



CANADA

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 60/41 FOUNDATIONS OF CANADIAN EXTERNAL POLICY

An address by Prime Minister Diefenbaker to the Canadian Club of Ottawa on November 24, 1960.

... I am going to speak generally of Canada's external policies, but with specific reference to three essential foundations of those policies - the Commonwealth, the United Nations and NATO.

Of the Commonwealth I will say nothing more than this:- that stronger than ever before is the relationship between the members of the Commonwealth. In the month of March, or possibly April, 1961, there will be held a further meeting of prime ministers of the Commonwealth. Matters that you and I know will come before that conference will either strengthen or weaken the position of the Commonwealth in the years ahead. I believe, however, in that spirit that has characterized the Commonwealth in the past as it meets changing and changed conditions, without any formal agreements, and without any compulsion. The Commonwealth brings together more than 550 million people united in a common dedication to those principles of freedom which today are so necessary to maintain and which give to the Commonwealth that unity in all parts of the world that provides an answer to the Communists wherever they may be.

All of you have been following the present session of the United Nations General Assembly. It opened at a time when all that remained of the "summit" was a rubble of disappointed hopes. Disarmament negotiations had been brought to a stop. Berlin was again a source of discord and danger. Peace was threatened in the Congo and in Laos. Nothing that was occurring at that time gave any hope of reducing, much less removing, the possibility of a miscalculation by one side or another which would result in world catastrophe.

Peace Still Precarious

What of the intervening months? What are the hopes of mankind today? There has been no significant or immediate change for the better. Peace continues to be dependent on the precarious premises and unpredictable personalities in Moscow and Peking. The best that may be

said today is that we are at the crossroads. We either go forward in the months ahead to greater harmony, or we relapse into still greater tension.

Shadow of Fear

I would recommend to you, gentlemen, if you want to get a picture of the situation in the world today, to read those magazines that come from China. The aggressive declarations of the leaders of mainland China in tone and content cast a frightening shadow of fear over mankind. Their views are threatening and the necessity of a realistic review of the situation becomes necessary and mandatory. There is no doubt that Canada has a vital interest in the future character of the relations of mainland China to the general stream of world politics. So vast and almost numberless a people cannot be ignored. The world is too interlocked with its common dangers to exclude almost one-quarter of the human race from the areas of major political settlement.

You saw what happened at the United Nations - the histrionic bluster of Chairman Khrushchov, his smiles and his sneers, even to the accompaniment of pounding shoes. This and the riddle of the Soviet relationship with Communist China in recent months, as well as the language of Peking, bellicose and threatening, assail us with fears and potential dangers.

There has been some easing of tension. Mr. Khrushchov has postponed for some months the Berlin question. The nuclear testing talks at Geneva are beneficial and hopeful, but these things are offset by the refusal of the Soviet Government to face the central issue of disarmament -- international inspection and control.

Khrushchov's Purpose

The United Nations meets and the discussions take place, representative of most of the earth. What are the results that flow from that Assembly meeting that is still continuing? I think Mr. Khrushchov came to New York to make up for lost ground. He said he came to discuss disarmament. Well, all he did while there was not discuss disarmament but endeavour to cripple the effectiveness of the Secretary-General's office. He tried to secure support to bring about a three-man praesidium of East, West and neutral in the place of the Secretary-General, an arrangement under which unanimous consent would be required before any action could be taken.

By this, Chairman Khrushchov would have debased the Assembly, he would have diminished its dignity, he would have paralyzed its authority. He denied the impartiality of the Secretary-General. There was no possibility of this being accepted by the Assembly.

Why, then, did he take this course? That will always be a matter of difficulty. Was he building for some other plans? Was he endeavouring to undermine? Was he in fact fearful that in the years ahead he would again be thwarted by the Assembly? The Congo situation at the time was very serious.

I digress for a moment to say this - that during the past three days the situation in Leopoldville has been dangerously tense. The Government is in hourly touch with the situation. In a state of affairs charged with emotion, when there has been a breakdown of civil authority, there is no possibility of assuring that there will not be a renewal of violence. However, more hopefully I can say this about the Canadians serving over there, on the basis of reports from the Canadian representatives in Leopoldville and at the United Nations - that necessary precautions have been taken to ensure a reasonable degree of security for the United Nations Force. The Force is in a state of alert. The Canadian contingent has been authorized to take those measures that are necessary in self-defence.

All of us can but hope that those who today serve in that international force for Canada will be protected and preserved. They are there for the maintenance of order. Inevitably they are faced with risks. These risks are inescapable. They represent the human price that must be paid in the discharge of essential international obligations.

The United Nations

And now, what of the United Nations?

I saw it born. I remember well in San Francisco in 1945 the hopes and aspirations of all mankind. They were embodied there, as the representatives of Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and France and other nations gathered together. I believe the United Nations today is facing its greatest challenge. I do not think that Mr. Khrushchov made any particular impression on the Asian or African delegations by his proposal for a praesidium. I do not think those nations rely on the U.S.S.R. to defend and protect their independence; they know that the U.S.S.R. today endeavours to take over the souls of those peoples yet uncommitted. But I do believe this - that those nations have been attracted and encouraged by the idea of having more influence in the administrative branch of the United Nations. This is something that we must face in the days ahead, for the West no longer has a majority in the United Nations and I think changes will have to be made.

As far as we in Canada are concerned, we have taken the stand that the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council should be enlarged, to the end that proper representation, geographically and culturally, may be achieved.

Outlook for Disarmament Unencouraging

In the field of disarmament, the outlook is not very hopeful. One has only to go back to those years before the Second World War. Read for a moment the message of President Roosevelt at that time to the nations of the world in 1933. The hopes of that day have been dissipated in the light of subsequent experience. Today over mankind hangs this nuclear fear. What is our stand?

We have continued to press for disarmament, without which there cannot be survival, for, sooner or later, if the armament race continues, either by calculation or miscalculation war must almost inevitably follow. We have taken a stand for an end to nuclear weapons, an end of testing, an end to the production of fissionable material for weapons, and for the transfer of existent fissionable materials to peaceful purposes. We have taken a stand for internationalization of outer space, without which there cannot be hope for mankind a generation hence. We have, at the same time, demanded that there shall be full inspection, to the end that disarmament agreements will be carried out according to the pledged word.

NATO

Now what about NATO?

Until these measures for disarmament are achieved, Canadians must maintain their defences and all the nations of the free world must give full and first place to the requirements of security. I have noticed some people saying that Canada should withdraw from NATO. That I cannot accept.

I believe that NATO is, and will remain, an association where Canada belongs. It not only meets the criterion of self-interest from the point of view of military defence. It is a group of nations, strong of purpose, sound and good in motive, respectful of free institutions, and representing collectively those heritages that are part of our civilization. It has proven to be an impregnable bulwark for freedom. Its function today is as imperative as ever.

Changes Must be Made

We must not and dare not discard it. But that does not mean that changes do not have to be made. It is but reasonable that an organization designed to meet the fears and formulas of the 1950's may not be wholly appropriate for the threats and hopes of the 1960's.

NATO has to be revitalized. It has become secondary and commonplace in the thinking of many. Its cohesion and collective understanding must be enhanced. Changes need to be made in the economic field.

We have to endeavour to bring about economic arrangements within NATO that will ensure that the nations which stand for freedom will not by economic action weaken their neighbours and those associated with them in this responsibility.

NATO Triumvirate Opposed

There have been suggestions that we should set up a kind of triumvirate in NATO with Britain, the United States and France determining the course. Canada stands opposed to that, definitely and unequivocally.

We take our NATO commitments seriously. We do not intend to accept a secondary or subordinate position. We believe that the consultative machinery of NATO should be improved.

We believe that the nations within NATO should not take any course that will have the result of diminishing the strength or the purpose or the idealism of the organization as a whole.

Canada Pays Its Way

There has also been some suggestion recently that members may be asked to increase their contributions to NATO. I point out this fact for Canada - that we have at all times maintained our contribution to a degree not exceeded by any other nation.

We have paid a high insurance premium, and I see no reason why Canada should or could contribute more than she has this year and in years past.

We have maintained our strength in NATO. We have supplied air and ground troops. We have made a contribution on a per capita basis of which Canadians as a whole can be proud.

I believe, as I said, that some changes must be made. I think there should be a meeting of heads of government at the earliest possible date.

Strategic Policies Must be Reviewed

There should be a full and considered review of NATO purposes and policies. Indeed, in the last two or three weeks the U.S.S.R. and its satellites and associates have been meeting in Moscow. Our strategic policies must be revised and reviewed in the light of the decisions which come to us as having been made at the Communist conclave which is even now still in session.

Maintain the United Nations; contribute according to our responsibilities; press for disarmament but maintain our defences.

What of the future?

There is a revolutionary turbulence in the world today. Everywhere there is a call on the part of peoples and nations for their independence.

Soviet Versus Western Colonialism

You heard Mr. Khrushchov as he inveighed against the colonialism of Britain and France. Yet since the last war those colonies and dependencies of the United Kingdom and of France have diminished to such an extent that more than half a billion people have secured their absolute freedom. Mr. Khrushchov was not able to give an answer when asked how many human beings had been given their freedom by the U.S.S.R. during the same period of time.

We live under a continuing nuclear threat. It touches the hearts of Canadians. The question is asked: are you going to provide nuclear weapons for Canadians? Gentlemen, the responsibility resting on those who have authority, as a trust from the people, knows no greater or more trying problem than this.

Canada and Nuclear Arms

We have taken the stand that no decision will be required while progress towards disarmament continues. To do otherwise would be inconsistent. When and if such weapons are required, then we shall have to take the responsibility. The future of Canadians requires that we make that decision which, in the light of the best information we have, represents the maximum security for our country. We have made it equally clear that we shall not, in any event, consider nuclear weapons until, as a sovereign nation, we have equality in control - a joint control. In other words, this problem is not one requiring immediate decision. The course to be taken will be determined in the light of what happens in connection with disarmament and in the light of events as they transpire and develop in the months ahead.

The great danger today, and I have found it everywhere, is that our people and the peoples of the free world are becoming complacent. The threat has been there so long that it is becoming commonplace.

I conclude and summarize. The principal aim of Canadian foreign policy is Canadian security in partnership with her friends. It is peace; it is welfare for all peoples, and particularly those who live in under-developed countries in poverty or in a state of retarded development. It is an understanding between cultures, however diverse; human ideologies,

however conflicting. It is the achievement of universal respect for law, for the processes of co-operation and for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

We live in a time of change. The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom said that we live in a time when the "winds of change" are blowing. We hope that new developments will come ushered in by winds of change rather than gales of destruction. My message to you is this - that we, as Canadians, set our Canadian sails, follow and steer a course so that those winds will not become gales. I hope that Providence and human intelligence will together allow these changes to take place without the storm that hovers over the horizon.

S/C