



CANADA

CANADIAN WEEKLY BULLETIN

INFORMATION DIVISION • DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS • OTTAWA, CANADA

Vol. 21 No. 12

March 23, 1966

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CANADA'S ROLE IN EAST-WEST RELATIONS

The address from which the following passages have been taken was given on March 11, at Carleton University, Ottawa, by Mr. Paul Martin, Secretary of State for External Affairs, as the last in a series entitled "The Communist States and the West."

...Anyone who has followed this series of lectures will already have asked himself what is the significance for a country like Canada of the far-reaching changes in the nature of world politics which my predecessors on this platform have analyzed. So far have these changes gone, in fact, that it is even legitimate to ask whether there is still such a thing as "East-West relations". Is there still a contest between two camps, each arrayed around one of the super powers, with a mass of non-aligned nations looking on, sometimes on the sidelines, sometimes caught in the cross-fire?

A few years ago this was the world scene. The expression "East-West relations" in practice covered everything of real importance in international affairs. That bipolarity has gone, and we find ourselves today in a much more complicated political and economic and military environment. In such a situation of relative fluidity it is clear that the smaller powers, including Canada, have greater scope both for the pursuit of their own national interests, which are unique by definition, and for the exercise of constructive initiative in search of solutions to problems of concern to the world as a whole.

This scope I intend to explore tonight. In doing so, I shall argue that the growth of pluralism does not necessarily mean the dissolution of "East" and "West" as we have known them, but rather the adoption by the Soviet Union and the Communist states closest to it (China, with its friends is perhaps

another matter) of a pattern of international relations similar to that of the rest of the world. This, I believe, is likely to be accompanied by the gradual abandonment in practice of world revolution as an instrument of the policy of Communist states. The end result of this tendency, if it is maintained, would not necessarily be the disappearance of rivalry between the Communist and non-Communist worlds, but the removal of that rivalry from the sphere of ideology and related military moves to a more rational and stable plane.

It is on such a plane that Canada can best play a creative role. But how close are we to it? Clearly we have not yet reached a point of stable international balance, let alone international harmony. Evolution in that direction has gone, perhaps, far enough to demand adaptation of our policies, but we must not confuse identification of a tendency with its fulfillment...It is essential to define one's own view of that evolution before suggesting the policy implications for Canada and other Western countries...The Sino-Soviet rift seems irreparable, short of a profound change of policy amounting to a *de facto* surrender by one side or the other to the ascendancy of its rival. The rift has been a lever which certain East European Communist countries, notably Roumania, and some non-ruling Communist parties, have used to enlarge somewhat the area of their independence from Soviet control....

But it is to be noted that this independence stops short of any significant departure from the general line of Communist policy toward the non-Communist world. The most that can be said is that, having smaller resources and fewer vested interests elsewhere in the world than the Soviet Union itself, the