

U.S. Invasion of Cambodia

It is very easy to criticize the United States. I am not surprised at the widespread criticisms. After all, there are to be congressional elections in the month of November and, naturally, political considerations will have some degree of weight among the members of the United States Congress. The suggestion has been made over and over again that we should neutralize much of Southeast Asia, including North Viet Nam, South Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos, and that the security of those nations should be guaranteed by the United States, Great Britain, Russia and France. That is an objective that can never be attained.

● (4:20 p.m.)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the right hon. gentleman, but his time has expired.

Some hon. Members: Continue.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Does the House give unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I wish to make just two further observations. That objective cannot be attained. It is all right to put these phantoms in the air and try to pick them out. Theoretically they are fine, but there are no one-way streets in negotiations. There must be traffic back and forth, and there is no such thing today between Viet Nam and the United States or, indeed, in any of the countries.

I am not taking a view different from my leader. He said there should be a declaration that the United States and Viet Nam should get out of Cambodia; that is what I understood. That is fine. However, who is going to put them out? Would they agree to leave the protected position in which they find themselves today and from which they carry on their activities? It is a frightening problem. It arouses the fear of mankind as it has not been aroused for a long, long while. Yet in the midst of all these fears a number of members have indicated that most Canadians and Americans do not fear that this will lead to a worldwide, extended conflagration.

It is easy to attack those who have responsibility. I have often been in disagreement with the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp). Today I thought he dealt with this subject in a more statesmenlike manner than he has dealt with subjects in the past. I do not say that in a manner of criticism, because the minister knows I have disa-

greed with him strongly in the past. I think today he will keep open our lines of communication with the United States. I hope he will extend those lines of communication by sending Chester Ronning abroad once more to see whether he can bring about a sense of reality that will immediately lead to a national settlement.

I do not want the message to go out from this Parliament today that the United States is in the dock in the view of the Canadian people. Our two countries have been together too long on behalf of freedom to permit such an idea to go out over the world.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. David Anderson (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, in entering this debate I wish to congratulate the previous speakers for their efforts. I think the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) and the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) made great speeches. However, these speeches indicate to many of the younger members of this House that their points of view are not completely applicable to the matter under discussion. I think the speech of the deputy leader of the New Democratic Party will certainly endear him to delegates of that party's leadership convention which will soon be held. It was a good speech in terms of delivery and what he said, far better than my speech will be. However, in terms of content I think he has forgotten precisely the point we are debating this afternoon.

The American involvement in Cambodia which started yesterday is a matter of great concern. It has been well dealt with by other speakers. I wish to emphasize one aspect to which the hon. member for York South made passing reference. He referred to the dismay in the U.S. Senate and in the Congress regarding this action. Just as worrying as the international aspect of this enlargement of the conflict are the internal results that might come from it. This, of course, cannot be predicted, certainly not by a Canadian as far away from the border as we in Ottawa. However, it is one aspect which is extremely worrying. There is a conflict between the President of the United States and Congress, a situation which our system happily avoids. This particular aspect of the problem is just as worrying as any other arising out of the actual ground involvement in Cambodia. President Nixon stated that the expansion of the war is to be of limited duration for limited objectives. Only time will tell.