

## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES



CANADA

INFORMATION DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 53/10 THE UNITED NATIONS AND WHAT IT STANDS FOR

An address by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, and President of the Seventh Session of the United Nations General Assembly, Mr. L.B. Pearson, made at Founders Week Convocation, Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida, February 23, 1953.

... The United Nations is often - these days - used as the whipping boy for national sins - of omission and commission.

It is no super-state, or even a court with power to enforce its judgments. It can only reflect the picture of the world in which we live - and hope that - by giving an honest, if at times frightening picture, we, the people, may be persuaded to do something about it.

What do we see in the United Nations mirror now? Two groups of powers whom we loosely call "Western democratic" and "Communist dictatorial" facing each other in fear and hostility across a widening chasm of suspicion and ill-will, a situation which if it persists is likely to have only one ending - and it won't be a happy one.

The United Nations with all its weaknesses - which are the weaknesses of its members - remains the best mechanism by which this situation can be changed. We are, after all, still talking to each other there; in language which I admit is frank, at times to the point of ferocity as words become ammunition in the cold war. But would it not be far worse if we stopped talking and if this last tie between the two worlds was broken? That indeed would be an acknowledgement of the inevitability of catastrophe.

There is another respect in which the United Nations now serves - and in the future can serve mankind even more fruitfully: by acting as the channel for the peaceful expression of the national feelings and the hope for greater human welfare of the insistent and awakened millions of Africa and Asia.

We on this continent are only very dimly aware of what has happened in these parts of the world which not long ago seemed to touch our interests only through missions, trade, and travelogues. We should know that great forces have now been liberated in these places - once far away but now as close as a Korean hillside - with consequences for our Western part of the world that are incalculable.