

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES



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CANADIAN POLICY IN THE PRESENT INTERNATIONAL  
CRISIS

Text of a broadcast delivered by  
Mr. L.B. Pearson, Secretary of State  
for External Affairs, over the Trans-  
Canada Network, on December 5, 1950.

I am speaking to you tonight from Lake Success on the eve of discussions here of far-reaching importance. So I should like to tell you how the situation looks to me and to outline, as frankly, and honestly and objectively as I can, the policy which I think we should follow.

In order to set the present crisis in perspective, let me go back to the international situation as it existed before the attack on the Republic of Korea on the 25th of June last. At that time, there was a kind of uneasy balance throughout the world between the countries under the influence and domination of Soviet Communism, and those where free institutions still prevailed. So long as that balance lasted, delicate, precarious and unsatisfactory though it was, there were grounds for hoping that these two forms of society could exist side by side, if only on the basis of mutual toleration; grounds for some hope also that, in time, changes might occur within the Soviet Communist system which would give back their freedom to peoples now living under tyranny, or which might make possible the negotiation of political differences.

This balance was marked by a fairly clear territorial line of division separating the free and the Soviet worlds. At some points the line could not be drawn exactly. At others, at the boundary of the Western sector of Berlin, for example, and along the 38th parallel in Korea - it was sharp and unmistakable.

This line separating the two worlds, which at times cuts across national boundaries, was not something which we liked. But it seemed, for the time being, the only possible basis for that uneasy truce which we have called peace.

This balance was upset by the communist attack on the Republic of Korea. From the outset, it was clear that this act of open and armed aggression might have consequences which would prevent us from re-establishing any tolerable relationship with the Soviet world, might even lead to a Third World War. One of the most serious charges against the North Korean Government and against those governments in Moscow and Peking which stood behind it, is that they were willing to run this enormous risk not only for themselves, but for the whole world.