

*External Affairs*

It is not hard to disillusion people and to make them sceptical and doubtful. We have heard a lot of high-sounding talk in the last ten years, and particularly in the last three or four years. I heard the leader of the opposition refer to the Atlantic charter. In his election campaign Churchill claimed great credit for the writing of the Atlantic charter. What did it mean? It did not mean anything. It was merely a propaganda statement, drafted for war purposes, on the eve of the invasion, to stimulate the troops in that invasion. It was only a formal document. It meant nothing legally and the people have come to that conclusion. They know that now because in effect Roosevelt said so himself. It was merely a propaganda document to stimulate people and to spur them on to a greater war effort. All of the language that was contained in the Atlantic charter about free access to raw materials of the world, and so forth, was just so much eyewash. It did not mean a thing. We have to start doing things if we are to come through this period right side up.

The discussion brought on by the Secretary of State for External Affairs at this time on the question of the recognition of China is an important one. It is one that should be thoroughly understood. I got the impression that in bringing it on at this time the minister is merely flying a kite for the purpose of getting all the information he can on the subject. I think he is testing public opinion and is looking at the editorials in the press. That is exactly what I would be doing if I were in his place, and had to deal with this particular subject at this time, because I know—and we might as well be quite frank in admitting this—that there is a lot of pressure being put on at this time by sectarian sources. So far as I am concerned I do not let these things influence me. There is a certain world condition, and if in the judgment of a majority of the members of this house and of the government a certain something should be done, then so far as the house is concerned that is what should be done, because in handling this particular situation we may be hitting the key to the future; and if we strike the wrong key and someone starts throwing atomic bombs around, they will not be either Catholic or Protestant; they will be straight atomic bombs without any discrimination, and we had better have a thorough understanding of it.

The leader of this group has already said that so far as he is concerned he thinks we should recognize China at this time. The leader of the opposition has taken an adamant stand to the effect that he does not think we should. He thinks it is the road

to appeasement. Well, no one should know the route to appeasement better than that party—and I am not saying that to cast any reflection upon the present leader of the opposition. But I do know they were behind appeasement as it developed before the last war, and leading into it. However, I shall not comment further upon that.

Then the government are doing exactly what I said they were doing. They are flying a kite—and I do not blame them because, in the final analysis, it is their responsibility. They are the ones who have to make the decision. I cannot see much similarity between the position developing now and the one which prevailed before the last war on the question of appeasement. I do not think we are appeasing anyone.

I am not concerned about the legal aspect of the matter. Someone said this afternoon that some professor had made a decision based upon international law to the effect that we have to recognize the fact that a certain government is there—and that that is international law. The question which arises in my mind is this: Who writes the international law? Certainly there is no international government, nor is there any statute as such. It is merely the opinion of someone who is a "supernatural" lawyer. He hands it on and some think it must be accepted as gospel. I am not concerned at all about that aspect of the matter.

I am concerned about the position of Canada, and her relations with China, and whether we are able to give the Canadian people an intelligent lead from the House of Commons. We have recognized many satellite countries, not because we liked them or because we liked their philosophies, but simply because they are there. We have established trade relations with them, and that is about all.

Our position with respect to China, as I see it, is this: In that country there are 450 million people who, because of mismanagement in the past, a lack of the means of life, and a high degree of manipulation, are prepared to accept anything in preference to what they had. That is the kind of government they have in China today.

There is much talk about an iron curtain, lack of opportunity, and getting in to tell the people what we are trying to do. Well, instead of appeasement, as set out by the leader of the opposition, are we not in a position where we must ask ourselves whether we are willing to close the door on China, have another iron curtain, and cut them off completely from any relationship with the outside world, thus throwing them directly into the arms of Russia?