

VERNMENT
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STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
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RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Transcript of a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Television programme "Press Conference" held in Ottawa on March 21, 1956, with the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L.B. Pearson, and members of the press participating.

The Change in Soviet Tactics

Press:

Mr. Pearson, a great many people, a lot of people in North America I think, are worried about whether Russia is outmanoeuvring us today, whether our policy is too rigid, too fixed and whether perhaps there is a little lack of leadership on the part of the West. I wonder what you think about that.

Mr. Pearson:

I am one of those people who are worrying. I think it is a good thing that we are worrying about it because it is a very serious problem. In my opinion, there is no doubt that the Soviet Government has changed its tactics. As I said the other night, and this is an over-simplification, they have begun to substitute vodka for violence. What I mean by that is they may have given up the idea of armed conquest and decided to substitute for what they call competitive co-existence. But their objectives may be just the same -- their ultimate objectives. While we may welcome the change in tactics, it does pose new problems for us and we may have to change our own tactics accordingly. But, when I say "we" -- I am not talking about six or seven men around a table in the Kremlin who can change their tactics in a hour and press a button and everybody else changes -- we are a coalition of free states. And it is a little more difficult problem, to work out agreed changes in a coalition; sometimes it is even difficult to work out agreed changes within a single government in a coalition.