

*Supply—External Affairs*

possible move which will help find a way out of the present impasse. This is our political obligation. The government accepts these obligations and, as it has done in the past, it will continue to play an active role in any search for peace in Viet Nam.

The immediate problem remains what it has been; how to get negotiations started. I reiterate that this is a matter of the greatest urgency and that a cessation of the bombing will clearly have a key significance in moving the problem in that direction. But the intractability of the problem is demonstrated by the fact that the bombing has not been halted, that military restraint is not being shown and that talks have not been entered into. This suggests that future efforts to narrow the gap between the two sides may have to be directed to matters of political substance as well as to the terms and conditions for a beginning of talks. We are urgently examining this aspect of the matter at this particular moment.

I have never believed that stalemate and rigidity are adequate grounds for a "do nothing" posture, and abandoning all efforts because past endeavours have proved unrewarding.

● (8:20 p.m.)

I am sure, Mr. Chairman, that everyone in this house and everyone in the world is greatly concerned about the situation in Viet Nam. I am sure that we are not alone in our efforts to try to bring about at least preliminary talks between both parties. When our ambassador was in Hanoi recently we had a reaffirmation of the willingness of the North to talk, but we were not given any indication when those talks would take place, except that we were informed they would take place at an appropriate time. It would have been very helpful had we had some indication as to when they might take place, as this would have enabled us and other countries to impress upon the United States the desirability of action that would bring about the beginning of talks that might lead ultimately to a settlement.

Reference was made by the hon. member for Greenwood today to the use of the Security Council. He correctly said that the Security Council was established as a means of avoiding situations that threatened the peace, or situations that had resulted in a violation of the peace. If North and South Viet Nam and other countries involved in this situation were

[Mr. Martin (Essex East).]

subject to the authority of the Security Council, there is no doubt that would be the place where this matter should be discussed. That would be the place where the great powers and the other, non-permanent members of the Security Council would be given an opportunity of taking steps that might lead to the negotiations that everyone wants to see undertaken.

The fact is that any action by the Security Council would provide nothing more than a place to debate. Some distinguished senators of the United States, notably Senator Mansfield who has been strongly opposed to the war, have for a long time urged that the matter be taken by the government of the United States to the Security Council. I can assure my hon. friend that this matter has been carefully considered by the Canadian government and other governments represented on the Security Council, great powers as well as non-permanent members.

The Secretary General of the United Nations has himself been opposed to taking this matter to the Security Council, for the reasons that I indicated at the outset, namely that the parties who are an integral part of any settlement are not subject to the authority of the Security Council because they are not members of the United Nations organization. His view is that it is within the framework of the Geneva powers that this problem should be discussed and should be resolved.

The Canadian government has not opposed this view. For a long time we have felt that if the matter could be brought within the Geneva framework, that is where the matter would more likely be settled or where greater progress would likely be made. But the fact is that one of the co-chairmen, the Soviet union, has been reluctant to call a meeting of the Geneva powers. The British government, as the other co-chairman, has been anxious to have discussions within the Geneva framework; but its action alone will not bring the other powers to the conference table under the terms of the Geneva agreement.

We continue to support the positions of countries, however, which take the view that the matter ought to be considered within the framework of the Geneva agreement. We support the position, for instance, of India; but it is a fact that the other member of the commission, Poland, has not supported this view. So countries have had to resort to whatever opportunities were open to them in their effort to try to help bring about a solution; in