

*Supply—External Affairs*

which he outlined four points of possible settlement of the future of east Asia. As he uttered the words I found myself tentatively in some agreement with him, but I should like to reserve my decision until I read the actual text. However, I would like to know whether what the minister said is an expression of policy on the part of the government or merely his own personal view at the moment.

But there was another sentence he uttered to which I found myself in strong opposition. I hope that I can quote it fairly and not too much out of context. The minister said that we have got to be clear on what we are trying to prevent. I think we have been abundantly clear through the years on what we have been trying to prevent, and because we have been trying to prevent something we have been pursuing a negative policy which in Asia is landing us in disaster. What we ought to be clear about is what we are trying to do, and what we are trying to do should be something vastly more constructive, vastly more positive, vastly more dynamic than what we are trying to prevent.

After all, what do the people of Asia want? They want freedom from the west. They want to be free nationally. They want to be their own masters so that they can create the social reforms which are so obviously needed in Asia, and if we are clear on what we are trying to do we should be supporting them and helping them in these aims and objectives. But all that we have been clear about is what we are trying to prevent. What we have been trying to prevent is communist expansion, and because we are trying to prevent it we have fought the communists on communism's own ground to our own detriment instead of fighting them on our ground, which is something positive and dynamic. If we can persuade the people of Asia that there is something worth while in our ethos and we support them by practical action then we are going to win Asia and the communists never can.

The minister also said that communist imperialism has been too successful in Asia. Of course it has been successful, and because of our own negative policies. He said too that we have got to accept the fact that the communists are working for control of south-east Asia and to some extent maintaining and achieving it, but if that is so I know of no greater indictment of western diplomacy. The western world has failed abysmally over the last few years to appreciate what was happening in Asia, and there is not one nation which is exempt from blame.

What we have refused to realize is that changes were taking place. Changes were

taking place in front of our eyes but we blinded ourselves to them. After every war the status quo must change. In some places it may be destroyed thoroughly, in some others distorted, but there is going to be change and it is the better part of wisdom to face that fact. I have said in the past in the house that the power of ideas is an infinitely greater power than the power of bullets. The truth of that is seen most graphically today in Asia because there are ideas at work there. They are ideas which came from the west. They are ideas which are fermenting in the minds and brains of people and the greatest idea of all is the ideal of freedom.

Certainly the most important thing that was said during the war from the point of view of affecting the status quo was said by President Roosevelt. He gave rebirth to an idea, an idea as old as man himself, the idea that men should be free. He gave rebirth to that idea in the four freedoms. The people of the world heard him, the people of the world believed him and the world has changed but we are afraid of the change which has taken place. Colonial peoples are going to be free. We may think we can stop them, we may think we can slow them down, but they will be free and there is the end to it. The sooner we realize they are going to be free and support their aspirations the sooner shall we make friends of them.

The question is of course how far are we prepared to go in co-operation with these people to achieve the freedom which they desire and which we ourselves possess. There are those who fear revolution, but we ourselves, we in this parliament, are creatures of revolution. Whether our forefathers came from the United Kingdom, France or any other nation, we are still creatures of revolution. Perhaps there are some who prefer to forget it. Perhaps there are some who have forgotten it. But still it is a fact that our freedom today stems from the overthrow of a tyrannical monarchy and governments which rejected democratic concepts. We are free because our ancestors fought and slew those who would have denied them freedom.

The same is true of the United States. The people of that country are also the children of revolution. Today they have as their founding father George Washington. He is the founding father of the United States because he led a successful revolution. Had he failed he would have been hanged by the neck as a traitor. Obviously, success is the difference between immortality and infamy. Now, men in other parts of the world are imbued with the same hope and wish for