



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY

(Excerpts from a speech by Mr. L.B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, in the House of Commons, January 14, 1957.)

... Recent events, especially events in the Middle East, have emphasized to all Canadians the importance and the responsibilities of Canadian foreign policy, even in respect of far away areas where there may seem to be few direct Canadian interests but where the paramount interests of all in peace and war are often involved. These events have also brought about, not only widespread public discussion of the decisions that we have made and may have to make, but also a reassessment of the principles which have underlined our policies and the factors which influence them. It has, I think, Mr. Speaker, been confirmed, if confirmation was necessary, that our foreign policy must be Canadian, based on Canadian considerations, Canadian values and Canadian interests, the greatest of which, however, apart from freedom itself, is peace. But a Canadian policy, in this day and age, is not necessarily the same as an independent policy. There is no country in the world today, even the most powerful, which in the preservation of peace and security can afford the luxury of, or run the risk of, a policy of independence in foreign affairs, in the sense that independence means isolation from one's friends or immunity from the effect of their decisions and their actions.

We should not, of course, and we do not, automatically or unhesitatingly follow the policy of the United States or the United Kingdom or any other country. Nevertheless, we cannot, and I suggest we should not, make our own decisions and our own policies without being influenced by, without taking into consideration, the policies of the United Kingdom or the United States or those of our other friends and allies with whom we are associated. No country is in a better position to appreciate