



# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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## IMPRESSIONS OF THE RUSSIANS AND THEIR LEADERS

Address given by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L. B. Pearson, at Women's Canadian Club, Chateau Laurier, Ottawa, December 8, 1955.

I must thank you first, Madam President, for your kind introduction and for your discriminating, indeed, your flattering recital of facts about my career. I need hardly say that I am very happy to be with you on this occasion to tell you something about my impressions on the trip which I have been recently privileged to undertake to the Soviet Union and to some countries in South-East Asia. On that trip we visited not only Russia but also, and for the greater part of our time, countries in South-East Asia. Yet I find on my return that nobody wants me to talk about anything but Russia. I have not had such a magnificent opportunity to talk in reply to questions since, I think, I returned as a soldier from the First War. Everyone wanted to know then what the war was like. Now they want to know what the Soviet Union is like, and I feel just about as incapable of answering that question as the earlier one, so many years ago.

I am not sure that in the verdict of history, and we won't get that for a good many generations, it will not be found that of the two great revolutions of our time - the Soviet Communist revolution of 1917 and the revolution taking place in Asia where hundreds of millions of people are emerging from the sleep of centuries, that of the two, the latter one, the results of which we do not yet see ultimately have far more reaching consequences for the world. The people of Asia have now become aware of modern industrial programs and they are determined to do better for themselves than has been done for them over the past 150 years; both in the search for political freedom and in that for a better life.

I felt it was a real privilege to see what had happened in that part of the world since I was there last, as well as to take part in the Ministerial Meeting of the Colombo Plan. I was inspired by what I heard and saw there and by the way this Colombo Plan is working out. We, in Canada, have, I think, made a respectable contribution to that Plan and I assure you that it is appreciated by countries like India and Pakistan and Ceylon, where it is in operation. It is not only a matter of material aid to these countries, helping them to help themselves to reach a better material standard of life, it is not only that which they appreciate, but the understanding and the sympathy and the political cooperation which we, who are privileged to participate in this Plan, are showing these peoples.