

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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NORTH AMERICAN SECURITY

An address by General A.G.L. McNaughton, delivered to the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, in Toronto, on May 25, 1950.

I count it a great honour as well as a great pleasure, to have the privilege of addressing the members of this group of leaders of the business world of the United States and of Canada. The subject on which I am to speak is "North American Security" and I welcome this opportunity to make a few observations on a question which is of fundamental importance to the peoples of both our countries. In doing so I will endeavour to bring before you some of the basic considerations which need to be taken into account in the present international situation, and I hope that in the course of my remarks I may indicate not only the very substantial progress which has been achieved between Canada and the United States within the wider grouping of the North Atlantic Treaty in translating ideas and sentiments into specific arrangements, but also that I may bring before you some aspects of these matters on which we have not as yet been able to arrive at arrangements which will provide that measure of effective co-operation which clearly is required.

At the present time the need for North American Security arises from one cause only, and that is the clear evidence that unless we make adequate defence preparations, the masters of the Soviet Union will continue to hold to their purpose of eventual world conquest and, whenever they deem the situation propitious for their purpose, will turn to war as a means of achieving their ends. This being so, it becomes most important for the nations who are threatened to bring themselves into close association so that, through mutual co-operation, they may create a deterrent which will check the evil designs of those who plan the disruptive policy of the Soviet Union.

In the circumstances which exist, the initiative for war must continue to lie with the Soviets for, by reason of our adherence to the principles of democracy, we cannot even contemplate a so-called "preventive" war for which a date might be set in advance to simplify planning and conserve resources. On the contrary we must take our guidance from the wise old saying that "The Strong Man Who Continues to be Armed Keepeth the Peace." As a consequence, and not having a point in time on which to focus, our preparations for defence must of necessity be at a level which we are physically capable of sustaining year in and year out. For that very reason, if our preparations are to prove effective in the brief time of warning likely to be available, our preparatory arrangements must be more comprehensive and costly than the preparations of those who plan to a specific date; and our effort may have to be long-continued.