

FOREWORD

The Annual Report of 1960 differs from previous Annual Reports. Instead of methodically recounting events in various countries and organizations during the year, it concentrates on a few main themes in which Canada has a special interest or concern and expands the Canadian Government's position on them. By this change, it is hoped to make the Report of greater value to the general public and to students of Canadian foreign policy.

Most of the major events of recent years have perforce had to be viewed against the background of East-West relations, and it has become customary to assess the international climate in any given period in terms of the relative degree of harmony existing between the Communist and non-Communist worlds. By that test, 1960 presents a regular graph of mounting hopes and cordiality in the first five months followed by an abrupt and steady decline from May onwards. The collapse of the summit talks in that month, followed shortly by the disruption of disarmament negotiations, set the stage for an intensification of the cold war in a number of trouble spots—Congo, Cuba, Laos—and in the fifteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly. The year closed in an atmosphere of heightened tension, uncertainty and confusion which left little ground for optimism.

Yet the events of the year, judged in post-war perspective, fell short of a full-scale revival of the cold war. East-West contacts, though reduced, were not entirely abandoned. Cultural and scientific exchanges with Communist-bloc countries were maintained in spite of name-calling on both sides; trade went on more or less undisturbed; and, although the main disarmament talks foundered, the important nuclear test talks continued uninterrupted. Although the atmosphere was certainly not conducive to the solution of difficult international problems, there was throughout an apparently studied attempt to avoid forcing matters anywhere to the danger point. 1960 was perhaps a foretaste of the sort of international climate in which we shall have to learn to live in an era of competitive co-existence between two ideologies, each of which recognizes the futility of all-out conflict.

To me the real significance of 1960 lies in the fact that it was the year in which the continent of Africa "came of age". While world attention has been focussed on the difficulties experienced by one African state, the Congo, in its transition from colony to nation, 18 other former colonies, 17 of them in Africa, have attained independence in peace and tranquility; and of these African nations, all but one have taken their place as sovereign states in the United Nations. For the first time in history, 1960 heard the independent voice of the continent of Africa raised in the councils of the world. It will be the task of statesmanship in the future to ensure that these new African nations are protected from external pressures, helped by the international community to attain national fulfilment in peace and liberty, and encouraged to play a constructive role in the United Nations and other international organizations. The degree of success which attends the future political and economic development of the continent of Africa is bound to exert a profound influence on the course of world history.