

Supply—External Affairs

it is my hope that what we see today in the stormy world in which we live might be settled in the same way by following the same pattern.

I intend to speak about only one problem, namely, the problem of neutralism in the world. Before doing so, I wish, as a supporter of this government, to commend and praise the government and the words and deeds of the Secretary of State for External Affairs in keeping our country on the side of making peace and assuring to the world a security which is badly needed, rather than to drive Canada toward a state of war. No one more than our Secretary of State for External Affairs has done a greater and better job to save the peace of the world since I have been in this parliament, and I am glad today to pay a great tribute to his work in that direction.

Let me come now to the problem of neutralism. I know that theory is one that is sponsored by the leader of a great country, the republic of India. We have known before in international law of another principle—we call it neutrality. How many countries have lost through being neutral in these days and particularly in the period ending with 1914 when the first world war started. Some countries in Europe had agreements with other countries assuring their neutrality. But the fact is that neutrality did not mean one thing at that time.

We are glad to develop in each country a spirit of neutrality which would mean that we should assure any policy which would encourage some countries to try to establish peace by the only means known to human beings, which is getting ready to defend a country if the country or any country is attacked by a prospective enemy.

It is peculiar to find out that countries advocating such international policies are on the other hand asking us for money and technicians to develop inside their own frontiers a self-supporting economy. I agree with that entirely, but it seems to me if we are going to live in a world where neutrality will develop in each country, if on the other hand we are going to give our money and technicians to develop a self-supporting economy, in my opinion that is something difficult to reconcile.

So between a policy of getting into a war at any price and getting peace, or trying very hard and striving for it by all means to secure peace, I would choose to maintain our connections with those countries which have the same philosophy and have built up a system of defence without aiming at going to war with anybody and trying to show to some countries in the world that we intend

to secure peace and only peace by all means without aiming at anything which could bring Canada into conflict with any country.

It is a very difficult problem to reconcile those ideas, but I will rest my case with the present government and I will rest my case with the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I am sure that Canada will be maintained at peace, that Canada in the years to come will favour peace by peaceful means, assuring not only to Canada the security we need but also helping other countries in the world which have the same willingness to live in peace for the good of humanity. I shall say nothing else today, except to conclude with a few words in French.

(Translation):

I do think that the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Pearson) and the government which he so worthily represents, will continue to serve the cause of peace by continuing to assist those countries which, like Canada, are seeking to establish peace in the world while ensuring their own security.

(Text):

Mr. Fleming: Mr. Chairman, at the outset let me say a brief word concerning the deliberations of the standing committee on external affairs. As in the past, I think the deliberations of that committee were most useful. The committee carried on its work in good spirit and with a co-operative attitude. I have long contended in this house that the standing committee on external affairs by its review of the estimates of the Department of External Affairs furnishes a useful example of how estimates should be treated for some of the other departments.

I take it that at this stage of the discussion we are confining our remarks to general statements and that at a later point we may address ourselves to a detailed consideration of individual items in the estimates.

The opening statement this morning of the Secretary of State for External Affairs covered a very limited field. I would be the first to acknowledge that the situation in the world today in many quarters is fluid and that dangerous elements exist, but there were some startling omissions in the statement made by the minister. I should like to mention several matters which I think the minister has side-stepped and which because of their importance warranted some statement on his behalf.

First is the current situation following the seizure of the assets of the Suez canal company by the government of Egypt. That matter received scanty treatment from the minister this morning. In a situation as formidable and as threatening as this we