

permitted to fall a victim to communist military attack. Still others, notably the United States, refuse to consider that action by the communists against even the off-shore islands of Quemoy or Matsu should be considered merely as part of a civil war and not warranting any interference on their part.

There is still ample room, therefore, for a serious conflict of policy and even of action between the United States and its friends arising out of these different viewpoints. We have been saved from this up to the present by the considerations which I have mentioned, and in recent months by the absence of military moves against the off-shore islands or against Formosa. If those moves, however, had taken place there might have been a really serious threat to unity and co-operation inside the coalition. It is therefore important that every effort be made to work out a real understanding and a common policy in these matters, or, if this cannot be done, that each should be kept informed as precisely as possible of where the others stand. At best, the maximum of unity, and at worst, the minimum of misunderstanding should be our aim.

These random reflections on policy in the Far East merely reinforce in my own mind the absolute necessity of strengthening co-operation and unity within our Western coalition generally. This means that action by one member state which affects, directly or importantly, the other members should only be taken after collective discussion and agreement, unless a situation of extreme emergency makes this impossible. This applies to the Far East, the Middle East, and to Western Europe and the Atlantic area. It applies particularly to the more powerful states in a coalition who, because of their power and their responsibilities can affect, by their actions, the other and less powerful members in a way which is not normally the case if the situation were reversed. A breach of this cardinal principle of consultation by the United States and the United Kingdom, for instance, and such breaches have occurred, as we all know, can do untold damage. A breach by Canada or Norway is likely to receive less attention, might even go unnoticed, because its effect is likely to be less. That is one reason why smaller nations are always more virtuous than larger ones in these matters. Their international sins of omission are often too small to get headlines.

It is, however, and I apologize for repeating it, less important at the present moment to dwell on the difficulties of the past than on ways and means of avoiding them in the future. A Canadian may, I think, be pardoned for emphasizing that this is particularly true in the case of consultation and co-operation between Washington and London and Paris. It is imperative, in our dangerous and disturbed world, that the lines of contact between these three capitals be repaired and renewed and reinvigorated.