

*Supply—External Affairs*

into two parts. The first part is how to bring the Indo-Chinese war to an end on terms which France, which has borne the heat and the burden of the day there at great sacrifice for many years now, and the associated states of Indo-China could accept. The second point, so far as the short-range problem is concerned, is to work out international arrangements with a maximum of free Asian participation to guarantee any settlement that might be reached.

But there is also the long-range problem of how to build up a collective security system for southeast Asia, again with a maximum of free Asian participation, so that new aggression may be prevented and the peace maintained. The short-range problem was of course made more difficult by the character and developments of the war and that in turn tended to complicate, colour and at times almost give an atmosphere of crisis to the second and longer range objective. Crisis diplomacy, Mr. Chairman, is at times in these days unavoidable, but it is not always the most effective agency for the solution of long-range problems. In the search for a solution to these problems one viewpoint emphasized that we should concentrate first on the immediate problem of the war, then work out arrangements to guarantee the armistice settlement and only afterwards deal with the bigger problem of collective security and the future. It was felt by those who held this view that the exigencies of the military situation, and they certainly existed, should not push those concerned into premature or ill-considered discussion of political or defence arrangements which would not have the solid foundation of general and wide support which was essential, and which would have given the communists an excuse to say that the Geneva conference had been sabotaged.

It was felt by this school of opinion that before attempting to organize security you must be sure that you know what you are going to organize, also that all the free countries of southeast Asia should at least be invited to participate in the consideration of the problem, and finally that there should be reasonable assurance of agreement and unity at home in regard to the acceptance of the commitments which might be necessary.

That was one view, one approach to this problem. The other approach, the other viewpoint, argued that recent events had shown the necessity of not only making a just peace in Indo-China but of taking steps, even while the conference was going on, to show by readiness to consider arrangements for collective action that the pattern of communist aggression in Asia could not be repeated without meeting strong and collective resistance;

that convincing evidence should be given now that any state which wanted to be free would be assisted in staying free.

It was felt by those who held this viewpoint—and there were of course shades of viewpoint between these two—that the adoption of this position and this attitude would not only make early peace in Indo-China more likely, by underlining the risks the communists would be taking if they prolonged the war, but would also act as an effective deterrent against communist aggression in the future. The United States, of course, has been reported as leaning to the latter view, and the United Kingdom to the former. Therefore alarming and often exaggerated conclusions have been drawn of Anglo-American divisions and differences. That was not unnatural in the circumstances, the circumstances being that there were at least 1,500 journalists in Geneva looking for news. Included in those 1,500 there was a small group of Canadian journalists and I should like to pay my tribute to the full, and I thought objective and careful, reports that were sent back home by that small group.

While differences, differences in emphasis and differences in approach, are I think unavoidable in a coalition of free states, especially in circumstances of this kind, it is of importance of course that they should be resolved. It is of vital importance, and I know that this is appreciated on all sides and indeed in all countries except the communist countries, that these differences should not become differences of policy and principle between our two closest friends, the United Kingdom and the United States. It would be the greatest possible tragedy if Asia were allowed to split the West. I am confident that this will not occur.

So far as the immediate problem of Indo-China is concerned, the short-range problem that I mentioned, the delegation of France put forward proposals to solve it and so did the communist delegations. The French proposal put forward by Mr. Bidault, who is playing a very difficult part in Geneva with great skill, enumerated certain points of settlement, and his points were supported by the United States, the United Kingdom and the associated states of Indo-China.

First, there should be an armistice to bring the fighting to an end, and then a political settlement based on the independence of the three states, which would be internationally supervised and guaranteed. Secondly, there should be separate consideration for the three states of Laos, Cambodia and Viet Nam. In so far as Laos and Cambodia were concerned, the Viet Minh should evacuate those countries at once. So far as Viet Nam