

protected as vital to that vital first line position. If that is so, then the coast of China is vital to the protection of the islands, and so on until every bit of territory you could secure becomes a first line.

I believe, however, it is equally dangerous to suggest that no country in its search for security has any right to establish a line of defence outside its own borders. Where was our first line of defence in 1939? Hitler said it was not in continental Europe, that we should be out of continental Europe. It had nothing to do with us because we were across the channel. He said "Clear out; this is not your line of defence". If our line of defence must be a geographical line close to our own territory, what are the British and ourselves doing in Europe today? It is because the first line of defence of Canada, in that sense, is in Europe that our men are there. Therefore, the argument does not seem to be impressive, one way or the other, as a geographical argument. The fact is, surely that our own line of defence is attacked and our own security is jeopardized whenever a free people anywhere is the victim of aggression. In fact, our safety is endangered whenever there is any war any place. Our only safe line, therefore, is peace: Our only safe policy is to join with friendly states in maintaining that peace and preventing war by collective action.

The hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra--I am sorry he is not in his seat tonight--asked me three other questions in addition to this question about our first line being in Formosa. One of them was, is it the belief of the Canadian Government that the offshore islands, Quemoy and Matsu, should be handed over to red China in the hope of inducing the communists to stop fighting? I think I have answered that.

His second question was, does the government believe or does it not that in the Pacific communist aggression can be stopped by giving up territory? I think I have tried to answer that.

Then he added, will the minister tell us whether the Canadian Government believes that the British should give up Hong Kong? This does not seem to be a very relevant question in the context of this debate. Certainly it is not relevant to the situation of the offshore islands or indeed in Formosa. I know that in certain quarters it is being suggested that because the British are reluctant to help in the event of the invasion of the offshore islands, other people should be reluctant to help the British maintain their position in Hong Kong. The offshore islands, of course, are part of China and are incidental to a war between two Chinese governments so that is not the same thing either legally or politically as the position of Hong Kong, whatever one may think of it in other respects.

Then the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra came back to his favourite question. I was quite certain he would not make an intervention in this debate without tackling me once again with it. He asked me, will the Canadian government work for and advocate a protective grouping of the nations of the Pacific such as exist in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. I wish he were