

United States, but as something between Canada, the United States and its friends in NATO and in United Nations. I also try to distinguish in this defence relationship with the United States, the problems which may come from what we have begun to call peripheral conflicts from those which will be posed by a major all-out war of extermination

Hon. members will recall that when I spoke some time ago in this debate I tried to make this distinction clear. So far as these peripheral wars, those smaller wars, if you wish to call them that, are concerned, Canada, both through its relationship to the United States and through its relationship to the United Nations or to NATO, might be involved in them. But Canada can hardly remain aloof from the latter. We are also concerned with those smaller conflicts because of the danger that they may spread into a larger conflict. There is no better example of that danger than the situation in and around Formosa and the coastal islands. It is possible of course, that even if trouble were at the beginning limited to that area, it might spread to this continent. If it did spread to this continent it would be very difficult for us to remain aloof from its effect. The facts of geography, apart from other things, would indicate that. Well, how can it spread? It might spread not by any all-out massive attack from some Chinese communist government on the North American continent because that would not be possible under present conditions. It might spread by a reaction on the part of the Chinese government's allies, a reaction on the part of the Soviet Union, which would result in a massive all-out attack on this continent, the Soviet Union being the only power today on the other side which is capable of that kind of reaction.

Now, if that reaction took place as a result of a local conflict in China, that would be an aggression; it would be a violation of the United Nations Charter and we would be asked to undertake the commitments which we have accepted as members of the United Nations, or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

When speaking on this aspect of the question some days ago, the hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker), said that if war broke out over Formosa or over the coastal islands that kind of chain reaction would be absolutely inevitable. I think I ought to quote him at this point because this seems to me to be of importance. Referring to the Secretary of State for External Affairs he said, as reported on page 2350 of Hansard of March 24:

"He has but to read the words of Molotov in which he stated that the situation in Asia was of equal concern to the U.S.S.R. In that case it is but fantasy to say that what might happen over there would not become an all-embracing conflict."

I did not go as far as that and indeed I do not think the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Drew) went quite as far as that in his statement, but I do admit that that kind of conflict might spread even though it was not inevitable that it would. I feel, and I am sure that hon. members on all sides of the house must feel, that if it did spread, if that did happen and there was a massive aggressive air attack on this continent, a struggle in which the very existence of the people of the