

*The Address—Mr. Drew*

I sympathize with all my heart with the sentiments of the Prime Minister when he expresses his hope of peace. I greatly doubt, however, whether the firm resolve and spirit of sacrifice which is so greatly needed in this country at this time will be aroused by statements that we are talking too much about war and that he is still confident that there will be peace for his lifetime. I hope there will. But the people need to be told the full extent of the dreadful danger with which we are confronted. There is war—cruel, bloody and relentless war. There is a war which has already cost the United States more than 55,000 casualties in seven months. There is war which has brought to a whole nation of freedom-loving people destruction and atrocities of a kind that is not pleasant to contemplate. The people of Korea know what war means, and why all free nations today must take the steps that are necessary to halt aggression.

I am well aware that in making these statements the Prime Minister was referring to a general war. I share with him the hope that a general war can be avoided, and, with him, I believe that a general war still can be avoided if the free nations build up their strength with the speed and on the scale of which free men and women are capable when fully aroused to the urgency of the demands upon their efforts.

When I referred to the Prime Minister's emphasis on peace I was referring to it in its relationship to other statements. I do not think that the Prime Minister has helped to impress upon our young people the real nature of the threat we face, when great prominence is given in the press and over the radio to his opinion that the odds against war are fifty to one. I should like to think they are, but I do not believe they are, and I do not think any thoughtful person would give odds of that kind at this time. Young men and women are hardly encouraged to sacrifice their present jobs if they think the odds against war are as great as that. If free men and women everywhere put their whole heart into the tasks before them, with that compelling sense of danger which the facts demand, I am as hopeful as anyone can be that the United Nations may still become an effective instrument for dealing with aggression, and that a general war may still be avoided. But the odds against such a war are not too great, and they will rapidly diminish if the men in the Kremlin have any reason to believe that the free nations are failing to make full use of their immense productive capacity and skill and the driving power of which only free men and women are capable.

[Mr. Drew.]

It is perhaps worthy of passing comment that Lloyd's never did bet fifty to one against the possibility of war. As I understand it, they entered into one of their ordinary contracts on the basis of fifty to one that a philatelic exhibition, which has been arranged in Toronto for next September, will not be prevented from meeting because of war. That is a very different thing. Contracts of that kind were taken out during the course of the last world war. In any event I do not think it helps to create that sense of compelling urgency which is so necessary at this time, when the Prime Minister, with the great prestige of his high office and his recognized sources of secret information, interprets his impression of the dangers we face in the terms of betting odds at Lloyd's.

I am not suggesting that the Prime Minister should seek to spread any atmosphere of gloom. On the contrary I hope that he will do all in his power to spread a spirit of confidence, which can only be justified and will only have some real foundation when a clarion call goes forth to the people of Canada that we are now engaged in a struggle for nothing less than the survival of our decent way of life, and that even the most remote possibility of defeat carries with it consequences too terrible for anyone to contemplate.

It is only when we are united in all our strength and vigour, with knowledge of the facts and faith in our cause, that we can have any reason for confidence. Then we can go forward with our heads erect and with light hearts, knowing that no matter what happens we shall have done our best.

I am well aware that because of their population the United States and Great Britain will play the leading role in guiding the course of military preparations. To a considerable extent we must accept the reality that we have no choice but to adjust our plans substantially to theirs. But the way in which we carry out our own part in that collective effort must be exclusively our own decision. Do not let us hear that we are being told by anyone else how we should do those jobs which are our own responsibility. What we do, and the way we do it, will have the most profound effect, not only upon our contribution to the joint defence of freedom, but upon the whole future of our country.

I propose, therefore, to deal with those two subjects which are exclusively within our own control and for which the parliament of Canada must assume full responsibility. National defence, and all the economic and financial consequences of the expenditures on defence, are the two most important