

Inquiries of the Ministry

States would be agreeable to some recognition of mainland China, is he or are any of the officials of his department in touch with the United States authorities to ascertain their views regarding either recognition of communist China by Canada or the seating of mainland China in the United Nations?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated last week, I made no such statement as was attributed to me. The statement was said to have been one made at a private meeting. But I did say to my hon. friend that in the formulation of foreign policy the government, this government or any other government, would take into consideration the position of friendly countries. That is still the position of the government of Canada.

Mr. Douglas: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I was not asking the minister a hypothetical question as to what they would do. I asked the minister if actual discussions are or have been going on relative to this subject.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, discussions on these matters are always taking place between interested governments. I had some discussion only the other day about this matter with a representative of a friendly country, and I expect to have one later today. This is part of the job of the external affairs minister.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Elucidation is part of the job, too.

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): I should like to address a supplementary question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Would he inform the house whether the reports he receives from our representative on the truce commission in South Viet Nam are identical or similar to those he receives from the United States state department with respect to the interpretation of the development of events in South Viet Nam?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, we have naturally had reactions from interested governments on that delicate situation. When we were in Tokyo we asked the representative of Canada on the international control commission to come to Tokyo to discuss the situation with us. These sources of information are very valuable to us in making necessary assessments.

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): Mr. Speaker, I should like to follow up one series [Mr. Douglas.]

of questions asked of the Secretary of State for External Affairs. With regard to the discussions that are being held with representatives of friendly countries, would one of those representatives be the senior senator from Arkansas, Senator Fulbright, whose speech in the Senate on April 15 has been widely disseminated?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Senator Fulbright is chairman of the foreign relations committee. He is not a member of the government of the United States. However, I happen to know Senator Fulbright and I would not be averse to talking to him.

Mr. Churchill: What is his opinion?

Mr. Olson: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister tell the house whether any member nation of the United Nations has stated that it intends to move a motion or to initiate some action for the seating of red China at the next session of the general assembly?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend knows that negotiations of this kind are confidential. It would be improper for me to say what the representative of another country indicated to me in a private conversation, but these conversations are taking place. Much will depend on the interpretation that is given this problem as to whether it is an important question within the meaning of the charter of the United Nations or whether it is a question that requires only a simple majority vote. I suggest quite seriously to my hon. friend that he look again at the detailed statement on this subject which was made in the month of May.

[Later:]

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, now that I have reread his speech of May 22 I would like to ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs whether his statement then holds true today as a declaration of Canada's policy with regard to China. His statement then read as follows:

We are watching the situation closely and Canadian policy will be predicated on a number of factors.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, if my hon. friend would read the analysis of the factors that followed in that speech perhaps he could add an interesting part to his question.