

It was misrepresented in our visit to Moscow, too, in the sense that we were told that the policy of the West was to insist that Germany shall remain in NATO as a price for unification. That, of course, is not the case. All we ask is that the Germans be allowed to make their own choice as a result of free elections. That choice might be membership in NATO or withdrawal from NATO, or any other course they may desire to follow; and it should be made perfectly clear that that is the position of the West. We should do our best to correct misrepresentations of that position from communist sources.

I have mentioned the NATO conference meeting. I do not have time today to give any detailed report of it, but I can say this. We agreed at that meeting, as you would have expected us to agree, that nothing happened to justify any relaxation in our defence or in our diplomacy. We felt that those who were opposed to NATO were counting on relaxation of the tension bringing about a relaxation of effort and a weakening in our unity. We agreed that we must do our best to remain strong and united and keep our diplomacy flexible and active. I hope there will be another opportunity when I can report in greater detail about the NATO developments, and especially the Council meeting last December.

The International Situation

In conclusion, may I just say a word on the general situation. The great combined effort to maintain peace and freedom goes on. The leadership in that effort continues to rest with the United States of America, and that is why every other free nation, especially a neighbour and friend like Canada, must be intensely preoccupied with every aspect of American policy. That is why we must make our views clearly known to the people of that country on the issues which affect us both but in which their position is vital.

The two greatest factors today bearing on the danger of aggression in all parts of the world are, I think, first the nature and conduct of United States policy because of its position of power and leadership, and second the strength of United States arms. As the predominant element of power in the NATO alliance—where would we be today without it? United States strength, military and economic, has been of decisive importance during the past decade in maintaining peace in Europe, and hence in the world. It will be so, I believe, in the years ahead.

Similarly, the determination of the United States to give leadership in resisting aggression in Korea in 1950 saved collective security and probably the United Nations itself. We would be wise not to forget this when we dwell on present differences of viewpoint within the coalition—and we have them—particularly in connection with Far Eastern policy.