

Nations twelve countries such as Ireland, Italy, Austria and Finland -- nations which have political, cultural and economic ties with the free world -- it was necessary to accept the admission of four states whose governments do not, at the present time, share our belief in the validity of free democracy.

There are some who suggest that there is something sinister in an honest compromise. Surely, adjustment of conflicting views by the process of give and take is one of the mainstays of our democratic system. Here in Canada, where the descendants of two historic races live side by side in friendly harmony, we recognize that without this kind of approach to our problems, we could never have achieved nationhood or developed that basic sense of unity which is the fundamental source of our strength as a nation. The art of compromise is just as necessary in international affairs. It is only as the nations learn to approach their problems in an attitude of mutual respect and understanding that we will succeed in building a world-wide community in which a secure peace will be possible.

Finally, it should be noted that admission to membership in the United Nations carries with it the assumption of definite obligations -- obligations which go far beyond those which are normally demanded of members of the international community under the law of nations. As a people nurtured in freedom and dedicated to peace, we disapprove of the policies followed by countries beyond the Iron Curtain. But surely they are not likely to become less acceptable members of the world community as adherents of the United Nations, committed as they must be to its purposes and subject to its rules.

We have all had reason to deplore the inhuman religious persecutions which have raged practically everywhere behind the Iron Curtain and which have disposed in the most horrible manner of human beings whose only crime has been their desire to be free. Speaking for Canada, I have raised my voice repeatedly in protest against the treatment of Cardinal Mindszenti and other leaders of the Church in violation of the most elementary principles of humanity. But I have been speaking to empty benches. Now, with the admission of Bulgaria, Hungary and Roumania to membership in the United Nations, I will be able to confront their representatives face to face with these charges. I will be able to ask them why they have made these ruthless attacks on the most precious of all freedoms -- the freedom of conscience -- and why they have permitted human beings to be so crudely tried and so unjustly condemned to death. It may well be that in bringing these nations to account for their actions before the bar of world opinion, this exposure in itself will prove to be a powerful deterrent to further violations of basic human rights.