

As hon. members are aware, the Canadian Government has consistently supported proposals for negotiation with the Soviet Union on the question of Berlin, and on other issues. Since, in this thermonuclear age, war is unthinkable, there is no alternative to negotiation for the solution of these problems. In our view negotiation implies a preparedness on both sides to do more than exchange views across the conference table. Each side must go some way to meet the basic interests of the other. If it is possible to arrive at some settlement on the Berlin question, the way should be opened for the solution of broader problems.

For these reasons we have watched with satisfaction the patient and determined efforts of the three Western negotiating powers at Geneva to find some basis for reaching agreement. We commend the willingness shown by the Western powers to make modifications concerning the terms of their presence in Berlin, which take account of expressed Soviet concerns. At the same time we support the principle, on which the Western powers have been united, that no agreement would be acceptable which placed in jeopardy the security of Berlin or the freedom of its citizens, or which could have the effect of foreclosing the prospect of the reunification of Germany. Unfortunately, circumstances do not seem propitious for great or sudden progress on the basic problem of reunification. This should not, however, preclude us from attempting to create an atmosphere in which reunification can more easily be brought about.

Where the resumed Foreign Ministers' Conference will lead us cannot now be predicted. The Canadian Government has held to the view that progress toward settlement of some international issues might be achieved by discussions amongst heads of government, in other words at a summit conference. It is the hope of the Canadian Government that such a meeting can be arranged. Then there may prove to be subjects other than those relating to Germany and Berlin--I mention the suspension of nuclear tests and the peaceful use of outer space as examples--on which progress could be made by high level discussions. At this stage, I think as few pre-conditions and prior stipulations as possible should be placed in the way of a summit meeting. For example, there have been signs of some difference of opinion on the question of who should participate in a summit conference, and there are indications of a trend to increase participation. In the judgment of the Canadian Government this is not likely to be a helpful development.

The suicidal prospect of global war must be apparent to all nations, and the need of finding some alternative for the settlement of differences must recommend itself to all statesmen. For a middle power such as Canada, with brilliant prospects of development, the international tensions which keep alive the threat of a nuclear holocaust are in themselves