian people and to permit competent international agencies and organizations to help in the urgent work of distributing food and caring for the sick. In this humanitarian work the Canadian government and people are already giving material support wherever it is within their power to do so.

The government and people of Canada have no desire to influence the form of government chosen by the peoples of eastern Europe. Our only aim is