

*External Affairs*

exists on the mainland of China to come to this conference. The invitation was coupled, of course, with a rider that it is understood that neither the invitation to nor the holding of the above-mentioned conference shall be deemed to imply diplomatic recognition in any case in which it has not already been accorded. But it does constitute an admission that that is the government that is controlling the forces that we have been resisting; that it is the government that can agree to and admit that we have demonstrated that aggression is not going to be allowed to be profitable and that they cannot impose their will upon the free world through aggression.

It may be that something more permanent than this cessation of firing across the no-man's-land between the two forces that are still there will come out of the Geneva conference. If that comes out of the Geneva conference, it may indicate that by negotiating with the same people other causes of world unrest and of uncertainty about the future can be eliminated. So long as that is the only government on the mainland of China, it is only through discussions with that government that any results can be achieved.

Now, when will there be sufficient results achieved to make it desirable to consider whether there should be what amounts to diplomatic recognition? That is something this government is not considering at this time. When I say "at this time", I am not using evasive language. I am not trying to have my language just comply with the facts. I do not mean just at this moment. Under present conditions I do not see any reason why we should consider diplomatic recognition of China. But those conditions may change and I think it would be most unfortunate, just as the editor of the *Journal* feels it would be most unfortunate, to tie ourselves down by declarations and commitments that would make it impossible for us at any time to come to the conclusion that even the diplomatic recognition of China would not be helpful to peace and security in the world. We are not in that position at the present time, and when I said there was no consideration being given by the government to that kind of recognition at this time I did not mean, as I saw suggested in at least one newspaper, that it was just something that had not yet come officially before the cabinet as a cabinet. I meant that I was not thinking of it and I did not know of any of my colleagues who were thinking in terms of diplomatic recognition of China under present conditions.

But I felt that none of us were thinking in terms that would make it impossible for us to make the right kind of a decision when,

[Mr. St. Laurent.]

under changed circumstances, a decision had to be made. Of course, that decision would have to be made in such a manner as would not involve flouting the opinion of our allies. We have many allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and we have others whom we can, I think, regard as allies, in the United Nations. It would be something of world concern. I would hope the position taken by Canada would be a position that would be of benefit to the peace and stability of the whole world. We should not attempt to make decisions that do not have to be made. The position at this time is that we are not, under present conditions, contemplating diplomatic recognition of China. We have not, and I do not think we should say at this time or at any other time that there may not be a situation in the future when a government we do not like, a government the complexion of which is quite contrary to all our democratic ideals, and a government which according to the information we have obtained by hearsay—of course we have to rely for our information on what we get by hearsay—seems to have been guilty of many things that we would not condone, may nevertheless have to be recognized. There are other governments with whom we have at the present time diplomatic relations who, we think, have done things we could not condone. But they are the governments of those lands and the only governments with whom any dealings in respect of their populations can be had.

I think we all hope that there will be, even between these apparently incompatible worlds, the free world and the world made up of countries with communist regimes, some kind of a *modus vivendi* which will in fact allow us to live, and allow them to live. That would take place, without our interference, without our approval, without our responsibility in any way in the lands we regard as unfortunate, because they are under such regimes. If we do not look upon that as possible, we then have to look upon this state of cold war as something of very long duration, with always the possibilities of its flaring up into something worse than a cold war.

Once again I am sorry that I was not more careful in the language I used, and that it was the kind of language that could give rise to this concern and to this controversy; but as far as policy is concerned, I was not speaking about policy. And now I do venture to say that the policy of the Canadian government at the present time is to keep an open mind as to whether or not at any time, under any conditions which may develop in the future, there should be recognition of the government which at that time will exist as a matter