

*External Affairs*

recall that the Secretary of State for External Affairs in his statement on the disarmament question felt that he could not give the house any indication of what Canada's stand might be as to proposals for disarmament. As a matter of fact, as found on page 932 of *Hansard* he is reported as having said:

Canada is putting forward her proposals which I am not at liberty to disclose as yet.

Throughout the debate it was quite obvious that the minister was very reluctant to give the house any advance notice of what Canada's proposals would be to the disarmament committee. As found on page 960 of *Hansard*, while the hon. member for Essex East (Mr. Martin) was speaking, the minister said:

May I ask the hon. member, is he suggesting that Canada's initiative in this regard should be taken in the way of propaganda, that is by announcing a plan to the world today or should it be taken in the councils of the countries with which she is now associated and later in the meeting of the 10-member committee? It comes down to a question of whether it is to be a case of propaganda or whether we are really going to try to work out a sound, worth-while scheme.

Further on in the speech of the hon. member for Essex East the minister asked this question:

Does the hon. member suggest that Canada, Italy, France and the United States should rush out now with their four different plans for disarmament? Does he not realize that at the United Nations there was only Selwyn Lloyd's statement and the statement of Premier Khrushchev? It never was the intention that the whole ten nations of the disarmament committee should rush out with ten statements about what they thought should be done to bring about disarmament.

The hon. member for Calgary South (Mr. Smith) also made a very forceful statement in which he expressed firm disapproval of having Canada show her hand before the disarmament committee meetings took place. On page 966 of *Hansard* the hon. member for Calgary South is reported as saying:

The hon. member for Essex East argues that our government, as a member of the 10-nation disarmament commission, should outline to parliament the proposals it intends to make at the disarmament meetings. I suggest this would be sheer folly at this time, for we might as well recognize that we are still in a poker game with our Russian friends.

Later, in the same debate, on page 969 of *Hansard* the hon. member for Calgary South is reported as saying:

I sincerely hope—and I close on the same note as that on which I began—that we are not prepared to show our hand prematurely, that we will deal with the Russians recognizing that we will remain armed until such time as they show the true intent of their honest motive.

Notwithstanding these very firm policy statements by both the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the hon. member for Calgary South, the Prime Minister, without

[Mr. Cardin.]

one word of explanation to the house, without one word of apology to either the Secretary of State for External Affairs or the hon. member for Calgary South, proceeded to give to the house a summary of his government's thinking on proposals that might usefully be made to the disarmament committee next month. In doing this, not only did the Prime Minister repudiate the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the hon. member for Calgary South but the Prime Minister actually repudiated his own words, words which he had spoken at the beginning of the debate. On page 989 of *Hansard*, the Prime Minister is reported as saying:

The hon. member for Essex East, on the other hand, seemed to advocate competitive alternative programs to be placed before the disarmament commission. I do not believe we should engage in such a competition.

I submit that there has been a complete repudiation, not only of the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the hon. member for Calgary South, but also of the Prime Minister himself.

Nor am I arguing that the house should not have been made aware of the proposals the government might want to make at the disarmament committee. On the contrary they were asked for, and rightly so, by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Pearson) and by the hon. member for Essex East. What I am arguing is that the cabinet should have decided right from the start to let the house know the nature of these proposals. I am arguing also that the Secretary of State for External Affairs should have been the one to give these proposals to the house at the beginning of the debate so that members like the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Essex East, who have had experience in the matter and who have had considerable success in dealing with disarmament questions, might have had an opportunity of discussing the proposals to make their points of view known or offering suggestions as to how best we might obtain world disarmament.

May I say also, that I strongly suspect the proposals that were put forward by the Prime Minister the other day were off the cuff. I believe the Prime Minister conceived, hatched and scrambled another egg without having the benefit of cabinet consultation, and without giving to this matter the type of serious consideration that should have been given to it in the cabinet and in this house. I am sure hon. members will recall that up until very recent years Canadians took justifiable pride in the fact that in the field of foreign affairs parliament presented a united front; that Canada's