



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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Text of an address by the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L. D. Wilgress, prepared for delivery to the Vancouver Board of Trade, May 20, 1953, at Vancouver, B.C.

...The last time I visited Vancouver was when I came here from attending the San Francisco Conference. At that time our hopes were placed in the United Nations as the bulwark of our security. We felt that the principles of collective security could be made to work if we could be sure of the peacetime co-operation of the Soviet Union. There were some doubts that this peacetime co-operation would be forthcoming but this was not reflected in the policy of any country. Otherwise we would not have seen such undue haste to disarm in response to the universal desire to have the men in uniform get back to their civilian occupations.

The first real shock to the hopes which we had placed in the United Nations came at the very first meetings of the Security Council. The Soviet Government then belied the assurances they had given us at San Francisco that they would use the veto with discretion and with a due sense of responsibility.

For a while our peoples, bent as they were on repairing the ravages of war, were bewildered as to what policy should be followed. The danger from without was matched in some countries by the danger from within. This became apparent from the strength of the Communist parties in such key countries as France and Italy and from the economic difficulties then being experienced by nearly all the Western European countries.

In 1947, there came the refusal of the Soviet Union to participate or to allow any of its satellites to participate in the Marshall Plan. This made us realize that the Soviet leaders were more bent on disrupting than on co-operating in the restoration of the European economies. The cold war was on. A year later the Soviet blockade of Berlin was to bring the cold war dangerously close to a hot war. In the meantime, in February 1948, there had come the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia. This revealed clearly Soviet imperialism in all its nakedness.