

*Supply—External Affairs*

Britain and France do not, of course, take the same positions with regard to the problems of the Middle East. Any situation that involved any one of these powers in a conflict with another world power in the Middle East directly or indirect would be a matter of great consequence to the peace of the world.

It was undoubtedly because of this, Mr. Chairman, that early in the disturbance General de Gaulle suggested that the great powers should hold a meeting at the highest level. His suggestion did not seem to call for a meeting within the context of the United Nations. The view of the Soviet union and I believe the view of the United States was that such a meeting might be useful but that it ought to be within the context of the United Nations, and this was the view stated by the Prime Minister of Canada.

In fairness to the French government they acceded to this at once. I can say that it is not without significance that the four great powers were able to engage in a form of collaboration particularly in the consultations that took place between the United States and the Soviet union in New York, which I believe has not really been much in evidence since the end of the second world war.

**Mr. Lewis:** Is that not rather an exaggeration?

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** I beg the hon. member's pardon?

**Mr. Lewis:** Is that not a bit of an exaggeration? The collaboration occurred after the whole situation had blown up in their faces.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** No, I do not mean the collaboration, I meant to use the word "consultation".

**Mr. Lewis:** Oh.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** The consultations took place before war broke out and very much during the course of it. I am sure that the action taken in the security council would not have been possible had it not been for the action of the great powers.

It seems to me that the consultations in this regard between the United States and the Soviet union were particularly significant in spite of the background of their differences on the problems of the Middle East. I hope that this consultation, this recognition of a common danger, may, slowly perhaps, establish a pattern that will be very useful in other international situations now facing us and in situations not yet before us.

As the hon. member for Greenwood said, when the war broke out people at once began to say that the United Nations was once again proving its weakness and that the security council was an ineffective body, as though the security council or the United Nations were some abstract entity, as though it were an organism independent of the member states that compose it. There is nothing wrong with the charter of the United Nations. There is nothing wrong with the structure of the United Nations that cannot be corrected. What is wrong is the intransigence of some countries, the unwillingness of some countries to accept their responsibilities. In this situation I think that instead of criticising the United Nations we should recognize how fortunate we are that it exists.

The security council has provided a forum for vigorous discussion. Its meetings have provided an occasion where verbal, not armed, confrontation could take place and where discussion of matters affecting the peace of the world could be conducted. As a result decisions with great importance for world peace were taken. War was held off for about ten days, and that in itself was something. When war did take place the security council took action. In face of the greatest difficulty, having in mind the divisions of ideological opinion in the communist world, the western world and among the unaligned, the unanimity reached on the two recent occasions is something that should cause us not to depreciate but to appreciate the significance of the United Nations.

In these grave circumstances we can take some satisfaction from the fact that the efforts of the permanent members of the security council and the resolutions that flowed from their efforts have helped to hasten an end to the fighting. We may relate the fighting in the Middle East to certain issues, to differences between the parties on particular questions, but once a firm and certain cease fire has been secured we must address ourselves, as our ambassador to the United Nations has said, to the underlying problems in the Middle East.

Much has been said about these problems. It has always been the view of the Canadian government that one key element in achieving a satisfactory permanent settlement of the Middle East problem is the recognition by all parties of the sovereignty and the right to exist in peace and security of all countries in that area. This surely is elementary foreign policy. How can we have peace in the world