

Crisis in Cuba

great powers can retreat from destruction. I think we should be very happy—and we expressed that happiness last week—that we have a world organization in existence at this time, and we should use it to the full in the days ahead.

There are certain implications in the events which have taken place which concern the foreign policy and the defence policy of our own country. It would be well, I think, if we were now to study our own policies in the light of what happened last week and what is happening now.

Mr. A. B. Patterson (Fraser Valley): Mr. Speaker, we appreciate the statement which has been presented to us this afternoon by the Prime Minister relative to a situation which has been of grave concern to us all throughout the past days.

I think it is a good thing that the Prime Minister does keep us advised of the developments which are taking place. We all recognize that in these circumstances there are sometimes factors involved which perhaps cannot be understood by the people at large and even by many of us who sit on the opposition side of this house, both because of the nature of the events themselves and also because the developments taking place have, at times, to be wrapped in secrecy. We do appreciate this statement and I am sure we all share the relief which has been occasioned by the events of the past two or three days.

Canadians from coast to coast were gravely alarmed by the situation in Cuba, as they had a right to be. For some time the policies followed by that nation have raised questions in the minds of many people, and as the situation developed those misgivings became more evident from day to day. Now that the immediate crisis has been resolved we are, naturally, filled with appreciation and a sense of thanksgiving, since we well understand that events of the kind we have seen in the past week or so could easily explode, resulting in dislocation and catastrophe not only for the western world but for the world as a whole. The news that the sites are to be dismantled and the missiles themselves returned to the Soviet union is comforting, but again we should like to urge that constant and cautious vigilance be the order of the day. Canada must continue to exercise a positive role in international affairs.

Once again I think it would be in order to say how much we appreciate the efforts of the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the field of disarmament. This is something which Canadians from coast to coast appreciate, something which unites us when there are so many things which divide us. We wholeheartedly support the efforts of the

Secretary of State for External Affairs in the field of disarmament because we feel this is the most rewarding field in which we could be engaged.

Not only would we urge constant and cautious vigilance but we must, I think, be ready to recognize the fact that we have to accept the responsibilities which fall upon a nation such as Canada. I agree that those responsibilities can best be discharged through the organizations and agencies which have already been established for that purpose; I refer to the United Nations and also to such other organizations as the organization of American states. I remember that some time ago, when I had the opportunity of attending meetings of the United Nations, one of the delegates stated that the United Nations had become too frail a vessel to become the repository of the hopes and aspirations of mankind. Perhaps he was right at that time, but I believe the United Nations is still the greatest organization we have at hand to carry on the work of peace and security. Therefore we continue to support the work of the United Nations and urge that it be used in every possible way to further the cause of peace and security.

Mr. Speaker, the leader of this group, the hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Thompson) placed our position very clearly before the house just a few days ago in regard to many of these situations. Before I conclude I would just say once again that the privileges we enjoy here in Canada should only make us realize to a greater extent than ever the responsibilities we have to the peoples of every corner of the world in order that they may be able to live in security and peace, and that we can move forward and defend those things without which life would be meaningless and futile.

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, without a doubt all hon. members of the house share the sense of relief that was obvious when the Prime Minister was making his statement on this question. In recent hours our hearts have been lightened and our spirits raised. Furthermore, without any doubt developments in recent hours with respect to the Cuban crisis have caused a global sigh of relief, have renewed hopes for a return to international sanity, and have increased the determination of all peoples to make certain that brinkmanship, by any nation, is replaced with the statesmanship of the United Nations.

Mr. Speaker, recent events have proven the correctness of the policy of this party in its immediate and wholehearted support for the proposals made by U Thant, the acting secretary general of the United Nations. I am proud to say that while some hesitated