

15. Excerpts from a statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs in Windsor, Ontario, November 15, 1950

...we will have to watch with particular care those areas and countries which lie on a periphery of the free world and are most open to Soviet attack. The marches of the free world are obviously the most critical points. It is there that the two worlds rub together. Even when aggression is not threatened, there is bound to be a certain amount of friction and unease along these borders. I do not need to insist, I imagine, on our determination to help in defending these areas from unprovoked aggression. By now, that should be beyond question. At the same time, we must hope that those primarily responsible for safeguarding the security of such areas of the world should carry out their mission in as steady and unprovocative a way as possible. We should go about without chips on our shoulders or fire in our eyes! It is difficult to decide how far the fears which the Soviet Union and its satellites profess for the West are genuine and how far they are trumped up to cloak their own totalitarian designs. Mostly the latter, I suspect. But the information which reaches the Kremlin about the West comes, in so many cases, from sources tainted by the prejudices of Marxist orthodoxy that we cannot entirely rule out the possibility that some genuine fear does play a considerable part in the formulation of the policy of the Soviet Union and its satellites. This possibility should be especially borne in mind, I think, on any occasion when it is necessary to conduct defensive military operations close to the borders of Communist states. Here we should do what we can to reduce those fears to a minimum and to reassure bordering states that their legitimate interests will not be infringed. I have in mind, of course, particularly tonight the situation in North Korea, where United Nations Forces are operating very close to the borders of Manchuria and Siberia. The integrity of their frontiers are, of course, of concern to those two governments. They are also concerned about the safety of valuable installations lying along the border. Nothing therefore should be left undone which could help to convince them that those legitimate concerns will be respected; even though in reverse circumstances we of the free world would not be shown such consideration. The motives which have prompted the Chinese Communist Government in Peking to despatch forces into North Korea are still obscure. Until we are obliged to believe otherwise, however, I would suggest that it might be wise to assume, as indeed is suggested by some of the evidence, that this incursion has been dictated by limited considerations and that it should not deflect us from our policy of trying, in every way open to us, to prevent the war from spreading.

Speaking in the House of Commons on August 31 I said: "I would like to emphasize also that it is not the purpose of this Government to support any course of policy which will extend the scope of the present conflict in Korea; a conflict which should be confined and localized if it is in our power to do that; and, if not, a policy which should avoid giving anyone else an excuse for extending it". That has been the policy of the Canadian Government from the outset of the war in Korea. It is still our policy today. And we have used whatever influence we have to urge these views on other governments which are involved in the hostilities in Korea. We have also urged—I did so when I spoke before the General Assembly of the United Nations on the 27th of September—that