

External Affairs

have particularly welcomed that because of certain statements that have been made by members of that party. While the leader of the opposition, Mr. Speaker, complained, if "complained" is not too strong a word, in rather general terms about the absence of information on certain vital matters, the hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Browne) complained in regard to the absence of detailed information concerning specific matters, and he mentioned two. He mentioned Formosa and the recognition of communist China.

Mr. Speaker, the policy of the government of Canada in regard to these matters has been made clear more than once in this house, outside this house and at the United Nations. If the hon. member is not satisfied, I would repeat to him—because I think it describes in a nutshell our policies in regard to these matters—the last paragraph of the statement of principles adopted by fifty-two members of the United Nations, including the United States of America. It deals with the Far East problem in general, Formosa and recognition in particular. We are bound by this paragraph because we accepted this statement of principles. The last paragraph reads as follows:

As soon as agreement has been reached on a cease-fire, the General Assembly—

That is the general assembly of the United Nations.

—shall set up an appropriate body which shall include representatives of the governments of the United Kingdom, the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the People's Republic of China, with a view to the achievement of a settlement, in conformity with existing international obligations and the provisions of the United Nations charter, of Far Eastern problems, including among others those of Formosa (Taiwan) and of representation of China in the United Nations.

As we rose this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, I was asked by an hon. member opposite whether I could say something about the situation in Iran. This would be one occasion, I think, when it would be inappropriate and inadvisable for one in my position to talk about this particular subject at this particular moment. It is one of the most difficult and dangerous problems, affecting not only Iran but many other countries as well. I think it would be unwise on my part to say anything about it at this time, except to express the hope that these problems can be settled in a way which would be consistent with the national aspirations of the Iranian people and the legitimate interests of other people who have ministered to the well-being of Iran in administering the oil industry of that country which they have been instrumental in developing.

[Mr. Pearson.]

Now, Mr. Speaker, there were various questions, brought up during the debate this afternoon, and on the previous day when we debated this resolution, which I shall try to deal with at not too great length. The leader of the official opposition (Mr. Drew) this afternoon was critical about the expenditure which the department over which I preside for the time being had been making on international conferences. He was worried because of the possibility of extravagance in this regard. I do not admit, Mr. Speaker, that there has been any extravagance; but if there has been, there will be ample opportunity for members of the committee, when it meets, to go into every detail of every conference and find out where that extravagance was.

It is true that we are attending a great many international meetings these days. There are a great many international conferences. I wish there were fewer of them. But the fact that there are so many is, I think, a proof of the complexity and the importance of international life, and of the necessity for international mechanisms to deal with international problems.

I cannot resist the temptation to suggest that while the leader of the opposition criticized our attendance at many conferences, we have also been criticized in the past because we have not ourselves initiated conferences. I might add that we have had a great many more invitations to attend conferences than we have accepted. We go to these conferences and we try to be represented effectively at them, when they are of practical interest and benefit to the Canadian people. I know that someone will undoubtedly be saying to himself at this point: What about that now notorious conference of international chocolate and cocoa manufacturers in Switzerland? When that matter was raised some time ago by the leader of the opposition, he got a good laugh from his followers and some other hon. members; and I do not begrudge him that. But I think he will admit that it was a cheap laugh when I tell him that that conference in which the Department of Trade and Commerce was interested cost the Canadian taxpayers \$8.99.

I know something about conferences myself, Mr. Speaker, because it has been my fate to attend a great many of them. I know how desirable it is to keep down the number of conferences at which we are represented to those in which our interests are affected. The leader of the opposition this afternoon talked about the increasing cost to Canada of these international conferences. If he had checked his figures—and he could have done so—he would have found that in 1947-48 the