

*External Affairs*

Affairs (Mr. Pearson) told us what had happened at Berlin. He told us of the failure of that conference except for the extent that the meeting at Geneva may be regarded as offering some hope. He told us also of the failure of that gathering to deal either with German unification or with a solution of the Austrian situation; and then he went on to deal with certain misunderstandings which had occurred as a result of a speech by Mr. Dulles some time ago. He pointed out the misgivings with which this government had heard of the announcement by Mr. Dulles of the assurance of massive retaliation in the event of circumstances arising which, in the opinion of the government of the United States, justified action of that kind. He spoke of the ambiguity of the words that had been used. He told us of the attempts which had been made to clear up the situation and to remove that ambiguity. He left us with the impression that massive retaliation would not occur without consultation.

But, Mr. Speaker, I do not believe he can have quite accurately interpreted what was in his mind. If he had told us that there would be consultation in regard to the circumstances under which there would be massive retaliation, then I think it might conform with what we have been told by the President of the United States through press reports we have received. There is a difference, and a very great difference. The eventuality against which the massing of all this dreadful hitting power has been taking place is that frightful eventuality of attack, either on the United States or on one of the nations with which we are associated. Is it thinkable that if such an attack occurred those forces which have been assembled for the defence of freedom would be held in leash while there was consultation? It is unthinkable.

Is it within the realm of possibility that the government of the United States would permit bombing to continue, or atomic attacks from submarines or surface craft, continued day by day or even hour by hour, without action until there had been consultation? It is simply not a possibility. That was recognized only a few days ago in Britain when it was indicated quite clearly that there would be agreement as to the circumstances under which the bases in Britain would be used, but it was very clearly understood that retaliation would be immediate, massive and dreadful.

The fact is that we are perhaps nearer the hope of lasting peace today than we have been for a very long time. It is a terrifying thing to admit, but as we read of the ashes from the hydrogen bomb at

Bikini blowing 800 or 900 miles still impregnated with the effect of that explosion, there must be in the minds of the men in the Kremlin, as of anyone else, how universal the destruction would be if the ultimate madness of war came once again.

There are many men in this chamber now who will remember how they were compelled to carry gas masks throughout the early years of the war. They were warned never to be without them. They knew that the enemy possessed, and that we possessed, gases of the most dreadful kind. That frightful weapon was never used. It was never used because it would have been so terrible on either side.

But here is something infinitely more terrible, so terrible in fact that it staggers the imagination. Only today responsible newspapers throughout the world are suggesting that great restraint should be exercised in the explosion of any more of these bombs. Editorials have pointed out that by accident someone may go beyond the controllable limit and thus send dangerous and deadly radiation throughout the greater part of the world. That is now a real and dreadful possibility.

One of these editorials in one of the most responsible newspapers published today pointed out that this presents the dreadful prospect that some madman, cornered and hopeless, might employ this dreadful weapon. That could be true. Certainly by every device within our power, certainly by every effort open to men of common sense and good will, we should be seeking to prevent that frightful possibility, which now unhappily is a possibility.

Anything I say will be said in the belief that what we do as a nation should bear that possibility in mind, and should keep that dreadful reality always before us in any decisions that are made. For that reason I wish to examine what was said yesterday, and what is still before us in regard to communist China and the conference which is to take place at Geneva.

The Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) explained yesterday that under the pressure of questions by members of the press he thought he might have used words that did not exactly interpret the thoughts that were in his mind. No member of this house will show any disposition to question in any way the explanation he has given. Certainly there is not any member here who is unaware of the difficulties presented by the kind of questions that are presented under pressure as someone leaves an aircraft, gets off a train or arrives at his destination, when he is either at home or abroad. That explanation we