

Washington Visit by Prime Minister

Like the Prime Minister, I think we are all impressed by the calm confidence and the sureness of touch with which President Kennedy has approached these grave international problems which confront him. It is a good thing for the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs to have continued a tradition of establishing close personal contact with the leader of the government of our neighbour, and it is a good thing that these close personal contacts now established can be supplemented by other machinery which has been set up over the years. We are conscious of the fact that a new addition to that machinery, the legislative committee of the two governments, is meeting at the present time. All this goes to show, Mr. Speaker, that there is no contradiction in the closest possible friendly relations with the United States with regard to matters of policy of joint interest and Canadian control of Canadian decisions in respect of that policy. There is no contradiction, either in Canada following Canadian policies but doing it in consultation and co-operation with her neighbour. Of course, we expect, all of us, that to operate also in reverse.

The Prime Minister was good enough to mention some of the matters which were discussed. I am amazed that in such a short time they could have covered so many important subjects. I confess that in my experience, in this kind of meeting, it would have taken us a few hours to agree even on a communique. Perhaps a communique was composed in advance, which is sometimes done. In any event, it is reassuring to know that the two governments are in such close agreement on these important things.

The Prime Minister referred to the necessity of re-establishing the independence and integrity of the Congo. At this time I cannot imagine any more difficult problem than that, and it will be solved, as the Prime Minister has stated, not by weakening but strengthening the United Nations and by keeping the cold war out of Africa; and by putting on African countries and some Asian countries the main responsibility for achieving this objective.

The Prime Minister mentioned NATO: I agree with him that here again the main thing is to strengthen, not weaken, NATO, in cohesion and in unity, but to do that in the light of the conditions of 1961 and not 1950, when NATO was born. I venture to say that if we were working out a north Atlantic agreement now it would not be in exactly the same terms as it was then, but the objectives must remain the same, the building up of collective action and collective security in the north Atlantic area.

[Mr. Pearson.]

The Prime Minister has talked about our good relations with the United States and the necessity for maintaining these relations. We all agree with that, I am sure. Neighbourhood, after all, Mr. Speaker, is a fact of geography, but good neighbourliness is a political achievement. I hope the Prime Minister's visit to Washington will strengthen and confirm that achievement.

Mr. Hazen Argue (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, it is important to Canada that our Prime Minister and the President of the United States should have a personal relationship, and it is also important that the many outstanding common problems should be dealt with and solved to our mutual satisfaction.

I take it that the Prime Minister's visit to the United States was a very short one, and the opportunity he had to speak with the President was, I am sure he will agree, all too brief. I believe, from what has happened, this is just an introductory one. Although the Prime Minister made a rather comprehensive statement and went over a number of questions that had been discussed, the statement seemed to me to be rather bare of any concrete conclusions on a number of very important problems.

Apparently, there was no conclusion on the question of the arming of the Bomarc missile. Our stand in opposition to nuclear weapons in Canada is clear but this is certainly a problem that I am sure is in the mind of the Prime Minister. There was no settlement. The whole question of Canada's oil policy and necessary markets for Canada's oil—and this involves the United States—apparently has not been settled.

Although there was some allusion to the disposal of agricultural surpluses, the Prime Minister did not state any details as to the discussion of the way in which the United States has moved into very important markets of the world and provided part of their huge surplus food in those markets, at the same time making it more difficult for Canada to extend necessary food markets in those areas.

The Prime Minister went over a number of questions but he did not refer to any discussion of the operation of subsidiaries of United States corporations operating in this country.

A meeting between the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of the United States is necessary from time to time and I am certain is useful. Any contribution that can be made, following these discussions, toward a settlement in the Congo will be a very major contribution to the peace of the world and to humanity. I hope that as this very difficult situation unfolds it will be possible to achieve an arrangement whereby African nations