

*External Affairs*

Majesty's government in the United Kingdom to send forces to protect King Hussein of Jordan and provide for stability in that little country. These events were discussed in this house, last summer, as indeed they began to be discussed in the United Nations on August 13 last.

I want to thank the Secretary of State for External Affairs for his co-operation in facilitating my access to certain individuals in some of the countries I visited. I wish to acknowledge at once the co-operation I received from Canadian personnel in every place I went where we have missions. I visited Lebanon, the United Arab Republic, Jordan, Iraq and Israel. I was afforded the opportunity in all these countries to see the heads of governments and in all cases but one the foreign ministers and as well, of course, other individuals from whom I was able to gather impressions and ideas. I believe that the house would expect me to say something of these impressions and this journey.

In Lebanon the government of President Chamoun was one that had not been disposed during its tenure of office to give support to the over-all objectives as stated by President Nasser, both with regard to the matter of Arab unity and certain aspects of Arab nationalism as enunciated by President Nasser. President Chamoun, in the conversation which I was privileged to have with him, had no hesitation in affirming that he did not share the objectives of President Nasser nor his general policy toward the Soviet union. On the other hand, the present president of Lebanon, General Chehab, who had not yet been installed in office, told me that he felt that in the interests of Lebanon itself there should be support by Lebanon for the general purposes of Arab unity and Arab nationalism as stated by President Nasser. General Chehab indicated his desire to do everything that would assist in the establishment in fact, if not in law, of the neutral position which Lebanon feels she should occupy vis-à-vis Europe and vis-à-vis her sister Arab states.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs will remember that when he spoke on this question last summer he put forward the view that by some form of international guarantee an attempt might be made to bring about the neutralization of Lebanon. My view is that it is not possible to do so in the manner suggested, and that the best we can hope, for some time at any rate, is the sort of informal arrangement which General Chehab is now pursuing as president of the little state of Lebanon. There can be no doubt that President Nasser is the single, dominant

figure in the Arab world. While at the present time the lack of full accord between the government of Iraq under Prime Minister Kassam and President Nasser would seem to indicate that Prime Minister Kassam is undoubtedly a personality of the greatest significance in the area, I do not think that anyone will deny the great influence which President Nasser occupies generally throughout the Arab world.

I would not want the house to think any impressions I have are based solely on the talks which I had the privilege of having with President Nasser. However, undoubtedly one is influenced by one's conversations with individuals who have, at the moment, great authority in their respective countries. I would not be true to my impression if I did not say that I was impressed with President Nasser. This does not mean to say that I do not have great reservations with regard to some of his policies, but I think I should say in this attempt to be objective, trying to fully assess the problems of the area, that there has been some misunderstanding of his motives and policies. I am satisfied that while the commitments he has made to the Soviet union are great, those commitments do not amount to his acceptance of the communist ideology. Indeed, only a few days ago, at a meeting in Damascus with President Tito, he made clear what his position was with regard to communists, both in Syria, now an integrated part of the United Arab Republic, and in Egypt.

As a matter of fact, I think it could be established that the integration of Syria with Egypt was largely brought about because of the fear Syria had become dangerously committed to the Soviet union and that this form of union would be one method by which the dangers of such a commitment could be mitigated. In any event, I think that we will not serve the cause of peace if, in the absence of a careful assessment of the situation, we charge the present government of the United Arab Republic as being fully in sympathy with communist ideology. I am sure that that is not the case.

There can be no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that the United Arab Republic is receiving great assistance from the Soviet union. President Nasser told me that it was only after the refusal of the government of the United States to maintain its policy of financially assisting the Aswan dam project, its refusal to extend credit terms to Egypt to permit that country to buy wheat, the intervention by the government of the United States with regard to the voluntary CARE program designed to feed the children of Egypt, that as a matter of last resort he appealed to the then Premier Bulganin, for assistance