

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES



INFORMATION DIVISION
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No. 50/37 An Address by Mr. L.S. St. Laurent, Prime Minister of Canada, delivered in Montreal on October 6, 1950, on the occasion of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Industrial Preparedness Association.

I am very happy that circumstances which have not permitted me to do much personal planning this summer and fall, have permitted me to be here this evening. I want first of all to thank the Canadian Industrial Preparedness Association for the unfailing co-operation its members have extended to the government since it was formed nearly three years ago. But I want to do more than thank you.

It has been cynically said that gratitude is a lively anticipation of future favours. I am sure you do not regard your co-operation in industrial preparedness as a favour to the government. But I think I can promise you that in the next few months the government is apt to be calling upon the Association and upon its members for even closer co-operation than heretofore.

In recent weeks the members of the North Atlantic Alliance have been intensifying the planning and organization of their combined strength for the purpose of deterring aggression and preventing a third World War.

We have all been gratified and encouraged by the proposal of the North Atlantic Council for the establishment of an integrated force on the Continent of Europe. Later this month the Defence Ministers of the North Atlantic Nations are to meet in Washington to work out detailed plans for that force.

What is equally important, a North Atlantic Military Production and Supply Board has been set up. It has the duty of co-ordinating the planning of defence production and procurement for the forces of the North Atlantic Nations.

Now before we can complete intelligent planning for defence production in Canada, international planning has to be sufficiently advanced so that we can determine our appropriate part in joint production for the North Atlantic forces.

That point was emphasized by the Minister of Trade and Commerce last June when he announced that arrangements had been made with your Association under which the services of Major-General Howard were to be available to the government, on a consultative basis, for planning with industry the use which might be made of Canadian industrial facilities. Mr. Howe said, at that

time, that in the munitions field generally Canadian industry to make its most effective contribution must help to meet the requirements of other nations and that international planning must be sufficiently developed to provide the information we needed to plan that production here in Canada.

The international planning is now moving forward much more rapidly -- and it cannot move forward too rapidly to suit us here in Canada. Of course it is obvious that the largest contribution we in Canada can make to the building up of the combined strength necessary to make aggression appear to be an unattractive risk is in the field of production and supply. But we can make that contribution only when we know what it is best to produce.

I notice that, last year, in his speech to you, Mr. Howe made one general observation I think it is very important for us never to forget. I shall not use his exact words, but what he said in effect was this -- that, as men who want peace, we must take precautions against the possibility of war. He said he used the word "precautions" rather than "preparations" because we should make clear on every possible occasion that our defence plans and our defence preparations are precautionary measures taken in the hope that they will never be needed except as insurance.

When we consider what precautions we should take in Canada, we have to consider much more than the needs of our own armed forces; we must also take the steps necessary to enable Canadian industry to convert quickly from civilian to military supplies and to expand greatly if the need should arise. That task is, of course, the special concern of the Industrial Preparedness Association.

Now the events of the past few months have, I think, convinced us all that if we are to have real security against aggression we must step up the insurance premium. We all know there is almost no cost, in material terms, which is too great to pay for avoiding another world war. Certainly, if we succeed in avoiding that calamity, we will not feel the cost has been too high. And, if the worse comes to the worst, and we do not succeed, it will not matter how much we might have saved by skimping on the insurance premium: all that and far more, not only in material resources but also in human lives, would then unhesitatingly be thrown into the winning of any actual conflict.

While I shall speak to you particularly of the industrial and supply side of our increased defence programme, we all know that Canada's part, even in this preventive stage -- which we hope will be the only stage -- cannot be, and will not be, exclusively a productive role. We, too, have our contribution to make to the combined fighting forces being organized in the free world.

In the first place, there is a greater risk than ever before to our own territory. Even though we are well placed in the world, and our military advisers do not anticipate large-scale offensive operations against this continent, there is a real possibility of nuisance raids and of bombing attacks, and both Canada and the United States

must devote a proportionately larger amount of their resources than were required in the past, to be prepared to meet such hazards.

Then, after we had almost given up hope of making the United Nations effective, at any early date, as an instrument to deal with aggression, the Korean incident has given new meaning to the security aspects of the United Nations organization. The Korean incident has also given a new urgency to our own obligations and to those of other members of the United Nations to have adequate forces available.

We had suitable naval and air force units immediately available and we have every reason to be proud of their contribution to the Korean campaign.

The aggression in Korea was the immediate occasion for the creation of the Canadian Army Special Force, but from the first move to establish that force it has been made clear that it was being created to be available to assist without undue delay in discharging Canadian obligations under the United Nations Charter and the North Atlantic Treaty. As I said at the Royal Military College in Kingston last week, the force is now being trained for service in Korea and it will be sent to Korea if that still seems to be the right place to send it when it is ready for service.

But it may be that circumstances will make it expedient to employ this special force in some other area and, if circumstances make such a course seem advisable in the interest of increasing the common security of ourselves and of our allies, the government will not hesitate to recommend to Parliament that this force be employed elsewhere. I also indicated last week -- and this was implicit in our plans from the beginning -- that the Special Force, if it were not needed in Korea, would be available for service with forces of our North Atlantic partners wherever it might best fit into any overall planning; that might well mean its employment in Europe if that is what best fits into the joint plans when those joint plans have taken definite shape.

I am sure we all recognize that the armed forces of Canada must be appropriately represented in the integrated force which is to be established by the North Atlantic Alliance. But it is of the utmost importance to be realistic about these matters. Any military force which we can send to Europe when there is no war going on in Europe will, of necessity, be a very small part of the combined strength in being of the North Atlantic powers if that strength is to be substantial enough to make potential aggressors think twice before they start anything.

But I certainly do not need to tell an audience as familiar as you are with the requirements in weapons and supplies of modern armed forces how large the requirements are in Europe, at the present time, for fighting equipment for the men who live over there. The free nations of the Western World are greatly outnumbered in properly equipped manpower by the nations now behind the iron curtain. The most effective way to match this tremendous pool of potentially hostile armed manpower is by the most efficient

use of the vastly greater industrial potential of the free world, particularly on this continent.

At the present time, the most serious obstacle to the creation on the continent of Europe of extensive military forces on our side is the shortage of actual equipment and of the capacity to produce equipment, weapons and supplies.

For the immediate future, therefore, the most urgent need of all our European allies is the need of military supplies to be put into the hands of men who are on the spot and who are capable of forming effective military forces. To provide real security, these forces must be properly equipped and the people of Western Europe must be completely convinced that we in North America are making effective and sincere plans to help them defend their homelands, and not merely to liberate those countries if they should be overrun. That is the real purpose of the integrated force.

So far as Canada is concerned, we need both forces in being, and a set up for mobilization in the event of a general war. And we shall also need a substantial industrial effort to produce weapons, equipment and supplies for both ourselves and our allies, and to do so just as quickly as joint production plans can be formulated on which appropriate Canadian action can be based.

So far as Canada is concerned, the financial aspects are being looked after. At the recent session of Parliament \$300,000,000 was appropriated as a substantial first step in this programme. Just as rapidly as we can reach agreement with our allies on what Canada can provide most effectively, we shall be turning to the members of your Association to help us in the performance of that task. Meanwhile, as I do not need to tell you, we have already stepped up production in a number of directions for our own forces.

We cannot, of course, as yet hazard a guess as to the volume of production which may be required from Canadian industry. As I have said, we do not yet know what types or what quantities of equipment we will be expected to produce for our North Atlantic allies. Other important unknowns are the types of equipment and the volume of orders likely to be placed here by the United States for its own forces or for European members of the North Atlantic Alliance. Moreover, of necessity, our production in Canada must be closely meshed with that of the United States. We must, for example, be assured we can get all the essential supplies needed for production of the right kind of equipment for our own use and for our North Atlantic partners. I am happy to say that the discussions we have had with the United States, through the Joint Industrial Mobilization Committee, on the ways and means of co-ordinating defence production have been most satisfactory, and I expect that before long we shall be able to make a public announcement as to the conclusions reached jointly by our two Governments.

Now, when we are laying great stress and attaching tremendous importance to the production side of our contribution to joint strength, if anyone talks about our position in relation to our associates in the United Nations

and the North Atlantic Alliance as being a humiliating one -- and some do talk that way, you know, -- whether they are sincere or not, I leave it to their listeners to judge -- my own reaction is that they are just talking nonsense. We are not always in the front line in publicity; but anyone who knows anything at all about us and about them does know that we are not often backward in effective performance.

One other point I think I should make before I conclude. In this present world-wide struggle between totalitarian communism and the free world, success will ultimately depend on much more than armed forces and military weapons, important and urgent though these are in this preventive stage. Some of the most effective weapons are not military weapons at all.

The real hope of communism is to destroy our so-called capitalist society from within by fomenting discontent, by creating divisions between classes, by gaining power over trade unions, by infiltrating into key positions and by a host of other subversive means. The communist technique is to put themselves in a position to take over governments and thereby gain control over whole nations. In many parts of Europe and Asia this technique has been altogether too successful.

At the present time, it does not constitute a threat in Canada, because we have an enlightened population which is increasingly aware of how the communists work, and the vast majority of our people are convinced that they have a better life and greater opportunities in our society than would be possible behind any iron curtain.

But we have to realize that the maintenance of our high standards of living and of human welfare is an objective which competes directly with the increasing demands for national and international security. In this shadow land between war and peace, it is obvious that some of our personal wants will have to go unsatisfied for the time being, if we are to act effectively to prevent war.

Many years of sustained effort may be necessary if war is to be prevented. If, as a nation, we are to be equal to that sustained effort, nothing will be more important than the maintenance of good relations, of a feeling of genuine partnership in all sections of our Canadian population. The members of your Association can contribute to that sense of national partnership especially through the maintenance of good working relations with labour.

We should never forget that the communists have always directed their main appeal particularly to organized labour. We have all watched with the greatest satisfaction the effective way in which the responsible leaders of Canadian labour have fought this subversive menace to their organizations. They are fighting a battle for all of us, for our way of life, and they deserve our help. Good relations with labour have been one of the happiest characteristics of Canadian industry in the post-war period. Everything those of you who are employers can do to give to labour a genuine sense of co-operative partnership in our national endeavour will not only increase our national capacity to provide security, but it will also contribute greatly to the capacity of your members individually and

collectively to make your most effective contribution to the combined strength of the free world.

Whatever be our respective stations in life, as freedom-loving, intelligent human beings, we are all pretty much alike. Each one of us is particularly concerned about his own well-being and that of his immediate dependents. But we all know that this well-being is dependent on the orderly working of well organized social institutions. We know none of us can carry on successfully as independent Robinson Crusoes. We have to secure our individual well-being through the co-ordinated activities of every sector of our population. I am sure we all want those activities to be co-ordinated in the manner that will produce the best result for each and everyone of us.

Quite naturally, we all want to understand and appreciate what is required from each one of us to achieve that result. When we do understand, I am sure most of us are sufficiently intelligent to accept the joint effort that may be called for. That is true even when the effort might be very distasteful if we were required to make it without being personally convinced that it was the fair thing to do. Most Canadians are ready to do their proper share of the co-ordinated effort that is essential to the well-being of the whole community. But all of us have to be given the opportunity of using brains as well as brawn, if we are to share in the most efficient manner in the accomplishment of our common national task.

In conclusion, may I thank you again on behalf of the government and of the people of Canada for what the Canadian Industrial Preparedness Association has already done to contribute to the security of our country and of the world we want to have and, even more, for what you are going to do in the months and years ahead to help give the human race that genuine security from war and the menace of war which the vast majority of men and women so passionately desire.

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