

*Supply—National Defence*

Mr. Chairman, I have just one thing to say about that. That division within the commonwealth resulting from the British action would have occurred whether or not we had voted on every occasion with the British delegation down there. We did not create the division. It certainly would have existed between the Asian members of the commonwealth and the other members whether or not we had lined up with those other members, and I think we have to be very careful when we talk about the unity of the commonwealth and co-operation within the commonwealth—and it is something we should not only talk about but should do what we can to bring about—never to forget there are three Asian members of that commonwealth. However, our efforts to bring them into closer association with the commonwealth and to keep them there surely should not mean that even within this association we have not got a very special relationship of intimacy and friendship with the old members of the commonwealth including above all our mother country in the commonwealth, the United Kingdom.

All I am trying to point out now is that our actions at the United Nations, criticize them if you like, did not bring about a division in the commonwealth. Indeed I am compelled to say that our actions and the attitude we adopted did help and are still helping to heal the divisions which are within the commonwealth at this time. If we had not taken the position we did take on these matters at the United Nations we would not have been in the position where we could have performed what I think to be a constructive role by bringing not only the members of the commonwealth closer together again, but, and this in some respects under the present circumstances is even more important, by bringing the United States, the British and the French closer together again.

No Canadian at the United Nations who has to get up and declare the policy of his government can feel anything but an agonizing regret when he finds himself on the other side of an issue from the representative of the United Kingdom. Over the years since we have had to take charge of our own foreign affairs we have had ample reason to respect and be grateful for the wisdom and experience of the United Kingdom at international conferences and in international matters, and over the years we have nearly always found ourselves in substantial agreement with the United Kingdom. At times we have been in agreement with the United Kingdom but not in agreement with the United States, but on this occasion in some of these measures before the United Nations

and indeed in respect of the original cause of this meeting of the United Nations we could not support 100 per cent the actions of the United Kingdom and France.

Believe me, Mr. Chairman, that does not mean we are weakening in any respect in our feeling of admiration, respect and affection for the mother country of the commonwealth. It was in that spirit, even when we disagreed at the United Nations, that we tried to be as helpful and constructive as possible, and to bring about a situation where disagreement would not be necessary in the future; I think, Mr. Chairman, that has happened. I am optimistic enough to believe that in so far as co-operation within the commonwealth and co-operation within the western coalition is concerned we have gone through the hardest of our experiences in the last two or three weeks, that the situation is changing and that we will come closer together again. The speech made this afternoon in the House of Commons in London by the foreign secretary of the government of the United Kingdom gives some indication, I believe, that this is true. We must all devoutly hope, and I am sure all hon. members of this house do hope, that it will be true. If there is anything any of us can do to bring about this work of restoration and reinvigoration within the commonwealth and within the western coalition all of us, I know, will be very proud indeed to do it.

The hon. member for Prince Albert said this morning when he made the interesting proposal that there should be a high level conference in Quebec to pursue this objective that Canada was in an enviable position in these matters, and that because of that position we have special privileges and special responsibilities.

I agree that we have in many respects an enviable position, but it is also a position of some responsibility. If it is enviable I venture to suggest that our actions at the United Nations in the last three weeks have not made it less enviable.

Leaving these controversial aspects of the question aside for the moment, I know I am speaking for every hon. member in the house when I say we can now look forward to the time when there will be a closer and more intimate relationship in the commonwealth, which includes three great nations of Asia, and in a western coalition which must have as its core the closest kind of co-operation and intimacy among the United States, the United Kingdom and France. That is the job for us to do from now on, and I hope we will all be able to pursue it so that we will