



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 59/41 A RE-ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET ATTITUDES

Address by the Prime Minister, Mr. John G. Diefenbaker, to the Men's and Women's Canadian Club, Halifax, Nova Scotia, November 14, 1959.

All plans for economic prosperity within Canada depend on the maintenance of international peace.

There are some signs of a new spirit in the relations between the Western world and the Soviet bloc. The discussions between Prime Minister Macmillan, President Eisenhower and Premier Khrushchov have contributed in large measure to a reduction of world tension.

On the Soviet side, threats, abuse and suspicion appear to have given way to an attitude of greater moderation and understanding. Many different interpretations have been placed on the new Soviet approach. There are those who see it as reliable evidence of a genuine determination on the part of the Soviet Union to negotiate settlements of outstanding differences. There are others who cannot bring themselves to believe that Mr. Khrushchov's words of moderation are anything but a deceitful cloak for continued Soviet pursuance of aggressive aims. It is difficult to decide where the truth really lies, but it is necessary for the Western nations to keep under constant review the policies and tactics which are best calculated to advance the cause of greater international stability.

Nothing which emerged from Mr. Khrushchov's visit to the United States and nothing he has said publicly since that time justifies the conclusion that any of the basic Soviet positions have been abandoned or modified. The Soviet hold on Eastern Europe has not been relaxed. The German problem is as intractable as ever. There are no signs of a falling-off in Soviet defence preparations. There is still much room for skepticism as to the real substance of Soviet disarmament proposals. We should not leap to the conclusion that the differences we have lived with for more than a decade are on the point of being swept away, or that trouble may not arise again in areas which are at present in a state of quiet.