

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

in their ideas about Viet Nam, and warn them at the same time that their education is being paid for in part by the sale of arms to the United States. Was he warning them not to bite the hand that feeds them? Was he expressing government policy on this occasion? If this is the case, how does he reconcile what he said with the fact that the Department of External Affairs is itself concerned about this situation? I wish the minister would explain the meaning of his remarks.

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of Transport):

If the hon. lady had been present I do not think she would have been showing the concern she has been showing tonight. The question which was put to me was a reasonable one. I gave a reasonable answer, but it did not satisfy the young man to whom it was addressed. He came back to the charge, as was perfectly fair according to the rules of engagement between a minister and a student in the circumstances.

I repeated the answer in a slightly different form, and then cautioned the young man as part of the answer that it was very difficult to know where to draw the line with respect to these complex matters when all the world is slightly inconsistent and all parties are slightly inconsistent, and people have great difficulty in sorting out in their minds the position of the demarcation line between what is right and what is wrong, and when, between black and white, there are many shades. As often happens under these circumstances, the newspaper took a single sentence out of a long and reasoned answer. This was all that appeared in the newspaper. I think it is unfair and unfortunate that, for whatever reason, this is occasionally done and reports of this kind are filed. They do not give any of the sense of depth of the reply that was given to a very serious and important question.

I can assure my hon. friend that if she had been there, while she might not have agreed with everything I said, she would have found it difficult to disagree substantially with the substance of my answer. I think she will appreciate, from her own experience, how difficult it is sometimes to have reports represent not only what was said but the sense of what was said. In this particular case, there was no real relationship whatever between what appeared in the newspaper and the gist of my reply. I think my hon. friend would be the first to admit this if she had been present.

[Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway).]

OLD AGE SECURITY—CENTENNIAL BONUS TO SENIOR CITIZENS

Mr. E. Nasserden (Rosthern): Mr. Speaker, the question I raise tonight has to do with old age security and the advisability of providing a centennial bonus to our senior citizens during this one hundredth birthday of Canada. I little thought when I placed this question before the house that I would have the privilege of sharing this quiet evening with the hon. member for Westmorland (Mrs. Rideout). Indeed, I really thought it might be a means whereby we might get the hon. member for Westmorland and the hon. member for Inverness-Richmond (Mr. MacEachen) together, so that they could present a united front from the maritime provinces.

When I take a look at the many celebrations that have been embarked upon in this country during our centennial year, I cannot help but realize that our senior citizens have been almost left out of these celebrations. They did receive a plaque if they had reached their one hundredth anniversary. I think, too, of the budget that was brought down by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) the other day and the general economic conditions in this country. The cost of living has been rising month by month for more than three years.

I think of the terrible plight of those on fixed incomes who have to meet the rising cost of living. We should realize that there are 1,200,000 people included in the category of senior citizens. These were the people who pioneered our country. These were the men and women who made possible everything we have in Canada today. They made possible the celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of this nation. They pioneered in the building of railroads from one end of this country to the other, so that the country could be joined together and there could be a greater degree of unity, so that there could be settlements in the western regions of our country and in that great province of British Columbia as well. These people also helped to build the transportation links to the north country, so that those who inhabited the rich expanse of our nation might also know something of the benefits that come from the unity of this nation.

I think of my own part of the country in the prairie provinces. Men and women came to pioneer in the breaking of the sod, the planting of grain and the harvesting of the crops of golden grain that made Canada the grain bin of an empire, the greatest empire of all times. Then I think, too, of those who