

[Search](#) [Help](#)[HANSARD 1803–2005](#) → [1950s](#) → [1953](#) → [October 1953](#) → [28 October 1953](#) → [Commons Sitting](#)

## EUROPEAN AFFAIRS AND TRIESTE

*HC Deb 28 October 1953 vol 518 cc2808-933*

*Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—[Mr. P. G. T. Buchan-Hepburn.]*

3.56 p.m.

Mr. Philip Noel-Baker (Derby, South) I must begin by saying how much my right hon. and hon. Friends, like all other Members, welcome the return of the Foreign Secretary to his office and to our debates, and how much we wish him all the health and strength that he requires. We regret that the first question that he should have had to handle on his return was the two-Power declaration about Trieste. It is about that declaration, the way in which it was drawn up and issued, the methods used and the failure of those methods, that I want to speak this afternoon.

I say this by way of preface. In everything that he does, whatever the individual question may happen to be, the Foreign Secretary is really dealing with one basic problem which he faces every day and hour: how Britain can help to stop another war. It is the significance of the two-Power Declaration in this broad basic problem that I want to show.

Thanks to Russia, we are facing now dangers in the world which mankind has never known before. Never has there been such a swift and terrible advance in armament technique as there has been since 1945. At present, our hope of checking aggression and stopping war lies in the defensive pacts which we have made to uphold the Charter of the United Nations. The Atlantic Pact has made greater progress than we could have hoped when we ratified it four years ago. Not only the northern countries, but also Italy, have been brought in. So have Greece and Turkey; and this year, Greece and Turkey made their treaty of mutual guarantee with Yugoslavia, founded also on the Charter of the United Nations. That treaty gave Europe a bastion it could have had in no other way, and I hope the House remembers how much Europe owes to the vision and generosity of the Greeks.

These favourable developments could not have happened if Trieste had remained a point of conflict, as it was six years ago. If the intervening period has been tided over, if these favourable developments have occurred, it has been due in no small measure to the presence of British and American troops in Trieste. We are there by virtue of an Instrument, establishing a Provisional Regime, attached to the Italian Peace Treaty, and endorsed by the Security Council of the United Nations.

When we accepted this mandate in 1947, we hoped that it was for a period of months. We hoped that a United Nations Governor would be appointed and the Free Territory set up without delay. It has lasted for six years. It has been an onerous mandate. It has cost us £2 million a year. It has locked up 5,000 of our troops. It has earned us the gibes of the Russians. But it has paid a very handsome dividend to Britain, to Europe and to the world. It has kept Trieste quiescent while the defence system of which I have spoken was growing up.

Now by their Two-Power Declaration, by their sudden unheralded publication of a unilateral decision to end our mandate, the Government have brought the Trieste question to a point of tension which it has not known since 1947. They have dealt a serious blow at the moral forces on which our defensive system rests. They have made Trieste a deadly weakness at the heart of Europe's line.

When I say that I am not speaking of the substance of the Declaration, of the territorial division which it proposed; I am speaking of the form and nature of the Declaration, the drafting, the way it was announced, and the grave mistakes of judgment and of tactics which the Government made.

Last week the Secretary of State said that in one respect what the Government had done was like what the Labour Government did when they made the Three-Power Declaration of 1948. It is true that Yugoslavia was given no prior notice on that occasion and that the Yugoslavs protested strongly, as they have done now. But there the likeness ends. The situation in 1948 was utterly unlike that of 1953. We had tried to get a strong and upright U.N. governor for Trieste, and Russia had vetoed every name. The Kremlin was still empire-building by political boring from within, and it was evident that they hoped by that system to capture Trieste, as they had already captured six separate satellite states. The seizure of Czechoslovakia had

occurred only three weeks before. At that time Yugoslavia was co-operating with us in nothing. It was still allowing Russia to use its territory for the lamentable war on Greece. The whole situation was utterly different from that of 1953.

And the Labour Government's action was wholly different from the action now taken by this Government in 1953. The tripartite Declaration of 1948 was not a unilateral decision. It was a proposal—a proposal that, since the Peace Treaty Statute for the Free Territory had proved unworkable, the Treaty, by proper legal process, should be changed. We invited Russia to negotiate a protocol—a new protocol—to change the Treaty, and we said that if the protocol could be agreed it should then be taken to the United Nations for its approval.

U.N. approval was required because in 1947 the Security Council had formally endorsed the statute of the proposed Free Territory and had agreed to fulfil the functions which the Statute laid upon it—and which in fact it still fulfils. The Commandant of A.M.G. in Trieste still sends an annual report to the Security Council. We therefore said that no changes could be made unless the United Nations had approved. Our proposal remained a proposal and no more. Russia did not agree to make the protocol, the approval of the Security Council was therefore never asked for, the Provisional Régime continued, our troops remained until today.

That was entirely different from what this Government did in the Two-Power Declaration of 8th October, 1953. It is true that the Lord President in another place called that Declaration a proposal, but that only showed the strange confusion on that and other points which there has been. The Declaration of 8th October was not a proposal; it was a decision. It was a unilateral decision which the Government intended immediately to carry out. They said: "The two Governments are no longer prepared to maintain their responsibility for the administration of Zone A. They have, therefore, decided to terminate Allied Military Government, to withdraw their troops, and to relinquish the administration of the Zone." They went on to say that the troops would be withdrawn, not after consultation, not when people had agreed, but "at the earliest practicable moment." To show that that was a final decision, that they were not proposing anything or asking anybody for approval, they began to move the wives and families of the troops away.

May I ask the Secretary of State some questions about that Declaration? First, may I ask him to explain a little further the strange conflict between the views expressed by himself and those expressed by the Lord President in another place about giving notice to the parties in advance? The Lord President was in charge of the Foreign Office until 5th October. The Declaration was issued three days later. The Secretary of State assured us that this question of timing, of when to tell the Italians and the Yugoslavs, had been given "anxious consideration," and the decision was to give them only a few hours. But the Lord President in another place said: "The Yugoslav and Italian Governments were given ... as far as I can remember, two or three days, and it may have been more."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, House of Lords, 20th October, 1953; Vol. 183, c. 1264.]" This is not a trifling matter. When our Ambassador presented the Declaration, Marshal Tito asked for 24 hours to consult his Cabinet. It was refused. That was a very grave decision and I hope the Secretary of State will say something about it this afternoon. The Marshal said it was "a shattering experience to be so treated." and that "the impossible manner" in which this vital decision was communicated was "profoundly offending to his nation." It was an obvious risk that the Marshal would so react. It might gravely imperil the reception of the two-Power plan, as no doubt it did. But the Secretary of State told us that this risk had been calculated. We were trying to "lance the abscess." We thought we could shock or stun the parties into acceptance of a fait accompli and so avoid the complications that might arise if they tried to argue with us before the thing was done. We therefore decided to give no notice at all.

Yet the Lord President said he thought we had given the parties two or three times as long as the 24 hours for which Marshal Tito asked in vain. The Foreign Secretary, no doubt with proper loyalty, told us that this mistake was "understandable." We do not understand it and unless the Foreign Secretary can clear it up, we shall conclude, with the Leader of the Opposition, that it simply shows the extraordinary confusion which there has been in the conduct of our foreign policy in recent months.

May I ask about the drafting of the Declaration? It was a decision to hand Zone A to the Italians. But it never mentioned Zone B or the Three-Power Declaration of 1948 at all. It never said, "This is partition, and that is that." A very revealing phrase was used by the "Manchester Guardian" diplomatic correspondent. He wrote: "The advantage of the Anglo-American solution is that each of the parties concerned can represent the solution as final or provisional as they feel inclined." I have too much respect for the "Manchester Guardian" to think they thought that one up themselves.

What was the result of this criminal ambiguity in the language used in the Declaration? Signor Pella and his Cabinet immediately declared that this provisional decision "did not prejudice Italy's rights to the entire territory" and that it "represented a substantial step forward to a just solution of the Trieste problem." That was evidently an interpretation of vital importance; but our Government let it pass in the silence which appeared to others to give consent.

Marshal Tito, of course, made the strongest protest and added the very natural observation that the Italian Cabinet could not possibly have said what they did say "without the Allies' permission." Again the Government made no comment on that. But 10 days later, in this House and in another place, they told us it was partition. The Lord President said that of course the Declaration was intended to be final, it was partition along the existing zonal boundary, and that all this was "inherent" in the statement that was made. But in those 10 days infinite damage had been done—illusions fostered, suspicions created, passions roused.

I am not saying now that partition on the zonal boundary was right or wrong; I am not saying that the plan might ever have been accepted as it stood. I am saying that any chance of its acceptance was destroyed by its sudden delivery as an ultimatum, and by the deliberate ambiguity of the language that was used. That was an offence against the first rule of the wise conduct of foreign affairs, which is always to say quite frankly and quite plainly exactly what you mean. [Laughter.] Well, I learned that principle from Arthur Henderson long ago, and it gave him a great position in world affairs in a short tenure of office. The drafting of this Declaration is in great measure to blame for the dangerous tension and the risk of armed conflict that exist today.

Now may I ask the Foreign Secretary a question about France? France is our closest ally. She is our closest neighbour. It was with France, with Leon Blum, that, as an act of faith, we began the Western system of defence when we signed the Treaty of Dunkirk. France has played a leading part in the negotiations about Trieste: when the statute for a Free Territory was made, when the three-Power Declaration was drawn up—the three-Power Declaration which this two-Power Declaration is now to supersede.

France is vitally concerned in all Italian questions. Italy is in far closer daily contact with her than she is with us. How could the Government have left France out of this Declaration? How could they only tell them as a fait accompli just before it saw the light of day? Of course, that caused indignation and anxiety in Paris. It placed the French in a very difficult position, and I hope the Foreign Secretary will tell us that he intends to return to full co-operation with our friends in France.

May I ask some questions about the legal aspects of the two-Power Declaration? We stand for the sanctity of treaties. We have a negotiation on the subject going on in Cairo now. We are in Trieste under the Italian Peace Treaty and, as I have said, in virtue of a decision of the United Nations. How could we make, and intend to execute, a two-Power decision to end treaty undertakings which many other nations had signed as well? The Foreign Secretary will not argue that, because Russia and others have set their treaties aside, we can do the same.

When the three-Power Declaration of 1948 was discussed in the Security Council in August of that year, the American spokesman explained that we were "urging a change in the Peace Treaty," but that meanwhile we "regarded it as binding." The Secretary of State said just the same a year ago. He will remember that when we gave the Italians a large share in the administration of Trieste in May, 1952, he said that those were simply administrative changes "which leave the basic juridical position unchanged." He said: "I cannot accept that there has been any violation of the Italian Peace Treaty." In other words, the Treaty was still in force. And he added something which reads rather strangely today: "The new arrangements are entirely without prejudice to the final solution of the problem of the future of the Free Territory as a whole." May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, what about the Treaty? Why did the Government propose simply to set it on one side and come away? How would they have cleared up the legal mess that would have resulted from its unilateral execution? Why did they throw doubt on this principle of the sanctity of treaties?

May I ask the right hon. Gentleman about what he said a week ago about the United Nations? He made some defeatist observations, as I thought them, about the Security Council. Of course we all want an immediate conference on Trieste, and we all hope it may succeed. But it may turn out that the only way to change the Treaty is through the Assembly of the United Nations. The Assembly has solved more serious and more dangerous disputes than this one. It has solved other problems arising out of the Italian Treaty—Eritrea, Somali-land, Libya—solved them with success after the Allies had failed. I hope the

right hon. Gentleman will assure us that last week he was not shutting the door on the U.N., whose help may very obviously be required.

May I now summarise the questions I have put to the Foreign Secretary by saying that, as at present advised, and pending his reply, we think the Government have handled this two-Power Declaration in an ill-considered, irresponsible and foolish way? We think their methods reduced to a minimum the chances that it would succeed, and increased the tension until there is now an actual risk of war. By their methods they gravely menaced the major British interest that is involved, the steady development of the European defence system of which I have spoken, in which our Trieste mandate has played so large a part.

Let the House consider for a moment the results of this unilateral decision to scuttle from Trieste, this unilateral decision to renounce the U.N. mandate, to leave the Italians and the Yugoslavs to argue, and, perhaps, to fight, it out. In Rome the Italian Government are in a very difficult position. Read their papers and see their difficulties over E.D.C. and other matters which they have to face. In Yugoslavia there was deep national resentment. Some observers say that the confidence of the people in the West has been irreparably undermined. In Trieste the people are anxious and afraid. "The Times" reports that responsible Italians there say that the two Allies should have maintained the status quo, that hardly anybody in the city wants our troops to leave. On the frontier between Italy and Yugoslavia the troops on each side are mounting guns, stacking ammunition, digging in. And the solution of the Trieste problem is now far harder than it was three weeks ago.

But, faced as we unhappily are with these results of what the Government did, everybody in every party must now try to help in undoing the damage that has been done. May I set out the principles on which I think the Government should proceed? The Trieste problem can only be settled, not by unilateral decisions, but by agreement between Yugoslavia and Italy and the other Powers concerned. Our troops should stay in Trieste until an agreement has been made. That is our mandate from the U.N. and we should see it through.

There should be a conference, at first a five-Power conference, which should meet with the least possible delay. Its scope should be entirely unrestricted, with nothing excluded and nothing demanded in advance. The conference should consider not only the two-Power Declaration but all the constructive proposals which both Italy and Yugoslavia have made. It should consider some of the principles on which the Statute of the proposed Free Territory was built—the de-militarisation of the two zones, freedom of transit and trade, guarantees for the rights of the minorities, with perhaps a U.N. arbitrator—the system which Lord Balfour and the League of Nations established with such remarkable success in Upper Silesia nearly 30 years ago.

Before the five-Power conference can meet, the Security Council will discuss this matter on the demand of Russia. It will do so on Tuesday next. I beg the Foreign Secretary that we should not just have another wordy wrangle with the Russians. Let the Council, in the name of the United Nations, the supreme authority concerned, call on the parties to this Trieste dispute to withdraw their armies and to cancel every preparation for the use of force which they have made. That would give the conference a better start, and it would give it, perhaps, a reasonable prospect of success.

There is another principle which the Security Council might very usefully proclaim. Under the Charter and the Atlantic Pact, no nation has a right to try to settle this Trieste question by the use, or by the threat, of force. It is our British right and our British interest, our most vital national interest, to see that that principle is upheld, to see that it is clearly comprehended and faithfully observed. The Security Council at least could do that for us with the Italians and Yugoslavs.

It is not only our vital national interest. It is the vital interest of Italy and Yugoslavia, too. Until the thought of force has been abandoned, this Trieste question can never be truly solved, and no settlement can really work unless both nations will co-operate for the common good of all. Like my right hon. Friend the Member for Bishop Auckland (Mr. Dalton), I spent some years in the First World War on the Italian front facing towards Trieste. I was with the Serbian Army at Salonica and elsewhere. As a result, I still feel a warm and genuine personal friendship for the peoples of both countries. As a result, I know at first hand, and I respect, the deep national feeling which in both countries this Trieste question has aroused.

But the fact remains, and the two nations should face it, that the people in the Territory of Trieste number less than 1 per cent. of the total population of the two nations. A policy of conflict will gravely damage the interests of that 1 per cent.; it will endanger the interests of the other 99 per cent., and it will imperil the peace of all mankind.

I hope that the House will say this today to these two nations, both our honoured friends: Europe is doomed unless it can bury the suspicions and the hatreds of the past. And Europe means Europeans, British and French and Germans, Greeks and

Bulgars, Italians and Yugoslavs. History will remember as our greatest men and nations those who make the reconciliations that are now so urgently required.

4.25 p.m.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Anthony Eden) The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, South (Mr. Noel-Baker) concluded his speech with a most eloquent appeal which I sincerely hope will be heeded by those to whom it was addressed. The earlier part of his speech was composed of more severe strictures upon Her Majesty's Government, and it is with that part that I shall try to deal in the course of the remarks which I shall address to the House.

I hope to reply to the right hon. Gentleman's questions in detail. The only point on which I may ask for a little latitude from the House is where actual discussions are still continuing. I think that the House will understand that in those circumstances none of us will want to say anything to make the position more difficult. For the rest, I shall do my best to meet the points which the right hon. Gentleman made.

As I heard the right hon. Gentleman's description of the problem and of the action which Her Majesty's Government were taking, I thought that there were two particularly dominating factors in the situation with which the right hon. Gentleman hardly dealt at all but which have been very much present in the mind of the Foreign Office all these months. I do not think that it is unfair to say that the right hon. Gentleman rather gave the impression that Trieste, after all, was not too bad at the time when we made this sudden move, that it was perhaps better than it had been for a great many years, and so on.

Unhappily that is exactly what the position was not. If it had been so, no one would have been more anxious than all of us to let matters stay as they were. As the House will recall—and many hon. Members will do so more accurately and in greater detail than I can because I was in Greece at the time—a very serious situation, to which I must refer in more detail later on, occurred in Trieste itself in July and August. It caused all the Governments concerned the deepest anxiety.

So we were faced, not, as it might appear from what the right hon. Gentleman said, with the choice between taking no action at all and events getting no worse, and making some constructive move. The choice presented to the Governments concerned was to let matters go on as they were, steadily and seriously deteriorating as they were judged to be, not only by what happened but by all the information which we could obtain, or taking some measure, drastic as I have admitted it was, to try to bring some amelioration to the situation. We have to understand that, if we are to follow at all the background in which these decisions were taken.

The second point which the right hon. Gentleman only touched upon quite lightly, and the second dominating influence, was the 1948 Declaration and I shall have to make some further reference to that in a moment. The right hon. Gentleman became almost poetic about how well the Government behaved at that time in handling the 1948 Declaration on Trieste and how badly we behaved. He said that the Government at that time wanted to negotiate with Russia and offered to negotiate. Does the right hon. Gentleman remember what they did? They published a Declaration and informed the Soviet Government at the very same time that they wished to publish a new protocol to give effect to it. There was no kind of discussion with the Russian Government at that time, and I do not think that the right hon. Gentleman's reproaches to us in this respect are entirely justified. I admit that, of course, no one pretends the circumstances were exactly similar. [Laughter.] Of course I do not, but I am going to show that they were very much closer than was suggested by the right hon. Member.

I must go back a little into the history of this business, because it is a diplomatic tangle of rather long standing and we hope, with patience and perseverance, to bring it to a settlement. We are not concerned in it alone. In all our efforts to find a solution we are working closely with the United States and with France, and I have special reason to be grateful for the part M. Bidault played during our discussions here in London and the part he has been playing ever since. But it is still true that our position and that of the United States is, in certain respects, different from that of the French, because we have forces in the Zone and the French have not. That does not mean that in this issue we would not want, and have not had—as I can assure the right hon. Member we have had—the closest possible contact with the French Government.

For a great many years this City of Trieste has been a bone of contention, first between Italy and the Hapsburg Empire, and, more lately, between Italy and Yugoslavia. It is what I suppose my right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Kelvingrove (Lieut.-Colonel Elliot) would call "border country" between Latin and Slav. No one would deny that for the right hon. Gentleman who was then Foreign Secretary it was a very difficult problem for the peacemaker, but the idea was that the Italian

Treaty would determine this frontier and meanwhile Allied Forces would occupy Zone A and Yugoslav Forces Zone B. In February, 1947, the late Government signed the Peace Treaty, but still there was no frontier at all in the Trieste area. They agreed to set up this independent sovereign unit to be known as the Free Territory of Trieste, comprising the present Zones A and B, independent both of Italy and of Yugoslavia, with a governor, who was to be approved by the Security Council. Our forces were to go very soon after the governor took office.

If all our plans had gone through that would have provided the solution but, unfortunately, things began to go wrong and, after lengthy debates in the Security Council, there was failure to agree on the appointment of a governor; in other words, on the step necessary to bring about the Peace Treaty solution. Meanwhile, relations had steadily deteriorated between the Soviets and their satellites, on the one hand, and the free countries of the West, on the other; and the independent Free Territory of Trieste—I think this is the blunt truth—became one of the earliest victims of the cold war.

I am not criticising, but merely asking the House to note, that it was in those circumstances that the Allies made their tripartite Declaration of March, 1948, and that Declaration advocated the award of the whole of both territories, Zones A and B, to Italy. It has been suggested that in some way what the Government did then—the right hon. Member rather hinted it—was a less operative step—I think those were the words of the right hon. Member for Lewisham, South (Mr. H. Morrison)—than the decision we reached on 8th October. Of course it was less operative because it recommended the return of territory over which we had absolutely no control at all. Whatever one calls it, whatever name one attaches to it—the right hon. Member for Derby, South was careful this afternoon to call it a proposal—the fact remains that that Declaration has had a dominant influence in the whole course of discussions ever since, just as much as if it had been named by any other catalogue or description which the House might like to apply to it.

I must say a word about how that Declaration was handled, in view of the criticisms we have had. It was made in a tripartite statement by the three Governments. It was made when the Security Council was still actively trying to apply the Peace Treaty solution. No advance notice was given to the Security Council, none was given to Yugoslavia, but the Italian Government were consulted in advance. The Soviet Government and the Yugoslav Government were informed simultaneously with publication. As I said just now, the Soviet Government were asked to agree to a protocol. I must draw the attention of the House to the terms in which Mr. Bevin spoke of the Declaration. This is what he said: "The history of recent months—" This is the point about which the hon. Member for Nelson and Colne (Mr. S. Silverman) asked me the other day—"has shown that the Peace Treaty provisions for setting up Trieste as a Free Territory have been made unworkable;"

*Mr. Sydney Silverman (Nelson and Colne)* What date was that?

*Mr. Eden* It was in 1948, in announcing the Declaration of 20th March, I think. I can give the hon. Member the exact date in a moment. It was the Monday after the Declaration was announced, at the weekend. Mr. Bevin was speaking on the Monday following. He said: "The history of recent months has shown that the Peace Treaty provisions for setting up Trieste as a Free Territory have been made unworkable; the three Governments have now become convinced that the only satisfactory solution from both the economic and political standpoint is the reversion of the Territory to Italian sovereignty." I cannot imagine anything much more definite than that. "Having reached this conclusion, the three Governments thought it best to say so." Later Mr. Bevin continued: "We cannot get agreement on the setting up of the Free Territory. Therefore, we came to the conclusion ... to try to break the deadlock by this proposal"—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 24th March, 1948; Vol. 448, c. 2998–9.] There is not such a very great difference in purpose in what we have been trying to do at this time. [Interruption.] I do not run away from it, I have used that word myself. Last week, during my statement, I used a phrase to which the Leader of the Opposition took some exception. I talked about "lancing the abscess." My hon. Friend the Member for Buckinghamshire, South (Mr. R. Bell), who is a more diligent reader of past issues of "The Times" newspaper than I am, looked up a leader in an issue of 27th March, immediately after the Declaration. It is interesting to note that the leading article opens with the sentence: "The Free Territory of Trieste is an abscess on the map of Europe that is getting worse and has sooner or later to be lanced." The truth is that in the years that have followed since this admirable forecast it has become increasingly evident—this is what we have to face—that in practice there is no possibility of giving effect either to the Peace Treaty solution, unhappily, or to that advocated by the Declaration of 1948. We and America and France together have tried persistently I can assure this House, to promote agreement between Italy and Yugoslavia.

We knew and the whole House knows that there were areas in Zone A where Slovenes predominated and in Zone B where Italians were in the majority. We did not see why agreement could not be reached on a so-called ethnic line, leaving the

smallest possible number of Italians under Slav rule and the smallest number of Slovenes in Italy. We made any number of proposals but none proved acceptable to both sides. Nationalist feeling was too strong to allow of a compromise. Every possible permutation and combination, ethnical, geographical and political, has been tried at one time or another. I do not think any other international question in which British interests are not directly involved has taken up more of my time and attention than this question of Trieste.

Now I come to another element in this situation, to which the right hon. Member did not refer and to which so little attention has been paid either in this House or in the country, but which I think we cannot afford to ignore. Ever since 1945—I do not think there is any dispute about this—Yugoslavia has been occupying Zone B. And gradually, stage by stage, it has been increasingly making the administration there conform to the Yugoslav system of government. As that is so, surely it is hardly surprising that Italy, which was given these assurances in the 1948 Declaration, should in turn be asking for a greater share in the administration of Zone A which is predominantly Italian in character.

It was in an attempt to meet this that we made the arrangements, to which the right hon. Gentleman referred, in the summer of last year under which some of the functions of government were transferred. But the main problem was still unsolved. I had had discussions with the Italians. So when I visited Belgrade a year ago I determined to do all I could to explore with the Yugoslav Government a basis for agreement, and from these exchanges I concluded that a settlement along the zonal boundary—though by no means ideal—was the only practicable one in all the circumstances.

After the conversations, though they continued for some months with the Governments concerned, we still could not get agreement. This state of affairs persisted all through the summer until in the latter days of August it took this different and much more dangerous turn, and then the situation flared up in a manner which gave Her Majesty's Government and the United States Government cause for real anxiety. All this, of course, was merely symptomatic of the violent feelings that Trieste arouses in Italy and Yugoslavia, and it is because of that that we and our American friends consulted together about the middle of September.

It was then agreed between us that urgent and drastic action was necessary to deal with the situation which was becoming increasingly dangerous. The course we adopted was dictated by our belief that the only practicable solution was division along the zonal boundary, and I was glad to see that, much as the right hon. Gentleman criticised the method, he did not criticise the possibility of that proving the final solution.

We expected that our action would lead to a final solution and we made this clear—I ask the right hon. Gentleman to note in reply to his question—in our communications to the Italian and Yugoslav Governments. The right hon. Gentleman says our communiqué was badly drafted. It certainly was not easy to draft and what we said in the concluding sentence of the paragraph which deals with this matter was this: "The two Governments expect that the measures being taken will lead to a final peaceful solution." I should have thought—[HON. MEMBERS: "Will lead to."] Those words were chosen as expressing our hope and wish and policy.

Here I come to the crux of the criticism so far as this debate is concerned. As I have said, the right hon. Gentleman did not complain so much about the merits of the solution put forward, but about the manner in which we acted. I shall try to explain why we adopted this method. We had concluded from our previous contacts that there was no chance of getting our solution, or any solution, accepted in advance by negotiation without vigorous intervention on our part. I am quite sure that judgment was correct. This being so, we thought there was a better chance that both sides would acquiesce if we announced our decision to both simultaneously and without prior consultation with either.

Admittedly there was risk in the action we took, but despite all the criticism, I am sure we had no choice but to take it, or to take no action. We foresaw protests and criticism. We foresaw violent reaction from both sides. What we did not foresee, and had not been led to expect, was the threat of military force, and there can be, I submit to the House, no justification for such threats.

I have been asked why did we not consult, for instance, the other signatories of the Peace Treaty and why we did not put the matter at once into the hands of the Security Council? The signatories of the Treaty include the Soviet Union, White Russia, the Ukraine, Czechoslovakia and Poland. If we were right in thinking we were dealing with a rapidly deteriorating situation, as I have described it, we could not have expected to get very far if we had to start by consulting all of them. As to approaching

the Security Council in advance of our action, Mr. Bevin's words in 1948 are still more true today, and it is now four years since the Council debated this issue. But when the Council——

Mr. John Paton (Norwich, North) I thank the right hon. Gentleman for giving way. He has used the phrase, "rapidly deteriorating situation" on a number of occasions. Would he be good enough to describe briefly to the House what that deterioration was?

Mr. Eden If the hon. Gentleman will look up the files of the national papers, as I have done, and read them through carefully, not only the papers of this country but of Italy, Yugoslavia and France, in August of this year, he will see for himself what occurred. What actually happened was that there were first reports of a statement in the Yugoslav papers which appeared to indicate some sudden move in respect of Trieste. How it came about I do not know. That created an immediate reaction on the Italian side and the situation got rapidly worse. There were troop movements——

Mr. John Hynd (Sheffield, Attercliffe) Why did not the right hon. Gentleman expect trouble? He has said he did not expect trouble.

Mr. Eden I have made quite plain to the right hon. Gentleman in the earlier passages of my speech the conclusion which I reached from the contacts I have had, and I stand by what I said. I wish to deal with the point made by the right hon. Gentleman. When the Council debates Trieste as it shortly will, we shall welcome the opportunity to explain our action to the United Nations.

Now, if I may say something about what is the most important of all, the immediate future, as I told the House last week, we are trying to find means of bringing the parties into agreement. We think that the most helpful approach is to try to bring them to a conference in which we, and I am sure the United States and the French Government, would be ready to participate. There may be other ways. We are considering them all with our French and American friends. We are certainly not prepared to withdraw from the statement of 8th October. But the arrangements for the handing over of the administration and the withdrawal of troops are complicated, and must inevitably take a certain amount of time. A conference could well take place meanwhile.

Last week I invoked the overriding need for unity between nations who should be good neighbours. After all, others, as the right hon. Gentleman indicated, have set an excellent example in this respect in recent years. Greece and Turkey, for instance, both of them linked to Italy and Yugoslavia, have shown Europe how the feuds of centuries can be composed. It does not seem to us unreasonable to ask the countries most concerned in this dispute to approach their differences in a like spirit. If they will do so we have no doubt that those differences can be resolved.

We want a solution of this Trieste problem within the next few months, because we know that until we do so we can make no effective security arrangements at this vital point in Western defence. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to think all that was working out well. But that is not so, because the good work done between Greece, Yugoslavia and Turkey, the improving relations between Greece and Italy and Turkey and Italy, cannot find their full meaning unless Italy and Yugoslavia come to a real understanding. I cannot believe that this cannot be achieved.

There is a wider consideration which affects us all. Disputes of this kind between nations which have a common interest to remain united gravely weaken the whole position of Europe. There is a danger that, as we try to deal with the complexity of these individual problems, we may lose some of the impetus towards general unity which has carried us forward and strengthened us in recent years. In the action which we have taken, the Government, after careful thought and in agreement with the Government of the United States, believe that we can yet achieve a solution of this problem. It is to that that all our efforts and all our strength will be devoted now and henceforth, and we believe that we can succeed.

4.51 p.m.

Mr. Clement Davies (Montgomery) With the last part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech I am sure everyone will be in a certain amount of agreement. The desire of everybody is to see a solution of the problem. What will worry many is how the right hon. Gentleman justifies the action which has been taken as a measure rightly taken to secure an immediate solution. The right hon. Gentleman pointed out that the situation was deteriorating so badly that anything might happen between the two nations with whom all of us are most anxious to remain friendly. Yet, with that deteriorating situation, he says that by the

Governments' action in going out and leaving the matter so that the two nations will be opposing one another, there was no danger whatever of either of them resorting to arms. That is a suggestion that I cannot possibly accept.

There they were acting as a buffer state, acting as police, between two countries with a steadily deteriorating situation, and they say, "The proper solution is that we should depart and let these two face one another." That is not a method to bring about an immediate solution such as we all desire. I am afraid that this great port, the land which surrounds it, and the people who occupy it and the immediate neighbourhood, have too often been used as pawns in the hands of great nations without any regard to their desire, their future or the part they played in the past.

Trieste is a great port. It has been the mode of ingress into Central Europe and the mode of egress from Central Europe into the Mediterranean for hundreds of years. It is one of the main ports of Europe. For 500 years it was under the rule of Austro-Hungary, when it served not only the needs of Austro-Hungary but those of Southern Germany and Switzerland. For about 200 years it was a free port, until about 1880, when it became something of a closed port for the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Then in 1915 it was used as a bribe to bring the Italian Government over to our side as an ally. A line was drawn delineating what should be future Italian territory without very much regard to the ethnological position of the inhabitants or their rights or desires. It was so badly drawn that when we came to the Treaty of Paris it had to be revised because President Wilson, who was certainly a very fair and just man, would not agree to the secret treaty that we made in London in 1915. The border was altered at that time, and so it remained under Italian domination until 1944.

In 1947 it was decided that a new Treaty should be made, and 21 nations agreed that the right thing to do was not to hand the place over either to Yugoslavia or to Italy. It was said that it served an area far wider; that it still was the most convenient port for Central Europe; that it was not the most convenient port for Northern Italy—Venice is that; and that it still ought to be supplying the needs of what had become Yugoslavia.

The new agreement then made was that it should be a free international port governed by its own people with a governor chosen by the United Nations. That was the fundamental idea. Unfortunately, there was then disagreement about who should be appointed governor. In 1948, within two years of the agreement to which we were a party having been made that this was a true solution in the interest of these people, in the interests of the hinterland and of Central Europe, the Government of the United Kingdom again changed their mind. One is tempted to think we did so for political reasons.

There was at that time a critical election taking place in Italy, and thereupon our Government and the Governments of the United States and France decided that they would now change their mind. There is a difference between what was done by the late Government and what has been done by the present Government. The present Government have done a definite act, or announced that they were about to do a definite act. What the other Government did was to say, "We have changed our mind and we are now asking that this matter be reconsidered by the other countries." I think that was on 20th March, and on 9th April, 1948, they sent a Note to Russia asking for the attendance of Russia at the preliminary conference, which was to be attended by the rest of the 21 nations, to decide what action should be taken. There was no unilateral action. A proposal for action could only be agreed to by the whole 21. That is a vital difference.

Because of disagreement whether or not that preliminary conference could be held, we come to the present situation. The right hon. Gentleman says that the situation is deteriorating. If that is true, before whom ought that situation to be placed for decision? Surely, it should be before the United Nations. We have no right, nor has the United States. We are trespassers unless we are there by the direct order of the United Nations, undertaking a direct duty to them. That is our only reason to be there. Otherwise, we have no right whatever to be there.

This is something we have undertaken which we could not possibly change without warning the people to whom we have given the undertaking. Yet, instead of putting it before the United Nations, instead of consulting the remainder of the 21, we suddenly make this announcement. I really do not follow the right hon. Gentleman when he says that that was the way in which he thought peace could be brought about. There we were, situated between the two nations, friendly nations so far as we are concerned, but both quarrelling as to their rights there. We were the buffer police standing in between, and then suddenly, without warning to anyone, we made up our minds that we had better go. The right hon. Gentleman says, "I thought that if we did that there would be no movement of troops." Why? He said that there was movement of troops and danger of movement of troops before he ever did that. I should have thought that the mere taking of that step would have increased the danger, and it is to that that I so strongly object.

There is not one of us who does not sincerely hope that out of this danger we may now, at last, bring about agreement. We are anxious that there should be agreement, but it cannot be as the result of unilateral action. Certainly, on our part, unilateral action should be the last thing that we should ever embark upon. We believe, or should believe, in the rule of law. We have condemned other countries for taking unilateral action. Above everybody, we should respect treaties. Yet, here was a treaty to which we put our signatures in 1947, and we are nevertheless now taking unilateral action, in conjunction with the United States, who ought also to be the last to break the rule of law.

I hope that the nations will come together and regard this, as "The Times" very rightly described it in 1948, as a dangerous abscess, and that we shall remove it, which can only be done by consent, by bringing in all the other people and then abiding by whatever is agreed, nobody taking any individual action on his own.

*5.2. p.m.*

Mr. Kenneth Robinson (St. Pancras, North) The whole House had some sympathy with the right hon. Gentleman in tracing the failure of this policy on Trieste and in trying to explain away a blunder for which he had no personal responsibility.

Mr. Eden I take full responsibility, and Her Majesty's Government take full responsibility, for everything that has been done.

Mr. Robinson Certainly. We all realise that the right hon. Gentleman's responsibility is complete in a nominal sense, but I can hardly believe that the negotiations which led to the decision were his doing.

This is not a simple problem, and nobody has ever suggested that it is. It has never been easy to reconcile the conflicting claims in Trieste. I do not think that any of us can envisage a solution which would be entirely satisfactory to all sides to the dispute, to the Yugoslavs, to the Italians or to the people of Trieste themselves. We know that the ethnic boundaries are inextricable and we know that national considerations of prestige are involved and bedevil the whole problem. The people of Trieste themselves want one solution or the other according to their nationalities, but I believe that, collectively, and above all, they want a final solution which will take them out of the battleground of nationalist feelings and politics.

They also want a solution which will give them some economic security, and that leads to the economic aspect of this problem, which is usually overlaid by the political aspect. Trieste has been enjoying a wholly artificial level of prosperity over the last few years, a prosperity based partly on the existence of British and American occupation forces in the Zone and partly on the action of the Americans in deliberately routeing every conceivable ton of Marshall Aid to Central Europe through Trieste.

Trieste is the natural port for that part of Central Europe, for Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and I think it is probably more likely in future to discharge the functions of the port for this part of Europe if it is a free port. We should remind ourselves that neither Italy nor Yugoslavia have any national economic need for Trieste as a port. If Trieste were Italian, any use which could be made of Trieste for Italian imports and exports would only be at the expense of Venice. And as for Yugoslavia, she has developed the port of Rijeka, which includes what used to be Fiume, and presumably that is capable of dealing with most of Yugoslavia's needs.

Everybody agrees that the time has come to find a permanent solution to the problem. It is long overdue, and eight years is too long for British and American troops to have been in Trieste. Every effort that has been made to solve the problem has been bedevilled by the tripartite Declaration of March, 1948. That was, in my view, an extremely unwise action, and it is perhaps kindest to regard it as a rather wild diplomatic shot in the cold war which was then just beginning. If it threw to the wolves any legitimate claims of Yugoslavia's, nobody worried very much at that time, because Yugoslavia was on the wrong side of the Iron Curtain. The trouble was that a mere three months later Yugoslavia came over from the wrong side of the Iron Curtain to our side, and that completely changed the whole picture.

We have been offering our services as honest brokers during the last three or four years to try to find a settlement, but the important thing is that we have never rescinded the 1948 Declaration. It is perhaps natural that during these years Yugoslavia appears to have been more willing than Italy to negotiate; Yugoslavia could hardly get anything less than the 1948 Declaration promised, and Italy could not possibly get more.

It must also be said that for Italy the question of Trieste has long been an invaluable smoke-screen for the Italian Government. Whenever things got out of hand on the home front, it was always possible to divert attention in the direction of Trieste.

Ministers could always buy a little breathing space by a chauvinistic speech about Trieste. Signor de Gasperi set the fashion. Signor Pella was very quick to follow it; he had hardly been in office a week before the latest crisis about Trieste blew up or was manufactured out of a fairly ordinary speech by Marshal Tito. As the right hon. Gentleman has told us, it was following that that the acting Foreign Secretary took counsel with the State Department and decided to cut the Gordian knot and settle the matter once and for all. "Yugoslavia is in occupation of Zone B. Will not Italy settle for Zone A?" That was the thought. It all looked very simple, and perhaps to the uninitiated it looked quite fair, but it overlooked the fact that Zone A has three times the population of Zone B and that the Slovene minority in Zone A is larger than the total population in Zone B.

The right hon. Gentleman told us that this was intended as a final solution and that he hoped it was a solution which would be accepted by both sides, if under protest. I presume he means that the Government thought they had reason to believe that Marshal Tito would not go to war over Trieste. Assuming that it was necessary to get a final solution, and a solution along the zonal frontiers, why did we not inform both sides that on a certain date, say three months' hence, we intended to remove our troops and that, in the meantime, both sides would be required to get round the table and negotiate an agreed settlement?

I believe that, given a definite time limit of that nature, agreement could very probably have been reached, and, certainly, it was worth trying. It is even conceivable that Yugoslavia might have agreed to some such settlement as that envisaged by the Government, with perhaps minor frontier alterations. But a settlement freely negotiated is a very different thing from a settlement imposed from outside by other countries. I do not think that any nation, least of all a proud and comparatively young nation like Yugoslavia, could possibly have acquiesced in what she regards, rightly or wrongly, as a sacrifice of her national interests and prestige.

Could anybody have been really surprised at the reaction in Belgrade—the reaction to a declaration made without any consultation in advance and without any notice beyond an hour or two of warning, and, above all, without any rescinding of the tripartite Agreement? If there was surprise at the Foreign Office, I think there was surprise in few other places, and I think it was an example of the extraordinary handling of this affair that when the acting Foreign Secretary came to the House of Lords a week or two afterwards he told the House of Lords there was, in fact, several days' notice given to Yugoslavia. I still find it extremely difficult to tie up that statement with the right hon. Gentleman's assurance that this matter was fully and carefully considered.

I certainly do not wish to condone the bellicose remarks and the threats of war made by Marshal Tito in the heat of the moment, but it is easy to understand his attitude. It is quite clear that he regarded this latest declaration of 8th October, coupled with the tripartite Declaration of March, 1948, and still operative, so far as he knew, as simply a gift of Zone A to Italy and an invitation to Italy to move into Zone B at some future date. Let us make no mistake about it. A Press statement issued by the Italian Embassy this week makes it quite clear that Italy does not renounce her claim to Zone B.

Is it to be wondered that Marshal Tito should recall the sufferings of his country under Italian occupation when she was fighting as our ally during the war? Is it to be wondered that he believed that his country's interests had been sacrificed by his allies of those days in favour of an ex-enemy? I do not say that his misgivings were justified, or that he correctly interpreted what the Government's intentions were, but I say that it is essential that his feelings should be recognised and understood. It is folly that they were not anticipated.

Why did not the right hon. Gentleman offer another chance, even a last chance, to get an agreed settlement? Why was it necessary to adopt this stupid and clumsy expedient of imposing a settlement without consultation and without warning? The trouble is, of course, that this blunder has had repercussions far beyond the mere question of Trieste. It has affected our whole relationship with Yugoslavia. On the only other occasion on which I ventured to address the House in a foreign affairs debate, about two years ago, I stressed the desirability of maintaining and strengthening the friendship between Yugoslavia and this country which had been built up under a Labour Government.

I may be wrong, but, in his winding-up speech, the right hon. Gentleman did not seem as keen about this as I was. I have watched with some pleasure for the last couple of years the right hon. Gentleman's steady conversion, and I think his visit to Belgrade a year ago and Marshal Tito's return visit to this country did enormous good. Now, in a single stroke, the whole of that goodwill is cast away.

I am not referring only to the anti-British demonstration in Belgrade. I should like to quote to the House a few lines from a despatch in last Sunday's "Observer," from their correspondent in Belgrade: "Yugoslav confidence in the West has been shaken

to its foundations and Yugoslav-Western relations have been thrown back into the melting-pot." "The Yugoslavs are a proud and prickly people. More even than by the substance of the decision of October 8, they have been offended by the manner in which it was communicated to them, without any consultation or preparation." "The parallel with the high-handed and brutal Russian behaviour which led to the break with Moscow, in 1948, is too striking to be overlooked by the man in the street." We have got to build up afresh, as it is still vitally important that this country and Yugoslavia should have the closest possible relations.

There is, of course, the other aspect of this declaration which was dealt with by my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, South (Mr. Noel-Baker), in his opening remarks. It is, of course, a breach of the Italian Peace Treaty, but Article 21 has been ignored for so long that the latest breach seems to be taken almost for granted. It was not, however, taken for granted by the Soviet Union, and another thing that the Government have done is that they have presented Mr. Vyshinsky with a superb platform on the United Nations Security Council, whereby he can pose, not only as one who respects the sanctity of treaties, but also as the friend of Yugoslavia in a friendless world.

I cannot imagine any other single diplomatic act which could have presented Mr. Vyshinsky with such an opportunity, and he has made good use of it. Was it not to be expected that, if we troubled the waters in this way, the Soviet Union would find it convenient to fish in them? Fortunately, there is no sign that Yugoslavia is likely to succumb to these blandishments, for I think that their experience of this particular embrace is too recent and too painful for that.

Finally, we have to ask ourselves "What next?" I should like to support very strongly the proposal put forward by my right hon. Friend for a conference, which I see also has the support of Mr. Foster Dulles and now of the Foreign Secretary. Why should it be a five-Power conference? There is, possibly, a case for a four-Power conference because there are only British and American troops in Zone A. But if we are going beyond that, why not a six-Power conference, to include the Soviet Union?

If we are sincere in our desire to bring the Soviet Union back into the councils of the nations, what better opportunity could there be to bring them, as a major signatory of the Italian Peace Treaty, into this proposed conference? I know that it might make matters even more difficult, but I think the risk would be worth taking. We have often said that if we ever did get any alleviation of the tension between East and West, it would start with something small. The right hon. Gentleman prefers the Austrian or German problem as a start, but here is an immediate opportunity on which we could invite the Soviet Union to take part.

Viscount Hinchingbrooke (Dorset, South) Would the hon. Gentleman tell the House whether he thinks that the membership of the forthcoming conference should be just those Governments which were signatories to the Peace Treaty?

Mr. Robinson I do not think we want an enormous conference, but I do think that, as one of the main signatories of the Treaty and also as the Power which brought up the matter at the Security Council, there is a good case for inviting the Soviet Union. I think it would be wise to do so.

We all hope that there will emerge from this conference a final solution. It is quite clear now that the last final solution was not final. We hope that this conference will take place, we wish it well and we hope that this problem of Trieste will be settled once and for all. We cannot forget, and we are not very likely to forget, this latest chapter in the catastrophic handling of foreign relations by the present Government, in which they have apparently recklessly thrown away the friendship of one of our most valuable allies.

5.20 p.m.

Mr. Christopher Hollis (Devizes) Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite have taken the opportunity of this debate to inquire into the Government's handling of this situation and no one can take exception to that. The Foreign Secretary himself would be the last person to complain, and, in the same way, no hon. or right hon. Member opposite could fairly take exception if my right hon. Friend or any other of my hon. Friends on this side of the House or, indeed, the hon. Member for St. Pancras North (Mr. K. Robinson) on the other side of the House, take the opportunity to ask what degree of responsibility for the present trouble arises from the 1948 Declaration?

But my concern in the very few remarks with which I shall trouble the House is not so much to ask how we have got into this trouble as to ask, how can we get out of it? Although it may be very necessary to have an inquest, we are not quite dead yet,

and I do not want to spend too much time on a pre-mortem investigation. It is more important that we should see how we can remain alive.

I entirely agree with the general observations of the hon. Member for St. Pancras, North and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Montgomery (Mr. C. Davies) about the essentially international nature of Trieste. That is a profoundly important truth which should be generally understood, and therefore, it was a most reasonable ambition by those who drafted the Peace Treaty to try to give Trieste an international status. It certainly still remains true that, whoever may eventually be found to be its possessor, they will get very little good of it unless they are willing to treat it in an international rather than a national way.

I agree with the remark that has already been made, that it is not a port of Yugoslavia or of Italy but a port of Central Europe. But however desirable an international solution may be in theory, I think we have to face the fact, as my right hon. Friend said, that it is clearly not practical politics to get such a solution as an immediate solution of the problem into which we have drifted. It is rather to this question of the steps to be taken in the immediate future that I want to address myself.

I recently returned from Italy, and I have come back with three very definite impressions. I may be wrong in those impressions—I am often wrong—but they are what struck me, and I feel fairly confident that I am not far out. I should like to put them before the House if I may.

The first impression is that if such action were to be taken by the Western Governments as to give the impression that we are not merely going to withdraw our troops from Trieste, but that we were going to disinterest ourselves in the problem for the future, then there can be very little doubt that Marshal Tito would march into Zone A. Whether he would march into Trieste itself or be content to occupy the country districts where the Slovenes are in the majority; whether the Italians would react and seek to invade Yugoslav territory elsewhere; whether that would develop into a full-scale Yugoslav-Italian war; and whether that would develop into a larger war still is as it may be. Such action on our part would certainly lead to consequences that would be enormously critical and which we all wish to avoid. That is my first impression.

The second one is that we must look at the matter from the Italian point of view. It is no business of ours to pass judgment on the political situation in Italy or in any other foreign country. Nevertheless, it is right that we should appreciate what are the facts of the political situation. Signor Pella, as we know, is a very able and honourable statesman, but he is not in a very strong domestic political position. It was by no means easy for him to accept the declaration of 8th October, even in the sense in which he accepted it. Signor de Castro, the Italian representative in Trieste, was very strongly of opinion that Signor Pella should not accept it, and it was with very great difficulty that Signor Pella was able to induce him not to resign his office. If he had done so, there would have been a domestic Italian situation in which it would have been very difficult for Signor Pella's Government to survive.

It is very strongly my impression that if, as a result of what appeared to be the Yugoslav Government's pressure, the Western Governments were inclined to renege on their present offer of 8th October to the Italian Government—and I was very glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman give the assurance that they have no intention of doing so—then I think there may be very little doubt that Signor Pella's Government would fall from office, and there would come into power in Italy a Government which would not ratify E.D.C. and would seek to take the Italians out of N.A.T.O. altogether.

We have to recognise the constitution of the Italian Chamber with a very strong Left-wing group bitterly opposed to the association of Italy with N.A.T.O. If, on the top of that, a temporary alliance were formed with some rabid nationalists from the Right, there would clearly be a political situation in which Italy could not pursue its present foreign policy. I think that is a factor. I am not passing any judgment on Italian politicians. I am merely stating the statistics that we have to face.

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, South (Mr. Noel-Baker) put forward his constructive suggestion as to how the problem should be dealt with. He suggested that it would be desirable, in spite of the 8th October Declaration, for the allied troops to remain in Trieste, and that a five-Power conference should meet to try to settle the differences that have arisen. The first obvious difficulty about that is that there does not seem to be any possibility of the Italians going into a conference on such conditions. Signor Pella has made it clear that he will not enter any conference unless he is on equal terms with the Yugoslavs; that is to say, that both sides must withdraw their troops out of both Zones, or that both sides must have troops in both Zones or at least be in command of each Zone.

I do not see how there would be any possibility of getting a five-Power conference under those circumstances, and, indeed, the attempt to pursue the policy which the right hon. Member for Derby, South advocated with complete sincerity would be to create a political crisis in Italy which would make the situation a great deal more difficult than it is.

Nor do I think the suggestion which has just been put forward by the hon. Member for St. Pancras, North, to turn the five-Power conference into a six-Power conference would be any help. Quite apart from anything else, I am not sure whether Marshal Tito would find the proposal made more attractive by having the five-Power conference turned into a six-Power conference. Surely, what we want is for the conference to agree on something, and to revise its conditions so as to make agreement less likely, as even the hon. Member himself admits, does not seem to me to be a very constructive or helpful suggestion.

There are these two dangers, and, with them on the one side and on the other, the question is, what ought we to do? As far as the immediate future is concerned, I must confess that I have formed a very definite conclusion and it is this: if and when we take our troops away from Trieste it is essential that we make it clear that even after our withdrawal we should announce that we would consider an invasion of Zone A from Zone B or of Zone B from Zone A—the former happens to be the more probable—to be an act of aggression. I think that if that were made clear there would be extremely little danger that Marshal Tito would move into Zone A before the matter was settled.

The present difficulty, however, is that there has not been forthcoming, either from Her Majesty's Government or from the American Government, any very clear statement of what we would do if, in point of fact, and contrary to our desires, there were a move from Zone B into Zone A. It is not sufficient to say that we would merely refer the matter to the United Nations or to the Security Council, because, unfortunately, the legal position is not nearly clear enough to be quite certain what would be the verdict. It would not require a lawyer of Mr. Vyshinsky's ability to spend weeks arguing whether the frontier between the Zones was, properly speaking, an international frontier within the terms of the United Nations Charter.

Therefore, it is essential for the moment that the position of the Western Powers on that point should be made abundantly clear. Far from that being a contribution to war, I think it would be the way to make quite certain that there would not be war. I do not say that that should be the sole policy pursued by the Western Powers. Having done that, then, by all means, let us go forward and have the five-Power conference as soon as possible, and settle, as soon as there is an atmosphere in which they can be settled, the problems of port facilities and the exchange of population.

We all know the history of how the ancient enmity between Greece and Turkey was ended by an agreement between those two countries for exchange of populations brought about by the statesman Kemal Ataturk. I think that might happen again between Italy and Yugoslavia. To hold the immediate situation, I think it essential that we should take the risk of making clear what would be our resistance to aggression, if risk there be.

There is, on the contrary, a very grave and dangerous situation if our idea is to intervene, but we think it more tactful not to say so. I think there can be no harm in firmly stating our intention, and I hope that as soon as possible the position of the Western Powers on that point will be made clear. I deliberately say, "as soon as possible," because I fully understand that it will probably not be possible for the Under-Secretary of State, when he winds up, to make a statement of that nature in this debate for the very obvious reason that we must go hand in hand with the Americans on this point, and nothing would be gained if we added to the existing confusion the further confusion of an apparent disparity between British and American policy.

If the report of Mr. Dulles's Press conference, as reported in "The Times" this morning, is an accurate one, then it is a disturbing fact that there are points on which Mr. Dulles has not yet quite made up his mind. He has not quite made up his mind whether the 1948 Declaration is superseded or not. I think that is very serious, but it is essential that when we speak we speak in unison with him.

It is essential that a joint Anglo-American declaration should be made as soon as possible, defining what would be our action if any offensive action was taken by either of the two parties against the other. If we leave unsolved what the Western Powers are going to do, the consequence may well be extremely dangerous.

5.35 p.m.

Mr. John Parker (Dagenham) I wish to take up a point made by the hon. Member for Devizes (Mr. Hollis). He stated that he thought that if Italy could not take over the occupation of Zone A fairly soon she would not sign on the dotted line with regard to E.D.C. Many people in Europe have interpreted the decision of the Americans and ourselves to allocate Zone A to the Italians as being a bribe to get their support for E.D.C. I think that in making this decision we have been backing the wrong horse.

Assuming the unfortunate event of a war between the West and Russia and her satellites, quite obviously the first thing that would happen in Italy would be a general strike; one-third of her population would be in revolt against the Government. The Italian forces, therefore, would be engaged in keeping the peace in Italy rather than in countering the invasion of Western Europe. That being so, the main effort of fighting such an invasion would have to fall on Marshal Tito's army.

I do not wish to go further into the point, but I think that if we get entangled in the argument as to whether we are to persuade Italy to go into E.D.C. by giving her Zone A, we are making a big mistake indeed.

Mr. Hollis I suggested quite a different thing. I did not suggest that we should persuade Italy to do anything by giving her Zone A. I was discussing what would be the consequence after the declaration of 8th October—a purely hypothetical situation—if that declaration were not implemented.

Mr. Parker I was following up the hon. Member by pointing out that many people took the view that the offer had been made to win Italy to E.D.C. I wish to take the question further and ask the House to consider what will be the result for Trieste of the various actions proposed by the Government or by hon. Members in this House. It is my opinion that if there is partition of Trieste, and if Zone A is given to the Italians, it will mean the death of the city as an important port. I think that the House should realise that fact if it is going to support that proposal.

Let us go into the past, because I think we ought to go rather carefully into the facts about Trieste. The right hon. and learned Member for Montgomery (Mr. C. Davies) and others have made the point that Trieste grew up as a port for Central Europe. That wants analysing rather more carefully, and also whether it is now the port of Central Europe, and is likely to remain so in the future.

If the House looks at the facts it will see to the North-East of the Adriatic, there is not only Trieste, but also the port of Rijeka, better known as Fiume. Both ports were artificially built up at the end of the last century. They were small local ports, and only grew rapidly after railways came to them. These railways were built by the Austrian and Hungarian Governments, who spent a great deal of money on railway communications and port installations in order to build up the ports as outlets for the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Between 1880 and 1913, these ports grew phenomenally as regards the amount of trade they carried, and also as regards their populations. The reason why these ports grew so successfully was due not only to the large amount of Government expenditure on port installations and communications, but also because of the Customs Union round the Hapsburg Empire. There was also a special Adriatic tariff giving low rail charges to the Adriatic ports. The Austro-Hungarian Empire thereby encouraged trade through these ports. The result was that the provinces of the North used Trieste to a very great extent, and Fiume to a lesser extent, during that period. The growth was very rapid indeed, but Trieste grew up much more rapidly than Fiume. It was able to develop its communications very much better through the famous Ljubljana Gap. On the other hand, Fiume was hampered by the fact that the railway communications had to go through the Dinaric mountains, which made it very much more difficult to handle heavy traffic going through that particular port.

I think it is well to analyse the traffic of Trieste before the First World War. In 1912 and 1913, 35 per cent. of the traffic with Trieste was with modern Yugoslavia—that is territory which is now inside Yugoslavia—and 30 per cent. modern Austria—mainly Vienna and that area; 20 per cent. was with modern Czechoslovakia and only 36 per cent. with Italy. That traffic between Czechoslovakia and Trieste only existed because of these special Adriatic tariffs. Even in those days the greater part of the overseas trade from Czechoslovakia went through Hamburg and the Northern ports.

Mr. M. Follick (Loughborough) Also Rotterdam.

Mr. Parker Yes, also Rotterdam and the other North Sea ports. But there was a very substantial trade at that time from the Czech area to Trieste. That has to be borne in mind when considering the pre-1914 position of Trieste.

Secondly, there was enormous emigration in those years from the whole of the Austro-Hungarian Empire to the United States. The "Bohunks," and all the other Central European people one knows of in America, poured from here into the United States, and that made a big passenger traffic through the port.

In 1919 came the victory of the Italian Irredentists in the war, and they took over both Trieste and Fiume. If one reads the Italian literature of the period it is interesting to see that they had the rather naïve idea that they could get both the ports and all their trade even though political barriers might be erected separating them from the territories serving them. In the peace treaties the Italians tried to get the old Adriatic tariffs retained, but the new countries did not keep up the special arrangements made by Austria and Hungary to develop the trade of these ports. I shall say more about Fiume later.

The traffic through Trieste fell very much, the population remained stationary, and the town was only really maintained by the fact that Mussolini pumped a great deal of money into Trieste by subsidising new industries. The Czech overseas trade mainly went northwards and is not likely ever to go south again to any great extent. The Yugoslav traffic disappeared very largely during these years and Trieste was left, in the main, with the fairly small traffic of the present Austrian Republic. The Italians tried to put a certain amount of trade through it but could not do very much about it because, as has been said, Venice and not Trieste is the best port for North-Eastern Italy.

I should like to say something about Fiume, because its history has a bearing on Trieste at the present time. There a free State was set up after the war. After d'Annunzio's Irredentists had seized it, the Yugoslavs finally accepted a partition by which the old town went to Italy and some of the suburbs—Zone B as you might call it—went to the Yugoslavs, including the town of Susak. Once that partition had taken place the Yugoslavs developed it as a port and sent most of their traffic through it. I am quite certain that partition of Trieste now would have exactly the same result. The town of Trieste would have grass growing on many of its quays and the Yugoslav would develop a new port in Zone B, probably at Isola. The Yugoslavs would have the advantage of using the Ljubljana Gap and developing their own port at the door of Trieste, in the same way as the Poles developed Gdynia, near Danzig, and as they themselves did with Susak. I would, therefore, say that in proposing to partition Trieste one must learn from the experience of Fiume and not make the same mistake again.

Returning to the position at Trieste at the present time, and taking the traffic of 1951 and 1952 which were very similar, the traffic, as has been mentioned, was much increased because the Americans and British had been bringing in their supplies for troops in Austria, and the Americans have been bringing in Marshall Aid supplies, to that port, so it has been artificially built up. That must be borne in mind. For the last year the total trade of Trieste has been 148 per cent. with Italy and 84 per cent. with the hinterland; Zone A had about 1 per cent.—and the 1951 figures were similar. Of that trade to the hinterland over 70 per cent. was with the Austrian Republic—Austria is the one country really interested economically in Trieste at the present time.

Taking her present overseas trade, 60 per cent. of Austria's trade is with Trieste, but 40 per cent. of the overseas trade of the Austrian Republic is not with the Mediterranean but with the North Sea and other Northern ports; already the North Sea and Northern ports have drawn trade from the South. One has to face the fact that they may go further in that, particularly when British and American troops are withdrawn. The situation is that, at present, Trieste has not good prospects as a port. Its main possibilities are with Austria, but that is threatened from the North, and it will also be threatened if the Yugoslavs build a rival port nearby which will have equally good communications with Austria, also through the Ljubljana gap.

Trieste has already got 18,000 unemployed, and about 10 per cent. to 12 per cent. of those who are employed are in the employ of the British and American forces. The town is not in a good position. Very little trade at Trieste is now done with Yugoslavia, partly because the Italian authorities for political reasons are not anxious to develop that trade and have restricted import licences, but there should be a good prospect for a certain amount of local trade—foodstuffs and timber being brought into Trieste, and Trieste selling some manufactured goods to the hinterland. Even all that possible local trade is not developed to the full. If the town goes to Italy there will still be a possibility of a certain amount of Austrian trade, but the town will in the main have to depend on extensive subsidies from Italy.

I think one should turn to see what has happened to Fiume. I visited that town recently and it is an absolute boom town, with two or three ships alongside each quay. Timber and maize were going out and machinery, etc., coming in. There is a mixture of the most modern cranes and motor lorries being used to handle the traffic, alongside horses and simple manhandling. The town is growing rapidly, and all the way round the hills behind new houses and flats are going up.

The population is a matter of some interest. In 1938 it was about 55,000 in the old town, and with Susak it was about 70,000. Of the 55,000, something over 30,000 were Italians. By last year the population was 130,000, and it is estimated that it will be 150,000 by 1955. In another 10 years it will possibly equal the population of Trieste itself. But the Italian population which was over 30,000 has dropped to 18,000. Some of the Italians emigrated after Mussolini went, but there has been an enormous influx from the surrounding Croat countryside and from the ports down the Adriatic coast. Incidentally, the mayor of the town is an Italian docker with a German name; he worked as a docker under Mussolini. That shows the mixture of the races in that part of the world. He is a staunch supporter of Marshal Tito.

There we have this boom town being developed and growing very much since it was in full Yugoslav possession. With the present industrialisation of Yugoslavia, obviously the port will have to be developed further. Its communications, however, with the hinterland are bad, and I am certain that with the growing industrialisation of that part of the world Trieste could also be well used by Yugoslavia. If they do not have the town themselves they will certainly develop a port in Zone B, with better communications with the interior than Fiume.

It is interesting to note in the "Manchester Guardian" that some of the leading citizens of Trieste have been to Rome and told Signor Pella what conditions in the town will be like in the event of partition. Can there not once more be an attempt to create a free city, covering both zones, with a free port for Austrian, Yugoslav and Italian traffic? There could be an Austrian governor and the members of the governing board could be drawn equally from Yugoslavia and Italy with some from the locality. Each commune in the area could use officially its own national language on the Swiss model. Italian, Croat and Slovene could all be used in schools.

I think that would be the best solution. If not, if the town is divided and Zone A is given to Italy, the future can only be what I mentioned earlier. I am certain that in the long run, the town having been ruined, the Yugoslavs will take it over, when a favourable opportunity offers, as they took over Fiume. It can only have an economic future if it is linked with its hinterland. I should point out that it is the only place left in Europe where an attempt is still made to have the port separated from its hinterland. That arrangement has already failed with Danzig and Fiume, and it will certainly fail with Trieste. It is a completely unsound economic and political situation.

I agree that we have this problem in what is largely an Italian town; I believe that a free state would be the best solution if it could be made to work. If not, we have to face the fact that an Italian town cut off from its surrounding countryside will not work. Multi-national countries like the Austrian empire had these multi-lingual towns. In the middle of the last century Budapest and Prague were German towns in the middle of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and so on. Later people came in from around, and they changed their character.

I hope the Government will try once more to get this free state created. If both Governments can be persuaded to unite the two Zones it will be the best solution. If they insist on Zone A going to Italy and Zone B to Yugoslavia, I am sure the whole area will eventually pass to Yugoslavia, after many of the Italians have left.

*5.55 p.m.*

Mr. Philip Bell (Bolton, East) Perhaps the hon. Member for Dagenham (Mr. Parker) will excuse me for not following him in what was, if I may say so, a very erudite history of Trieste. If I am no wiser, at any rate I am better informed.

I am sure every hon. Member is most anxious that we should not in what we say increase the tension which exists in that area, nor precipitate any recourse to arms. One thing is surely quite clear, and that is that the only reason that so many of us are so anxious about this matter and, indeed, why we are debating it, is that one country, believed to be civilised, which subscribes to the United Nations and to the Charter, has threatened war. Nothing else has caused any tension. There has been no threat of war by Italy.

Miss Jennie Lee (Cannock) What!

Mr. Ernest Popplewell (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, West) Will not the hon. and learned Gentleman agree that, while there may not have been any threat of war by Italy, there has been a tremendous amount of Italian troop movement along the borders?

Mr. Bell I agree. Those are gestures, but there has been no public declaration of an invasion from Zone A to Zone B. There has been no suggestion that if the Italians were let into Zone A they would move into Zone B. What the Italians have said is that the Minister will resign if the Government withdraws from its position. We think it is rather more likely that the obligations of the Charter might not rest so heavily on the shoulders of a new member as perhaps as on Italian shoulders, and we are alarmed that he might carry out this threat.

Mr. R. H. S. Crossman (Coventry, East) It has been agreed, has it not, that Italian troops intended to move into Zone A? Will the hon. and learned Gentleman tell me what more legal right the Italians have than the Yugoslavs to make such a move?

Mr. Bell They will not move into Zone A except by permission and on the withdrawal of the existing armed forces of the United Nations.

Mr. Crossman That is not a legal right.

Mr. Bell I shall deal with that in a moment. I am interested when people have recourse to legality.

This is not a new point in Trieste. Let us consider the position at the time of the Declaration. When this two-part Declaration was made on 20th March, 1948, not surprisingly it brought back the Soviet into the arena. They had done nothing; they had refused to agree to the appointment of a Governor who should, in fact, have been appointed some two years before. Then, when this Declaration was made, they came to the United Nations and nominated a gentleman who came from Switzerland and who had previously been nominated as one of the possible Governors by Great Britain.

The British Administration at the United Nations then said, "We will not have that Governor—though he is a suitable man and he was our nominee—for this reason: You have delayed too long in setting up this Governor, who was supposed to be there by 15th September, 1947, and conditions have changed since there has been no Governor. In fact, Zone B has become a police State, and so we shall not agree to the appointment of a Governor."

It was in 1949 that our Administration said, "This part of the Italian Peace Treaty has become impracticable." That is what is being said today by the present Administration, by this latest declaration. It was a little ungenerous of the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mr. Noel-Baker) to lay great stress on the legality of the position, when his own Administration were refusing to agree to the appointment of a perfectly suitable man as Governor as long ago as 1949.

In this debate the Government have been asked, "Why do you make a demarche like this without having negotiations?" One hon. Member asked why we did not put them on a time limit and tell them that if they did not agree within a certain time we should do something. That is what has happened. We have informed them that action will be taken at some date in the future, but it is open to anybody to negotiate in the meantime. Some people seem to imagine that as long as one gets everybody round a table they will all agree.

Both the previous Government and this one have exhausted their ingenuity. Am I to believe that the Labour Government did not take every opportunity and exert every ingenuity to get a reasonable and fair settlement? There comes a time when it is only adding to the irritation, the nerves and the general upset to take no action. In these modern conditions the difficulty is often that the people who are in possession, so to speak, are in a strong position. On the question of Abadan, the real merits of the Persian case were that they happened to be in Persia and we were not. In Egypt we have the advantage that we happen to be in the Canal Zone and the Egyptians are not. In the Berlin air lift we had the advantage of being in a part of Berlin in which there were no Russians.

If they think that it is going to upset the equilibrium to attempt a positive and definite attack and initiate a hostile act, the persons in possession take advantage of that and the fact that there are only temporary or armistice lines, and dig in and say to the others, "I will not agree. You must be the one who starts the shooting. I shall never shoot, but if you want to do anything you will have to shoot."

There is, therefore, a good deal to be said for the British and United States Administrations in charge of this city for so arranging the position that the strike has to come from the other side. Nobody really believes that any strike could come from the Italians, once they were in Zone A. The whole burden of publicly having recourse to war is thrown on the other side. It is easy to leave matters as they are and say that we should do nothing, but in the face of our experience and the fact that there is

an urgency about the situation why should not we believe—as the Foreign Secretary said he believed—that although there would be a great upset about it, and these two loyal members of the United Nations might take it to arbitration, or protest or agitate about it, they would not have recourse to war?

Why should we assume that Tito would have recourse to war? What is the prize or justification for it? It has been pointed out that the city of Trieste is in a parlous position, but it is not a prize of great value. We know that both in Zone A and Zone B the overwhelming majority of the population is Italian. That fact is put on one side by the Yugoslavs, who say that a lot of depopulation occurred during the Italian administration of their Zone, and the Italians reply by pointing to the last known census—the Austrian one of 1910—which showed an Italian majority in both Zones.

Hon. Members opposite must share with hon. Members on this side the responsibility for the fact that at the time of the tripartite agreement, taking into account the history of the city and the claims of population, we said that both Zones should go to Italy. It is not for us to argue now whether that is necessarily right, but it is for us to say that this Solomon's judgment of giving one zone to Italy and one to Yugoslavia is not manifestly such an injustice that a country, after having exhausted all other methods of redressing the balance, should have recourse to arms.

In my submission, the worst thing that could happen would be for us to be distracted from the main point, which is that although Yugoslavia has a claim it has not exhausted its claim by having a plebiscite or appealing to the Hague Tribunal or to the United Nations. Here is a country which has been in receipt of European aid for a great number of years and has recently received a considerable amount of recognition and hospitality from this country, and which, the first time it is thwarted, threatens to go to war or invade and take an area which is vital neither to its security nor to its life.

*Mr. Popplewell* The hon. and learned Member again refers to this threat of war. This is a most important point. Would not he agree that a year ago in Bled, and also in London this year, Marshal Tito gave an undertaking to our Foreign Secretary that he would not resort to war over Trieste? Is it not very peculiar that something of a very outstanding nature has taken place, namely, the insult to Yugoslavia in not having received even 24 hours' notice, should have brought such a remarkable change, in view of the Marshal's pledge?

*Mr. Bell* I hope that the first pledge which the hon. Gentleman mentioned stands. I understood that it was conditional, and that the person who gave the pledge, if he thought his feelings had been upset, was entitled to ignore it. I should not take that view of an international pledge. Have not there been years to negotiate? If good will exists why have they not negotiated before?

What is more likely to happen is that, faced with the possibility of one country having recourse to war, both parties will accept this Solomon's judgment, but they will accept it only because the Foreign Secretary had the courage to make a judgment and do something. What is the alternative? As a responsible authority, are we going to be afraid every time we need to make a decision because there would be a threat of war? We cannot live under threats of war when we have executive decisions to make. If we are afraid to make decisions, conferences can be delayed and solutions cannot be found. We must stiffen our resolution and not continually go about crying and weeping, and saying, "We must get everybody to agree to everything before we do anything."

6.10 p.m.

*Mr. Woodrow Wyatt (Birmingham, Aston)* I think the Foreign Secretary's defence today of this extraordinary action was rather feeble, and I thought that the hon. and learned Member for Bolton, East (Mr. Philip Bell) did not improve on it, though he spoke with a little more passion than the right hon. Gentleman. He felt, perhaps, a little happier about it, because he does not have any responsibility for it.

What we wanted to hear from the Foreign Secretary before he sat down was what was the evidence that the situation in Trieste had deteriorated so badly and so rapidly that this action simply had to be taken now without waiting any longer at all. The right hon. Gentleman said he had had reports from friends and that he was satisfied on reading those reports that the situation had so deteriorated. Why cannot we be told what those reports say? He says, "Read the newspapers." A great many things have been said in the newspapers about the situation in Trieste lately and for eight years without any suggestion that we were getting to a situation in which Marshal Tito would threaten to move troops into Zone A.

I think most people on this side of the House would give the Foreign Secretary the credit of believing that if he had been at the Foreign Office this would never have happened at all. It was manifest from the way he spoke that he himself also took the same view, but, like a loyal colleague, he had to defend this most peculiar action. This will be a classic example in Foreign Office history of exactly how not to do something. I expect that future entrants into the Foreign Office will be shown all the minutes and records and charts that led to this unfortunate decision and warned never to do anything like that.

There is only one reason why this action was taken, and that was that the Americans, having failed to win the Italian elections, thought that the Italian Government wanted propping up a bit more now and to be induced to join the European Defence Community. I too want the Italians to join the European Defence Community, but I do not think the right way to get them to join it is by bribing them to do so. If people care so little about their own self-defence that they have to be bribed to take part in it, they are not going to be very much good if and when it comes to a war. In any case this action has been too late for the Italian elections, and it does not even seem to have succeeded in getting the Italians to come into E.D.C.

All that this action has done is to precipitate an extremely awkward international situation. Of course it was inconvenient and uncomfortable and unsatisfactory to have the situation in Trieste as it was, but we had only 3,000 or 4,000 troops out there—it only cost us £2 million a year—and the situation was not so unpleasant as it has now become. We had one outbreak of war in the Balkans before, in 1914, and it led to wider consequences. Although the previous situation in Trieste was not ideal it was better to go on on that basis, to go on with a disagreeable situation, rather than to disturb it and make it become an acutely dangerous one. Nothing can wipe out the incompetence of the Government in this matter; but now that this action has been taken, and it is past, we have to think of what we are to do in the future. The very effect of a declaration of this kind creates a new situation in itself.

One is bound to say that logically the declaration does set out accurately what the situation is and what is practical in some respects in that situation. It is true that Zone A is predominantly Italian, and if ethics have any place in foreign affairs—they do not often have very much, but if they have any—then certainly the Zone should be Italian. That is indisputable. It is also true and indisputable that Zone B is occupied by the Yugoslavs, and they do not propose to leave, and I notice that the declaration is very careful not to say anything about the displacing of the Yugoslavs from Zone B. It does not actually warn the Italians they can have no hope of getting Zone B, but it does not say that there is going to be any attempt to move the Yugoslavs from Zone B.

I do not think that the Yugoslavs have any moral claim whatever on Trieste. I think the arguments and the figures put by my hon. Friend the Member for Dagenham (Mr. Parker) were very interesting about the economic situation of Trieste, but, of course, Trieste was Italian before the war, and it survived. It may not have had an extremely prosperous economy, but there are occasions in men's lives when they are not really interested predominantly in economic considerations, but in nationalism, patriotism, all sorts of emotional things—not at all according to Marx's proposition that economics are uppermost in men's considerations—and they allow these emotional things to displace the economic considerations.

Tito has made this threat to go into Zone A, and I do not think that that is a light threat. I do not think it is a light threat, not because I think Tito is necessarily a person of ballast or great importance but because he himself is in a very critical situation in his own country. He has large numbers of people in his country who do not think he is the right sort of Communist. They think he ought to be following the Moscow line, and they are always giving him trouble. They have always said that it was unwise to get into such close association with the West.

After the break with Russia he has had to keep on saying, "I know they are all right, and I am sure they will not do anything unpleasant to us about Trieste. It is all right. We are on a better bet with the West than we were with the Russians." Then we go and do this, which makes his position more difficult, and I think he has got to make a threat of this kind to keep the Moscow Communists in check, and I think he would have to live up to such a threat if the Italians were to take over immediately and completely in Zone A.

There is, I think, an illusion about what would then happen. There are some people who think that the Yugoslavs, being such brave and resolute fighters, would sweep the Italians out of Zone A in about half an hour and that the whole battle would be over then, because the Italians would run away. I do not think that is true. I think the Italians would put their best divisions there, and their Alpine troops are extremely competent, well trained and brave, and if they were put into Zone A in Trieste and were attacked by the Yugoslavs they would not run away. Perhaps it would be more convenient if they did, but they will not.

Mr. Philip Bell I am not disputing that, but suppose the attack comes before the Italians get in or have time to arm or to defend themselves, what will be the case then?

Mr. Wyatt I agree that the Government are extremely incompetent, but I do not think that even this Government would be so incompetent as to remove our own troops before the Italians took over and thereby allow Tito to march in before the Italians had a chance to take over. I do not think that the hon. and learned Gentleman's fears will be realised.

Tito has made this threat, which is a very valid threat; and one has to be very careful how one deals with it. I think he undoubtedly feels he has been double-crossed, because although there was the 1948 Declaration we have been steadily, by implication, watering that down ever since, and Tito came here as a guest of the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary. They patted him on the back and told him everything would be all right. Then this happens to him, and it is very uncomfortable and very disagreeable for him.

Despite that I do not think that that means we either should or could now go back on this unfortunate declaration, because we cannot keep on chopping and changing; we cannot go on making declarations and watering them down—making one declaration in 1948, running away from it, making another on 8th October, 1953, and then start "reneging" from that in November and December, 1953. We have go to take a stand somewhere and make up our minds, now that we have precipitated this unfortunate situation.

It is, of course, right to think of the situation Tito has to face inside Yugoslavia, but it is right also to think of the situation inside Italy. We do not want to drive the Italians into Communism, and certainly if we start going back on this latest declaration we shall emphatically and decidedly give a tremendous impetus to Communism inside Italy.

Now we have to find a way of softening the blow to Tito, to soften the asperities of the situation and make it a little easier for him. Clearly, the Italians will not be so impracticable as to keep on trying to get back Zone B. They know that it is impossible. They may have some claim to it, but I do not think that it is a very strong claim. I believe that they are prepared to lose it. One thing which might come out of any conference is some declaration from the Italians that they would not resort to war or force in trying to get back Zone B. Perhaps some kind of face-saving formula could be found.

Mr. James Hudson (Ealing, North) The Italians have been saying again and again precisely the opposite of what my hon. Friend is now telling us. What evidence has he in any published form for the statements which he has made?

Mr. Wyatt The Italians are not completely impractical. They would not be so foolish as to try to plunge the Balkans into war by insisting on getting Zone B. I think they will resign themselves to the loss of it, complaining, no doubt.

Dr. H. Morgan (Warrington) Before my hon. Friend leaves that subject——

Mr. Wyatt I would rather not be interrupted again, not because I am afraid to deal with interruptions, but because I do not want to prolong my speech unnecessarily.

So far as Zone A is concerned, I was disturbed to hear the Foreign Secretary say that this action of handing it over to the Italians was to be proceeded with at once and speedily, in a matter of months. Why has it to be done in a matter of months? What is the urgency? Why cannot it be done over a period of, say, one and a half years or two years? In the life of a city that is not a very long time. There are hundreds of years more to come for Trieste and we should not try to insist on altering the whole set-up of the place in a few months.

After all, the present position has gone on for eight years already and if the change were done slowly and gradually, if officials were replaced as suggested in the statement of May, 1952, by Italians and an Italian administration came slowly in, it might not provoke too hostile a reaction. The position would gradually sort itself out. One thing is clear. Although we cannot go back upon the declaration now, this foolish declaration having been made, we must carry it out slowly and gently in order not to precipitate a crisis. The period suggested by the Foreign Secretary is much too short to allow Tito to take it easily and to find a face saving formula vis-à-vis his Moscow inclined followers.

The whole incident provides a classic example of how not to proceed in foreign affairs. We hope that the Government will learn from this error, and that in future, when some rash and foolish action is proposed by the Americans they will stand up to them and will explain what the consequences are likely to be. Although Lord Salisbury has had, or is supposed to have had,

300 years of diplomacy behind him, I hope he will not be allowed to take part in these matters any more. There seems to be some gap between the last family diplomat and the present one. In situations like this we ought to point out to the Americans the dangerous consequences which may result and make sure that a sensible policy is followed and not a policy of this kind.

6.24 p.m.

*Mr. C. E. Mott-Radcliffe (Windsor)* The hon. Member for Aston (Mr. Wyatt), who preceded me, like other hon. Gentlemen who have already spoken in this debate, would be on better ground in their attack upon the Government if, when they were in office, they had found a satisfactory solution to this problem. The problem of Trieste and its environment has been one of the most intractable of problems for 30 or 40 years. Frontier rectification in favour of Italy was one of the prices that the Allied Powers paid in the First World War for Italy to come in on their side. After the First World War, the frontier of Italy was advanced east of the Wilson line under the Treaty of Rapallo, in 1920. I think there is general agreement that this frontier inflicted a good deal of hardship on the Slovene population, particularly when the Fascists were in power.

The Italian population is, broadly speaking, concentrated in Trieste itself and, with certain exceptions, along the Western Istrian littoral. The population of the immediate hinterland is predominantly Slav. Ever since the Second World War, there has been a number of attempts to settle this particular frontier. If I remember correctly, in 1946 there was a four-Power boundary commission which tried to settle the matter, but was unable to come to an agreed solution. When they had all finished their labours the various lines they drew on the map looked like Clapham Junction.

There was the Russian line, which, very broadly, followed the maximum Yugoslav demands. There was the French line, which was drawn, as near as possible, upon an ethnic basis, and awarded Istrian coal and bauxite to Yugoslavia. Then there was the American proposal, which, broadly speaking, was the most favourable to Italy, awarding her most of the Istrian coal and bauxite and the town of Pola. The British line was slightly less favourable to Italy than that of the Americans. There was no agreement about any of them.

When the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mr. Noel-Baker) opened the debate he gave the impression that the tripartite Declaration of 1948 was nothing more than a sort of friendly proposal, something thrown out as a good idea. It was nothing of the sort. It was a definite conclusion. The then Foreign Secretary, the late Mr. Bevin, answering a Question in the House, talked about the whole Treaty having broken down. He said: "Having reached this conclusion, the three Governments thought it best to say so."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 24th March, 1948; Vol. 448, c. 2998.] We cannot have anything more definite than that.

The trouble was that, having reached this conclusion that both Zones A and B should go to Italy, the late Government were not, unfortunately, in a position, for reasons which we know only too well, to carry out the conclusions arrived at. They were not in a position to deliver Zone B to Italy at all.

*Mr. Noel-Baker* We said that we would not do anything until there had been a change in the Treaty and until a legal process had been gone through, with the approval of the United Nations.

*Mr. Mott-Radcliffe* In the circumstances prevailing at that time, when relations with the Soviet Union and other satellites and signatories to the Treaty were not at their best, the chance of getting the approval of all or any was very remote. On that thesis I cannot see that there was any object in making the proposal at all. It was made as a definite conclusion reached by the three Powers concerned, to hand over both Zone A and Zone B to Italy.

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, South also said words to the effect, "Let us get back to the Treaty now." The difficulty, as the late Mr. Bevin said in his original statement, and as other hon. Gentlemen opposite have said, is that the setting up of the free territory of Trieste with an independent Governor has never been implemented. There never has been, since 1946, the slightest chance of the Treaty being implemented in this respect. It is pointless to job back to the Treaty, because, much as we regret the fact, it is completely and absolutely impracticable.

*Mr. S. Silverman* Would the hon. Gentleman care to explain why? Everybody was in agreement late in 1946, and if the thing was not set in operation then, it was only because the Russians would not agree with our proposal for a neutral governor. I think that we proposed a Swiss, and the thing broke down on that. If the agreement then made really carried then and would, in principle, carry now the support of every interested party, and if the Russians now, however belated, as seems to be the

case are willing to accept the Governor we proposed in 1947, why should there be any insuperable difficulty in getting back to what was then the agreed arrangement consented to by every interested party?

*Mr. Mott-Radclyffe* I think the hon. Gentleman will recollect—no doubt someone will correct me if I am wrong—that the disagreement was not only over the nationality of the governor; it was on the much wider question of the powers given to the governor.

As the hon. Gentleman knows, the Soviet Union are always willing, in retrospect, to say they would accept a decision which, at the particular time when it was put forward, they showed no signs of accepting at all.

*Mr. Silverman* Why not? Why should we reject them?

*Mr. Mott-Radclyffe* If the hon. Gentleman thinks that in 1948 at the time of the tripartite Declaration there was the slightest chance of getting the Russians to accept Zone B as well as Zone A being handed over to the Italians or that they would work constructively for a conference now we all hope that he will use his good offices to persuade them to do so.

*Mr. Silverman* The hon. Gentleman misunderstands me. I have never suggested that there was ever the slightest chance of the Russians or anyone else expecting the Italians to accept the Declaration of 1948. What I am talking about is the Treaty arrangements before that. The only thing that they broke down on was concerning the personality of the governor, and quite recently the Russians have said that they would now accept our proposal. Are we against it because they are in favour?

*Mr. Mott-Radclyffe* A very fortunate state of affairs would arise if the Russians were now to agree to discuss constructively not only Trieste but also all the other problems inseparably connected with Western Europe. That would be a very happy state of affairs indeed, and we all hope that will happen.

One other point was raised by the right hon. Member for Derby, South. He gave me the impression that one of the reasons why he objected to the declaration of 8th October was because everything in Trieste was going on very nicely anyway. He was quite happy, apparently, to allow British and American troops to become permanently based in Zone A. Everyone would be happy—the Italians, the Yugoslavs, the French, ourselves and the United States. Let everyone go on living happily ever after and there would be no trouble. I do not think that that is the situation.

There were a series of riots in August and in the three or four months before then. So far from everyone proceeding happily, in actual fact the temperature underneath the surface was at intervals reaching something like boiling point, and that was the position with which the Government had to deal. They had to do something and come to some decision quickly or else do nothing and run the far greater risks of the result of doing nothing. Surely, if Her Majesty's Government had decided to take what was the easiest course on the short view and do nothing, and the lid had blown sky high, my right hon. Friend, in those circumstances, would, rightly, have been liable to criticism.

All of us in this House, wherever we sit and to whatever party we belong, hope that the temperature will drop, that common sense will prevail and that both the Italians and Yugoslavs will agree to come to a conference. No speech in any quarter of the House should be made which will render any such conference less likely or less probable. I think that everyone agrees in the hope that as a result of this debate both the Italians and the Yugoslavs may be persuaded not to ask for pre-conditions before coming to a conference which the other party find it quite impossible to accept.

I agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Devizes (Mr. Hollis) that if it should so happen that the Yugoslavs were to march physically into Zone A or, conversely, if it should so happen that the Italians were to march into Zone B it would be an act of aggression. I find it very difficult to believe that either the Italians or the Yugoslavs are deliberately going to commit an act of aggression and to cause bloodshed over this particular issue. I just do not believe it. After all, with a little common sense and with a little give and take on both sides and a little co-operation on both sides, what a lot of assistance they could each be to the other and how much they could both achieve in the defence of the free world.

6.36 p.m.

*Mr. R. H. S. Crossman (Coventry, East)* I think that the last speech was a nice speech. The hon. Member for Windsor (Mr. Mott-Radclyffe) suggested that our debate here would inspire the Yugoslavs and the Italians. The debate will have to be a jolly

good one to do that after the effect of the policy the Government have pursued. What we must try to do is to repair the damage caused by it both to the Yugoslavs and to the Italians in their relations with this country.

What, of course, the Government have done, is to make them think that we are double-crossers. My right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, South (Mr. Noel-Baker) suggested that we should always speak frankly about foreign policy. I do not think that he was wholly frank, but I shall try and be frank for him. We are accused of double-crossing, and the thing which interests me, and the only thing which I want to address the House on, is why we earned the bad name.

I was sorry for the Foreign Secretary that three days after he came back this thing should break out, and that he should have had to make a very unconvincing speech on behalf of his colleague who was really responsible. Nevertheless, he has the satisfaction of knowing that the more unconvincing his speech the greater the loyalty he showed to the noble Lord in another place.

I think that my hon. Friend the Member for Aston (Mr. Wyatt) was a little mistaken about the Foreign Office. He said that this would be regarded as a classical example of a mess-up. I served in the Foreign Office during the war as a temporary civil servant, and I say that very rarely is the Foreign Office stupid and very rarely does it commit a mess-up on procedure. If disasters occur it is not because of stupidity but usually because of over-cleverness. Some of my hon. Friends are saying to the Foreign Secretary, "We do not disagree with what you are trying to do; it is the terrible way you do it." But the one thing the Foreign Office know about is the way to do things. I suggest that we turn our attention from the way they did it, with all their usual suavity and skill, to what they were doing. What caused them to have such a policy as to antagonise almost equally the Italians and the Yugoslavs? It is almost a unique achievement to have done that!

I think that it is worth while spending a few minutes studying how it was done. The Foreign Secretary said that Trieste is an old story. I agree. We read in the history books about the secret treaty of 1915. That was the first time that Trieste was a bribe. Since then, I do not think that there was a time when it has ever come into our consciousness except in connection with a piece of power political bribery.

One of the problems of Trieste is that it is a genuine issue to the Italians. If British people laugh at that, they should remember that we felt very oddly about Ireland for 70 years. On the whole, Italians feel about Trieste the same kind of complex emotion as many Members of this House before us felt when they argued about the rights of Ireland. Trieste is that sort of problem to Italians, and it is even more complicated because the feeling does not end at Trieste. It goes on to Istria and Dalmatia, and it is combined with an imperialist Italian tradition which says that "We have the right to expand as a superior nation against the Slavs." That is an extremely potent emotion.

The Right wing Italian politicians needed Trieste. There must be a Trieste crisis, otherwise people would notice how the workers are living in Italy. Whenever there is a big internal crisis, they can set the people feeling passionately about Trieste. To this extent I congratulate the Foreign Secretary. He has strengthened Signor Pella's position in Italy enormously by creating a Trieste crisis. The right hon. Gentleman has, of course, antagonised the Italians against us simultaneously, but he has made Signor Pella, for the first time, a popular politician for defying the British and standing up and saying, "We will get our rights in Trieste."

Now, I come to the delicate question of the 1948 award. The only respect in which I agree with my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, South was when he tried to make a distinction between the moral elegance of our Labour Government's behaviour in 1948 and the duplicity of 1953. There was duplicity in both cases; let us be candid about it. The difference is that the bribe worked in 1948, but not in 1953. The whole success of the 1948 bribe was that we offered the Italians something we could not give them, and we were doing it four days before an election in order to win that election for de Gasperi. There was no intention on the part of Britain, France or America of fulfilling the promise of 1948. It was designed solely to win votes. The promise is made for four days only, de Gasperi wins the election, and afterwards nobody dreams that we need worry about it. What a clever promise to make!

The trouble was that within three months it became possible to do something about it. So long as Yugoslavia was attached to the Soviet bloc, the promise was unfulfillable. But once she had become an independent power, it was possible to keep the promise that we had made to the Italians.

It is very bad luck when really immoral actions, well calculated, have uncalculated consequences. I do not blame the Members of the Labour Government, or of the American or French Governments, for not seeing that Tito's defection would upset their admirable plan, but I disagree with my right hon. Friend when he calls it a moral plan. I cannot see that that was a very moral thing to do. It was a clever thing to do, and, as nearly always happens with clever policies, it had unpalatable consequences. By winning the election for de Gasperi in this way, we have made the problem practically insoluble.

Everybody knows that there is no conceivable possibility of giving Zone B as well as Zone A to the Italians, and yet we have given the Italians—it is no good saying we have not—a promise. We pledged them to do the thing which fills their national ego with the greatest longing, to give them more than their share in that area.

At the cost of making any future settlement very difficult, we decided to be thoroughly dishonest and immoral in order to defeat Communism in Italy. I do not think it is wise to intervene in elections anyway, but to intervene with that sort of promise, because we felt that we would never have to honour our word, that does not seem to me a very striking example of international morality or of British good sense.

What the Foreign Secretary says to us on this side is, "Look what your party did. We have only done the same." That is an odd argument, usually, one says "once bitten, twice shy." I do not know how any British Government, having seen the consequences of the 1948 bribe and of the sort of immorality we then committed, could do it all over again in 1953.

There are, of course, differences between the two bribes. This time, the election had been lost before the bribe was given. This bribe is concerned not with the elections—I do not think the Foreign Secretary will disagree—but with the Italian ratification of E.D.C.

*Mr. Eden indicated dissent.*

Mr. Crossman The right hon. Gentleman shakes his head, but I have the evidence with me and I shall pursue it. At least, that is what Mrs. Claire Luce thought; that is what Mr. Dulles thought at that time.

If the Foreign Secretary doubts that, let us look at the facts. I agree with him that there is a lot to be said for a final settlement, but there is nothing to be said for a judgment of Solomon in which Solomon looks at the two women and says, "I shall cut the baby in half if you will not decide whose it is," and then winks at one of the women and adds, "I'll try to get you the whole baby." That is exactly what happened in the 1953 election. It was to be a final decision, but it was a final decision with just that wink to the Italians sufficient to deceive them again and to make them ratify E.D.C. I think the proper word is a "douceur."

Had the Foreign Office really wanted nothing but the judgment of Solomon, nothing but a final decision, what would they have done? We on this side can all say what they would have done. As my hon. Friend the Member for St. Pancras, North (Mr. K. Robinson) said, we would have stated our intention well in advance. We would have said, "In nine months' time we are going to clear out. But in the course of those nine months, we will first have one more try in the Security Council to see whether a Governor could be appointed—that would clear us with the treaty—and then we will have one more try at getting the Yugoslavs and Italians to agree. Only if we can neither get any Governor appointed nor obtain any agreement between the Yugoslavs and the Italians, only then will we carry out the final Judgment of Solomon." That is what we ought to have said. And we would have had to add a third point, that we were anyway formally abrogating the 1948 offer.

It does not take a very learned man to see that that would be the sensible thing to do if we were wanting a final solution in which we had some respect for the sanctity of the treaty, some respect for the United Nations and some respect for the Yugoslavs and the Italians. And we probably would have got some agreement in this way by announcing our decision to cut the Gordian knot after nine months.

But what actually happened? First, we made no effort to obtain a decision at the United Nations or to show ourselves interested in observing the treaty. We did not even go to the Security Council or to the General Assembly. It is all very well for the hon. Member for Windsor to say that this is just a legal point, but I remember the row in the House when the Persians unilaterally tore up an extremely unpleasant treaty. I remember the row and indignation still going on about the Egyptians. What have the Egyptians done? They have repudiated the 1936 treaty. They have repudiated a treaty every clause of which is being violated by us, but we still say they are wicked to do it.

If we want to have a case against people who repudiate treaties, why gratuitously repudiate this treaty without any final effort to get the treaty implemented by having a Governor appointed? If we want to gain Yugoslav and Italian friendship, why did we not consult them before? There are only two possible answers, that of my hon. Friend the Member for Aston and mine. My hon. Friend says that the Foreign Office were incompetent. I cannot believe it.

I believe that the Foreign Office were competent, but they could do none of those three obvious things without upsetting the intentions of the Americans. For if we had abrogated the 1948 agreement in advance, Signor Pella's Government would have been furious, and had we told the Yugoslav's in advance we would not have got away with it. We could only give the additional douceur to the Italians by the deliberate ambiguity of the announcement. The Foreign Secretary says it is as clear as crystal. Let me repeat that sentence he quoted. "This will lead to a final solution." What a masterpiece of ambiguity! It means everything and it means nothing. But what is quite clear is that no Italian can assume from the announcement that the 1948 award had been abrogated, and no Italian can believe from this wording that their claim to Zone B had been entirely annulled. On the contrary, the whole purpose of this ambiguous wording was to enable Signor Pella to say to the Italians, "Look, boys, what I have got in return for agreeing to us ratifying E.D.C."

Where is the evidence for that? We do not get it from the Foreign Office. May be we will get it by asking some questions. We have an Ambassador in Rome, and he was told to acquaint Signor Pella with our decision. I should like to ask: Was he instructed to tell Signor Pella that this was final? I do not think he was. "The Times" has a very good correspondent in Rome who reported every day on the situation. On 9th October Signor Pella made a speech in the Chamber of Deputies in which he said that: "Italy's acceptance of responsibility for the Zone does not in any way signify that she relinquished her rights in the whole territory." On the 11th he received the three Ambassadors again and expressed "pleasure and gratitude at the Anglo-American gesture." According to "The Times" on the 9th, 10th and 11th October, the Italians were delighted with what we had done, and all Belgrade was in revolt. No one on either side was in any doubt as to what we meant. We meant that the Italians still retained their claim to Zone B. That was why Rome was pleased and Belgrade was angry.

Then comes a change On the 15th we see the Italians getting a little alarmed. On the 17th Signor Pella saw the three Ambassadors again, and according to "The Times" he warned them in these words: "I will have extreme difficulty in persuading my Parliament and country to continue wholehearted participation in the Atlantic Alliance and to approve the European Defence Community Treaty." On the 18th he repeated that in the Senate, and on the 19th he threatened to resign. Then, as an H-Bomb of modern diplomacy he added that if he resigned Signor Nenni would take his place.

I want the House to notice the progress from the excited Italian pleasure of the first five days to uncertainty and then to the suspicion that what they had been promised was being gradually removed from them. The bluff had been called, and Tito had reacted more violently than anticipated to the idea that the future of Trieste should be settled by a bribe given to the Italians for voting for the re-armament of Germany.

So we have now got the explanation. The Foreign Office was not incompetent but was given a two-faced directive. The directive was to impose a final solution but simultaneously to sweeten the Italians. The Foreign Office probably did not much like this directive and did not do much about the douceur. Our Ambassador, as far as possible, did warn the Italians. But the douceur came from Mrs. Claire Luce. We must remember her plight. She intervened in the Italian elections and lost them. So she had to make good. Two days after this announcement she told the American Press that she had spent five weeks on this matter and that this announcement was her creation.

Now why was she so proud if this was a judgment of Solomon? Why did she feel that this was grand? She could not have done so, if she had been telling Signor Pella that the U.S.A. had decided to deprive them of any right to Zone B and to abrogate the 1948 award. She was saying something quite different, and we can see that there was a certain lack of co-ordination between the diplomacy of the British and of the Americans. We connived at the American douceur. We averted our eyes from it and we agreed to its ambiguities. We did not do anything evil ourselves; we just let evil happen and hoped that we would get away with it. But we didn't.

May I in conclusion offer some general observations on this somewhat sordid story. I know that the Foreign Secretary and Mr. Dulles want to force E.D.C. through as fast as possible. The Foreign Secretary said so at Margate to the assembled hordes of Conservatives. France was to be brow-beaten, dragooned, and persuaded to sign. The Italians were to be bribed. The question is, what is the next move now that we cannot pay the bribe? The Italians are very sensible people, and whatever we

may say they are realistic politicians. It is only a realistic politician who will say, "I am only a loyal democratic as long as I get Trieste. If I do not get Trieste, I cannot remain in the Atlantic Community. That is the condition by which I will enter." If we like, we might call that a Machiavellian negotiation. But it is no more dishonest than the American and British policy. The Italians are playing the Machiavellian game which Mr. Dulles is playing and which we all have been playing, with the same disastrous result for years and years. This sort of diplomacy is both immoral and ineffective, and the lesson is that, once again over-cleverness has not paid.

The second thing I want to say is that we can still save something if we are sensible. I agree that we have got to get a four-Power conference and unfortunately we have to get it without pre-conditions. That is very hard on the Italians. They have been offered a bribe and it has not been paid, and I sympathise with them if in revenge they do not sign E.D.C. That would be a fair reward to give the Foreign Secretary and Mr. Dulles for their behaviour.

I say this about the situation in Trieste. It would, of course, be a disaster if as a result of any award Trieste becomes only a port of Italy because that will mean that all that has been done for it since the war will be ruined within two years. As a port of Italy Trieste would not be allowed to compete with Venice. There will be large-scale unemployment under those conditions. One of the tragedies of Trieste is that its national interests and economic realities are in complete contradiction, and if it is parted from its hinterland and forced into Italy it will have no economic existence. I plead with the Foreign Secretary to forget about bribing people into E.D.C. and think about the Triestinis, about the future of the port, about the good relations of Italy and Yugoslavia.

*Mr. Wyatt* I do not want to disturb the argument being put forward by my hon. Friend, but is he aware that the Triestinis want to join Italy in spite of economic considerations?

*Mr. Crossman* I think my hon. Friend has made a perfectly fair point in saying that there are times when nationalist emotions overwhelm self-interest. But I am sure the Triestinis are rather less interested in the entry of Italian troops now than they were a week ago. But to return to the future of the port. I do not deny that it has to be administered by Italy, but I appeal for every effort to have at least one part of it a free port accessible for Yugoslavia.

I think we must also consider the minorities. No one has said anything about the Italian minority in Zone B. That is a very gloomy area. Those small Italian towns look grim. We must look after them and we must look after the Slovenes who live in the Italian Zone. If we showed more interest in those people and less interest in over-clever diplomacy, in buying the Italians in, I could see some hope. But if we continue to use the methods adopted in 1915, employed again in 1948, and used even less successfully in 1953, then the hopes of the Western democracies are rather dim.

7.1 p.m.

*Mr. Patrick Maitland (Lanark)* I hardly expected that I should find myself in agreement on a number of points with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Coventry, East (Mr. Crossman), who sat at a desk in the Foreign Office not far from my own when I was there too. I can only say that although he left the Foreign Office apparently with an abiding impression of its competence to devise plots, my own impression is of a less smooth-running machine. Be that as it may. I hope in a moment to advert to two facets of the argument of the hon. Gentleman: first, the background of expediency which, unfortunately, is the historical background of this problem and, secondly, his inquiry into the question of what caused the present crisis.

Before doing that, however, I am bound to say to my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary that I am profoundly relieved that he stressed that some time will elapse before the evacuation of Trieste takes place. I paid what attention I could to his words and it may be that I misconstrued them. But I did get the impression that there was a considerable elasticity in the timetable proposed. For that, at least, I am heartily thankful. After all, the cardinal phrase in the 1953 declaration was that the evacuation would take place at the earliest practicable moment. I stress that quotation—"the earliest practicable moment."

I also think that we should welcome the stress which the Foreign Secretary put upon the necessity for seeking the cooperation of the French Government in finding a solution. In a moment I shall refer to the question of what other Powers should take a hand in this business. It is already reassuring, however, that in addition to Britain and the United States, French co-operation, help, advice, diplomacy and finesse are being summoned to our assistance.

Finally, in looking at the Balkan problem as a whole, it is perhaps unrealistic to forget the real achievement in terms of Western and, let us say. North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, security that has already followed from the diplomacy of my right hon.

Friend. I refer, in particular, to the Balkan Pact between Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey, which has contributed much to the stability of that area. Indeed, it is Greece and Turkey, among others, that I believe should also be closely interested in, and concerned with, developments in the Trieste affair as these now go forward.

As the hon. Member for Coventry, East has just pointed out, it must be recognised that this story has been bedevilled as far back as the secret Treaty of London of 1915. That Treaty was, for practical purposes, repudiated at the end of the First World War and, as a result, the Italians were, naturally, embittered. At the time that Treaty became known, the founders of the new Yugoslav State naturally became suspicious, too, and there has always been—I believe there still is—a certain tradition of Yugoslav suspicion on that score.

That expedient approach to an ethnic problem has been matched by the events of the post-war years. I sympathise with the words of the hon. Member for Coventry, East about this so-called morality. Like him, I find it difficult to observe any consistent streak of morality in the whole process. What may be argued is that the course recently adopted was a practical one, but that is another argument altogether. But I certainly cannot subscribe to suggestions that this represents any high-water mark of international morality.

I go back to the statement made by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary when this House resumed after the summer Recess. We were told that tension had been rising since August and that there was a "flare-up" in the relations between Italy and Yugoslavia dating from that time. Here is the point where I think we may legitimately seek for a little more information. There has been a story of riot and inflammatory speeches since August, and no doubt that is true. But what set it going? I feel sure that when my hon. Friend replies to the debate, he will be able to throw some light on that.

Is it, or is it not, true that during the summer discussions were proceeding between the Yugoslav, the British, the French and the American Governments about some kind of military assistance to Yugoslavia? I understand that negotiations took place in Washington and I believe that if they did not concern Britain or France, they certainly concerned the United States. However, rumour has it that we and the French were involved, and it would be helpful if the Under-Secretary would tell us.

Secondly, even if we were not involved, were we kept abreast of discussions which took place? There was a Colonel-General Vučkević, in Washington, in August, discussing, so we are led to believe, the possibilities of various military supplies. Will my hon. Friend say whether we know what took place at those conversations and whether any political issues were raised in them? It has been suggested in one quarter and another that the Yugoslavs were told in those conversations that arms might flow more easily if they hurried up and completed their defence arrangements with Greece and Turkey.

If it is true, then, that political questions were raised, can it be that, for whatever reason, the Yugoslav Government felt that they might be in a position to blackmail the West? Possibly not. I only raise that question because we are told that this crisis, in the phrase of the Foreign Secretary, "flared up" in August. The only occasion I can discover for such a "flare-up" is those conversations, and the impression they were creating in Belgrade.

My next question is: to what extent have our colleagues in the North Atlantic Alliance been consulted and to what extent will they be consulted? It is no longer denied that the Yugoslav President has made at least one, and possibly several, public statements of at least a threatening character. In fact, he has said that if the Italians come into Zone A Yugoslav troops will march.

We should make full allowance for the heat of election time in a totalitarian country, but, nevertheless, such a threat has been uttered. If that threat were put into effect surely it would involve every member of the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance from Portugal to Iceland, from Greece and Turkey to Canada. I hope that the Under-Secretary will kindly say something about the N.A.T.O. position in this matter. We N.A.T.O. members are committed to consult in case of aggression and we say, in that Treaty, that an attack against one is an attack against all. Have we consulted about this menace? Are we going to consult at all?

It may be said that it was impossible to consult with N.A.T.O. beforehand, inasmuch as Italy is a member of N.A.T.O. and was an interested party to the dispute. There is, indeed, substance in such an argument. But I cannot help feeling that if by being an ally inside such a tight Treaty as N.A.T.O. a nation has not certain access to her friends' minds, a certain privilege denied to alien countries outside it, and a certain measure of extra confidence beforehand, then that Treaty is in danger of becoming a little out-moded.

I ask, further, whether it is not wholly desirable that N.A.T.O. should examine this problem now and consider the danger—one hardly dare mention the word "war" though that has been spoken of—and consider whether allies are not wholly entitled to a fair measure of consideration. It may be said that any such course would anger the Yugoslavs and that, since it is an accepted object of Western policy to try to draw Yugoslavia into closer security arrangements with the N.A.T.O. Powers, such a course might be damaging. But surely there is something to be said for advertising to outsiders the advantages of membership of the club.

I submit that whatever may be the origin of the crisis, whatever skill in plotting or clumsiness in failure to plot have gone to make it up, what is needed now is firmness and calm. First of all, though it is true that there are economic implications, this is a quarrel about minorities. At the risk of contradiction I suggest that it is probably the most violent outburst about minorities that Europe has witnessed since the war. It may be said that the Saar is an equally grave minority problem. But, certainly, Trieste is a very violent one. And in a contracting world where we recognise that power is becoming concentrated in fewer hands, it is surely all the more vital that the great Powers that have the responsibility for keeping down the temperature should be calm and firm, certainly about minorities.

I believe that there is a solution to which we can look forward. I believe that when we seek this conference it is worth while setting before our eyes a positive line of conduct. It may not instantly commend itself to all. No doubt there will be some who will say that it is not practicable. But I would submit certain considerations. First, I would ask whether it is seriously believed that the people of Yugoslavia want to get involved in war over Trieste. I find it difficult to believe that the people of any country in the world want to get involved in a war about Trieste.

I should say, further, that while President Tito's bombastic remarks were made at election time and, therefore, it may be said that he was waving the flag a bit, it is also true that in his country there is at present a system of election which, from the Government point of view, is not lacking in convenience. I understand that opposition candidates are not either very many or very vociferous. Questions of the sensitivity of public opinion are not dominating issues in the minds of the Yugoslav Cabinet under the present system.

*Mr. Michael Foot (Plymouth, Devonport)* Does the hon. Member think that he is contributing to the settlement of this problem when he refers to Marshal Tito's statement, which was deliberately made, as a bombastic statement made for election purposes, when one of the issues at stake is the treatment of the large number of Slovenes who, for many years, have been most bitterly persecuted in Zone A?

*Mr. Maitland* I am greatly obliged to the hon. Member for his interruption, because it leads me to my next point. I was about to suggest that in so far as certain political conditions obtain in that country, it is possible for the Government there to modify its point of view without being overthrown or risking defeat at the polls shortly after.

An interesting and most helpful facet of this situation lies in the fact that the Italian Prime Minister—who, one might have thought, would have had most to fear from the proposition—has now suggested that there should be a plebiscite. It is open to us all to hold our own ideas whether there are more Slovenes or more Italians in the disputed areas. I have worked as a newspaper man in both countries for some time and I have the strong impression that, on the face of it, it would be the Italians who would stand to lose from the plebiscite proposal. Since the hon. Member for Devonport has made the point so effectively for me, indeed with a cogency far greater than I could achieve, that Marshal Tito is most concerned about the fate of these minorities, then surely a free vote would be the most welcome opportunity that could be devised to placate him?

It will be said that Marshal Tito has already refused that proposal. Although it is true that he has refused so far, we are not altogether without some means of exercising persuasion even at this stage. It may be said that our persuasion has so far been singularly ineffective. Nevertheless, we do help Yugoslavia in a number of ways. There have been credits, arms, and the discussions to which I referred earlier.

We are in diplomatic discussion with them just now. I submit that we could put it to President Tito that he has nothing whatever to lose and everything to gain in the esteem of the world if he will agree to submit this area to the decision of a free vote. If he refuses it will seem to suggest that his anxiety about those whom he says he wishes to protect is premature, and perhaps even exaggerated. If, on the other hand, he accepts, the people can decide. This principle of a free vote is one which, after all, we have adumbrated in a number of Notes to the Soviet Government with regard to Germany. It is not by any means a principle alien to our history or to that of the United Nations. It is a method we could well put forward.

It may be asked what question should be put in such a plebiscite. I believe that it could be quite simple. Voters might be asked some such question as, "Do you wish to live in Italy or Yugoslavia?" Upon the result of that poll I believe that a partition could take place, because then it would be sanctioned by a free vote. Hon. Members might ask who would supervise such a plebiscite. This is just the sort of thing that should and could be discussed in the North Atlantic Treaty Council. Here, on the one hand, is an acknowledged threat to peace and, on the other, a constructive proposal.

The Western Powers are in negotiation with Yugoslavia on this matter. We have not yet been told what is to be the object of the conference, because both sides are putting forward different conditions. I put forward the idea of a plebiscite for further debate and reflection because I believe that, whatever else may be said in this House or outside, there is not a single sane person, Italian or Yugoslav, who wants to fight a war for Trieste.

7.20 p.m.

*Mr. M. Follick (Loughborough)* I am not going to throw all the blame for what has happened on to the Government, because a large part of what has happened is entirely due to history. This matter of Trieste has not just arisen overnight. This has been the cause of trouble between Powers for the last 90 years.

The Triple-Alliance was formed not to bring Italy into alliance with Austria and Germany for the sake of the military aid which Italy would give, but to prevent Italy and Austria going to war. The subject and the object of the war would have been exactly this question of Trieste and also the whole province of Istria. But the event has been unfortunate. We brought Tito over here and brought a Communist country into the comity of the Western nations. We could give this demonstration to the world that the free nations could live in harmony with those who had a Communist philosophy and, having brought Yugoslavia over to the Western nations, there was a much greater possibility, if it all worked out properly, of separating China from Russia.

I have just come back from the United States. It is difficult to understand the apprehension that exists in the United States on account of fear, not of Russia, but of the whole Communist world getting together. With Yugoslavia we could have shown the world that there is no need for all the Communist States to cling to Russia; there is no need for the Chinese, the Yugoslavs, or the Poles to accept absolutely the dictation of Moscow. They could be Communist, if they liked, in their own philosophy if they believed it, but still decide for themselves who their partners should be in their way of life. That was the opportunity we had with Yugoslavia.

I have spoken of the apprehension there is in the United States. It may not be believed, but in every room in every hotel in the United States, as far west as Los Angeles, there are cards, such as this I hold in my hand, containing instructions to learn and obey in case of "enemy attack." There were great posters on the main roads, 20 feet by 30 feet, instructing the public what to do in case of "enemy attack"—they use the words, "enemy attack." When I was in New York we had an air-raid warning and everyone had to get off the streets, out of the buses and taxis, and into the shelters. They have shelters in Los Angeles to take 20,000 people.

That is the sort of feeling and apprehension which we have to dispel. We can only dispel it by showing the Communist nations that they are not bound to be attached to Russia for their existence, but that a nation can exist with a Communist theory as an independent nation. Here was Yugoslavia living with us and still maintaining her Communist philosophy. That was the opportunity we had, an opportunity I hope we shall not lose, because it is invaluable. It is valuable for our future existence and future trade and we dare not lose it.

All this talk about dividing Trieste is absolute nonsense. We have had divided cities such as Fiume and Teschen, and they never worked. Either we have to give them to one or the other, or to neither, and that is the policy to work out. Are we to give Trieste to Italy, to Yugoslavia, or to make it an independent republic, as Hamburg was for 300 years? The port of Trieste is not necessary to Italy. Italy has dozens of first-class ports. It is not absolutely necessary to Yugoslavia. But it is necessary to Austria, Czechoslovakia and to Hungary. Here we have a port necessary to the central European nations, but not essential either to Italy or to Yugoslavia.

I happen to have been a student at the University of Padua before the First World War and I experienced there the whole of the irredenta. The irredentist movement had its centre in Padua and the first Saturday in every third month we used to go to the Piazza San Marco in Venice and burn the Austrian flag. The hatred in those days was not against the Slovenes; the hatred was against Austria. The whole of the hatred and the target of the irredentist movement was against Austria. They tried to make the

Slovenes their friends and the Slovenes were as much advanced before the First World War—I am talking of 1910—on the edges of Trieste as they have ever been.

As a matter of fact, Villa Opicina, less than a mile from Trieste, was a Slovene village and General Diaz, in his progress into Austria, in 1917, tried to win over the Slovenes so that they should not be future enemies but future friends. This is what General Diaz said in the proclamation he made to the Slovenes. I beg to be allowed to read these few words from a very well-known book—one of my own.

*Mr. Arthur Lewis (West Ham, North) Written in simplified spelling?*

*Mr. Follick* It is called, "Facing Facts" and the proclamation stated: "Italy, the great State of Liberty, will give you the same civic rights as to her other subjects. She will give you schools in your own language, more numerous than Austria did." It will be seen that the target was Austria. It continues: "Your religion will be respected because the Catholic religion is that of all Italy." This was an official proclamation. It went on: "Rest assured that Italy, powerful and victorious, will take care of your citizens, no matter what their nationality." That was an official proclamation, a promise and a pledge given by the Italians to the Slovenes. But once they had got it they fulfilled nothing. My book continues: "What has Italy done? When the district belonged to the Austrian Empire there were 540 Yugoslav schools. The instruction was in the vernacular. Today, there is not a single school left in those parts except where the instruction is in Italian. There were nearly a thousand Yugoslav teachers, teaching their own people in their own schools when these parts belonged to that tyrannically oppressive Austria. Under the liberty-loving Italy, there are not only no Yugoslav schools but, also, no Yugoslav teachers. And that is not all. They are not even allowed to hear sermons in their own language in church." On top of that those Slovenes were obliged to give their children Italian names, and even some gravestones in the cemetery were defaced because they had Slovene names on them. That is what has caused the hatred between the Slovenes and the Italians, and that will not be wiped out; it is there for good and account has to be taken of that hatred between the Yugoslav and Italian people.

Are we to try to give Trieste to one or the other of these, because if we do we shall make a great mistake? We can create a small independent republic of Trieste—a State of Trieste with a free port, its own Parliament and its own President. We cannot take Danzig as an example and say that it will be a failure. Danzig was a failure not because it was made independent of Poland and Germany but on account of the Polish Corridor. If that Corridor had not existed there would not have been the trouble over Danzig.

On the creation by Bismarck of the German Empire, Hamburg refused to enter as a part of it but did so as a constituent State of the German Empire, maintaining all its freedoms and all its liberties as an independent Republic inside the German Empire; so much so that in 1904, when King Edward went to Hamburg he did so not as a guest of the Kaiser but as a guest of the Senate of Hamburg. Finding the mode of address difficult they created a new name for him, that of Kaufmann Koenig—"The businessman King," and that was the name by which King Edward was known in Germany afterwards.

If that could be done in the case of Hamburg, which was an independent State for nearly 300 years—Trieste was almost independent from 1719 to about 1890, almost 200 years—it is apparent that these small independent States can be made to work if they have a purpose. After all, the Spaniards and the French could not agree which should have Andorra, and that has remained independent for 700 years. They could not agree to which Monaco should belong to, and that has remained independent for 600 years. If we could only have half a century of peace over Trieste it might allow the idea to work and eliminate Trieste as a danger point in Europe.

If we do not solve this problem properly and fairly Trieste will be the cause of a war, and not a war between Italy and Yugoslavia. Does anyone believe that other States would remain idle while these two fought each other? The whole world would be involved again. After all, Sarajevo was smaller than Trieste, but it brought down the whole world in flames. That can happen again if we do not try to prevent it. It will not help matter by trying to split Trieste and to say, "This belongs to Yugoslavia and those streets belong to Italy." That will only mean further complications and further conflict. It will be depriving Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia of their natural outlets to the sea by making Trieste a part of either Yugoslavia or Italy, and Trieste is not essential either to the one or the other.

Build Trieste up as an independent State: bring the two nations together. There is no reason why they cannot live together. The French and the Germans have lived together long enough in Switzerland to overcome their difficulties. If, in Trieste, the people have a pride in their civic rights as independent people, there is no reason why they cannot do so there.

I therefore appeal to the Foreign Secretary. I do not intend to blame him for all that has happened; he cannot be blamed, history has brought about the whole situation. I only say that it is unfortunate because we have an opportunity, which is not lost even now, of making Yugoslavia a model upon which the world can be built—of showing that we can live in harmony with the Communist countries, and trade with them and that our existence and theirs can go on together. Then there might be happiness in the world. Without that we shall have continual conflict, continual disputes and continual contention.

I leave it to the Foreign Secretary: there is a solution. Create this independent State of Trieste, belonging to neither Yugoslavia nor Italy but to the people to whom it is necessary, as a port for Central Europe and as an outlet to the ocean for Central Europe.

7.37 p.m.

Viscount Hinchingbrooke (Dorset, South) I hope that I shall not be thought patronising by the hon. Member for Loughborough (Mr. Follick) if I say that the whole House listens to him with respect because he is a considerable student of history and has a great knowledge of foreign affairs. But he left me in some doubt, because I could not follow from what he said that as a result of the change that is now to be made the city of Trieste is to be split, as he seemed to suggest. I understand that the port and city of Trieste and the immediate hinterland will be handed to the Italians. It is true that the hinterland contains a fair proportion of Slovenes, but the city is and always has been Italian, and the policy that has been announced is not the split that he suggests.

The other predicament into which the hon. Member put me was in relation to the rather fanciful theory, admittedly with an historical foundation, that we should somehow or other organise a Hanseatic city in that part of the Mediterranean. It is because I do not think that this country, with all its vast commitments all over the world, has the strength to set about organising things of that kind on idealistic lines that I warmly support the policy which my right hon. Friend declared in the House last week.

I take it that in this solution for Trieste a vital British interest is subserved, namely an essential reduction of our commitments. Here we are, a nation exhausted by the war, with an enormous amount to do at home, heavily overtaxed, with a vast re-armament programme laid upon our backs, and we really cannot afford to concentrate troops and resources and spend money in those portions of the world which do not materially aid the cause which we serve. I am delighted at the prospect—I do not put it higher at the moment—that as a result of the rather sharp shock that Her Majesty's Government have administered to the Yugoslavs and the Italians, there will be some diminution of Britain's commitments in that part of the world.

The hon. Member for Coventry, East (Mr. Crossman) said Trieste will die. I do not want it to die, but is it being kept alive now by the unnecessary expenditure of sterling by our troops and by the associated organisations there? I am very pleased to find the Government turning a scrutinising eye on these corners of the world where the British are heavily involved, chiefly through the operations of the United Nations Organisation and the commitments we have undertaken on their behalf, and are seeing where they can be reduced without loss of safety to our Realm.

Several hon. Gentlemen opposite have suggested that Her Majesty's Government are taking action equivalent to breaking treaties. I thought the right hon. and learned Member for Montgomery (Mr. C. Davies) used particularly loose language regarding that. The hon. Member for St. Pancras, North (Mr. K. Robinson) hinted that Her Majesty's Government do not respect the sanctity of treaties. He said that undoubtedly Mr. Vyshinsky would play about with that in the United Nations very soon.

The hon. Member for Coventry, East used the words, "repudiation of treaties." I thought that his speech was more than usually unedifying. It was a brilliant phantasmagoria of words and ideas. It was like a great fountain which you can admire while it is playing—every droplet scintillating with light. But when he sat down, and himself turned off the fountain, all you had to look at was a pretty ugly nozzle in the middle of a placid pool. I have heard the hon. Gentleman in really constructive mood on other occasions, but tonight I thought his speech was simply an exercise in polemics.

He used the word "repudiation," and I challenge hon. Members opposite to say precisely how the Italian Treaty has been repudiated or abrogated by Her Majesty's Government. There is all the difference between denunciation and abrogation. To abrogate a treaty without the consent of the contracting parties is a very serious matter, but to denounce a treaty is surely the only way in which any nation can approach the process of change in the commitments of its foreign policy. I take it that Her

Majesty's Government have done no more. Perhaps "denunciation" is too strong a word, but they have said, "We cannot continue to be responsible, with the Americans, for the maintenance of Trieste and for holding the Italians and the Yugoslavs apart." In the last two or three years there has been repeated evidence of both those countries playing themselves off at our expense. We have got nothing out of that position, except the recrimination of both sides.

In my view, it was absolutely necessary to administer a short sharp shock to both parties to bring them up against the essential realities of the situation. But any suggestion that Her Majesty's Government have repudiated or abrogated any treaty arrangements cannot be considered to be the case. A conference is about to take place and, as a result, it may well be that the legal international commitments in the Trieste area will, by common consent, be altered. That would be the correct and proper method to exert our diplomacy in that field. I have no doubt that Her Majesty's Government, like all Governments of this country, of whatever party, will carry out their policy with due regard to their legal obligations.

The only other thing I wish to say is with reference to the shock tactics which have been applied. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have criticised them. They said, quite rightly, that there were reports of troop movements in Yugoslavia and Italy earlier this summer, and Marshal Tito had made inflammatory speeches. They went on to criticise the action of Her Majesty's Government in applying the solution which has been applied for the reason that it has lead to increased threats by Yugoslavia and Italy and increased movement of troops. I take it that the attitude adopted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, South (Mr. Noel-Baker) and his hon. Friends is that the only solution to apply if there are these rumours of wars is a perpetual conference, and discussions, and no kind of threat of the withdrawal of our military forces.

It is very often the case, when people are squabbling in a committee or children are squabbling in a household, that the authority, be it the chairman of the committee or the pater familias, by raising his voice a few tones can produce a quiet result in the end. I think that will inevitably result from the action Her Majesty's Government have taken. These shock tactics are occasionally legitimately employable in diplomatic relations. One can find endless examples throughout history where they have been successfully employed by various nations, and not least by ourselves.

I do not invite my right hon. Friend to confirm that any of these thoughts were behind his mind in stating the policy he stated the other day, but for my own part I welcome this decision. I think it will result in reducing unnecessary commitments and thereby inevitably in the end—though in a very minor degree in this case—increase the standard of living in this country. I think the policy is defensible because it has not, as hon. Gentlemen opposite have suggested, gone so far as repudiating or abrogating any existing treaty and because the shock tactics which have been employed have worked throughout history, and on this occasion will work again.

7.50 p.m.

Miss Jennie Lee (Cannock) I am alarmed that more emphasis has not been placed on the mood of the Yugoslav people. I think we are making a great mistake, a fundamental mistake, if we think that Marshal Tito is bluffing. Marshal Tito and the Yugoslav people are suffering, at the moment, from a burning sense of injustice. They feel that they have been double-crossed, that they have been treated in a most churlish manner. Their indignation is probably greater against this country than against the United States of America, because they thought that they were reaching a cordial honourable understanding with us.

We cannot even begin to see the true implications of the situation in Trieste if we do not pay attention to the mood of the Yugoslav people and their leaders. I have in my hand a letter from a friend in Yugoslavia who says that Yugoslavia "has again found her soul, just as on 27th March, 1941, when we revolted against Hitler's diktat." We had better pay attention to that. There have been excited crowds, demonstrations throughout Yugoslavia, with the younger generation more indignant, if possible, than the older generation. This is a small country, but vigorous and proud and feeling passionately that it has justice on its side.

Recalling that in 1941 it defied the diktat of Hitler and in 1948 it defied all the pressures of Soviet Russia, in 1953 we had better be quite sure of our facts before we come to any easy decision about what Marshal Tito and the Yugoslav people will do. And, anyhow, who are we simply to say that resistance would be only a romantic gesture on their part?

Not so long ago Britain was a small island which Hitler thought he had assessed perfectly. He thought we were not to be taken seriously, that some of us did not even know where Czechoslovakia was. He thought we would not fight. In these things conventional diplomats too often make mistakes. We were very polite to the representatives of Hitler who came to London.

Perhaps we misled them by our politeness, but the essential fact is that if there is one country in the world that should understand the present mood of the Yugoslav people it is this country. In terms of size, resources and arms, we did an impossible thing when we took the stand we did against Hitler.

To the best of my knowledge—and I have a lot of information—the Yugoslavs feel as deeply about the present situation as this country felt at the moment when, against all reckoning, we decided that our honour was involved in declaring war on Hitler's Germany. I say those words most seriously, and I hope that the House will take note of them.

My next point is that we cannot engage in the superficial trickery of saying that if the Yugoslavs resist a change being made in the status quo, they were not even being consulted, thereby Marshal Tito becomes the aggressor. There have been two speeches today of outstanding importance and significance. Both were made from the back benches, one by my hon. Friend the Member for Coventry, East (Mr. Crossman) who introduced many of the realities of the situation, the other by the hon. Member for Devizes (Mr. Hollis).

I want the House to note what the hon. Member for Devizes said. I hope that from both Front Benches, when the official speeches are made at the end of the debate, there will be a solemn and clear repudiation of what he said. The Foreign Secretary was not here at the time when the hon. Member for Devizes said that we should insist on Zone A being entirely an Italian province, and that if the Yugoslavs resisted in any way we should declare that an act of aggression. He inferred that the Yugoslavs would be met not merely by Italian troops but, presumably, by British and American troops as well. There were other hon. Members present. I believe that that is a fair statement of what he said. I should like to be contradicted now if I have in any way misquoted him.

The hon. Member for Devizes, like other back benchers, brought the realities of the problem into the debate. A great deal can be made of the manner in which these proposals were made known to the world, but that has already been done by other hon. Members. What I do stress is that the Foreign Secretary was doing himself less than justice when he told the House that the decision over Trieste arose because of trouble in July and August. I say to the Foreign Secretary, without wishing to be in any way personally offensive, that I do not believe him and I do not believe that he himself expects to be taken seriously when he makes a statement of that kind.

There was nothing that happened in Trieste in July or August that justified either the method of his present entanglements or the substance of those entanglements—nothing at all. If there was a certain amount of shouting and marching we should remember that, while it has come from both the Yugoslav and the Italian sides, the major blame lies with the Italians, because they have needed to wave the banner of Trieste to hide the difficulties of the Italian internal situation.

In this I agree with the hon. Member for Devizes. He got down to the realities of this matter. The question was, how can Italy be brought into E.D.C? What bribe will be adequate? Mr. Dulles made a good job of it with Dr. Adenauer. Mrs. Claire Luce made a very bad mess of things in the Italian election. De Gasperi was out. Signor Pella had to be built up. This present bribe is given. This is the most cynical kind of power politics. We cannot call it international law; it is international thuggery.

We had better take note that not only the countries involved realise the realities of the situation, but that public opinion throughout the world realises the position. We had better consider not only how the Yugoslav people and the Italians will react if the situation gets out of hand, but how our own people will react. The British people have a strong sense of justice. They do not like to see nations, especially small nations, treated in the way that Yugoslavia has been treated.

I wish now to comment on the Italian internal situation. Why is the Foreign Secretary so anxious to make a present of Trieste to Soviet Russia? That is what will happen. Inside Italy we give these bribes from time to time, but it is not the Right that grows in strength, it is the Left. I should like to see a strong Socialist Left in Italy—a strong Left independent of Russia, American, British or any other pressure. That would soon, more than anything, sweeten relations with Yugoslavia and the rest of the world.

But there is no indication of that. The trade unions of Italy are almost solidly Soviet Communist and the movements in internal Italian politics are more and more towards Soviet Communism. They will continue in that direction until, instead of flag waving in Italy, we have action to tackle the sore problems of mass unemployment, hunger and the lack of even elementary decencies in living conditions for millions of Italians.

I do not know what the signal is which is passing at the moment between the Foreign Secretary and the Opposition Front Bench. I hope it is merely a sort of "How do to you." I hope that my right hon. Friend, who will speak from our Front Bench, agrees with what I am saying.

*Mr. Hugh Dalton (Bishop Auckland) indicated assent.*

Miss Lee Italian politics are getting out of hand, and the interventions which have been made so clumsily by America and ourselves are making the situation worse and not better. To come to the lowest level of all, if we want to conduct a cold war efficiently, why are we taking the risk of the whole of Zone A being in the hands of the Italians? I should have thought that, even on military grounds, if we could make the great port of Trieste a free international port, it would be a very much wiser and safer thing to do. Our job ought to be to ensure that adequate protection is given to the minorities in both Zone A and Zone B. If one examines the facts, one finds that the Yugoslavs have a good record in dealing with minorities. Yugoslavia is itself made up of minorities, so understands and sympathises with others.

I do not intervene in the debate as one who thinks that all virtues lie with the people of Yugoslavia and all faults with the people of Italy. I have a warm regard for the ordinary people of both countries. I believe that we ought to be trying to bring them nearer to one another and not exacerbating the present situation. It was not people like me who during the war called all the Italians "Wops," and talked about" taking a hot rake down Italy." In war and in peace, some of us realise that there are people on the side of the angels in all countries and others on the side of the devil. The arguments used during the war about whether or not to bomb cities like Milan, in the north of Italy, are well known. Some of us knew we had friends and allies waiting for us there among anti-Fascist workers.

What bedevils the approach of hon. Members opposite in all such matters is that they think that they can chop people off entirely in national blocks, or else they catch the American disease of seeing everything in terms of anti-Communism. Marshal Tito and the Yugoslavs have been more efficient than hon. Members opposite in dealing with Soviet Communism. I do not have to become a bitter anti-Communist, because I never was a Communist. I have always been profoundly a democrat and a Socialist.

Let me say, plainly, that we shall never beat Soviet Communism if we make the centre of our diplomacy an attack on Communism. We shall beat it only when we make the centre of our diplomacy an attack on poverty, on hunger and on the humiliations which are placed on people because they belong to a small race or a small class or because of the colour of their skin. I hope that when my right hon. Friend and the Government spokesman conclude the debate they will follow the example which has been set by the back benchers and talk about the realities of the situation and not treat the matter as if it were a parlour game.

I might have talked a great deal about the 1948 settlement. I considered that to be dirty politics, just as I do what is happening now. But I will leave it at that, for the point has been amply made by others. Finally I beg the Government not to underestimate the seriousness of the situation. There is nothing in what we have done which redounds to the advantage of the Italian people, for they cannot grow vines and corn on the streets of Trieste. We need a settlement in Trieste in the interests of both peoples, but we can only do it if we, above all nations, ourselves a small nation, begin by showing proper respect to both the Yugoslavs and the Italians and bring them into conference, remembering, in all we do, that the way to make Trieste a city which is a help and not a menace to the world is to mobilise our resources for the fight against poverty and stop the stupid, dangerous and self-defeating obsession that we can intrigue our way into a victory against Soviet Russia.

8.5 p.m.

Mr. Charles Doughty (Surrey, East) The debate was entitled "A general debate on the European situation with particular regard to Trieste," but, with the exception of a speech by one hon. Member who took us all over Europe for centuries back, it has centred on Trieste. Therefore, the general situation existing today in Europe has been brought out of focus.

There are today many other problems in Europe which are more important even though they may not at the moment be as acrid as the Trieste problem. It is important to remember that we cannot be strong everywhere. Even if we are fortunate enough to be allied to the United States of America and can pool our resources, the rule still applies that we cannot be strong everywhere. Unfortunately, we have had for eight years, in conjunction with the Americans, to keep forces sitting looking after interests which are certainly not British interests. It was right to put the forces there at the beginning, and I do not criticise that,

but those who put them there thought, rather optimistically, that they would be there only a short time while some solution was found to the by no means novel problem of Trieste.

For many years a solution was sought between the parties. The good offices of ourselves and others were used in an attempt to bring them together and to get them to agree upon a solution so that we could quietly take away our troops, but at no time have those efforts been successful, through no fault of ourselves or the others. Thus, the answer to hon. Members in any part of the House who say, "You should have brought them together and forced them to come to some agreement," is that those efforts have been made over the years and have failed.

The other solution which is proposed is that the troops and the Allied Military Government should remain. How long should they remain? Should they remain there for ever? Should they remain there while the situation gets worse? Should they remain there until we are forced to start shooting in order to keep order, which is a most objectionable thing to do in a place where we have no British interests at all? That was the situation with which we were faced by the hon. Member for Coventry, East (Mr. Crossman) in his amusing and interesting speech which was entirely devoid of any relation to the facts. We laughed about the Italians being given something, this being followed by a wink to indicate something different; that was amusing, but it had no relation to the facts. The situation is clear. We were in Trieste and something had to be done, and done quickly.

Hon. Members on both sides of the House have asked for fuller details of the exact situation in July and August and the deterioration which was expected in the future, and I have no doubt that we shall be given that, although there was enough about it in the newspapers in those months. There were riots in the streets and so on, and the situation undoubtedly deteriorated and something had to be done. Whether it is internal politics or external politics or the affairs of one's own business, one has to do something when faced with a crisis, for if one talks too much the crisis merely gets worse.

I am sure I speak for all hon. Members in the House when I say that in trying to come to a decision about Trieste we desire to have the friendship and cooperation not only of the Italians but also of the Yugoslavs. To please both parties would not have been easy. It is as if Solomon, in carrying out his judgment, had had to cut the baby in half, which we should not regard as a satisfactory solution for either party. That is exactly the situation with which we were faced in Zone A and Zone B of Trieste.

Having come to a decision, let us stick to it. Do not let us be weak. Having come to this decision, do not let either party think that they can, by threatening or by intrigue, get something more. I know that they will feel sore, and I understand their feelings full well, but there is nothing that we can do, unless it is to accept the view of one party, which will be wrong.

I have listened to all the speeches in this debate, and hon. Members have suggested different solutions, which fact in itself struck me as showing the difficulties of this situation. For instance, people have talked about making a kind of new Hanseatic town of Trieste. Of course, the situations bear no resemblance at all. The old Hanseatic towns of Germany consisted of Germans in a German State, in which none of these nationalist feelings have been aroused and in which there were no minority problems. What would happen today to a free port of Trieste? It would be spurned by the Italians, ignored by the Yugoslavs, cut off and would slowly starve.

One hon. Member spoke of the conditions of unemployment in Trieste, but whatever unemployment there is now will be as nothing to the conditions of unemployment in a free Trieste, with no money and no finance to look after anybody who is unemployed, and no money for public works or for keeping going at all. We remember the condition of Vienna between the war, with a country around it which was much too small to support it. That would be a small problem compared with that of a free port of Trieste.

One hon. Member suggested a plebiscite. Just as we see today in the Sudan, plebiscites are matters, like general elections, which stir up feelings. Speeches are made and accusations and counter-accusations cutting across the parties, the interests and the races in the country concerned, and, instead of the situation calming down, it becomes worse. I do not believe that, whatever is said upon either side, actual blows, in the sense of the use of firearms, will result in either Zone A or Zone B.

I think we have had to make a most difficult and most awkward decision, but that we had to make a decision was obvious. It is very fortunate that we were able to come to that decision in conjunction with our American allies, and, having come to that decision, we must stick to it and hope that cool heads and calm counsels will prevail. But we must take our troops away, though not with undue haste. They cannot remain there very much longer. We can only hope that the Italians and the Yugoslavs will keep to the respective zones, and that this important part of Europe may in course of time return to the calm which we

hope will descend upon it, because there are plenty of other danger spots in Europe upon which we must keep our eyes, and not be distracted by what is going on in Trieste.

8.13 p.m.

Mr. Michael Foot (Plymouth, Devonport) The hon. Member for Surrey, East (Mr. Doughty) began his speech by rebuking my hon. Friend the Member for Coventry, East (Mr. Crossman). He said that the facts presented by my hon. Friend bore no relation to realities, but his repudiation of those facts would have been more impressive if he had selected one of them in order to repudiate it in detail.

Mr. Doughty I did select one of them—the beautiful picture of the Italians [...] given something with one hand and [...] promised something with the other, which was amusing but not accurate.

Mr. Foot Well, we can take it up immediately and see whether it is accurate or not. It is not enough to say that my hon. Friend's general conclusion rested upon facts which were wrong.

If the hon. Gentleman opposite wished to make an impressive retort, he should have selected at any rate one of the long list of facts presented by my hon. Friend and showed that it was wrong. But, of course, the case made out by my hon. Friend was based on the whole story, built up from a detailed list of items of evidence presented partly by the correspondent of "The Times" and partly by statements by Signor Pella—statements which, I am sure, the hon. Gentleman will not dare to repudiate because they are on record—and, therefore, it seems to me not a very impressive retort for him to make. In fact, the most remarkable thing about this debate is not that we have had many facts presented from the back benches, but that almost the only facts presented to the House have come from the back benches.

The speech of the Foreign Secretary was remarkable for the lack of information which it presented to the House, and I have never heard a statement in this House comparable with that with which we were presented today. The Foreign Secretary said, as one of the main parts of his arguments, that there had been a grave deterioration in the situation concerning Trieste in the summer months. He did not produce any evidence that will stand up to scrutiny to prove what that deterioration was. We were told to read the newspapers, in which there were reports of certain events, and the hon. Member for Surrey, East, to substantiate his case, said there were riots somewhere.

This combination, apparently—the story of riots somewhere which must be related to a few newspaper reports—is supposed to provide the main reason why this action was taken. Surely, the Foreign Secretary, if he was going to impress the House in this matter, would have devoted a considerable part of his speech to give in detail—chapter and verse—what was the evidence of this grave deterioration. Perhaps the Joint Under-Secretary, when he replies to the debate, will tell us in detail what this evidence is, though it seems to me that it would have been very much better if it could have been given at the beginning of the day by the Foreign Secretary, so that we could have examined it.

The second plea made by the hon. Gentleman opposite is that, having made up our minds on the decision, we should stick to it, and this seems to be the plea that runs through most of the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite who dare to get up and support the Government on this matter. Most of them cannot think of any good argument for the decision, and so they say that, having made it, we had better stick to it. That also appears to be the statement that is given to us by the Foreign Secretary, who said that we were not going to withdraw from the position we have taken up. This seems to me to be the gravest part of the outcome of this debate, because, in fact, already the Government have had to change considerably from the original decision which they made.

I understand—and perhaps the Joint Under-Secretary will confirm this—that, in the original decision, the instructions given to the British military commander on the spot were that he would have to be ready to clear out in 30 days, and that he replied that it was impossible for that to be done. I understand that the American commander in Trieste replied to a similar notification which his Government sent to him that he would not be able to clear out in under 90 days.

It would be interesting to know whether, before the decision was taken, the Government took any evidence from the people on the spot. What was the information of the British military commander in the area? Whenever there is a man on the spot who can produce evidence to support something which the Government may do, they always bring forward the evidence. When there is a man on the spot, who had seen the situation for himself and understood the feelings of the people in Trieste, we are

not told what he thinks. I should have thought that he would have had very grave doubts about the decision, but we have no evidence as to the information which he gave. I am not saying that it will be easy to give the answer to this, but I am pretty sure that if the Government had taken the trouble to make the inquiry, the answer they would have got would have been to try to prevent them from rushing into this manœuvre.

Coming to the question of whether we are to stick to this decision or not, I say that already the Government have departed somewhat from the decision made on 8th October. They have already learned—what they should have learned before—that the withdrawal cannot take place in the time laid down, yet it is decided by the Government and argued by hon. Gentlemen opposite that we must stick to our decision. This brings me to the question which has been mentioned on both sides of the House regarding this decision being a judgment of Solomon. I should have thought that nothing was further from the judgment of Solomon than this dictate. In the case of the judgment of Solomon, it was decreed that the child should be cut in two. When protest was made by the real mother Solomon did change the decision. Now a protest has come from Yugoslavia in very violent terms, and the same people who referred to the judgment of Solomon are now saying that we should not take any notice of the mother who actually protests about cutting the child in half.

So if we look at the real lesson of the judgment of Solomon we see it is that the decision was that the first decision should never be carried out. And, of course, this decision will never be carried out. Why? Because Marshal Tito has stated, as, I think, he had every right to state, that if the Italians march in from one side he will march in from the other side; and, as my hon. Friend the Member for Cannock (Miss Lee) has said, if the Government treat that statement lightly they are making a very grave error. So I do not believe that the decision will be carried out. Therefore, what I think we should be thinking about is how to make a better decision.

It seems an extraordinary thing, in carrying out the decision, that no one can bring forward any argument in favour of it on grounds of merit. Yet we are told we must stick to this decision. If we could change the decision made in 1946 about the Free Territory, if we could change the decision in 1948 to give the whole territory to Italy, and if we can then change that decision in order to cut the area in half now in 1953, do not let anyone conic along to say to me, "This decision is final, it cannot be altered. It is impossible for the Government to go back on it." Of course the Government can change their minds again, and they will be compelled to change their minds by the force of events which the Government should have had the wisdom to have foreseen.

What kind of a solution would be a better solution? I think there are two that are far better solutions than this one the Government are seeking to impose with the assistance of the Americans. One solution would be to go back to the proposals of the Italian Peace Treaty. After all, this issue of Trieste did not grow up overnight. It has been going on for generations, ever since the first bribe was offered to Italy in the secret treaty of 1915. The only clause of that secret treaty that was carried into effect was this one about Trieste, despite great protests at the time by President Wilson, who opposed the bribery.

At any rate, the problem of Trieste has been going on for 30 or 40 years. The appalling complexity of it we have known, and this was one of the reasons which led those concerned with the Italian peace treaty, who had studied the thing in detail for many years, to make the proposal for a solution embodied in the Italian Peace Treaty, the solution which was incorporated in the Treaty which we signed and which we have now torn up—however much the noble Lord the Member for Dorset, South (Viscount Hinchingbrooke) may protest. It shocks him to hear that the British Government have torn up a treaty, but that is what this Government have done. The only instrument under which we are in Trieste is the Italian Peace Treaty, and we have torn it up without consulting any of the other signatories except one.

The fact is that the Italian Peace Treaty solution was one that was advocated by many people in many quarters as a way of trying to deal with the complex situation in which minorities are so mixed up. It is a much better solution of the problem than the one that can be carried out only with force against the Yugoslavs, which is the Government's solution now. A better solution would be to go back to the proposals of the Italian Peace Treaty. The main obstacle to carrying out the proposals of the Italian Peace Treaty was the objection of the Russians. But as—no doubt from their own motives and in their own interests—they have withdrawn their protest, it would be better to try this solution than the one the Government are seeking to enforce. In many ways it is the only possibility of being fair to all the people concerned.

If, however, the Government are so determined that they will not go back to what was the accepted view of the British Government five or six years ago as a solution of this problem, they may be prepared to examine fairly the proposal made by

Marshal Tito. In view of the inflammatory and insulting speeches made about him by some hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House, I think it is only fair that it should be declared and insisted upon that, in spite of the fact that Marshal Tito felt he had been betrayed and might have felt he had been insulted by this declaration, in two days after it he came out with a proposal for dealing with the situation; with a constructive proposal, far more constructive than any proposal suggested by any hon. Member opposite in the debate today.

What did he say? He said Trieste itself should have an Italian administration. That was part of his proposal. He said the Slovene population in the other part of Zone A ought to go under Yugoslav rule. What is wrong with that? As my hon. Friend the Member for Loughborough (Mr. Follick) pointed out, of course one can talk about the Italians' feelings about Trieste; they have them, and they must be respected; but Yugoslav feelings, Slovene feelings, are just as passionate, and, perhaps, with even greater cause. Immediately that area was incorporated in Italy after the First World War, and before even the Fascists had come into power in Italy, a régime of Fascist character was put into operation at once, and, as my hon. Friend explained, every attempt was made to crush the Slovenes by every form of oppression and every device for abrogating any protection for minorities whatever.

What happened then? The Slovenes liberated themselves in the Second World War. They were not liberated by British Forces. They were not liberated by any other Forces. They liberated themselves from Italian rule. Now this Government are proposing under this declaration to force those Slovenes back under Italian rule, the same people who liberated themselves. Every Slovene regards that as a betrayal, and, of course, every Yugoslav regards it in the same sense, and naturally they feel bitter and angry about it.

Therefore, why not consider a solution in which we should have justice for the Italians in Trieste, in the sense that they would have there a city which is predominantly Italian under their own administration and a solution by which we should also do justice to the Slovenes who have been fighting for their rights for 30 or 40 years, and who see now a prospect of being forced back under the same pitiless terror they lived under for something like 30 years.

That is another solution, another proposal, for dealing with the situation put forward by Marshal Tito. Why cannot that be considered? It is certainly fairer than that which the Government are seeking to push through. It is no use people coming along and talking as though, having examined the problem in all its detail, the Government have come to the only solution. There are other proposals put forward which are much fairer, which, indeed, were first put forward and agreed to by this country in the Italian Peace Treaty; and there are the further proposals Marshal Tito has put forward for settling the problem, and which are much fairer than anything that has been suggested in the Anglo-American declaration.

It has been said by some people that the only complaint against what the Government have done is concerned with the manner in which it was done. I think that the manner in which it was done certainly added to the feeling of indignation felt in Belgrade, and to the feelings in Rome that were described by my hon. Friend the Member for Coventry, East. But my main complaint is against the substance of the decision itself. We shall not settle the problem by forcing the Slovenes back under Italian rule. We shall not settle it by forcing the Slovenes back under Italian rule, for we should continue to have the kind of situation that we had in the period between the two wars when there were troubles and disturbances all the time. It was only because of the power and strength of the new Yugoslavia that the Slovenes were able to throw off the Italian yoke. Why we should be a party to forcing them back into that situation passes my comprehension.

Mr. F. M. Bennett (Reading, North) The hon. Gentleman speaks with considerable feeling about the sentiments of Slovenes faced with the prospect of coming under Italian rule. In the solution he proposes I do not think he has made any allowance for the feelings of Italians at the prospect of coming under Slovene rule.

Mr. Foot There ought to be protection, and it might be part of the Treaty to give protection to Italian minorities under Slovene rule. I agree with that. I think my solution is better than that which the Government are seeking to enforce, the solution of the Italian Peace Treaty itself in regard to both Zone A and Zone B. Under the second solution, proposed by Marshal Tito, the problem of Zone A would be taken care of. If we compare the situation of the Italian minority in Yugoslavia with that of the Slovene minorities under Italy, we find far better treatment given to the Italians than was given to the Slovenes. Those who examine the record will find that to be a fact.

The Government may think they can stick to this decision, but I believe they will have to change it again and again. It will be very much better if they make up their minds to a solution for the whole area instead of trying to force through the solution that

they are now going to impose. Even worse than the Foreign Secretary getting up at the beginning of the debate and saying that he was not going to withdraw from the decision at all, was the fact that three or four hon. Members on the Government side demanded that Britain should be relieved of this commitment.

I am glad that some hon. Members on that side of the House are now interested in the subject of reducing our commitments, because some of us have raised our voices from this side of the House in favour of that process for many years. However, in the same breath as hon. Members congratulated the Government on relieving us of the burden of £2 million a year they said that we should undertake a great new commitment. If the Italians marched into Zone A and Yugoslavia refused to accept that decision, we were to be committed to go to war.

There is no legal sanction whatever for what the Government are proposing under the Anglo-American declaration. This is just a diktat laid down by persons who have no right or power to make the decision. It is no good the Government lecturing Marshal Tito at this stage about respect for law. You do not do that kind of thing when you are tearing up a treaty and when we have just invited one side to go into the area without any legal right to do so. If we invite them in, we have to take the consequences. For all those reasons: because of the natural reaction of the Yugoslavs, because of the impractical nature of the decision, and because there are better solutions available, I say that so far from the Government being able to stick to this decision they will have to run away from it week after week, month after month and year after year.

It would be very much better, more honest and more to the advantage of the reputation of this country, which the Government have dragged so low by these methods, if the Government said openly, "Yes, we confess that we made a terrible mistake. We withdraw the Anglo-American Declaration and are prepared for a conference in which no one is committed beforehand either to this proposal or to any other proposal which may have been put forward by the other parties." That is probably the only way we shall get a conference. We must find out how to get a conference to work out the decision, but it is very unlikely that there will be a conference if these methods continue.

The Italians say that they will not go to a conference until their part of the bargain is sealed and delivered. The Yugoslavs very naturally will not go to a conference if the diktat is to go through. How shall we get a conference that way? The only way to get an effective conference is for the Government to have the courage to admit that they have made one of the most colossal and wretched blunders in diplomatic history. Then they may be able to repair some of the damage.

*8.35 p.m.*

*Mr. Norman Cole (Bedfordshire, South)* There has been much talk in this debate about the hatreds and passions which have been aroused in this great problem and of these we in this House must take due cognisance. There has been one aspect of the situation which, I think, justifies our attention. That is that although there are considerable difficulties in the way at the moment both Italy and Yugoslavia have admitted the possibility of a conference. This position I suggest might not have obtained 50 years ago. It does at least show that Italy and Yugoslavia know that there is no possibility of getting any reasonable solution on Trieste by going to war. We know that in this country and I believe the two Powers concerned are well aware of it.

There has been a lot of talk in this debate in respect of the problems of the two countries—Italy and Yugoslavia. I want to talk about the problems of two other countries—the U.S.A. and particularly ourselves. We have had the reputation in the world for many years, if not for centuries, of being a great administrative power to give help in any area which needs our services. I am glad that we have that reputation and I hope that we will continue to have it. But there comes a time when any administrative power, especially a power whose economic life is at the standard that ours is today, has to consider the continuation of its administration and all that that means.

May I remind the House of the words of my right hon. Friend in his opening speech today, that there has hardly been in recent years a territory in which we are not primarily concerned which has occupied so much of his time. That is a description of the work which my right hon. Friend has put in on Trieste. In addition, it is costing this country something like £2 million a year for this entirely altruistic function and something like 5,000 troops are involved there the whole time. The time must come when we have to consider, especially in a territory which can have no possible connection with the Commonwealth, whether we can continue to do that.

I want to ask one particular point of all those who have criticised this decision of 8th October. If it was not to be now, when was that decision to be made? Was it to be made in three months' time, six months' time, or were we to go on ad infinitum

having this onerous task in Trieste? I hope that the right hon. Gentleman who is to wind up this debate for the Opposition will tell the House quite sincerely what would have been the Socialist solution of this particular problem.

If it should have been in 10 years' time would we have been prepared for this country to go on carrying out this onerous task. This conference, which I really believe will take place, despite all the protestations of the hon. Member for Devonport (Mr. Foot), has a far greater possibility of success with the knowledge of the two parties concerned that this country means what it says, that in due time it is going to withdraw, rather than a conference before any such decision was made when the idea would be that, "If you boys do not come round the table we shall have to think about withdrawing."

The position at the moment is that we have said that we are to withdraw from Trieste at the earliest reasonable moment concomitant with the physical difficulties. The parties to this conference will hold that conference knowing that any decision of the conference must be passed with that in mind. I suggest to the House that that is an entirely different state of affairs from suggesting that, because of the deterioration of the position or because we are tired of the onerous task we have to do, the people concerned should get together and have a conference to decide what to do about it.

The whole thing would be a most dilatory process and we might not have any conference for years. Now, within two days of our decision, we have Marshal Tito making a suggestion and then the Italians have made another suggestion. It is true that at present there is a stalemate because both parties have conditions not acceptable to each other, but the fact remains that both parties, without going to war with each other, hope to have a conference. When they get to that conference, they know the decision made by the two parties concerned—ourselves and the United States—that we are going to leave. The whole strength of this decision and the great possibility of a solution being found by that conference lies in the courage that the Government had, with the United States of America, in making the decision of 8th October.

This peculiarly difficult situation of Trieste is not one that will be met by any action which savours of lack of courage. Of all things, it is one which calls for bold treatment and one in which the two parties know that we mean what we say. I hope that the Government adhere to their decision, and I am sure that all Members of the House would be with me in wishing well to the conference and hoping that it will take place, and that we may have a solution of this great problem by personal, friendly means rather than by than act of war.

8.41 p.m.

Mr. John Hynd (Sheffield, Attercliffe) I listened with interest to the hon. Member for Bedfordshire, South (Mr. Cole), who talked about the inevitability of what he calls "this conference," seeming to overlook entirely that what we are discussing today is not a conference at all. There is no conference. What we are discussing is a *fait accompli*.

When the hon. Member says that the parties will inevitably meet in conference against the background of the decision which has been made, does he not realise that that is precisely the wrong way to start a conference, after the deed has been done? Surely, if we want a conference, the thing to do is to try to get the conference before the *fait accompli*. If the hon. Member thinks that the only way that could be done was by the method the Government have adopted—of making their decision that Zone A was to go to Italy, in the hope that this would drive the parties to a conference—surely they could have achieved quite as much by going a little less far and announcing to Italy and Yugoslavia that unless they were prepared to meet and discuss a solution, we would then be forced to withdraw our troops. Surely that would have been much more reasonable and would have had, at least, the same prospects of achieving the conference as this disastrous decision will have, which spikes a conference from the beginning because of the impossible situation in which it puts the parties.

I was rather surprised that the hon. Member began his speech by some interesting phrases. He referred to "this territory with which we are not primarily concerned." That is an ominous familiarity. It sounds very much like a faraway country of whom we know very little, and one remembers what came of that kind of approach to these problems. The hon. Member referred to our "entirely altruistic action" in occupying Trieste. Are we entirely altruistic in holding the occupation of Germany, in being members of the United Nations, or in being in Korea at the present time?

Mr. Cole If the hon. Member does not agree with my definition of altruistic, will he say why we were supposed to be there for only a few months?

Mr. Hynd We are only supposed to be there for a few months?

Mr. Cole "Were," not" are."

Mr. Hynd Because at the end of the war nobody foresaw what would be the development. I do not want to go over the whole story, but we, with Russia—the great allies who had conquered the menace against democracy during the war—hoped that we would be able to draw up peace treaties and settle down. But it did not work out that way. We have had a post to hold, and we have held it. It is strange to hear in this year—1953—that we have undertaken these obligations through the United Nations for holding the peace of the world, in Trieste and elsewhere, for entirely altruistic purposes. It is a peculiar attitude to the responsibilities of a highly organised country in this modern age.

But supposing that were so; supposing that Trieste was a territory in which we had not much interest or were not primarily interested; supposing we were there for purely altruistic reasons that was the hon. Member's argument. Why should we not withdraw? Is that the reason why the Government are withdrawing? When I heard the Foreign Secretary this afternoon, I did not gather that the withdrawal was merely because we had decided not to waste our money any longer and that we had no other reason for being there than altruistic reasons. I understood there were some very positive reasons why this announcement had been made.

One of the difficulties of this debate is that one is tempted to go into the merits of the claims of Italy and Yugoslavia for this territory. I hope I shall not be drawn into that kind of argument, because that is not the issue before us. The issue is the colossal blunder the Government made in the way they approached the situation. There is no solution for this situation. Many suggestions have been made in the course of the debate, and also in Yugoslavia, in Italy and all over the world.

As a matter of fact, it would appear that Trieste is a series of lines, like a lot of blood vessels, Morgan lines, American lines, Yugoslav lines, and so on. There is no proved solution for Trieste any more than there is for the Saar problem, or the Danzig problem or the Alsace-Lorraine problem. A solution may be found today or tomorrow which might overcome the immediate difficulty, but there will always be an Alsace-Lorraine problem, a Saar problem and a Trieste problem in Europe so long as Europe remains a group of independent States battling to try to get control of little territories of this kind, instead of all serving the purposes of a united Europe. That is the key to the problem, but, unfortunately, we cannot develop that particular theme tonight, otherwise I might be tempted to go into the Government's record on the united Europe question.

The tragedy of it all is that the development of this united Europe, which would have eliminated the Trieste, the Saar and the Alsace problems, was beginning through the Schuman Plan, through E.D.C. and in discussions at the ad hoc committee to set up a political authority which was to bring all these nations into one and where all these problems would be eliminated. By this one single action, the Government have done more to destroy effective development of European union than anything else, including the Prime Minister running away from E.D.C. and other things. That is one of the main tragedies in this decision.

When the Foreign Secretary was addressing the House this afternoon even hon. Members on the other side—of course, they cannot be expected to pronounce on it—felt that he was undergoing very considerable embarrassment. I do not think the House ever heard such an impossible case being put forward with such difficulty, such hesitation and such a mass of contradictions.

The right hon. Gentleman was asked why this step had been taken, and he said it was because the situation was deteriorating so gravely, and people did not appreciate the fact before we made the announcement of our decision. When he was asked what he meant by the deteriorating situation he described certain circumstances, including the fact that already the movement of troops was taking place on both sides. Just previously, however, he had announced that, in weighing up the consequences of this pronouncement before it was made, the Government never dreamt for a moment that there was any fear of military action. Yet he said that the very cause of the announcement was that very fear of military action. The whole speech was equally illogical and equally self-contradictory. No one could have listened to him without feeling embarrassed.

What have been the results of the action? Whatever the Government expected, certainly the immediate effect has been to increase the danger of war in that area. This is not a party charge. It has been stated in the Press all over the world, and not in Socialist newspapers only. This view is not confined to the Labour Party. I believe that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Montgomery (Mr. C. Davies), who is the Leader of the Liberal Party, took the same line this afternoon. I have seen it in newspapers of all complexions. Whatever is at issue here, there is no question but that the danger of war has been increased considerably as a result of this action. Never mind whether it is justified or not. It happens to be the case as a result of the action of the Government.

I have not studied the decision and I do not know if we come in on this should war break out, but if the Italians go in, and the Yugoslavs go in at the same time, there is bound to be a clash. If there is a clash, where do we stand under our Treaty obligations?

Mr. Ellis Smith (Stoke-on-Trent, South) We shall not be in it.

Mr. Hynd I am glad to be assured that we have no commitments and would not be in it. Whether we are in it or not, however, we shall bear the blame for having created a situation which has brought about a conflict in that part of the world and which is bound to spread anyway.

The second thing that emerges from this decision is that the Government have put not only this country but also France in an impossible position. The explanation given by the Foreign Secretary as to why France was not consulted was a particularly thin one. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that France had been brought into the consultations on all previous occasions. Yet on this occasion they were not consulted and had not even been warned in advance. Why? Because they have no troops there. Are we not to be informed of any action to be taken anywhere by the United Nations unless we happen to have troops there? Surely that is a new doctrine being preached in this age of co-operation for the creation of peace and security.

The right hon. Gentleman has put not only ourselves and France in that impossible position, but has also put Signor Pella and his Government and every party in Italy in an impossible position. The curious thing about these Saars and Triestes and Danzigs is that all the ordinary people in the countries concerned may not have the slightest knowledge of what it means, or not the slightest personal interest in what comes out of it.

It may not matter two hoots to the Italian peasant in the south of Italy, living in the miserable conditions that exist in that part of the country. It may not matter to the Yugoslav peasant in the hinterland of that country whether Trieste is governed by Italians or Yugoslavs, but inevitably these situations are built up in the national Press and by the national propaganda of those countries to the point where they become the most vital thing to everybody concerned.

We cannot discuss this matter in the same terms in regard to Yugoslavia because it is not a democratic country according to our conception, but in Italy, where separate political parties exist, there is not a single political party there which would dare to preach anything but the maximum demands of Italy on Trieste, because of the popular feeling that has been aroused and which has been intensified by just such actions as this. Therefore, Italy is in an impossible position.

Yugoslavia is also put in an impossible position because how could Tito possibly face his people and say, "I am doing nothing although the Italians are walking into Trieste"? We know he cannot do it. We know that with all the good will Signor Pella may have he cannot face up to the situation. Therefore, a clash is bound to be created by this stupid action of ours.

Why was it taken? The only possible reason that could emerge from all the fumblings and hesitations of the Government is that this was a gamble in the hope that, by facing these two parties with this tremendous danger, they might both draw back and say. "Let us have a conference rather than go to war." I think that is what the situation boils down to, and the Government do not seem to realise that if that had been the purpose, what they should have done would have been to say, "Have a conference before anything is done, otherwise we shall withdraw." We should have said that and not, "We are handing over Zone A to the Italians. Have your conference because we shall withdraw anyway."

The gamble was a monstrous one. If the Government merely hoped that there would be no clash between Yugoslavia and Italy, there was no justification for such a monstrous gamble which might involve many thousands of lives, and which, in any case, would not permanently settle the fate of that territory. Yet what else is left?

One hon. Member opposite made the peculiar remark, "Let us be strong. Do not let us weaken. Let us pull out." If that is a strong policy, if that is a positive policy for this country, after the obligation that we have undertaken by the occupation of that area for such a long time, it makes Tory policy still more bewildering and difficult to understand. I would have said that that is the weakest and most cowardly of all policies—to run away from one's obligations and leave people there to fight it out when one knows that they have practically no alternative.

I am glad to hear that at least some of the back benchers opposite seem to think a conference inevitable. I think that it would have been inevitable anyway if the situation had been properly handled. Let us give them a chance of having a conference. We

know that the Yugoslavs cannot possibly come to a conference with an open mind and a free hand if this step is taken, but Yugoslavia has offered and asked for a conference without the fait accompli. That is not the result of the Government's step, because Marshal Tito has been repeatedly asking before this statement was made, "When are we going back to the Peace Treaty?" He has repeatedly said that the only solution to the Trieste problem is to make it a free territory in accordance with the Treaty.

The Foreign Secretary has said, "Yes we could possibly have entered into discussions and gone to the United Nations and said, 'We must settle the situation. Let us discuss the Peace Treaty. The situation has changed. Let us consider whether any modifications of the existing terms of the Peace Treaty are possible.' But think of the delay with Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Byelo-Russia and the Ukraine in the United Nations. There would have been endless discussions and interminable delays before there was any kind of settlement." Of course there would have been delays, but it happens to be the alternative to war in the modern world to have a conference which involves delay. It all takes time but it saves a lot of lives and is likely to lead to a more lasting settlement than would ever be achieved by war.

*Mr. F. M. Bennett* If that is right, will the hon. Member say why his own Government gave up as a bad job the attempt of the United Nations to reach a settlement in 1948 and made a declaration?

*Mr. Hynd* That is the only retort which the Government have on this subject. It has been made quite clear that the 1948 Declaration was a statement of a change of view on the part of Britain, France and America which was not followed by the withdrawal of our troops from Trieste and the handing over of the whole of the area to Italy or even that part of which we could dispose. What we said in 1948 was, "The Peace Treaty has not been implemented. It appears that Russia has made no concessions and Yugoslavia is in the Russian camp, therefore we are prepared to make another proposal and see whether we can get together and agree upon it."

Nobody would have objected if the present Government had made a similar statement today and if Britain and America had gone to France and said, "Shall we make a proposal and announce to the world that Italy should have Zone A and that we should have a meeting of the Security Council to discuss that proposal and the amendment of the Treaty? "We on this side of the House would certainly not have objected to that, but the Government have not done it. That is the entire difference between the situation today and that in 1948.

When the Government and hon. Members opposite refer to the 1948 Declaration they are obviously running away from their obligations. We would have supported anything that would have brought about an amendment of the Treaty. Whatever is the outcome of a conference the Treaty must come under re-consideration, because it happens to be the only legal document on which our approach to the Trieste problem can be based at the present time. We may have to discard the whole Treaty, abrogate the whole Treaty, denounce the whole Treaty, or amend the Treaty, but at least we have to discuss it.

I go back to what I said in the beginning of my speech. Whatever may be the outcome of this, even if there is a conference—and I sincerely hope that by withdrawing the declaration and leaving our troops there we shall enable them to have a conference—it will be only a temporary solution. The final solution of all these frontier problems can only lie in the abolition of the frontiers and the policy of building up in Europe a centralised, integrated community in which all these problems will automatically disappear, just as long since they disappeared in our country, in America, and other countries which have got rid of this type of problem.

9.1 p.m.

*Mr. Hugh Dalton (Bishop Auckland)* The purpose of our debate today is to focus attention on one subject in the foreign field, rather than to have a general debate, and to fix attention on the mishandling of the Trieste question by Her Majesty's Government in association, in this case, with the United States Government. We have desired to dwell upon the very dangerous situation which has been created and to demand certain explanations from the Government and a statement of what it is intended to do next in future policy in this field.

I shall not take sides in anything I say now as between Italians and Yugoslavs. We want the friendship of both. Both are, in different ways, most gifted and attractive peoples who play their part in the life of Europe and will, I hope, play it more abundantly in the coming days. We want to help each of them to be better friends with the other. I will say only this as to the area concerned. My right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, South (Mr. Noel-Baker) and I and many others know that place

in peace, or war, or both. Very simply, Trieste is a city of Italians surrounded by Slavs and dependent for its life on trade with the great hinterland that lies behind. Any solution must take account of these very simple facts.

Let us not underrate the feelings of Italians about Trieste. Trieste has been a symbol and a flag, for which they were willing to die. Many Italian lives were laid down by men whose greatest and most passionate desire was that Trieste should be an Italian city. So, at the end of the First World War, it did become and so—but for Mussolini's action, contrary to the wish of great numbers of Italians, in bringing Italy into the Second World War on the wrong side, on the side of our common enemy—Trieste would have remained. But he reopened this whole question and, at the end of the Second World War, victorious Yugoslavs advancing westwards and victorious soldiers of our own New Zealand division advancing eastwards met and clasped hands in the suburbs of Trieste. Since that time it has never been clearly decided who should rule there, or what the system and the set-up should be. Hence today's debate.

I do not wish to speak so long as to take time which we all wish the Joint Under-Secretary to use in explaining the policy of the Government to us. Several hon. Members opposite have taken refuge in references to the Declaration of March, 1948. They have been well answered from this side of the House. I spend only one sentence, at this stage of the debate, on that Declaration. It differed from the most recent declaration, of October, 1953, in that it was a proposal and not a diktat, in that it was to be discussed with a number of other interested Powers and not just to be used to enforce the will of only two, and that no immediate action whatever without such consultation, and without agreement in the course of such consultation, was to be based upon it. That totally differentiates it from this latest declaration.

Moreover, much has changed since 1948. History grinds on, and scenes become different. One thing in particular has greatly changed—the relations of this country with Yugoslavia. In March, 1948, Yugoslavia was still on the other side of the iron curtain. Within a few months of that Declaration being issued she had broken out into freedom and has since been more and more closely our friend. In March this year—March seems to be a month that matters in these contexts—Marshal Tito came to London. He was applauded, he was loudly cheered as he went about the streets. He was a welcome guest, and was regarded by us all as an ally. That meant much to those who knew his country and had visited it, and were most anxious that closer links should be forged between Yugoslavia and Britain.

I have looked again at the statement which the Prime Minister made to this House following the visit of Marshal Tito. The Prime Minister said: "I do not think it is going too far to state that the whole visit was an unqualified success and has made a contribution of major importance to mutual collaboration and understanding, as well as to the general cause of peace."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 1st April, 1953; Vol. 513, c. 1211.]" Marshal Tito returned to Belgrade, and before a vast cheering crowd, who were most delighted with all that they heard about his visit, he said that the Prime Minister had told him during his visit to London, "We are your allies, and if Yugoslavia is attacked we shall fight and die together."

What a change since then, in consequence of the foolish action which we are tonight considering! One of the heaviest indictments against this declaration of 8th October is that, for the time being at least, let us hope not permanently, it has wholly undone the good of Marshal Tito's visit to London, and has wholly set back the efforts made by great numbers of people on both sides to bring about a greater mutual trust and understanding between Yugoslavia and Great Britain. I deplore this declaration not least—indeed very nearly most of all—for this evil effect which it has undoubtedly had.

We are tonight objecting to and criticising the declaration of 8th October, and I should like very briefly to restate in a few sentences the grounds on which we criticise it and believe it to contain grave faults. I will not now speak of its substance—that has been referred to by other speakers, and I will presently come back to that. But quite apart from the substance of the declaration, we criticise first the manner of its announcement, the fact that there was no warning to either interested party—no invitation to the Italians and Yugoslavs to enter into discussion on these subjects. It was an announcement, a diktat, to them about what had been decided about them without their having been consulted about their own interests.

I share the great surprise which has been expressed by many, including my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, South, at the extraordinary failure of the acting Foreign Secretary in the absence of the Foreign Secretary, which we all very much regretted, to remember, when questioned in the House of Lords, whether the notice given to the Yugoslavs was two days or two weeks. It is incredible. He said that he had been in the thick of all this, attending great numbers of meetings at which all aspects of this subject were discussed, but he was unable to remember. When questioned, he said "I have not got my notes here, I think it was two days." A little later a statement was issued from the Foreign Office explaining that it was only six hours.

I find this an extraordinary and gross exhibition of incompetence by the acting Foreign Secretary. It makes us feel most uncertain of what is being done in this branch of our affairs.

My hon. Friend the Member for St. Pancras, North (Mr. K. Robinson), who I thought made a very helpful and constructive speech, said that it might have been best—and I agree—at this stage, if it was desired to ventilate this particular solution, to say to the two parties concerned, "We will fix a date well on, a few months hence, and meanwhile will press you to get you into conference and reach some agreement before that date. If you do not do so, it will become very difficult for us to maintain our garrison." How much better that would have been.

Today the right hon. Gentleman made the defence which was, no doubt, the best available to him. In substance, he said that the situation was deteriorating very dangerously in the months leading up to the declaration. He said, "There were troop movements and if you read the Yugoslav and Italian papers you will find out about them." He said, "I read them and other people read them for me, and I was disturbed." He said; "There were troop movements, and so it was all very difficult and we therefore decided to do this abrupt and sudden thing; but what astonished us is that the Yugoslavs then threatened to use armed force."

I do believe this was the best defence which could be put up for an indefensible act; but really it is incredible that serious men of ripe age and great experience should be forced into such a position by others when they have to speak like that in the House. No, Sir, it was the best defence which could be made of the indefensible.

So much for the manner of the announcement. The second great fault we find is in the ambiguity of the announcement and the fact that nothing is said about Zone B and its future. Here again we have the Lord President of the Council who, questioned in another place as to why nothing had been said about Zone B, said that it was inherent in the statement that there should be a division of the territory along the zonal boundary.

I do not think, either grammatically or logically, that this was inherent in the statement at all. It related only to Zone A—including of course the city of Trieste. There was nothing in the statement about Zone B at all. It would have been better to have made it abundantly clear that under this plan Zone B remained permanently within the Yugoslav administration. That is what we are told the declaration was intended to convey.

I regret I was not in the House when my hon. Friend the Member for Coventry, East (Mr. Crossman) spoke, but I gather he put a question—and we should like the Joint Under-Secretary of State to answer it—as to just what it was that was said to Signor Pella in Rome when he got this brief notice of what was going to be imposed by this decision. I am always glad to hear my hon. Friend, because he is exceedingly interesting on these subjects, but I should like to know whether Signor Pella—I am trying to put this question with precision, but I do not want to interrupt any briefing of the Joint Under-Secretary by his Chief—in the first case was expressly informed that Zone B would remain permanently Yugoslav when our Ambassador broke this news to him. Was he told that?

As I understand it, for some days Signor Pella, in his statements to the Press, showed every sign of satisfaction, happiness and gratitude. But gradually, after a few days, the tone changed. I merely want to know whether this change of tone was due to some fuller understanding later on, in some amplified form, of what this decision would mean; or whether on the very first day he was told, "Yes, you may have Zone A, including the city, but Zone B—no. That is permanently Yugoslav." We should like to know whether that, or the substance of that, was said or not. I hope that the Joint Under-Secretary will have no difficulty in giving us whatever the answer may be.

As a result of this there was a violent outburst of indignation in Yugoslavia, and among the general body of Italians there was great uncertainty. They did not know what was meant. They had not been present when Signor Pella saw the British and American Ambassadors. I am not surprised at what happened. The matter was further complicated, and I refer to "The Times." I emphasise my source. This is not my own statement, but according to the Washington correspondent of "The Times" "this morning Mr. Dulles appears to have made certain observations at a Press conference. It seems that there is some election campaign in New York. I am quoting" The Times "correspondent who is, I am sure, a most respectable character. I do not know what his politics are, but he said: 'The implication ...'" That is, of Mr. Dulles' statement to the Press—"... remains, therefore, that should there be no agreement, the United States would continue to support Italian claims to the whole territory ..." Then "The Times" makes the comment: "... this can hardly be taken seriously, except during the mayoralty campaign in New York." I should like to know whether there is any reason, according to the Foreign Office information, for thinking that

Mr. Dulles is suggesting that the whole of this territory will still go to Italy, including Zone B, unless the Italians and Yugoslavs agree that it shall not. I hope that that is a clear question which admits of a straight answer.

The third grave defect, as we see it, in the declaration of 8th October is the proposed early removal of the British and United States troops. It has often been said that the British soldier is the best ambassador of peace, and in a literal sense that is true here in this place. It is clear that already without this small group, almost a token force, of British and American soldiers, there would have been shooting and these people would have been at one another's throats. It is also clear that it is only the presence of the troops—and their continued presence in the very early future—which can at any rate reduce the very grave risks of the outbreak of military operations and clashes on a scale which easily might become quite literally a war.

Therefore, I regret very much, as I think some hon. Members opposite also regret even though they do not admit it, the passage in the declaration which says that these troops are to be taken away at the very earliest practicable date. Perhaps we can also have an answer to the question by my hon. Friend the Member for Devonport (Mr. Foot) whether it is true that orders were sent to the commanders of the British and American forces in Trieste naming some such period as 30 days in which they all had to be out, and that these military officers both replied to their respective Governments that the thing was absolutely impossible.

Why was it that the Government committed such a blunder? It is much below the Foreign Secretary's usual form—much below it. I am pretty clear that the effective decision to do this was taken while he, very regrettably, was away. I think he mentioned in his speech that these discussions reached their climax of intensity about the middle of September. He returned officially to take charge of the Foreign Office in the early days of October—5th October, I think. But by then the goose had been cooked and he could not uncook it. That I think, is the explanation. Commitments had been entered into—

*Mr. Eden* I really must repeat what I said, that the decisions which we took were the decisions of the Government as a whole, and I, as Foreign Secretary, was in charge of the Foreign Office when they were taken and, therefore, the responsibility is mine and nobody else's.

*Mr. Dalton* The right hon. Gentleman knows that I respect his courage and his candour, and it is very good of him to tell us that and to take upon his shoulders the decision which was reached. He will excuse me if I say that he knows, and I know, and many people who have been in Governments know, that a decision like this does not leap fresh from the brain—of Zeus or Diana, or whatever god or goddess it may be—on the very morning the Cabinet meets. It is always carefully prepared beforehand, often after long and tedious elaboration of minutes and Departmental discussions. It does not all come out clean like that.

The right hon. Gentleman must not deny—because it would not be true, and he would not say what was untrue, although he is most loyal to his colleagues and willing to bear their burdens—that, owing to his unfortunate absence during the summer, which we greatly regret, all sorts of approaches towards decisions were obviously taken when he was unable to exercise his good judgment and restraining influence on people who have not such good judgment as he has, but who in considerable numbers compose Her Majesty's present Administration.

Whoever is to blame—the right hon. Gentleman says that he is more to blame than I thought he was—there is no doubt that the country as a whole has been shocked by this. This is not a party matter at all. Many non-party people have been very much shocked by it. It is regarded in the country generally as a most deplorable incident, which the country hopes will not be repeated in any comparable form, and it strengthens the feeling in the country that the present Government is really losing its grip. [Laughter.] This is not mere rhetoric; it is a fact.

It is partly because, to our great regret, the Government have had such a long sick list. I will be perfectly honest and genuine about this. We are all very sorry when people whom we know fall ill, even though they are on the other side of the House, but it is also true that if a Government has a large number of Ministers out of action for considerable periods, it is clear that that Government is bound to suffer both in the effectiveness of its work and in public esteem. We have had three Ministers successively in charge of Foreign Affairs, who have fallen ill in recent months. I hear that the present Lord President has not been very well and was again this morning confined to bed. In view of this, let us hope that before long the Government will recover its full physical powers—I say nothing about their other powers—or that the country will have an opportunity of expressing its judgment about it.

Tonight it is our duty as Her Majesty's Opposition to record our judgment in the Lobby on this issue. Our judgment is that Her Majesty's Government have grossly blundered in the whole handling of the matter, have bitterly estranged some of our friends, some who were becoming some of our best friends, and have completely bewildered others, and that as a result a clash of arms, which might grow from small beginnings into greater things, at the head of the Adriatic in this troubled part of Europe has become a looming danger which will require strong and persistent effort to avert, for a clash of arms at the head of the Adriatic might lead to incalculable consequences. Therefore, we shall vote tonight in condemnation of the Government on this issue.

So much for the past, the lamentable immediate past. What of the future? A great number of alternative solutions have been put forward by speakers from both sides of the House. It is clear that, if only we could get the Italians and the Yugoslavs into what I would call a real discussion, a number of these could be examined dispassionately. I shall not pick and choose between them tonight, for I do not think it is right to do so, but a great number of possibilities have been suggested from both sides of the House.

There was the scheme contemplated in the Treaty, and the scheme whereby we should have a permanent division along the zonal boundaries. There was also the scheme suggested by Marshal Tito and Mr. Kardelj, in which we should have the city of Trieste wholly Italian and all the surrounding Slav countryside within the Yugoslav State. In regard to many of these proposals, it would be very profitable if further examination could take place. My hon. Friend the Member for Dagenham (Mr. Parker) made a very interesting and well-informed speech about the economics of the situation with which my hon. Friend the Member for Loughborough (Mr. Follick) also dealt. Trieste cannot live and flourish without a grave unemployment problem, unless there is free movement of trade through the port from the hinterland behind, and that must be an essential part of any settlement.

We have made two positive proposals from our side. First, that the Government should do their very best to secure, even now, the summoning of a conference, to which Italians and Yugoslavs could both come on a footing of parity and without any conditions attached to it, in order to review afresh all the alternative possibilities of settling this vexed problem. In the second place, we propose and we urge upon the Government that British troops—and I hope also American troops—should remain in their stations in Trieste for as long as may be needed to ensure that this danger of war in this part of the world does not materialise.

It is a very cheap payment to make for the peace of the world that we should keep 5,000 troops—and the Americans an equal number—out there at this time in order to preserve the peace of Europe. If these two suggestions which I have made could be accepted in substance at least, then, although the Government's past actions which we censure tonight have caused great mischief and brought about great risks, if a declaration could be made along these lines, the future in this troubled area would look more hopeful and less dangerous.

9.27 p.m.

*The Joint Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Anthony Nutting)* Like my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary, I do not want to say anything in this debate which will make agreement upon this topic more difficult to achieve. Within these limits, I will try my best to deal with the questions which have been put to me in the debate.

First of all, may I deal with the concluding suggestions of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bishop Auckland (Mr. Dalton). My right hon. Friend outlined the future policy and intentions of H.M. Government in this matter. His words were very carefully chosen, and I have nothing whatsoever to add to what he said about our intentions and our plan to get the conference and our intention to continue with the decision announced on 8th October.

May I deal with the 1948 Declaration, to which a great deal of reference has been made in the course of the debate? Frankly, the defences which have been advanced for this Declaration seem to me to be rather disingenuous. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, South (Mr. Noel-Baker) and his right hon. Friend said that the 1948 Declaration was intended as a proposal to the Soviet Government. That is perfectly true; it was a proposal to the Soviet Government.

If the late Government had really intended it to be a working proposal for negotiations with the Soviet Government, then, surely, they would not have published it at precisely the same time as they informed the Soviet Government of it. From the moment of its publication, this Declaration was regarded throughout the world as the policy, the view, the aim and the purpose of the late Government, as an undertaking and as a promise to Italy that so far as it lay within the power of the late Government they would do all that they could to secure the return of the whole of the territory of Trieste to Italy.

As the hon. Gentleman the Member for St. Pancras, North (Mr. K. Robinson) said, the fact is—and we cannot Burke this fact—that every negotiation since 1948 has been dominated—the hon. Member was harder in his strictures upon the late Government than I am; he said every negotiation had been "bedevilled"—by the existence of this Declaration. It meant, in effect, that every time the Yugoslavs and Italians came together to discuss the question, either the Italians based themselves upon the 1948 Declaration, or, if they made no open mention of it, the Yugoslavs suspected the Italians' position, and for that matter ours, too, was still based upon that Declaration.

Let me say a word to the House about the merits of the decision announced on 8th October. The position in which we found ourselves was that the late Government had done their best to put the Peace Treaty solution into effect, and they had failed. They had tried a solution based on the 1948 Declaration, and they had failed again. They, and subsequently we, had tried to bring about direct negotiations between the two sides, and they failed. Therefore, in our judgment no other possible way out was left but the action which we took on 8th October, namely, partition. Apart from a few hon. Gentlemen, notably the hon. Member for Coventry, East (Mr. Crossman) and his hon. Friends, it seems to have been accepted, broadly speaking, by the House, that partition is, in the long run, the only solution to this problem.

There was no question whatever of the Yugoslavs willingly renouncing Zone B, nor of the Italians, for their part, willingly renouncing Zone A. They would not have negotiated the exchange of either Zone or the gift of either Zone one to the other. Therefore, the change, if any change were to be brought about, could have been made only by the use of force by one side or the other, with the inevitable consequence of involving British and American troops on the spot. I need not say, I am sure the whole House will agree, what a disaster this would have been.

Let me turn to the decision of 8th October and what it said, because there was a great deal of comment on this aspect of the matter. We have said that we expect our decision of 8th October will lead to a final settlement, and we made this plain to both Governments, to both the Italian and the Yugoslav Governments, in identical terms to both, and in the terms of the communiqué. I hope that that answers the question put to me by the right hon. Gentleman.

*Mr. Dalton* I should like to get this completely clear. It is rather important. The communiqué, in our view, is not explicit at all. It is not, therefore, satisfactory to quote the terms of the communiqué. The question I asked was very simple. I asked, was Signor Pella told by Her Majesty's Ambassador in Rome, when the latter first informed him of this new decision, that this meant—[Interruption.]—yes or at any other time—was Signor Pella told on his first interview regarding this new policy by the Ambassador, or any other member of the diplomatic mission who, in the absence of the Ambassador, may have seen him, that it meant goodbye by Italy to Zone B? Was he told that?

*Mr. Nutting* I told the right hon. Gentleman that Her Majesty's Ambassador informed Signor Pella that the two Governments, or that Her Majesty's Government—we only spoke for Her Majesty's Government—expected that this decision would lead to a final settlement. [HON. MEMBERS: "Answer."] He was told what was said in the communiqué which was issued on 8th October—[HON. MEMBERS: "Which one?"]—the communiqué issued on 8th October, which spoke in these terms. What is more—and perhaps I may add this for the edification of the right hon. Gentleman—nothing was subsequently said on any further occasion. The right hon. Gentleman asked whether there had been any addition to or subtraction from what was originally said by the Ambassador to Signor Pella. The answer to that question is definitely "No." Nothing further was said on any subsequent date.

*Mr. Crossman* May we take it therefore that the position now is that we have told the Italians and the Yugoslavs that we hope that this will lead to a final solution, and that the ambiguity which caused the whole trouble remains in its unimpaired purity?

*Mr. Nutting* I really do not think that these words can be plainer or have a plainer meaning. [HON. MEMBERS: "Oh."] In any case, it is not for the Opposition—I do not want to rub in this point, because it is clearly a sore point for the Opposition—who recommended the return of the whole territory to Italy, to cavil at the words which were used in the communiqué.

*Mr. Hector McNeil (Greenock)* I am very much obliged to the hon. Gentleman for giving way. He is being very patient. He is surely not asking the House to believe that neither the Italian Foreign Office nor the Yugoslav Foreign Office, at these first meetings or at subsequent meetings, did not invite Her Majesty's Government to elucidate what the communiqué; meant. Is the House to believe if, as seems reasonable those foreign offices did ask for elucidation, that it was refused to them?

*Mr. Nutting* No elucidation was refused because the words were perfectly plain and perfectly clear.

*Mr. Dalton rose—*

*Hon. Members Oh.*

Mr. Dalton The Under-Secretary, having better manners than many of his followers, has given way to me on a very important public matter which, no doubt, many of his followers would like to have shouted down. Did not Signor Pella, at the interview we are discussing, when this was broken to the parties for the first time, say, "What about Zone B?" or words to that effect? What reply was given to him?

Mr. Nutting The right hon. Gentleman is now asking me to divulge to the House of Commons, and hence to the world, confidential discussions between one of Her Majesty's representatives and a foreign Prime Minister. It is really very strange doctrine that right hon. Gentlemen opposite, who have only so recently left office and who would most strongly have resented any such question from us when they were in office, should demand that a member of the Government should divulge the contents of the confidential discussions between one of Her Majesty's representatives and a foreign Prime Minister.

Mr. Herbert Morrison (Lewisham, South) Why is the hon. Gentleman so sensitive? Is not that exactly what the Prime Minister did with his predecessor's confidential communications with the American Secretary of State about attacks on us in Korea from air bases over the border?

Mr. Nutting That was a completely different situation. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister was forced to disclose the existence of these telegrams because the Opposition took him to task for having changed the policy when he was in office.

May I deal with the suggestion made by the hon. Member for Coventry, East, that this communication to the Italians was accompanied by what he called a douceur, and that we and the United States Government told the Italians, or tipped them the wink, as I think he put it, that this 8th October decision was intended by us as a first instalment of the return of the whole territory to Italy. There is no foundation whatsoever for this insinuation—no foundation whatsoever.

What is more, may I add that Signor Pella—in case it has escaped the hon. Gentleman's notice—in a speech to the Italian Senate or House of Representatives—at any rate, in a speech to the Italian Parliament—has made it perfectly clear that the Italian Government have no intention whatsoever of using force to regain Zone B or any part of it. With the Yugoslavs in civil and military control of Zone B surely there can be no threat to peace whatsoever from that side, at any rate.

Before I leave this question of finality, let me say one word in reply to the complaint—I think that it was by the hon. Member for St. Pancras, North—that we did not rescind the 1948 Declaration when we arrived at this decision. The position of Her Majesty's Government, in regard to the 1948 Declaration, is implicit in what was publicly stated both on 8th October, and in the Foreign Secretary's statement of 20th October. We have said that we expect the decision of 8th October will lead to a final settlement. If there is agreement to a final settlement among all concerned, such agreement would, of course, replace the 1948 Declaration. That is what I am informed Mr. Dulles said in America and was quoted in "The Times" newspaper today as having said. That is the position of Her Majesty's Government.

It has been suggested by the right hon. Member for Derby, South and others that we had a mandate from the Security Council to keep our troops in Zone A, and that we have in some way broken with that mandate—we have broken faith. The position is that the Allied Military Government, under the Italian Peace Treaty, was only required to carry on pending the appointment of a governor. Neither the signatories of the Peace Treaty nor the Security Council ever contemplated that the United Kingdom and the United States should indefinitely carry a responsibility which was specified in the Peace Treaty as purely temporary.

If Her Majesty's Government still have forces there today—six years later—it is because, and only because, the Security Council, which accepted responsibility for the Free Territory when established, have failed to appoint a governor and thereby failed to enable the Free Territory to be set up. That was a situation never envisaged by the Peace Treaty. What is more, the Security Council have failed to deal with this matter for something like four years. It is not, therefore, in any breach of any Security Council resolution endorsed by the late Government or of any provision of the Italian Peace Treaty that Her Majesty's Government have taken the decision to hand over the administration of Zone A. This is a de facto solution, designed to arrive at a final settlement of this question.

Mr. Noel-Baker Is it not a fact that the instrument establishing a Provisional Régime said that we should occupy and look after Zone A until a governor was appointed for the Free Territory? There was no time limit. The Security Council accepted responsibilities for the area and the Head of Military Government has made a report to the Security Council every year.

Mr. Nutting It is true that the provisional solution envisaged in the Italian Peace Treaty—Provisional Statute, I think it was called—did envisage precisely that; but, of course, we never got to the Provisional Statute, and still less did we get to the Permanent Statute. It is because of that that the Free Territory has never been set up.

May I say a word about the methods of the decision of Her Majesty's Government? In the Opposition's criticism of the methods which we had adopted, I gathered the impression throughout the debate that both right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite have not faced—I sometimes got the impression that they refused to face—the facts of the very difficult and dangerous situation with which the two Governments have had to contend, particularly in these last months.

For months and for years, all attempts to bring about agreement through discussions between the Italians and the Yugoslavs had failed. Tempers were steadily mounting, and, eventually, developments in August brought matters to such a pitch that there was a real danger of a flare-up, including military action, in view of the troop and naval movement carried out by both sides. As my right hon. Friend has made plain, our talks with both sides through the preceding months had led us to believe that a final solution on the basis of the present zonal boundary, with possible adjustments by agreement between the two sides, might, if not welcomed with open arms by Italy and Yugoslavia, be acquiesced in. But the situation throughout August and September made urgent action essential, if even this reluctant acquiescence was to be forthcoming.

Several hon. Members have asked me for more information on this topic, the right hon. and learned Member for Montgomery (Mr. C. Davies) and the hon. Member for Aston (Mr. Wyatt) in particular. The immediate cause of the flare-up last August was an obscurely and ambiguously worded report put out by the Yugopress News Agency on 28th August—I quote from their statement—that in view of the deliberate "Italianisation" of Zone A and of the general attitude of the Italian Government, "Yugoslavia's attitude in the Trieste question would have to be submitted to serious examination." The Italians immediately interpreted this report—I am not attributing blame to either side but am merely describing the situation that happened in August—as foreshadowing the imminent annexation of Zone B by Yugoslavia; and on 29th August the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued an official statement that "if Yugoslavia in fact carried out such a rash and irresponsible act, the Italian reaction would, without doubt, be what the conscience of our people would demand." By the end of the month, the Italians had despatched a cruiser and two destroyers from Taranto to Venice, leave had been stopped for naval and army personnel, and one artillery regiment, concentrated on Monfalcone, moved close to the Trieste border.

A state of tension quickly arose. There was an exchange of speeches. Meanwhile, the Yugoslav Government were addressing a series of notes to Italy protesting against Italian troop movements, answered on the Italian side by similar counter-accusations and accompanied by mutual recriminations about continued frontier violations. The language used on both sides, especially in the newspapers, became increasingly violent. Italian troop movements continued and by the end of September it was evident that the gulf between the two sides was wider than ever. Both sides were virtually claiming the whole of the Free Territory of Trieste. A very dangerous situation had arisen not only upon the zonal boundary, but upon the whole boundary of the Italian-Yugoslav frontier. All this had happened—let me add and let me emphasise—when our troops were still in occupation of Zone A.

It was this inflammatory and seriously deteriorating situation that caused the United States and British Governments to get together to devise a solution. It was not an attempt to bribe Italy into ratification of E.D.C. It has absolutely nothing to do with E.D.C. I can only say that in answer to the hon. Lady the Member for Cannock (Miss Lee), who accused my right hon. Friend of having lied in this matter.

The situation was deteriorating so seriously that, as my hon. Friend the Member for Bedfordshire, South (Mr. Cole) said, had it been allowed to continue it would probably have become quite impossible to devise any solution of the present zonal boundary. National tempers might well have been frayed to a point where such a solution would have been too dangerous to contemplate.

The right hon. and learned Member for Montgomery asked me to explain why we took this particular decision at such a time. He said that, when national tempers were so frayed and the situation was so delicate and so dangerous, surely this was the last action to take. That is a perfectly fair point, and I think I have given a perfectly fair answer to it. The situation was deteriorating

so rapidly that had we let it go on still further and indefinitely we should never have been able to devise, still less get agreement between both sides upon, this and or any other solution of the Trieste problem. Therefore, we had to act urgently and immediately in order to get this solution.

There has been criticism of the fact that Italy and Yugoslavia, although treated on the same basis, were not given any advance warning. But what would have been the point of giving advance warning? We already knew that the positions of the two sides were poles apart, and if either or both had had advance knowledge of what we proposed to do, since the solution was not and is not fully satisfactory to either, they would have been bound to oppose it in the hope of persuading us to change our minds. Naturally, we were concerned that our decision should be received with as few hard and violent words and reactions as possible.

This reduction of hard words and violent actions would not have been achieved by further delay, by prior discussion with both sides, or even by giving both sides a few days' warning of what we proposed, but, on the contrary, that would have had precisely the opposite effect to what was intended. We had to make up our minds on the merits of the case, and for the reason which I have given to the House in explanation of the August situation we had to act quickly.

I do not complain that hon. Members are suggesting that what we should have done was to consult the parties in advance. I assure them that, had we done so, we should have got absolutely nowhere and we should, therefore, have been forced to do nothing, which would have brought about a still more serious and, as I say, seriously deteriorating situation. On those grounds, I do not accept the indictment of the Opposition as to our timing and methods.

In conclusion, may I say that for a Government confronted with this situation there were two possible courses of action. We could have left our own and United States troops to continue indefinitely to administer Zone A and, as my right hon. Friend has said, to hold the ring. In this case no inconsiderable number of British Forces were involved. The hon. Member for Aston said that there were 3,000 British but there were 5,000 British and 5,000 American, and they might not have been enough. The acute deterioration in the situation which occurred during August and September might have necessitated reinforcing our troops in Trieste to ensure that we were even capable of holding the ring. And there would always have been the possibility—a very undesirable, a very dangerous, and, I should have thought.

*to this House of Commons a most unwelcome possibility—of our own men becoming involved, willy nilly, in open hostilities between the Italians and the Yugoslavs.*

*Under the circumstances, we were bound to take the other course: to try to devise a solution, if necessary without the full consent of both parties. Any such attempt was bound to involve painful action, but lancing an abscess or, as Mr. Dulles put it to his Press conference, cutting a Gordian knot, or whatever expression one chooses, is a painful process. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition complained that we had not indulged in a sedative operation. Frankly, the sedative operations indulged in by his Government in this matter had not led to any solution of this problem——*

Mr. C. R. Attlee (Walthamstow, West) The hon. Gentleman is misquoting me. What I said was that stabbing an ulcer suddenly could not be described as a sedative operation.

Mr. Nutting I am sorry if I have misquoted the right hon. Gentleman. I understood that his complaint was that we had not gone in for sedative treatment. At any rate, I can assure the House that sedative treatment would have had the very opposite of the effect which I am sure the whole of this House wishes, a solution and a settlement on a final basis of this Trieste question. Necessity is often painful, and it is surely better to act drastically as we have done—as we were forced to do—when needs be, before the situation has become such that it is impossible to act at all

*Question put, "That this House do now adjourn."*

*The House divided: Ayes, 268; Noes, 296.*

Division No. 227.]	AYES	[10.0 p.m.
Acland, Sir Richard	Bellenger, Rt. Hon. F. J.	Brook, Dryden (Halifax)
Adams, Richard	Bence, C. R.	Broughton, Dr. A. D. D.
Allen, Arthur (Bosworth)	Benn, Hon. Wedgwood	Brown, Rt. Hon. George (Belper)

Allen, Scholefield (Crewe)	Benson, G.	Brown, Thomas (Ince)
Anderson, Alexander (Motherwell)	Bing, G. H. C.	Burke, W. A.
Anderson, Frank (Whitehaven)	Blackburn, F.	Burton, Miss F. E.
Attlee, Rt. Hon. C. R.	Blenkinsop, A.	Butler, Herbert (Hackney, S.)
Awbery, S. S.	Blyton, W. R.	Callaghan, L. J.
Bacon, Miss Alice	Bottomley, Rt. Hon. A. G.	Carmichael, J.
Baird, J.	Bowen, E. R.	Castle, Mrs. B. A
Balfour, A.	Bowles, F. G.	Champion, A. J.
Barnes, Rt. Hon. A. J.	Braddock, Mrs. Elizabeth	Chapman, W. D
Bartley, P.	Brockway, A. F.	Chetwynd, G. R
Clunie, J.	Jay, Rt. Hon. D. P. T.	Reid, William (Camlachie)
Coldrick, W.	Jeger, George (Goole)	Rhodes, H.
Collick, P. H.	Jenkins, R. H. (Stechford)	Richards, R.
Corbet, Mrs. Freda	Johnson, James (Rugby)	Robens, Rt. Hon. A.
Cove, W. G.	Johnston, Douglas (Paisley)	Roberts, Albert (Normanton)
Craddock, George (Bradford, S.)	Jones, David (Hartlepool)	Roberts, Goronwy (Caernarvon)
Crossman, R. H. S.	Jones, Frederick Elwyn (West Ham, S.)	Robinson, Kenneth (St. Paneras, N.)
Cullen, Mrs. A.	Jones, Jack (Rotherham)	Rogers, George (Kensington, N.)
Daines, P.	Keenan, W.	Ross, William
Dalton, Rt. Hon. H.	Kenyon, C.	Royle, C.
Darling, George (Hillsborough)	Key, Rt. Hon. C. W.	Shackleton, E. A. A.
Davies, Rt. Hon. Clement (Montgomery)	King, Dr. H. M.	Shawcross, Rt. Hon. Sir Hartley
Davies, Harold (Leek)	Lee, Frederick (Newton)	Shinwell, Rt. Hon. E.
Davies, Stephen (Merthyr)	Lee, Miss Jennie (Cannock)	Short, E. W.
de Freitas, Geoffrey	Lever, Harold (Cheetham)	Silverman, Julius (Erdington)
Deer, G.	Lever, Leslie (Ardwick)	Silverman, Sydney (Nelson)
Delargy, H. J.	Lewis, Arthur	Simmons, C. J. (Brierley Hill)
Dodds, N. N.	Lindgren, G. S.	Skeffington, A. M.
Donnelly, D. L.	Lipton, Lt.-Col. M.	Slater, Mrs. H. (Stoke-on Trent)
Dugdale, Rt. Hon. John (W. Bromwich)	Logan, D. G.	Slater, J. (Durham, Sedgefield)
Ede, Rt. Hon. J. C.	MacColl, J. E.	Smith, Ellis (Stoke, S.)
Edelman, M.	McGhee, H. G.	Smith, Norman (Nottingham, S.)
Edwards, Rt. Hon. John (Brighouse)	McGovern, J.	Snow, J. W.
Edwards, Rt. Hon. Ness (Caerphilly)	McInnes, J.	Sorensen, R. W.
Evans, Albert (Islington, S. W.)	McKay, John (Wallsend)	Soskice, Rt. Hon. Sir Frank
Evans, Edward (Lowestoft)	McLeavy, F.	Sparks, J. A.
Evans, Stanley (Wednesbury)	MacMillan, M. K. (Western Isles)	Steele, T.
Fernyhough, E.	McNeill, Rt. Hon. H.	Stewart, Michael (Fulham, E.)
Fienburgh, W.	MacPherson, Malcolm (Stirling)	Stokes, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Finch, H. J.	Mainwaring, W. H.	Strachey, Rt. Hon. J.
Fletcher, Eric (Islington, E.)	Mallalieu, E. L. (Brigg)	Strauss, Rt. Hon. George (Vauxhall)
Follick, M.	Mallalieu, J. P. W. (Huddersfield, E.)	Stross, Dr. Barnett
Foot, M. M.	Mann, Mrs. Jean	Summerskill, Rt. Hon. E.
Forman, J. C.	Manuel, A. C.	Swingler, S. T.
Fraser, Thomas (Hamilton)	Marquand, Rt. Hon. H. A	Sylvester, G. O.
Freeman, John (Watford)	Mason, Roy	Taylor, Bernard (Mansfield)
Freeman, Peter (Newport)	Mayhew, C. P.	Taylor, John (West Lothian)
Gibson, C. W.	Mellish, R. J.	Taylor, Rt. Hon. Robert (Morpet)
Glanville, James	Messer, Sir F.	Thomas, Iorwerth (Rhondda, W.)
Gooch, E. G.	Mikardo, Ian	Thomas, Ivor Owen (Wrekin)
Gordon-Walker, Rt. Hon. P. C.	Mitchison, G. R.	Thomson, George (Dundee, E.)
Greenwood, Anthony (Rossendale)	Monslow, W.	Thorneycroft, Harry (Clayton)
Greenwood, Rt. Hn. Arthur (Wakefield)	Moody, A. S.	Thornton, E.
Grenfell, Rt. Hon. D. R.	Morgan, Dr. H. B. W	Timmons, J.
Grey, C. F.	Morley, R.	Tomney, F.
Griffiths, David (Rother Valley)	Morris, Percy (Swansea, W.)	Turner-Samuels, M.
Griffiths, Rt. Hon. James (Llanelly)	Morrison, Rt. Hon. H. (Lewisham, S.)	Ungoed-Thomas, Sir Lynn
Griffiths, William (Exchange)	Mort, D. L.	Usborne, H. C.
Grimond, J.	Moyle, A.	Viant, S. P.
Hale, Leslie	Mulley, F. W.	Wallace, H. W.
Hall, Rt. Hon. Glenvil (Colne Valley)	Murray, J. D.	Watkins, T. E.

Hall, John T. (Gateshead, W.)	Nally, W.	Warbey, W. N
Hamilton, W. W	Neal, Harold (Bolsover)	Webb, Rt. Hon. M. (Bradford, C.)
Hannan, W.	Noel-Baker, Rt. Hon. P. J	Weitzman, D.
Hardy, E. A.	O'Brien, T.	Wells, Percy (Faversham)
Hargreaves, A.	Oldfield, W. H.	Wells, William (Walsall)
Harrison, J. (Nottingham, E.)	Oliver, G. H.	West, D. G.
Hastings, S.	Orbach, M.	Wheatley, Rt. Hon. John
Hayman, F. H.	Oswald, T.	Wheeldon, W. E.
Henderson, Rt. Hon. A. (Rowley Regis)	Padley, W. E.	White, Mrs. Irene (E. Flint)
Herbison, Miss M.	Paling, Will T. (Dewsbury)	Whiteley, Rt. Hon. W.
Hewitson, Capt. M.	Palmer, A. M. F	Wigg, George
Hobson, C. R.	Pannell, Charles	Wilcock, Group Capt. C. A. B.
Holman, P.	Pargiter, G. A.	Wilkins, W. A.
Houghton, Douglas	Parker, J.	Willey, F. T.
Hoy, J. H.	Paton, J.	Williams, Rev. Llywelyn (Abertillery)
Hubbard, T. F.	Peart, T. F.	Williams, Ronald (Wigan)
Hudson, James (Ealing, N.)	Plummer, Sir Leslie	Williams, Rt. Hon. Thomas (Don Vill'y)
Hughes, Cledwyn (Anglesey)	Popplewell, E.	Williams, W. R. (Droylsden)
Hughes, Emrys (S. Ayrshire)	Porter, G.	Williams, W. T. (Hammersmith, S.)
Hughes, Hector (Aberdeen, N.)	Price, Philips (Gloucestershire, W.)	Wilson, Rt. Hon. Harold (Huyton)
Hynd, H. (Accrington)	Proctor, W. T.	Winterbottom, Ian (Nottingham, C.)
Hynd, J. B. (Attercliffe)	Pryde, D. J.	Winterbottom, Richard (Brightside)
Irvine, A. J. (Edge Hill)	Pursey, Cmdr. H	Woodburn, R. Hon. A.
Irving, W. J. (Wood Green)	Rankin, John	Wyatt, W. L.
Issacs, Rt. Hon. G. A.	Reeves, J.	TELLERS FOR THE AYES:
Janner, B	Reid, Thomas (Swindon)	Mr. Bowden and Mr. Pearson.
Aitken, W. T.	Foster, John	Lucas, P. B. (Brentford)
Allan, R. A. (Paddington, S.)	Fraser, Hon. Hugh (Stone)	Lucas-Tooth, Sir Hugh
Alport, C. J. M.	Fraser, Sir Ian (Morecambe and; Lonsdale)	Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. O.
Amery, Julian (Preston, N.)	Fyfe, Rt. Hon. Sir David Maxwell	McAdden, S. J.
Amory, Heathcoat (Tiverton)	Galbraith, Rt. Hon. T. D. (Pollok)	McCallum, Major D.
Anstruther-Gray, Major W. J.	Galbraith, T. G. D. (Hillhead)	McCorquodale, Rt. Hon. M. S.
Arbuthnot, John	Gammans, L. D.	Macdonald, Sir Peter
Ashton, H. (Chelmsford)	Garner-Evans, E. H.	Mackeson, Brig. H. R.
Assheton, Rt. Hon. R. (Blackburn, W.)	George, Rt. Hon. Maj. G. Lloyd	McKibbin, A. J.
Astor, Hon. J. J.	Godber, J. B.	Mackie, J. H. (Galloway)
Baker, P. A. D.	Gomme-Duncan, Col. A.	Maclay, Rt. Hon. John
Baldock, Lt.-Cmdr. J. M	Gough, C. F. H.	Macleod, Rt. Hon. Iain (Enfield, W.)
Baldwin, A. E.	Gower, H. R.	MacLeod, John (Ross and Cromarty)
Banks, Col. C.	Graham, Sir Fergus	Macmillan, Rt. Hon. Harold (Bromley)
Barber, Anthony	Gridley, Sir Arnold	Macpherson, Niall (Dumfries)
Barlow, Sir John	Grimston, Hon. John (St. Albans)	Maitland, Comdr. J. F. W. (Hornastle)
Baxter, A. B.	Grimston, Sir Robert (Westbury)	Maitland, Patrick (Lanark)
Beach, Maj. Hicks	Hall, John (Wycombe)	Manningham-Buller, Sir R. E.
Bell, Philip (Bolton, E.)	Harden, J. R. E.	Markham, Major Sir Frank
Bell, Ronald (Bucks, S.)	Hare, Hon. J. H.	Marlowe, A. A. H.
Bennett, F. M. (Reading, N.)	Harris, Frederick (Croydon, N.)	Marples, A. E.
Bennett, Dr. Reginald (Gosport)	Harris, Reader (Heston)	Marshall, Douglas (Bodmin)
Bennett, William (Woodside)	Harrison, Col. J. H. (Eye)	Marshall, Sir Sidney (Sutton)
Bevins, J. R. (Toxteth)	Harvey, Air Cdre. A. V. (Macclesfield)	Maude, Angus
Birch, Nigel	Harvey, Ian (Harrow, E.)	Maydon, Lt.-Comdr. S. L. C.
Bishop, F. P.	Harvie-Watt, Sir George	Medlicott, Brig. F.
Black, C. W.	Hay, John	Mellor, Sir John
Boothby, Sir R. J. G.	Head, Rt. Hon. A. H.	Monckton, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Bossom, Sir A. C.	Heald, Sir Lionel	Moore, Lt.-Col. Sir Thomas
Boyd-Carpenter, J. A	Heath, Edward	Morrison, John (Salisbury)
Boyle, Sir Edward	Henderson, John (Cathcart)	Mott-Radclyffe, C. E.
Braine, B. R.	Higgs, J. M. C.	Nabarro, G. D. N.
Braithwaite, Ltd.-Cdr. G. (Bristol, N. W.)	Hill, Dr. Charles (Luton)	Neave, A. M. S.
Bromley-Davenport, Lt.-Col. W. H.	Hill, Mrs. E. (Wythenshawe)	Nicholls, Harmar

Brooke, Henry (Hampstead)	Hinchbrooke, Viscount	Nicholson, Godfrey (Farnham)
Brooman-White, R. C.	Hirst, Geoffrey	Nicolson, Nigel (Bournemouth, E.)
Browne, Jack (Govan)	Holland-Martin, C. J.	Nield, Basil (Chester)
Bullard, D. G.	Hollis, M. C.	Noble, Cmdr. A. H. P.
Bullus, Wing Commander E. E	Holmes, Sir Stanley (Harwich)	Nugent, G. R. H.
Burden, F. F. A.	Hope, Lord John	Nutting, Anthony
Butcher, Sir Herbert	Hopkinson, Rt. Hon. Henry	Oakshott, H. D.
Campbell, Sir David	Hornsby-Smith, Miss M. P.	Odey, G. W.
Carr, Robert	Horobin, I. M.	O'Neill, Phelim (Co. Antrim, N.)
Cary, Sir Robert	Horsbrugh, Rt. Hon. Florence	Ormsby-Gore, Hon. W. D.
Channon, H.	Howard, Gerald (Cambridgeshire)	Orr, Capt. L. P. S.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Sir Winston	Howard, Hon. Greville (St. Ives)	Orr-Ewing, Charles Ian (Hendon, N.)
Clarke, Col. Ralph (East Grinstead)	Hudson, Sir Austin (Lewisham, N.)	Orr-Ewing, Sir Ian (Weston-super-Mare)
Cole, Norman	Hudson, W. R. A. (Hull, N.)	Peake, Rt. Hon. O.
Colegate, W. A.	Hulbert, Wing Cdr. N. J	Perkins, W. R. D.
Conant, Maj. R. J. E.	Hurd, A. R.	Peto, Brig. C. H. M
Cooper, Sqd. Ldr. Albert	Hutchinson, Sir Geoffrey (Ilford, N.)	Peyton, J. W. W.
Cooper-Key, E. M.	Hutchison, Lt.-Com. Clark (E'b'rgh, W.)	Pickthorn, K. W. M.
Craddock, Beresford (Spelthorne)	Hutchison, James (Scotstoun)	Pilkington, Capt. R. A
Crookshank, Capt. Rt. Hon. H. F. C	Hyton-Foster, H. B. H.	Pitman, I. J.
Crosthwaite-Eyre, Col. O. E.	Jenkins, Robert (Dulwich)	Pitt, Miss E. M.
Crouch, R. F.	Jennings, R.	Powell, J. Enoch
Crowder, Sir John (Finchley)	Johnson, Eric (Blackley)	Price, Henry (Lewisham, W.)
Crowder, Petre (Ruislip—Northwood)	Johnson, Howard (Kemptown)	Prior-Palmer, Brig. O. L
Cuthbert, W. N.	Jones, A. (Hall Green)	Profumo, J. D.
Darling, Sir William (Edinburgh, S.)	Joynson-Hicks, Hon. L. W	Raikes, Sir Victor
De la Bère, Sir Rupert	Kaberry, D.	Rayner, Brig. R.
Digby, S. Wingfield	Keeling, Sir Edward	Redmayne, M.
Dodds-Parker, A. D.	Kerr, H. W.	Remnant, Hon. P
Donaldson, Cmdr. C. E. McA.	Lambert, Hon. G.	Renton, D. L. M.
Donner, Sir P. W.	Lambton, Viscount	Roberts, Peter (Heeley)
Doughty, C. J. A.	Lancaster, Col. C. G.	Robertson, Sir David
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord Malcolm	Langford-Holt, J. A.	Robinson, Roland (Blackpool, S.)
Drayson, G. B.	Law, Rt. Hon. R. K.	Robson-Brown, W.
Dugdale, Rt. Hon. Sir T. (Richmond)	Leather, E. H. C.	Rodgers, John (Sevenoaks)
Duthie, W. S.	Legge-Bourke, Maj. E. A. H.	Roper, Sir Harold
Eccles, Rt. Hon. Sir D. M.	Legh, Hon. Peter (Petersfield)	Ropner, Col. Sir Leonard
Eden, Rt. Hon. A.	Lennox-Boyd, Rt. Hon. A. T	Russell, R. S.
Elliot, Rt. Hon. W. E	Lindsay, Martin	Ryder, Capt. R. E. D.
Erroll, F. J.	Linstead, Sir H. N.	Sandys, Rt. Hon. D.
Fell, A.	Llewellyn, D. T.	Savory, Prof. Sir Douglas
Finlay, Graeme	Lloyd, Rt. Hon. G. (King's Norton)	Schofield, Lt.-Col. W
Fisher, Nigel	Lloyd, Maj. Sir Guy (Renfrew, E.)	Scott, R. Donald
Fleetwood-Hesketh, R. F.	Lockwood, Lt.-Col. J. C.	Scott-Miller, Cmdr. R
Fletcher, Sir Walter (Bury)	Longden, Gilbert	Shepherd, William
Fletcher-Cooke, C.	Low, A. R. W.	Simon, J. E. S. (Middlesbrough, W.)
Ford, Mrs. Patricia	Lucas, Sir Jocelyn (Portsmouth, S.)	Smithers, Peter (Winchester)
Fort, R.	Taylor, William (Bradford, N.)	Smithers, Sir Waldron (Orpington)
Smyth, Brig. J. G. (Norwood)	Teeling, W.	Wakefield, Sir Wavell (St. Marylebone)
Snadden, W. McN.	Thomas, Rt. Hon. J. P. L. (Hereford)	Walker-Smith, D. C.
Soames, Capt. C.	Thomas, Leslie (Canterbury)	Ward, Hon. George (Worcester)
Spearman, A. C. M.	Thomas, P. J. M. (Conway)	Ward, Miss I. (Tynemouth)
Speir, R. M.	Spence, H. R. (Aberdeenshire, W.) Thompson, Kenneth (Walton)	Waterhouse, Capt, Rt. Hon. C
Spens, Sir Patrick (Kensington, S.)	Thompson, Lt.-Cdr. R. (Croydon, W.)	Watkinson, H. A.
Stanley, Capt. Hon. Richard	Thorneycroft, Rt. Hn. Peter (Monmouth)	Wellwood, W.
Stevens, G. P.	Thornton-Kemsley, Col. C. N.	Williams, Rt. Hon. Charles (Torquay)
Steward, W. A. (Woolwich, W.)	Tilney, John	Williams, Gerald (Tonbridge)
Stewart, Henderson (Fife, E.)	Touche, Sir Gordon	Williams, Paul (Sunderland, S.)
Stoddart-Scott, Col. M.	Turner, H. F. L	Williams, R. Dudley (Exeter)
Storey, S.	Turton, R. H.	Wills, G.
		Wilson, Geoffrey (Truro)

Strauss, Henry (Norwich, S.)	Tweedsmuir, Lady	Wood, Hon. R.
Stuart, Rt. Hon. James (Moray)	Vane, W. M. F.	York, C.
Studholme, H. G.	Vaughan-Morgan, J. K.	
Sutcliffe, Sir Harold	Vosper, D. F.	TELLERS FOR THE NOES:
Taylor, Charles (Eastbourne)	Wakefield, Edward (Derbyshire, W.)	Mr. Buchan-Hepburn and Sir Cedric Drewe.