

*The Address—Mr. St. Laurent*

I must admit that the leader of the opposition was quite fair in his reference to the rather glib remark I made on one occasion at a press conference that there had been issued a policy by Lloyd's against the probability of an international meeting in Toronto, planned for next September, being interfered with by war. He did suggest in his remarks that he did not think it was any choice of mine that so much had been made of it in the newspapers and over the radio. Hon. members know that my considered views about the world situation were expressed in the new year's message which was recorded for broadcasting to the people of Canada before I left on December 31 to attend the meeting of the commonwealth prime ministers in London.

My considered views were there expressed. They are still my views. I shall not read them into the record, but I think the substance can be put in just about four sentences. I said then, and I really believe, that the situation at the opening of 1951 was even more serious than it was at the opening of 1950. I stated then, and I firmly believe, that that is why we must increase our efforts to prevent a world war. In spite of the gravity of the situation I do not believe a world war is inevitable. I do not believe that a world war is inevitable because of my confidence in the willingness and ability of the peoples of the twelve nations grouped together under the North Atlantic treaty to build up their strength to a point where aggression will not be attempted against them.

I do not believe we can fold our arms and expect that we shall not have war. I believe, however, that the people of this nation and the people of the other eleven nations who have banded themselves together under the terms of the North Atlantic treaty are willing and able to do what will be necessary to constitute an effective deterrent against the probability of aggression. We knew that a supreme commander had been appointed. Although it was known to all the people of Canada, we believed nevertheless it was an event of sufficient importance to be mentioned in His Excellency's speech to us at the opening of parliament. We regarded it as one of those indications of the progress that was being made in organizing north Atlantic strength against the risk of aggression.

From our own experience prior to the appointment of a supreme commander, we knew that there had been much comparing of good things to do in an attempt to decide which were preferable; but up to the time

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a supreme commander was selected and recognized by the governments of the twelve nations, it was quite difficult to find anyone to take the responsibility of saying, "Among the good things that might be done, this is the one we are going to do and we are going to do it now." I think the choice of a supreme commander for the marshalling and organizing of the forces of the twelve nations banded together under that treaty will make for dispatch; and dispatch is required if we are to justify our faith, belief and trust that we shall soon have that strength required to make aggression unattractive to any who might be tempted to start it against us.

Not only has a supreme commander been chosen, but the supreme commander has visited the capitals of the twelve nations that are signatories of the North Atlantic treaty. He has reported to us here the impressions he gathered overseas and he has now reported to the congress of the United States the impressions he gathered in his visits to the twelve nations. Just as I came into the chamber I was handed a dispatch summarizing some of the statements the supreme commander had made in his report of an hour's duration to the United States congress:

Eisenhower asked this question: "Why are we frightened of dictatorial governments?" He said the only thing such governments have is unity of purpose, but it is "enforced by a gun in the kidneys."

That is not the kind of unity of purpose that is going to prevail among the peoples of the twelve nations that are signatories to the North Atlantic treaty.

Repeatedly Eisenhower emphasized that the proposed build-up of forces in Europe is aimed at keeping the peace.

It is because I believe that such is the real purpose of the free peoples of these twelve nations that I still venture to express the confident hope that we shall not have to indulge in a third catastrophic world war. I believe that the manpower, the know-how, the industrial potential and the natural resources available to the people of those twelve nations are such that if we had the misfortune to become involved in a third world war we would still win; but the cost of doing so would be so terrible that it is still my hope and my confident belief that it can be prevented. The price we shall have to pay to ensure its avoidance is going to be a heavy one and it is mounting constantly. The proposals the government will have to make in order to carry out the declarations contained in the speech from the throne will be brought to the attention of this house, Mr. Speaker, and they will, I am sure, justify the