

I said that there did not seem to be any suggestion that India was going to be the ultimate target of any aggression which might be undertaken, but that so long as there were these terrible agents of destruction at the disposal of us in the free world and of those behind the iron curtain we had to be sure that those behind the iron curtain who might be—I do not think they are apt to be for a very long period—actual aggressors should be convinced that if there was aggression there would be inevitable retaliation which would do to the aggressor at least as much damage as they might do to the nation attacked.

If there was to be that kind of aggression it did not seem improbable that the ultimate target would be the United States and that the way to the United States would be on a path which led through Canada and that we intended to have that path in such condition that it could not be used for aggression without serious damage to those using it and that if it was used, no matter how rapid or how unexpected the aggression was, there would still be inevitable retaliation which would do as great damage to the aggressor as he might have caused.

We agreed that the likelihood of going to war with these terrible implements of destruction was not great, but that there was still a possibility. Because of that possibility we felt that the free nations must remain in such a position that possible aggressors would realize that retaliation would be inevitable and the result would unfortunately be a great degree of mutual destruction.

Mr. Nehru had suggested that military alliances appeared to him to be adding to the international tension because they appeared to denote a warlike attitude. I told him that unfortunately for us we were in such a position that we had to maintain military alliances as long as there was any possibility of aggression with the use of these new weapons because we ourselves did not have them. In our military alliances the tasks had been distributed and we could count, and possible aggressors knew this, upon the fact that these weapons were at the disposition of the United States.

I was saying all this to him, not to criticize his attitude but to ask him to feel that we also could rationalize our conduct, that we had what appeared to us to be very good reasons for maintaining these alliances and not adopting the view taken by him that there might be less international tension. We felt that the tension which existed was necessary as a deterrent against the use of any of these terrible instruments.