

*Supply—External Affairs*

such a pact with Australia and New Zealand would in our opinion be fatal to the democratic cause in Asia, and fatal to the peace of the world. I think our United States friends should be told that very plainly by Canada.

Canada should oppose and refuse to associate itself with any southeast Asian alliance which does not include at least the Asian countries I have mentioned. I think, indeed, that was implicit in the statement of the minister this afternoon. This is apparently the view that is strongly held in the United Kingdom. On April 12 and 13 Mr. Dulles and Mr. Eden met to discuss the Indo-Chinese situation. They issued a joint statement which read in part as follows:

We are ready to take part, with the other countries principally concerned, that is France, Australia, New Zealand, Siam and the Philippines, in an examination of the possibility of establishing a collective defence, within the framework of the United Nations charter, to assure the peace, security and freedom of southeast Asia and the western Pacific.

You will notice that some Asian nations were included and some were not mentioned. On April 13 Mr. Eden placed this statement before the House of Commons. Mr. Attlee, the leader of the opposition, urged that it be recognized that "in building up the strength of the free nations of Asia against aggression, it is vital that there should be a union of Asian countries as well as those of European descent, whether in Australia, here, or in America." Mr. Attlee went on to declare:

The essential thing is that it should be a freeing of the peoples of Asia which should not in any way be misrepresented—as it may be misrepresented—as a defence of obsolete colonialism.

Therein lies the danger, that a southeast Asian pact without these new free nations would be regarded by these peoples as an attempt to inflict upon them once again an obsolete colonialism. Thus there was a debate in the British parliament and the matter was discussed by the British press and the public throughout the next few weeks. The situation was discussed, and with what result? I read quite a number of British papers, and as far as I have been able to ascertain the result was that public opinion was strongly against any declaration involving united action in southeast Asia without participation by India and the adjacent countries. I believe Mr. Churchill was impressed with public opinion, so that on April 27 he rose in the house, and in reply to a question said:

The government are not prepared to give any undertakings about United Kingdom military action in Indo-China in advance of the results of Geneva.

It is a fact, too, that Mr. Eden at Geneva has exercised, as the hon. gentleman said

this afternoon, patience, perseverance and restraint in an endeavour to bring about a cease-fire and peace by negotiation.

While this conference has been in progress France has suffered severe setbacks in Indo-China, and now finds herself in a position where she cannot win. Irrespective of what may happen in that area, her bargaining position has been effectually weakened. In the "Foreign Policy Bulletin" of May 15, 1954, Mr. William B. Dunn, a member of the United States foreign service who served from 1949 to 1953 in the troubled area, and who is regarded as a specialist on southeast Asia, points out that the Vietnamese are determined to win complete independence. He is not a communist and he has not been attacked by Senator McCarthy or any others. He was regarded, and is still regarded by the state department, as an authority on southeast Asian problems. He says this:

It means independence from France, and no other political problem seems to them to be of much importance. Virtually all Vietnamese overflow with bitter recollections of firsthand experiences under the old colonial regime. They find it impossible to believe that France is capable of any generous act. Consequently, they are not prepared to believe their country to be independent as long as there is any special political association with France or while the military forces of the French union remain in Viet Nam. The French sponsored government of Bao Dai to them is a mere continuation of the old colonial system under a new label.

We may not think that is a fair statement so far as France is concerned, but he gives it as his opinion, and I want to place it on the record because it is the opinion of a man who is regarded as an authority on the problems of southeast Asia. I may say this also seems to be the opinion of many citizens of the United States. We are told that congress has been deluged with letters protesting against United States intervention in this struggle. Many citizens of the United States remember that until very recently United States policy has been traditionally an anti-colonial policy. Indeed, many of us who had the opportunity, before and during the war, of addressing United States audiences can remember vividly the invariable question relating to the struggle of India for independence, and what I considered from time to time the very unfair references to Canada as a part of the British Empire allegedly supporting colonial oppression in India.

We believe that if France declared dissociation from colonialism in Indo-China it would be more effective in weakening the anti-colonial propaganda of Moscow and Peking, which is false propaganda but which has proven so valuable to Ho Chi Minh, than the dropping of an atomic or hydrogen bomb