

North Atlantic Treaty

the tremendous progress which has been made in that country and how it has become an example to the adjacent countries of Lebanon, Syria, Transjordan, Egypt and other eastern countries. If we are going to associate ourselves with any country in that area—I do not say that we can do this successfully at the present time because of Israel's internal conditions—we should endeavour to associate ourselves with the one democracy which has been established with our own parliamentary system, with Israel.

It is true that we perhaps alienated them, and I think that was done inadvisedly although it may be argued that it was necessary during the war to adopt the attitude that was adopted by the great powers. Nonetheless I say that every attempt should be made today to associate ourselves with Israel and to build up its strength economically and socially and in every other way so that we may have a real democratic friend in an area where heaven knows democracy needs a friend. In that area there are very few organizations that can be called democratic.

In that area, if we include India, there are at least a billion people living under conditions of squalor and misery. Eighty per cent of those people are peasants and one would think that peasants would have enough food. But having to deliver 40, 60 or 80 per cent of their produce to the land owners, in many areas they live in dire poverty. Unfortunately in the past we have been so largely associated with their oppressors. Now revolutionary movements are rising to end this age-old poverty, misery and want.

In my opinion it is in these areas, rather than in western Europe, that the fate of the world will be decided. Unfortunately the Soviet union, I think falsely, has managed to portray itself to the depressed peoples in Iran, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Egypt, the Sudan and other countries in the East and Middle East as the nation which alone can bring them deliverance and prosperity. We know perfectly well that if the Soviet union were successful the peoples of those areas would simply be exchanging one group of reactionary rulers for another group of totalitarian dictators.

Consequently I say to the minister that in all these discussions that are taking place, whether in the United Nations or in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Canada should emphasize more and more the necessity for economic aid not only to countries with whom we are associated now but to those living under depressed conditions which may make them susceptible to communist propaganda.

While we accept this protocol, while we are aware of the dangers inherent in the extension of the North Atlantic treaty, while territorially we are enlarging our commitments, we realize that this is a most important matter for the parliament and the people of Canada. But again I say we are not going to win this world-wide struggle for the minds of men by considering 'almost exclusively the manufacture of armaments and the sending of military supplies overseas. More and more, victory will lie in the hands of the group which can offer to the depressed masses of the world wherever they exist—yes, even in our own country—the prospect of better standards of life and freedom of association, freedom of thought, freedom of religion and all those freedoms which they might otherwise exchange for the mirage of better economic conditions, which indeed they would be more apt to exchange for a totalitarian dictatorship, and which would only lead the world into greater catastrophes than it has ever known.

I do not want to prolong the discussion, but I did want to say what I have said. I wanted to emphasize the economic side of this matter as it concerns Greece, Turkey and the backward countries of the world. We should not be thinking almost exclusively in terms of armies overseas, in terms of sending overseas great quantities of guns and military supplies. After all, we in Canada perhaps can best use our resources, both human and material, by supplying the world with the means to improve standards of life wherever they can be improved and in that way assist most to win the battle for democracy and freedom.

Mr. Solon E. Low (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, this is a most important event, the approval of the protocol for the accession of Greece and Turkey into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Being a matter of so much importance it seems too bad that it had to come up so close to the end of the session. Otherwise I am quite sure that this chamber would have been filled with interested members. I am sure that if many hon. members are not here today to hear the minister and take part in this discussion it is not due to their lack of interest in such an important matter. I think it is due more to the fact that this is the tail-end of a session which has been interrupted by a Christmas holiday and many members are not able to be here. Otherwise I am quite certain that we would have had a most interesting debate by an interested membership of this house.

I am quite sure too that most members must realize the importance of the obligation