

*External Affairs*

optimism as to the results of the conference. Nevertheless, we shall do our part as Canadian representatives, I hope, to achieve a satisfactory result which may bring peace to Korea.

At the Geneva conference there will also be discussed the question of Indo-China. It was agreed on by the four foreign ministers at Berlin that this question should be discussed by representatives of France, the United Kingdom, the United States, the U.S.S.R., the Chinese people's republic and other interested states. As hon. members know, the problem of Indo-China, where bitter fighting has been going on for eight years and is going on today, has never been submitted to the United Nations for consideration, and for that reason Canada has not been as directly concerned with this matter as we were with the aggression in Korea. Nevertheless, I am sure we are all conscious of the critical significance of the struggle in Indo-China as it affects the aspirations of the people of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia in achieving and maintaining the independence accorded them by France, as it affects the security of the neighbouring countries in southeast Asia and as it affects the ability of France to make the maximum contribution to European and North Atlantic security and co-operative arrangements. And so, while we do not expect at Geneva to take any active part in discussions regarding Indo-China, we shall of course follow these talks with close interest and take advantage of any opportunity that may be afforded to us to help in bringing some satisfactory conclusion out of this particular matter.

There is another matter, Mr. Speaker, about which I think I should say a word or two. I meant to discuss this, as a matter of fact, when I was speaking in the house in January, but considerations of time did not then make it possible. I refer to President Eisenhower's proposals last autumn on atomic energy. During recent months, and indeed during recent days, a considerable amount of significant information has been made public regarding the terrible power of atomic weapons, particularly the new type of hydrogen atomic weapons which, and it is a horrible admission to have to make, have made the bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima and killed 60,000 people obsolescent. There is no need for me to try to impress on the house the fearful power of these weapons and the awesome responsibility toward all future generations, which their recent development imposes on humanity.

In the face of the dangers which these developments involve, it is vitally important

that no genuine opportunity for international co-operation in this field should be missed. In this respect the Berlin conference was disappointing and the Korean conference at Geneva may prove to be so, too. But surely we must never abandon the effort and the hope that sooner or later sanity and moderation will somehow prevail, and that man will exercise control over weapons, the use of which may destroy his little world.

While there are, as we know from long experience, many and bitter difficulties in the way of solution of this problem of international control of atomic energy, President Eisenhower's proposal does give us some hope that progress can be made. That proposal is in many respects a modest one. For that purpose, it may be easier to implement it. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that when this proposal was first mentioned in this house—the proposal refers of course to the collection of atomic stockpiles of uranium and fissionable materials under an international atomic energy agency—the Canadian government announced its unreserved support for it. The Prime Minister referred to it in the house at that time as an imaginative and constructive approach to what is perhaps the greatest problem of the day, namely, the effective control of atomic energy and its development for welfare rather than for warfare. But I think it is important that our strong support for this approach should be accompanied by a clear understanding, not only of what the proposal is but what it is not. For example, it does not of itself offer a solution for the terrible problem of the use of atomic energy for destructive purposes.

But while it is a relatively modest one, therein may, as I said, lie its virtue, or at any rate lie the possibility of its early and general acceptance. Furthermore, it could, if it were adopted, be the starting point for further progress and for reaching more important forward results. At this point it might be useful if I just said a word on the procedure being followed by the United States' government in making arrangements for discussion of this proposal by the nations principally concerned. Obviously—at least it seems obvious to me—it is of great importance that the Soviet union should participate fully in these discussions; and for that reason Mr. Dulles, the United States Secretary of State, had been holding, as the house no doubt knows, bilateral discussions with the Soviet ambassador in Washington, and during the Berlin conference with Mr. Molotov, with a view to making satisfactory arrangements for further and more general progress.

These discussions have now advanced to the point where, on March 19, the United States government presented to the Soviet