



# Statements and Speeches

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## CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE AT A DECISIVE STAGE

A Statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, at the Banff '74 International Conference on Slavic Studies, September 6, 1974.

It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to address this distinguished academic gathering so soon after taking up my new functions as Secretary of State for External Affairs. In fact, this is my first public speech in that capacity, and I think it is a particularly appropriate occasion, because your concerns and mine are to a significant degree both related and complementary. Related, because it is clear to any student of international affairs that the activities and aspirations of the 370 million people who live in the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe are bound to be of crucial importance to the wider questions of world peace and stability that must be of concern to all governments. Complementary, because, while you are for the most part engaged in the academic and private sectors and I in the public sector, we are both contributing in our different ways to the broader contacts and deeper mutual understanding that are essential ingredients of better East-West relations.

Canada has long been in the forefront of Western countries that have sought improvement of those relations through the process we call *détente* -- the reduction of tensions and the promotion of co-operation on the basis of mutual confidence and reciprocal benefit. We have long realized that a balanced military stand-off would not be a sufficient basis for lasting security. We, therefore, together with our allies in NATO, began to look for security through better relations between governments. It is significant, I think, that a particularly Canadian approach to alliance -- one which Mr. Pearson had for many years advocated -- was vindicated by this process. For NATO, in the course of the Sixties, began to evolve into what he had wanted for so long -- a truly consultative organization where the great issues of peace could be discussed and the way prepared for a relaxation of tension in that most tense of continents, Europe. This approach did not, of course, mean the abandonment of the physical means of security for the sake of a still hypothetical *détente*. One cannot hope -- or even wish -- to turn policy over as though it were a pancake. But change is in the nature of things -- the world will