



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
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No. 50/44 Statement on the Soviet Peace Resolution
by Mr. L.B. Pearson, Secretary of State
for External Affairs and Chairman of the
Canadian Delegation to the United Nations
General Assembly, made in the First
(Political) Committee on October 30, 1950.

We are now nearing the end of what is becoming an annual occurrence at the Assembly - a general debate on the essentials of peace. I doubt whether these debates contribute much, if anything, to peace; or the resolutions which emerge from them and which will inevitably tend to repeat themselves, from year to year. It may, in fact, be argued that these discussions, by underlining and exaggerating differences, by the violence of the language used, create an atmosphere which makes peace more difficult. Headline diplomacy is not the best way to settle differences, especially when the headlines reproduce such Soviet phrases as "unbridled slanders", "dirty insinuations", "nonsensical babbling", "maddened yelps of warmongers". I have my own peace proposal to make. It is a two-year moratorium on bellicose and violent speeches about peace at the United Nations, and a two-year attempt to do something effectively about peace.

The Soviet Resolution contains an appeal to the permanent members of the Security Council to work for peace and to conclude a pact. While we must be, of course, in favour of renewed effort to reach agreement by every form of consultation, we should not forget that peace lies not primarily in pacts, but in the hearts of men and the policies of states.

In this matter of consultation as in other matters, we should come down out of the clouds and face certain hard facts. What kind of consultations are envisaged? Experience has shown that some forms may accomplish nothing. Indeed, they may do more harm than good by raising hopes that are later dashed and by creating despair out of failure of great expectations.

If international discussions on political problems are not carefully prepared, and the preliminary diplomatic work not thoroughly done, they may merely underline and exacerbate disagreement and leave the position afterwards worse than before.

We think that these considerations apply with particular force to consultation with the Soviet Union. We look back upon a long series of sterile discussions and negotiations with the Soviet Union in almost every international forum, whether it be the Security Council, the Council of Foreign Ministers, the Control Commission for Germany, the Far Eastern Commission, or any other body in which Soviet foreign policy has confronted all our efforts at compromise with a resolute and resounding "nyet".