

here so that I could give him exactly the same answer as I have given him six or seven times before. It would be along this line. There is no single arrangement in the Pacific at present which is along NATO lines. It has been considered that the arrangement should not be along NATO lines because of different conditions in the Pacific. The Southeast Asia defence organization, which he had in mind, has no such commitment as NATO at all. The main reason why it has not got such a commitment is that the United States would not accept one in those circumstances.

I could tell him tonight if he were here, as I have told him before, that we are not therefore taking any initiative or accepting any invitation to extend our commitments in that area, that is in the Pacific, beyond those which we now have and which include our commitments under the Charter of the United Nations. I do not think he had any right to go on to say, as he did, that because we would not extend our commitment in this way we were not alert to things happening in the Pacific and we were more interested in Europe. I would suggest that what has happened in Korea, and what is now happening in Indo-China, is sufficient evidence that we have and retain a very genuine interest in what goes on in the Pacific and Asian areas.

In closing I would return almost to where I began. The subject which has loomed so large throughout this debate has been our relations with the United States and our preoccupation with those relations. This preoccupation, indeed this anxiety, is understandable over our relations economic, our relations political and our relations strategic. I suggest that that relationship, vitally important as it must be to us and as it has been in the past, will be even more so in the future. A relationship to be successful on both sides must be based on mutual respect, a freedom to hold and to express our views. I assure my hon. friends who have been criticizing the Government because we have not, as they have said, had enough courage to express those views, that they do not feel any more strongly about that than we do. However, we in the Government happen at this time to have some responsibility for the conduct of international relations. It is not always advisable in the conduct of diplomacy and international affairs, even with our best friends, to shout from the housetop and throw our weight about, in order to impress our own people with the fact that we are very independent.

This relationship must also be based on recognition of the fact that if our coalition, which is now headed by the United States, breaks up, then indeed there will be a grave danger to peace and security. I suggest, therefore, that while we must be independent and speak up when it is necessary to do so, we must be sure we do nothing avoidable by our words and by our deeds to further that wrong end of disunity and division. When we do disagree with the United States we must be sure that that disagreement is not based on a narrow conception of our national interest, but is a disagreement which goes to the very basis of the coalition policy and which we maintain on the highest principles of peace and international security.