

We have seen that a high degree of armed preparedness has emerged as the product of a military appreciation that with the modern weapons at its disposal one side could strike a crippling blow at the other and quickly render the adversary helpless. Clearly this result could most easily be achieved through a surprise attack and those responsible for national defence have devoted much energy and ingenuity to devise means of meeting that threat.

As we and others have frequently emphasized, the removal of that risk does not lie either in unilateral action or in meaningless declarations. If for example the West were to lower its guard, such action, we believe, would increase rather than reduce the risk of nuclear war through mistake or miscalculation. The solution lies in dealing with the causes which have led to armed preparedness and one of the main causes in our view is the danger of surprise attack. It is what produces the gnawing fear that if one side should halt or reduce its defence preparedness the other would strike a death blow.

It is just because we recognize surprise attack as perhaps the most ominous of the dangers facing the world that the Canadian Government welcomes warmly the initiative which the United States has taken in the Council today. In our view the proposal for the prompt establishment of a system of inspection in northern areas, to provide safeguards against the danger of surprise attack, represents a practicable attempt to deal with this most deeply rooted cause of anxiety and tension.

Before I enter further into the substance of the proposal now before us, I should like to call attention to the somewhat novel situation in which the Council finds itself. I think I am right in saying that this is one of the few if not the first occasion on which a member has requested the Council to convene to consider not a complaint, nor the action consequent on a General Assembly resolution, nor the report of a subsidiary organ or of some agent of the UN, but a positive and constructive proposal which is designed to assist the Council in maintaining international peace and security. It is the hope of the Canadian Government that these proceedings will show that the Council can act constructively through the adoption of preventive as well as remedial measures.

The Canadian Government has already expressed its readiness to open the whole of Canada under a general system of inspection. Moreover, the positive Canadian attitude towards measures to provide against surprise attack is one which we have maintained for several years. I might, however, give some precision to Canada's attitude towards partial plans for international inspection. We are prepared to have a part of Canada included in any initial scheme of inspection which would involve a zone containing a North American portion and a Soviet portion of relatively equal importance. My point is that we are not wedded to any specific proposal and the essence of the Canadian position is that the areas of both sides should be of comparable importance, so that the arrangements would be equitable.