

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 53/3

THE STRENGTH OF FREEDOM

An address by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L.B. Pearson, at a meeting held under the auspices of B'nai B'rith, at Guelph, Ontario, February 2, 1953.

It is a cliché worn to the point of threadbarness, to say that we live in a critical time in the world's history. But it is terribly true. Furthermore, while we can always hope for something better and must strive to achieve it, we would, I think, be wise to plan our national existence on the assumption that this crisis may be with us for a long time.

Military aggression has already broken out in one corner of the globe. The threat of it persists at other points. There is always the overhanging horror of a general all-out war of atomic obliteration.

All this results from the adaptation and exploitation by one of the oldest imperialisms in history of a doctrine, Communism, which now holds sway over the minds of millions of men in every part of the world.

The evil combination of military might, political infiltration, and psychological pressure, operating both through aggressive action or the threat of it, and the creation of internal divisions at home, constitutes a menace which only the most naive person can refuse to take seriously.

How to meet and defeat this threat, and, at the same time, preserve our fundamental liberties, protect the sources of our moral strength, and promote human welfare, is the great challenge of our age.

To meet the menace of Communism, however, we must understand it. Yet one of the primary purposes of the Communists and their Russian masters is to prevent or obscure such understanding.

We should recognize in the first place that a main objective of Communism is to split up the Western world and to create divisions between states and between groups within states.

For this purpose, it strives to plant, in the policies of governments and in the minds of individuals, doubts, suspicions and fears. It exploits every opportunity - and it is given plenty - to frustrate co-operation within the free world to separate us from our friends, especially from the United States; and to crumble the confidence of the free man in his institutions and in himself.