

It is clear that if we are ever attacked, it is on "quality" forces and on "quality" weapons and equipment that we should place reliance. It is important that this be well remembered down the years and particularly by those entrusted with the conduct of negotiations for reductions in world armaments.

I think that in the period between World War I and World War II, both in Canada and in the United States, we learned the bitter lesson that unilateral disarmament is a delusion -- a very expensive delusion that brought us very dear to disaster and that cost us very dear in the lives of our young people. Just such a bitter delusion would be the surrender of any of the special weapons of great power, with which I include those based on atomic energy, until we have acceptable assurance through mutually applicable safeguards and an effective international system of inspection and control which carries our confidence that they, or their like, will not be used against us.

On the contrary as the situation stands it is of the first importance that we give our closest attention and effort to extending the margin of superiority which we now possess in these special weapons and in insuring that we shall be able to use them effectively should the occasion require.

In these matters, the advantage of safeguards now possessed by the people of North America is not something which we could retain if we ceased to progress; if we allowed our industrial efficiencies to decline, then most certainly, we would soon be overtaken and surpassed. The best protection for the countries of North America, as well as for the world, would be an effective organization of security under the United Nations but until this can be brought about, the continued production and further improvement of all our weapons and the maintenance of industrial efficiency and preparedness are vital to the prevention of aggression by making impossible any prospect for its success.

I conclude these remarks on "The Defence of North America" by saying that until effective disarmament can be brought about and until the aspirations of all nations can be harmonized by peaceful means we will continue to need our armed forces, both as a deterrant to attack against ourselves and as an assurance to all other peaceloving nations, who think with us, that the peoples of North America remain strong and well able to help them.

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