

*Crisis in Cuba*

must support that action. But as I have already stated outside the house, we can, while supporting that action which is considered necessary in the interests of security in the face of this threat, be very grateful indeed that the United Nations has been called into session at this time and that the security council is already meeting. We can be grateful that at the United Nations, our world organization, they are working, talking and negotiating to solve this problem in a way which will remove it as a threat to peace.

I think we can be grateful, as we have had cause to be grateful in the past, that with all its weaknesses, with all its frustrations, with all its failures, the United Nations, the world organization, is in existence today, and stands between humanity and destruction. I think we can also be grateful that the United States, which is the world's most powerful state, has not hesitated to bring this matter before the United Nations so that its action and its conduct can be considered by the representatives of 109 nations and a decision can be reached in the world forum as to that action.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. When we hear statements like that it is perhaps just as well to remember that in 1956, when the Soviet union attacked Hungary with fire, sword and terror, the Soviet union did not bring its action to the attention of the United Nations. As many hon. members of this house know, it rejected the right of the United Nations even to look into that action. So, Mr. Speaker, while we can be grateful indeed for the United Nations intervention in this matter, I think we can also be grateful for the action taken by the United States in bringing its action to the United Nations. I think we can support, as the United Kingdom has supported and in every appropriate way, the position of the United States at the United Nations.

As I have already said, that does not mean, in the minds of many people, that all the details of that action are to be approved without qualification. Many people, friends of the United States and anxious to support the United States, may question some of the arguments used and indeed some of the action taken. But while that may be true, that is not so important as the necessity of rallying round our neighbour and our friend as members of the North Atlantic alliance around a friend which is a free and democratic nation; where there is an open society, where people can make up their minds and public opinion can express itself; which has a society that is not imperialistic in design and is not imperialistic in action.

[Mr. Pearson.]

Mr. Speaker, I think it must be an encouragement to all of us that the position I suggest should be taken, to which the Prime Minister has already referred, is a position taken by every member of the organization of American states, a good many of whom have been critical of many aspects of United States policy in Latin America and indeed in Cuba. It is a comforting fact and it makes, I think, for peace and security, that the western hemisphere is united in the broad issue before the United Nations in this present threat to peace and security.

There is one other aspect of the question which the Prime Minister has mentioned. The United Nations has intervened. The secretary general, in a way which reminds us of the attitude adopted by his great predecessor, has intervened with wisdom and restraint and has put forward to the security council on behalf of, I think, 44 Asian and African members—a great number of Asian and African members—a proposal which may prevent the situation from deteriorating while a solution for the broad problems can be found.

Very often—and the history of the past world war has shown this—it takes this kind of crisis in order to find solutions which go beyond the crisis itself. So perhaps out of this danger and out of this threat we can find solutions to problems which it would have been impossible to find in other atmospheres. The secretary general has perhaps shown us how this can be done. He has indicated that the United Nations could intervene at this time through a resolution which is a kind of stand-still resolution, under which the United States would abandon its blockade and the U.S.S.R. would abandon the shipment of military supplies to Cuba for a period of time. During that period of time perhaps a solution can be found, not only to the immediate problem but to related and perhaps even more important problems.

This seems to me to be a very constructive and encouraging development. But I suggest that it would have far more chance of success if it could be supplemented by some proposal which would ensure that any obligation undertaken by those concerned would be carried out. The particular proposal indicates that there would be an obligation on the United States to abandon the blockade, which obligation could not be broken without it being known at once. It is almost a self-enforcing obligation. But the obligation on the other side, not to send military supplies to Cuba, is one that could be evaded unless there were facilities for control and inspection.

There is something therefore that the Canadian delegation, if the opportunity arises