

many generations, provided the leadership of North American statesmen and the resolution of our North American population is equal to the power which is now ours. Although I have said North American, and although we like and expect to be consulted, we Canadians are realistic and we know that there has to be a proper relationship between power and responsibility; and that the United States alone has the necessary power to support the required leadership.

The American people have certainly not striven for their present position of power and responsibility in the world. I am sure most of you and, indeed, most North Americans on both sides of the border look back often with longing to the days before 1914 when it seemed safe to ignore international affairs outside this hemisphere. But we in North America have no such choice. The only choice before you and before us is a choice between wise, patient and intelligent leadership of the free world by the United States or a rapid shrinkage of the circumference of the free world, with all the disastrous consequences that it would bring even if we were able to maintain some kind of independent existence in our Western Hemisphere.

In the kind of world we are now living in there is no quick and easy way to peace or to anything we would like to think of as a normal existence. We have first of all to create, and after that to maintain, perhaps for generations, military strength which will be too substantial to be challenged by any potential aggressor with any hope of final victory.

We cannot count on any early collapse of the totalitarian system erected behind the Iron Curtain. We are faced with the problem of living in the same world with that system. I am not sure that one of the greatest dangers we shall have to face will not be the danger of aggression, but the danger of listening to those who think they have a quick way and an easy solution to this dangerous problem.

There will be many who will say that since communism is bent on extinguishing our way of life, we should hit first, that the best thing to do is to get the inevitable over with. The appeal of that kind of doctrine is likely to grow as the military strength of the free world grows. In the next few years, it may be that nothing will be so important as to remember that what we are doing is to try to prevent a third world war, not to win one.

One of your distinguished American diplomats has said that "the United States will fight, if necessary, to preserve freedom and justice, but it will not make war merely because the road to peace is inevitably long and hard and tiresome." I have not the slightest doubt and I am sure you have no doubt that, if a test of strength is forced upon us by an aggressor, we in the free world could win again. But the cost will be far greater than the cost of any previous war. Even victory will bring with it destruction, dislocation and desolation so great as to constitute a threat to civilization itself. That is why we must never forget that our real aim is to be strong in order to prevent war. Of course, we need the help of our European partners. Of course, we need to do everything we can to win the sympathy and preserve the stability of the countless millions of the East.

But, if the free world is to be saved, and, if we and our children and our children's children are to enjoy a free and expanding society in this Western Hemisphere I feel that we in North America must now and for many months ahead accept and discharge, with wisdom and with patience, the heavy responsibilities which are inseparable from the position of power which North America has in the world of our generation.