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**Note du secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures au
secrétaire d'État des États-Unis**

**Memorandum from Secretary of State for External Affairs to
Secretary of State of the United States**

Secret

December 6, 1950

**Views of the Canadian Government on Possible Use
of Atomic Weapons in the Far East**

The military authorities may argue that the atomic bomb is just another weapon. But, in the minds of ordinary people everywhere in the world, it is far more than that and has acquired an immensely greater intrinsic significance. The anxiety with which the possibility of the use of the bomb, by either side, is regarded has been strikingly and increasingly evident of late among our friends in Europe and in Asia. This is the main reason for the appeal, even in free countries, of the cynical Communist "peace" campaign.

The psychological and political consequences of the employment of the bomb, or the threat of its employment, in the present critical situation would be incalculably great. The risk of retaliation, to which our allies in Europe feel themselves to be exposed, would affect materially their will to resist, and even the consideration of the possibility of atomic war in Asia, when our defences are still weak, cannot fail to stimulate the tendencies toward "neutralism" which the development of strength and unity on our side is beginning to overcome.

The strategic use of the bomb against Chinese cities might conceivably change the course of military events in Asia now, but at the risk of destroying the cohesion and unity of purpose of the Atlantic community. Certainly its use, for a second time, against an Asian people would dangerously weaken the links that remain between the Western world and the peoples of the East.

The atomic bomb is the most powerful deterrent element in the arsenal