

Supply—External Affairs

socialists of Viet Nam. Let us bear in mind that these non-communist or indeed anti-communist Asian socialist parties in Burma, Indonesia and other countries are exercising a tremendous influence on the conduct of affairs. They sent a statement to the foreign ministers of the principal powers represented at the Geneva conference, and outlined some simple objectives which, they said, must be pursued if peace was to be attained. These objectives were four in number. The first was the suspension of hostilities. Second was the establishment of real independence for Viet Nam. Third was general elections under the control of neutral countries such as—and they gave as examples—India, the Philippines and Siam. Fourth was the conclusion of a treaty giving France cultural, economic, diplomatic and technical facilities similar to those which were provided in the treaty between Great Britain and India.

It seems to me that these are very moderate terms and, if accepted, might form the basis for a lasting peace. They may be idealistic; they may be unacceptable to the other side, even if they were acceptable to our side. But at least it seems to me they form a basis. And in the granting of elections I think they confirm very largely the views most of us hold with regard to the future government of Korea—that if free elections are to be held in Korea they should be supervised by those who are not involved in the war, supervised by those who are not associated with the communist group. And I would add one further proviso: They should be Asian nations associated with the United Nations, but not having participated in the late war.

There are a number of other matters I would have liked to discuss this afternoon. I had wanted to deal more particularly with the background, and with the situation as we see it in Indo-China. I am certain that if France had followed the example of Great Britain in India or, as did the Dutch a little later under pressure, in Indonesia, the situation in southeast Asia would be far different from what it is today.

But the situation is there. And not by threats of massive retaliation, not by threats of military intervention shall we be able to end the troubles in that region. I still believe that the more we can do to assist these Asian peoples in arriving at independence and freedom, and then of building up their economies so that they may improve their standard of living, the more we shall have done to meet the threat of communism. We can do more in that than in any other way.

The tragedy of it is that, so long as there is turmoil and strife in these countries, there is little or no production, little or no building up

of those countries. And behind them, to the rear of them, China stands uninvaded; and within its borders, so far as we know, it is at peace, building up its economy and giving a demonstration of what these communists will tell the Asian countries communists can do.

I think that is the tragedy of our time, and I hope that the conference at Geneva will be successful. I agree with my hon. friend: Mr. Eden's part in that conference has been a very worthy one. One of the reasons he has been able to act as negotiator is, I would draw to the attention of the house, that unlike Mr. Dulles, who walked out because the United States does not recognize the fact of a new government in China, Mr. Eden could remain and talk because his government had recognized that fact. That, I think, is an argument for those who would recognize the fact of a new government in China. While we may not agree with his political views, Mr. Eden has been enabled to fulfil a function that no one else could fulfil, at least in the same way.

Mr. Low: Mr. Chairman, before I enter upon a discussion of external affairs generally I should like to explain to the house why it was impossible for me to be here at the beginning of Mr. Pearson's address. I am sorry I had to be away for well over a half hour attending a funeral. I should have liked very much to have been in my seat to hear all he said. However, he was courteous enough to send me a copy of the notes from which he was going to speak. Since coming to the house I have had a chance to look at them, and also to follow what he had to say.

However, before dealing with the minister's statement I should like to say something about the work of the external affairs committee. Nothing has been said this afternoon to this effect, but the occasion for the launching of this debate was a report from that committee. I should like to say a word or two about two or three features of our work, as a background to what I shall discuss later in connection with our external relations.

I have been a member of that committee since it was set up in 1945. During all those years I think it has proved to be a good committee. It has justified itself by the thorough study of the estimates it has made each year and by the painstaking and careful investigation of matters that have arisen. I believe there is very little relative to our external relations that has been overlooked. I believe that the good experience in the external affairs committee might serve as a pattern for some of the other departments of government. I would not suggest all of them should