

# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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## PEACE THROUGH THE UNITED NATIONS

An address by Mr. L. B. Pearson, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, at the Annual Dinner of the Toronto Board of Trade, January 26, 1948.

The hope for achievement of world peace, that distant dream of man since the days when he first became the victim of a rock hurled at him by a belligerent neighbour, rests largely, I submit, on the realization of two possibilities.

The first of these, though bound to be the last in accomplishment, is one world with one law and one government. That may come slowly, as a result of evolution, or quickly as a result of conquest. If the former, man will have to show far more wisdom in the future than he has ever shown in the past. It is possible, of course -- anything is possible -- that the awful potentialities of scientific progress in a politically anarchic society may force wisdom on him through fear. It is possible, but a peace which balances uneasily on the thin edge of fear of the consequences of war, does not inspire too much confidence in its ability to survive.

Certainly there is at the moment little evidence of our one world in any sense of the word except the geographic. Physically we are one world. We are, if not our brothers' keepers, at least all our brothers' neighbours. But we should not fool ourselves by believing that propinquity always means peace or that rubbing shoulders doesn't make for friction as often as friendliness. There is less feeling of one world in a political or spiritual sense at this particular moment in history than at any time, perhaps, since the break-up of the Roman Empire. That break-up splintered mankind into hundreds of political and social fragments. Current developments are breaking mankind into, not twenty, but two fragments and that is more sinister and more dangerous.

Our one world, and our one government, may also come suddenly and terribly by one of these two worlds becoming an aggressor, over-running the other, and bombing and blasting all peoples into submission. This would simply mean the peace and order of the cemetery. Either the conquered would become slaves of the global conqueror, or more probably, victors and vanquished alike would perish. This may seem to be wild and fanciful talk; the reflection of a mind upset by fear. It is not. Nearly all the great scientists of our democratic world - those of the other world are not permitted to let us know what they think - have expressed views on the destructive possibilities of the "harnessing of science to the Chariot of Destruction" which are as clear as they are terrifying. Bertrand Russell, for instance, in an address in London not long ago - and he is no sensationalist in these matters - sketched in a few cold but devastating phrases the possible effect of man's scientific genius on man's physical survival. Bacteriological warfare, if it ever came, he said, would destroy all vegetable and animal life. Even the moss would shrivel on the rock, and our world "would roll on through space a large and lifeless lump of stone." If, however, bacteria were not used and the belligerents with great restraint, stuck to the more