

NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE

Issued by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L. B. Pearson, over the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation International Service.

For those concerned with international relations, and for those devoted to the long quest for peace and security and international justice, this has been in many respects a turbulent and disappointing year, and we shall enter 1956 with many anxieties. During the coming year, it seems evident that we shall need all the patience, good sense and resolution which we can command.

When I spoke on this programme a year ago, the principal international problems were as follows: relations between the Soviet and the free world; disarmament and the menace of atomic warfare; the unification of Germany; friction and violence in the Near East and serious unrest in many parts of the world, notably North Africa, Indochina and Formosa.

These problems are still with us; and it would not be difficult for a pessimist or a cynic to compile a list of our failures and of our disappointments during the last 12 months.

Must Accept Setbacks

It must, however, be remembered that these international problems, and the circumstances in those areas where peace is uncertain, have been the consequence of many centuries of world history; and it is unrealistic to expect the progress from year to year in their solution will be easy, inevitable and cumulative. We must, it seems to me, be prepared to accept setbacks and disappointments without giving way to despair; and to take comfort and courage from what has in fact been accomplished without becoming complacent.

If this has been a difficult year for all of us, we are ourselves in some measure to blame. We expected, for example, far too much from the Summit Conference in July; and then, later, we tended to go to the other extreme of dejection when the results of the later Ministerial Conference in Geneva proved so disappointing.

In this problem of the relations between the Soviet and the free world we have gained this year at last one very solid advantage; we now have far more knowledge of policies and objectives of those we fear. If we have the wisdom to benefit by what we have learned, we shall not a second time allow ourselves to become too elated by successes or too dejected by failures as we face and deal with

the tortuous and contradictory tactics and policies in which the dictators of Russia indulge.

While sharing the disappointment felt about many of the events of 1955, I believe that in many matters important progress has been made. At the Tenth Anniversary Assembly of the United Nations, for instance, the deadlock on the acceptance of new members has been very largely broken. We are happy that Canada was able to make an important contribution to this objective. We still think it most unfortunate that the United Nations will not have the benefit of a delegation from Japan; but the acceptance of 16 new members, thus making the United Nations more nearly a universal body, is clearly an important forward step. Nor have we given up, nor will we give up, the search for an agreement by which armaments can be reduced and atomic weapons outlawed.

Another achievement of the United Nations this year has been the decision to set up an international agency for the peaceful uses of atomic energy. This has brought great satisfaction and hope to those areas of the world, and there are many of them, in which the absence of a cheap and continuous source of power has been a principal reason for lack of progress in economic development.

There are other U.N. achievements. The unspectacular but vital work of the Specialized Agencies of the United Nations has continued, and a good fight is going on against ignorance, disease, poverty and misfortune.

NATO Stronger

Also during the year NATO has grown in strength and unity and remains our most effective deterrent against aggression. Our progress here is an answer to those who hope that in an atmosphere of relaxation of tension NATO will weaken and fall apart. This is, of course, a danger, but it can be met by strengthening the non-military aspects of our association—and by rejecting all temptations to weaken our defences merely because of communist blandishments.

During the year, NATO and free Europe has been strengthened and made more secure by the decision of Germany to join the company of Western European nations prepared to unite their efforts to defend their freedom. It is reassuring to know that our new associates resolutely refuse to accept Soviet terms