

intervention. It is the function of diplomacy to seek accommodation which can be the basis for stable relations between differing countries and systems. We have agreed in the past that some such accommodation with the Soviet Union and its satellites is necessary. In the present circumstances, I believe it is our duty to make every effort to reach such a settlement.

But we must not allow this process—or the situation which makes it necessary—to weaken our resolve or interfere with our plan to strengthen our defences. Above all, we must not allow it to weaken the unity, or the friendly co-operation of those countries in the free world who are now working together so closely for the good purpose of establishing conditions of stability and peace in the world.

Our task will be complicated by the necessity of keeping in mind both political and military considerations. Both, for instance, must be present in any consideration of the possible use of the atomic bomb. From the strictly legal point of view, the atomic bomb is merely another weapon, and can be used like any other weapon. The supreme crime is not the use of a particular weapon, but committing an aggression which makes the use of any weapon necessary.

The political instinct of people throughout the world, however, has insisted—and I think rightly—that the atomic bomb is different from other weapons. Not only is its destructive power far greater than that of any other weapon, but it was created as a result of the deepest penetration that man has yet made into the fundamental secrets of Nature, and if used widely enough, might destroy all life on this planet. Whether or not to use a weapon of that kind should surely not be decided by the application of the same criteria applicable to other weapons, or by unilateral decision, no matter what the technical and legal position may be. At a time of military reverses, when soldiers are trapped and encircled and are dying desperately, there will naturally be a strong temptation to sanction the use of the atomic bomb. Anyone considering such authorization, however, must remember that the fate of the whole world may depend on the decision. The atomic bomb is universally regarded as the ultimate weapon. It should be treated as such.

This is a time of desperately hard decisions. It is also a time which will demand greater sacrifices than we in Canada have ever before been asked to make; and without much of the stimulation and excitement and feeling of survival or extinction that accompanies a shooting war.

It may be that in the days ahead the process of negotiation which I have suggested will become impossible or will be tried and fail. Then those who use force will have to be met by all the force we can muster in the free world. Until that time, however, we must guard freedom by wisdom, as well as by arms.

18. Excerpts from Communiqué of December 9, 1950, on the Discussions between President Truman and Prime Minister Attlee

The situation in Korea is one of great gravity and far-reaching consequences. By the end of October the forces of the United Nations had all but completed the mission set for them by the United Nations "to repel the armed attack and