

dispute between nations. It is for this reason and in this spirit that I now say a few words to you about the international situation.

International Situation

What of the international situation? As you know, the Foreign Ministers' Conference in Geneva came to an end last month, after two prolonged sessions of negotiations devoted mainly to the problems of Berlin and German reunification. While no solution to these problems was found, the Conference must be regarded as worthwhile, especially when one reflects on the possible alternatives. The threats of unilateral action on Berlin and of the use of force, which were being uttered by Soviet spokesmen last November, have receded into the background.

Progress was not made on the broad question of reunification and European security. Differences over the Berlin situation were narrowed sufficiently to lay the groundwork for belief that some interim arrangement can be achieved pending a final settlement.

While the results of the Conference were neither dramatic nor conclusive, I continue to believe in the imperative need of negotiations between the Soviet Union and the West, while recognizing that quick and easy results cannot be expected from these negotiations.

The differences that divide are many and deep. The West is certainly not going to abandon its basic principles, and the Soviet Union will not modify its political philosophy to an extent that would make likely an early and comprehensive settlement of our differences.

I believe that in the pursuit of a settlement of these outstanding differences the West must be prepared to negotiate in many ways and at all levels and at great length, according to the opportunities which present themselves.

President Eisenhower's Initiative

It was with these considerations in mind that the Canadian Government gave immediate support to President Eisenhower's decision to arrange for an exchange of visits with Premier Khrushchev. The Canadian Government welcomed it as evidence of the willingness of President Eisenhower, in his capacity as leader of the major power in the Western world, to assume the responsibilities which the strength and position of his country bestow, no matter how onerous and unrewarding the task may be.

I applaud the initiative which President Eisenhower has directed towards the creation of an atmosphere which would facilitate the beginnings of what must be a long and difficult process of negotiation.