

## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
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No. 55/41 THE VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION

Text of the Talk by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L.B. Pearson, for the "Special Speakers Series" of the CBC on November 27, 1955.

Since returning from my visit to the Soviet Union, I have often been asked: why did you go there? and what were the results, if any?

I went to Russia primarily to exchange views about current international issues, particularly those of direct concern to our two countries, in the hope that such an exchange might assist in some small way in the resolution of differences; or at least give me a clearer understanding of what these differences were. Certainly no one can be happy about them when you realize that the price of failure to establish a durable peace might easily be the unimaginable devastation of a nuclear war.

In my talks with the Soviet leaders I did what I could, and whenever I had the chance, to correct misunderstandings or misapprehensions about the policies by which we in Canada, in concert with our Allies, seek to protect our security and ensure peace.

I tried to make them realize -- and I did not have the impression that this was labouring the obvious -- that we of the West are as vitally concerned as the Soviet leaders told me they were, with peace and security and the removal of the causes of war. But I likewise made it clear to them that we were not prepared to scrap our collective security arrangements or weaken our defences merely because of what has been called the "Geneva Spirit"; -- especially when as the recent Geneva conference has shown, that "spirit" as a subject for toasts is one thing; but as a basis for negotiations is something else. It is not enough to talk in general and friendly terms about "reducing international tensions", while leaving unresolved the basic differences which cause these tensions.

During my visit to Moscow and to the Crimea we talked of many things -- of "Ships and shoes and sealing wax, and cabbages" -- and NATO. Mr. Khrushchev, a very blunt and outspoken person, who does not waste time on the niceties of language or protocol, and the more subtle and sophisticated Mr. Bulganin (these two seem very close together at the "summit", of Soviet affairs) made no secret to me of their determination to weaken and destroy our North Atlantic Organization as an aggressive, anti-Soviet bloc.