

*Supply—External Affairs*

It is encouraging to note that so far there has been no report of the sabotage of pipe lines or installations. There has not been any interference with the availability of oil for Canada. However, the cutting off of the flow of oil by ship to Britain and the United States may have disruptive effects, especially in view of the closing of the Suez canal. I imagine these difficulties can be surmounted perhaps after a period of adjustment.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Would the minister say something about the closing of the Suez canal? He mentioned it just now.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** I propose to say something about that, and perhaps I could do so right now. Several days ago the U.A.R. authorities announced they were closing the Suez canal to all ships on the grounds that Britain and the United States had intervened in the conflict on the side of Israel. These accusations, as I said a moment ago, were indignantly denied by the two governments concerned.

The closing of this principal maritime route, if continued for a long period, would seriously disrupt commercial exchanges between Asia, Europe and the Far East. The transit of oil makes up a large part of the canal traffic, although large-size tankers have since 1956 been transporting oil to Europe around the Cape of Good Hope. Some volume of Canada's oil imports passes through the Suez canal. However, Canada is not to any serious extent dependent on the use of the canal nor do we have an extensive merchant fleet. I would hope, if it is officially confirmed that the Suez canal has been closed, this stoppage of traffic will be temporary only. The U.A.R. itself relies to a large extent on the foreign exchange revenues that come from the canal.

We have been told now that Iraq, the republic of Yemen and Syria have broken off relations with Britain and the United States. Algeria, Sudan and the United Arab Republic have broken off with the United States. The significance of this action must, of course, be obvious to every hon. member. Diplomatic relations of these last three countries with Britain were severed over the question of Rhodesia. I understand a number of other Arab countries, including Lebanon, have also broken relations with the United States and Britain.

Charges have been made in connection with this action that United States aircraft have been engaged in the fight. I want to say that

[Mr. Martin (Essex East).]

the Canadian government is unreservedly satisfied there is no foundation whatever for these charges. British and United States embassies, consulates and information offices in a number of Arab countries have been burned or ransacked by mobs. This destruction of property and harassment of diplomatic officials is, of course, regrettable. Canadian missions in Arab countries, that is, in Cairo, Beirut and Tunis, have happily not been the objects of demonstrations or attacks. In those countries where we are not represented and where Canadian consular interests have been handled by British missions, alternate arrangements will be made for the protection of Canadians. I may say that Canada will do all it can to try to impress upon those Arab countries where we have embassies the importance of trying to improve the relationships of all countries with the countries of the Middle East so that the job of reconstruction and rehabilitation can go ahead.

I am wondering whether the United States, in the light of all these developments, will be prepared to repeat the offer made by President Eisenhower in 1958. After the dispatch of some 12,000 marines to Lebanon and the British dispatch of forces into Amman, the United Nations intervened to establish a peace force between Syria and Lebanon. This served to cause the withdrawal of these forces and encouraged the United States to offer vast sums of money to assist in improving the standard of living of the peoples in the Middle East, particularly in the Arab countries. This, of course, is something we have to look to as a must if we are going to remove one of the sources of friction and one of the causes of hostility in that area.

● (5:40 p.m.)

Several times during the course of questions in the past three weeks we have talked about the responsibilities of the great powers. This is a good opportunity, I think, to underline the importance of these responsibilities. In the security council of the United Nations the great powers have been given special status, and their right of veto must be weighed against the undeniable responsibility which these powers share in the solution of international problems.

When the recent trouble in the Middle East arose the dangers were generally recognized by the great powers. We were all concerned about the implications of this situation because of our concern about the possibility of nuclear war in this interdependent world of ours. The Soviet union, the United States,