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COPY

50 King St. West, Toronto,  
February 25, 1954.

Dear . . . . .:

I have had to absorb a lot of humiliation at the hands of certain allegedly Conservative newspapers lately--particularly The Toronto Telegram. Have a feeling that I cannot in self-respect avoid breaking out, but at my age and in my state of health am very reluctant to do so. At the risk of adding to your already too heavy burden, I have decided to ask a little guidance.

Herewith is editorial from yesterday's Telegram. You observe it attacks Judith Robinson, their own columnist. Needless to say, it would be hard at present to conceive of circumstances under which, if war came between the United States and Soviet Russia, Canada could stay out. This realization, though, is quite different from a pledge in advance, and necessarily without knowledge of developments which the future will unfold, that Canada will at once participate. We certainly never gave any such pledge in the past, even to Britain. We left the decision with ourselves until the time would come when we must decide. The doctrine which the Telegram now proclaims gives to the United States the right to determine when Canada goes to war. That paper's hallucinations about the greatness of Lester B. Pearson have brought it to this unheard of extreme of dedication.

True, under certain specified circumstances, our adherence to NATO commits us. Those circumstances we have considered, and for our commitment there we get commitments in return. Pearson's prolific pledges in Florida are litter of another breed. I can hardly believe my eyes that such stuff can be published without a roar of anger from the Parliaments and firesides of Canada.

I do not know how to describe where the Telegram went for its new Editor. Am told it was to the last known political progeny of John Diefenbaker. If such doctrine had been submitted to Diefenbaker when Britain, the head of our Commonwealth, was the main guardian of world peace and freedom, he would have torn his hair out in rage.

Am sure I will feel better when I have a word from you.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Arthur Meighen.

P.S.--Since dictating the above, have seen the CP despatch of yesterday from Ottawa (copy enclosed) in which Pearson is said to have explained his statements. This despatch leaves the matter exactly where it was when I dictated the above. It is no explanation at all--just a re-affirmation of a pledge that should be pilloried without mercy.

A. M.

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