

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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HOW THE PRINCIPLES OF WAR CAN BE APPLIED TO PEACE

An address by Field Marshal, The Right Honourable The Viscount Alexander of Tunis, K.G., Governor General of Canada, delivered at MacDonald College, McGill University, on the occasion of the Second Annual War Memorial Assembly, February 26, 1948.

On this historic occasion when we are gathered here to commemorate the many men and women of Macdonald College who served in two World Wars, and to honour the memory of the seventy-four who gave their lives, I feel deeply honoured for the privilege of addressing you tonight.

Those names which are inscribed in the Book of Remembrance, which has just been unveiled, were those of great Canadians. They were citizens who were willing to give all they had for their country. We honour them, and I need not say that this generation and those who come after us will ever remember them and their deeds.

During the recent World War, I had the good fortune to command Canadian soldiers in battle. And amongst all the many fighting men of the different nations which composed my Army Group, none played a more gallant and distinguished part in our victory than Canada's own sons-- your countrymen.

Those days now belong to the past, and glorious as they were they will only be lived again when old warriors get together to exchange their reminiscences or be brought to life once more in the pages of history books. Therefore, tonight we will say "farewell to the past" and direct our thoughts to the problems of the present and the future.

In choosing a title for my address to you this evening, I have been to some extent influenced by the occasion which brings us together on this Second Annual War Memorial Assembly, but perhaps even more so by my experiences as a soldier over the past thirty-seven years. I hope, therefore, that some of my observations, based on that background, may prove of some value to you in helping find a solution to the manifold problems which face us today.

Most people of this generation have a very sincere dread and hatred of war. The word "war" scares them. Now, I think it very important that we are quite clear in our minds what this word, war, means. It is not a curious phenomenon which arrives suddenly by itself and strikes us down like a thunderbolt. War is no more peculiar than peace--they are both conditions. War is simply the extension, by other means, of the ends which a nation hopes to gain by peaceful means. Clausevitz said "War is the continuation of policy by