

*Supply—External Affairs***AFTER RECESS**

There is one matter I wish to bring to the attention of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, which I hope he will bear in mind when discussing matters of state with his colleague, the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Last week and again today there was discussion in this house, and in the larger city newspapers, about the alleged fact that the government has reduced the amount of moneys available for northern health services. I wonder whether it is generally understood that the infant mortality rate of our native Indian and Eskimo population is amongst the highest in the world? According to my researches there are only four countries which show a higher infant mortality rate.

I am not trying to make a case here for reduced foreign aid but I do say there is something illogical in our extending foreign aid to underdeveloped countries to assist reduce their infant mortality rates and at the same time reducing the amount we spend on northern health services. Thanks largely to foreign aid the infant mortality rate of many underdeveloped countries has been reduced over the past ten years, but I stress the fact that the infant mortality rate of our native Indian and Eskimo population is exceeded only by the infant mortality rates of two countries in equatorial Africa, one or two in southeast Asia, and one in Latin America. If the minister wishes to head off criticism of his estimates covering foreign aid expenditures I think he should prevail upon his colleagues, in particular the Minister of National Health and Welfare, that our native population deserves better treatment in the way of health services.

There were two or three other matters I wished to refer to but since they were mentioned by other hon. members I feel it would be best at this point to listen to what the Secretary of State for External Affairs has to say.

**Mr. Knowles:** Six o'clock.

**The Chairman:** Order. May I be permitted to list the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment. They are as follows: the hon. member for Saskatoon (Mr. Brand), Health and Welfare; the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. McCleave), Income Tax; the hon. member for Dufferin-Simcoe (Mr. Maddill), Immigration.

It being after six o'clock I do now leave the chair.

At 6.19 p.m. the committee took recess.

The committee resumed at 8 p.m.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** Mr. Chairman, we have had a rather interesting and useful discussion of various aspects of Canadian foreign policy. I should like to begin by congratulating the Leader of the Opposition on what I thought was a helpful and constructive statement. I warmly welcome what he has had to say about the importance of external aid and the place it occupies in foreign policy today. I assure him I share fully the views which he so well expressed this afternoon.

A number of members have referred to the situation in Viet Nam. I believe this is a matter which should engage our attention at the present time, and I wish to say something about this to the house. There can be no differences of opinion about the urgency of the need to help bring this terrible ordeal to an end. We believe the only way to do so is through negotiations that are directed toward the establishment of a durable and stable settlement which both sides can accept and live with.

The immediate problem continues to be what it has been for some time; it is as simple to formulate as it has proven difficult to solve in practice. It is the problem of how to get the negotiations started and how to establish a sufficient measure of confidence between the two sides to enable them to sit down together and start discussing the basic political issues at stake in Viet Nam, instead of bringing their military weight to bear on them. This is the aspect of the problem to which the government has directed the highest priority and urgency. It has seemed to us that a country such as Canada which has had prolonged experience with the problems of that country and which has ready access to both sides might well be able to help bridge the gap between the battlefield and the conference room.

No third party of course can compel the two sides to change their positions and policies in order to take certain actions or refrain from others. The most we can hope to do is encourage the two sides to reconsider their positions, to clarify ambiguities and to see in this process of discussion and examination whether any element of common ground exists.

In my view there have recently been three major developments which have had a bearing on the diplomatic and military impasse