

*Supply—External Affairs*

other territories in Asia associated with us in this great partnership, join in these deliberations.

However, they are members of the United Nations, and in that organization the opportunity presents itself to exchange opinions with them and to bring them closer and closer in harmony with our own thoughts on world affairs.

I wish to direct the remainder of my remarks to that commonwealth association. Much has been said about the United Nations and about the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. We know the steps that are being taken to bring to reality the European defence community. The Secretary of State for External Affairs has spoken of the possibility of a new organization in Asia with powers and scope similar to those of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Each one of these efforts is in itself a forward step in those collective efforts which have done so much to bring closer together, in common action, the nations which desire peace and which, while desiring peace, also desire freedom for themselves and others.

As I listened to some of the comments about statements made in the United States, I could not help noticing how critical some people in this chamber are ready to be about statements made in the United States, and yet how little I have heard by way of criticism from the same source about things that are being said by Russia and by China at this time. Does any hon. member in this chamber suggest for one moment that the position of the United States and that of Russia are comparable in this world picture with which we are confronted today? There is not one thoughtful member of this committee who would even for a moment tolerate such a suggestion. We know the people of the United States too well—there are too many blood ties as well as an understanding of the broadest kind—for us to believe at any time that, with whatever power they might possess, the United States have any hope but that of peace.

It would be well for us to remember that if the United States ceases to be the central core of our great organization for defence, the main hope of achieving continuing peace in the world today will have disappeared. I do not believe for one moment we shall reach any such time. However, I do not think that anyone contributes to the advancement of the hope of peace by suggesting that anyone in the United States—whether we approve of their particular words or not—has any aspiration other than for the same kind of peace that we want here in Canada.

Some of those who are so free in their criticism of statements made in the United States might well subject their own statements to examination before they suggest that we should be too ready to have our position at any time tested by their words. Not one of these nations is perfect. No single nation in this western fellowship is without its faults, but at least we can say this: The people of the United States, to our knowledge, are just as anxious as we are to have peace. If at any time there is any discussion of the strength of their weapons and of how, in any dreadful circumstances, those weapons might be employed, it is only because we have come to learn that in this world we may be a long time waiting for a second chance if we are unprepared to defend ourselves against the declared aggressive plans of Russia and the satellite governments associated with Moscow.

We have spoken of these wider associations. Each one of them offers its hope. Mr. Chairman, I believe there is no single association in the world that offers us greater hope for the years ahead than does the commonwealth of nations, expressing a common loyalty to a similar parliamentary system and the rule of law. This is no mere sentimental expression of an ancient fellowship. Either this commonwealth is a reality or it is not. Either we believe in this commonwealth or we have abandoned our faith in an organization that has done more for the advancement of society in this world than has any other group of people in the long history of the human race.

We are inclined to boast about the thin and intangible ties that hold this commonwealth together. I suggest that we should not let those ties become too thin and too intangible. We are also inclined to speak about the fact that this relationship is undefinable. I think it would be well that we define it, not in rigid terms but in terms that we can understand. Whatever other definition there may be, I think we at least can say that this commonwealth represents the greatest experiment in international friendship that has yet been worked out by the genius of man. We have been advised that it is well to keep friendships in repair. I think it is wise to keep this particular form of international friendship in good repair at all times.

I thought that a former prime minister of New Zealand answered the questions that sometimes seem to creep into some people's minds, as well as it could be done. There are those who seem to feel that a definite acceptance of a real association within the commonwealth in some way suggests a