

VERNMENT



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OUR CHANGING WORLD

Text of an address by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L.B. Pearson, made at the annual dinner meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, at North Bay, on January 21, 1952.

We are entering another year in the "terrible 20th century", as that towering figure, Mr. Winston Churchill, called it in his speech last week at Ottawa, where we were proud and honoured to receive him. It is a good time to look back and to look forward. Looking back - well back - we may draw some useful lessons from history to help us as we face the problems ahead, though I suspect that historical insight often consists, as someone has said, of backing winners that have already won.

A knowledge of history does, however, help one to realize that there have been, in recent years, fundamental changes in the international scene. An appreciation of these changes is essential if we wish to solve contemporary international problems and a refusal to understand them is, I think, responsible for a good deal of the confusion and frustration which so often plagues us now in the relations between states.

In the first place, there has been in the last 50 years a fundamental change in the pattern of distribution of world power until now the centres of such power are in Washington and Moscow.

The power in one centre, the U.S.S.R., rests on and is directed by a totalitarian police regime which has brought about the submission to it, by conquest or subversion, of a group of satellite states. It represents everything that is hateful and reactionary, and its efforts to extend its sway over other peoples must be and are being resisted. If this resistance is to succeed, however, it is just as important to know your opponent as to know yourself. Yet it is extremely difficult for anyone to feel confident that he knows much about, to quote Mr. Churchill again, "the enigma wrapped in a mystery" that is Moscow under Communist rule. We do know, of course, that this regime is controlled by a small group of men who do not believe in international friendship or international co-operation, except on their own terms, and who have given us no reason to think that they understand the compromises and adjustments which are required if the relations between states are to be conducted in a normal way. We also know that these men are in complete control of the minds and bodies of nearly two hundred millions of human beings; that they are distorting history

and twisting the purposes of education to ensure that a generation will be raised in ignorance and hate of any system of government or society except that which dominates them. We know also that, whatever they may say for outside consumption in order to deceive and confuse us, they believe that their system and ours are incompatible and one or the other must disappear. To attack our system by any means, including armed force, is not to them aggression - as Mr. Vishinsky once admitted at a United Nations Assembly in an unguarded moment.

Prussia was once called a state possessed by an army. In Russia a revolutionary conspiracy possesses an empire, and hopes to possess a world. To achieve its purpose this conspiracy will use any force, whether twisted idealism or frustrated ambition, whether fear or lust for conquest, which is willing to accept its sway and submit to it. Imperialism was dangerous enough when it was based on national power alone, but when it can use as its spearhead a world-wide subversive ideology, it becomes a menace greater than any that ever before faced those who would remain free.

The other centre of power, the United States, stands for something else; and something infinitely better. With that power centre are associated other free countries - including Canada - who realize that there can be no safety alone. But this is a coming together, voluntarily, of free states; a partnership based on mutual respect, and willing co-operation. This is no relationship of master and servant. Of course, the smaller members of the association are bound to be preoccupied by the strength, especially the atomic strength, of our giant leader and the way it might be used. It would be surprising if this were not so. But that preoccupation does not mean that we fear the fate that awaits any state that is dragooned into the Russian Communist group. The Americans, who respect other peoples' rights because they cherish their own, would not desire that, any more than we would tolerate it. As a well-known and thoughtful American commentator, Walter Lippman, has said:

"For our own sakes we must wish to live among equals, among peoples who trust us but do not fear us, who work with us but do not fawn upon us. Only equals can really be trusted, only governments that speak candidly and do not say what they think we want to hear, what they believe will keep the dollars flowing. There is no health in satellitism, and even the most ruthless imperialism can never trust the satellite."

Those are wise words and they explain the basic difference between our free world coalition and the chain gang of the Stalinist world.

Nevertheless, there are those who still worry about the danger of being crushed between the two giants. Especially are these worries evident in certain circles of Europe, in countries which have been bruised and battered by war after war, invaded and despoiled, whose only thought is to be left in peace to work out their own destinies in their own way. There is nothing that provokes such a shudder in the European mind as the spectre of invasion and liberation. Next time, they rightly surmise, there may be nothing but dust and chaos to liberate. Most of free Europe, however, also realizes that the best way of avoiding this result is

to unite its strength with the strength of the New World - in a strong and close Atlantic community - so that there will be no temptation for an aggressor to imagine that he can win an easy victory, or, indeed, a victory of any kind.

The attitude of Europe to America, a compound of hope and admiration and anxiety, should be understood by those of us who live in North America, no longer, it is true, in "fire-proof houses", as once some Canadians thought, but still some distance away from the places where fires have previously begun and raged most fiercely. On their part, Europeans should realize that American power is in possession of a people who did not seek it and who will use it, if not always with complete wisdom, yet without aggressive or domineering design. If this were not true, or if it ever ceased to be true, the great coalition for peace, built around the United States, would soon crumble.

An American scholar, Professor Earle, has put the matter in this way:

"It is natural enough that certain segments of European opinion should be concerned lest the United States may come to pursue power for its own sake. It is undoubtedly true that Western Europe would be happier if there were no cold war - that is to say, if there were no Soviet-American test of power. But would Western Europe be more contented, more secure, and more prosperous if the United States were disposed to run the risks of giving the U.S.S.R. a free hand in Europe? Distasteful as American intervention in Europe may be, would even the severest critic of the United States wish to have American economic and military aid withdrawn? Has the United States created the Soviet threat or merely reacted to it? These are questions which Europeans can answer better than Americans, but they are questions which Americans may venture to ask in view of the severe criticism (some of it vindictive, some of it uninformed, some of it admittedly justifiable) which is continuously directed at American policy."

It will help in building up this defensive association with the United States as its centre and leader, if we appreciate another revolutionary change which has taken place over the last half-century, the change in the number and nature of free and sovereign states, which has resulted in what might be called the fragmentation of international society. In the application of the principles of self-government and nationalism, a great number of new, many of them weak, states have been formed. This is an inevitable and should be a healthy process, but some of its results, as I can testify from attending United Nations Assembly meetings where we now have 60 members, make international co-operation and international agreement more difficult. Some of these states are as sensitive about their new freedom as they are conscious of their weakness and indeed conscious of the value to them of the UN for covering up that weakness and pursuing their own ends. Their sensitiveness makes them difficult to deal with, especially at the present moment in the Middle East. Many of these states are in that part of the world, Asia, whose people feel that they have for long been the victims of outside exploitation and suppression, the memory of which lingers on. Most of them need help, if they are to resist the subversive doctrines of Communism

which would exploit their national feelings for the purposes of Soviet imperialism and harness their discontent and distress to ends which have nothing to do with the welfare of the people, but they are morbidly touchy about help with strings attached. It is important to remember, as we build up the North Atlantic community, or as we work out our policies inside the United Nations, so that aggression may be prevented and security achieved, that we will not succeed unless we understand the problems of these new Asian nations and assist in their solution. That is why the development of defensive military strength must go hand in hand with programmes for economic and technical assistance, for rehabilitation, and improvement in those regions of Africa and Asia where man lives on the very borderline of existence with his only certain companions hunger, deprivation and disease.

There is a third revolution, and as important as the other two, which has occurred in recent years, the revolution in science and technology. Here the problem is to try to reduce the gap which has been created by man's startling material advance and his much less impressive progress, if, indeed, it is progress at all, in the social, political and moral fields. It is a subject about which one could talk for hours without coming to any easy or satisfying conclusion. But I think that we would all at least agree on this one thing. If man's social development does not soon catch up to or at least narrow the gap between it and his material progress, he will ultimately be lost in the chasm between scientific brilliance and moral imbecility.

It is against a background such as this that those of us who are charged with responsibility in international affairs have to face the problems ahead.

Are those problems going to overwhelm us and lead to war? If not, how are we to avoid this result? Above all, and more specifically, what policy should we adopt in the cold war so that it will be replaced by peace and not by an atomic explosion.

These are questions which I keep asking myself, as I know you do too. If it is difficult to find the right answers in our own minds, you will realize how infinitely more difficult it must be to get a number of separate governments to agree on those answers. Yet such collective agreement is essential if there is to be effective action. No one can "go it" alone.

I feel myself, and this feeling has been expressed recently by others whose experience and wisdom in these matters is greater than mine, that we can look into 1952 with somewhat less anxiety than gripped us a year ago. Having said that, I should add that we had a very great deal to be anxious about then, and that there is nothing in the present international picture, especially in that part of it which covers Asia, which should lead anyone to think that defence expenditures can now be converted into income tax exemptions!

The coalition for peace, based now on NATO, has, however, made progress through its increasing strength and developing unity. That gives ground for hope in the year ahead. Those who might be tempted to substitute armed

aggression for political subversion know now that this strength and this unity stand in the way; more and more solidly in the way. The moral of this, then, is not to abandon the course that is leading us to safety but to persist - steadily but unprovocatively - in this strengthening and in the consolidation of this unity. Those are the ends to which the North Atlantic Council is working and to which our next meeting at Lisbon in a few weeks time will make, I think, a greater contribution than that made by any that have preceded it.

But if there is cause for less anxiety in Europe, there is cause for more in Asia. In Korea the purposes and the designs of the Communist aggressor at the cease-fire table are difficult to establish. Never was there a more frustrating or tortuous negotiation, nor can we yet tell whether it will leave the United Nations position, or the United Nations forces, who have succeeded in blocking and defeating aggression there, stronger or weaker. This is a risk being taken for peace. It is worth taking. If it fails, the responsibility for such failure must be made clear. If it succeeds, and later there is bad faith and renewed aggression in Korea, the responsibility will be equally clear and the consequences may be far-reaching. That should be clearly understood by those who would break any armistice arranged.

The defence lines against Communist aggression, in Asia, however, are far more extensive than the width of the Korean peninsula. They cannot all be held in equal military strength with the resources presently available. That makes it the more important that Western participation in the defence of that part of the world against aggression should rest on a strong political foundation; that it should be allied with national and economic progress and not be saddled with the dragging weights of social injustice, racial discriminations, or political reaction. If Asia goes Communist, and this must be considered as at least a possibility, it will be for no love of Russia or of Marx, but because the agents of Russia and Marx were able to exploit and harness to revolution the longing for a piece of bread, a roof and the right to stand erect. It is only by their own exertions and their own policies that the peoples of Asia can secure these benefits. But we can help them, to some extent, materially, but also by our understanding of their aspirations and giving them the assurance of our desire to co-operate with them in the solution of their problems.

In Asia, especially in Southeast Asia, then, the situation is heavy with danger; all the more so because the danger may express itself, not in open aggression where we would know where we were, but in aid and assistance to those who are already fighting against local governments. There may be no clear-cut breach of the peace as there was in Korea and consequently no clear-cut basis for collective defence. Indo-China, Burma and Malaya have shown how desperately difficult such situations can become.

In Europe, however, as I have said, the situation seems somewhat brighter. But here also there is a new danger - new perhaps only in our increasing consciousness of it. It is a possible weakening of morale, following economic and political instability. The Cominform leaders in the Kremlin

are patient and realistic schemers, with a sense of historical inevitability which derives from their reading of the Gospel of Marx. With the Atlantic Pact and the atomic bomb in mind, they may have ruled out, for the time being, direct armed aggression against free Europe. They may have replaced it by a campaign to sap our strength, weaken our resistance; undermine our resolve to get strong and keep united. Such a campaign could operate in various ways. By phony but specious "peace" campaigns designed to lull us into a false security and make the burden of defence expenditures seem unnecessary. By malicious propaganda designed to show that these unnecessary expenditures, imposed, as they will allege, by the United States, remove all possibility of an improved standard of living. By exploiting national prejudices, jealousies and envies; stirring up class against class, nation against nation, by working on France's fear of Germany, Britain's worries about closer European ties, Europe's hesitations over American strength; America's doubts of Europe's resolution. We must defend ourselves against these tactics, and that is not going to be easy, because this is a campaign in the war of ideas. The defence must therefore be positive and constructive.

One important part of this defence is so to conduct our NATO rearmament programme that it does not remove the hope (indeed, the certainty) of greater human welfare for those people who are to be protected by it; by hammering away at the idea that NATO stands for peace alone and that without the security it will provide, there can be no progress.

It would be folly, of course, if we invited military attack by weakness, if we slackened in any important respect our defence effort. But it would also be unwise if we brought about economic and political weakness by trying to arm too quickly, too extensively everywhere. This is the lesser danger, I admit, but it is certainly a danger in Europe where the economic and social foundations on which a military defence structure must rest are not so strong as they are on this continent; and where termites are patiently but persistently gnawing at them.

This, then, is our dual problem, the search for military security with economic stability.

That is a difficult enough problem for a single state to work out. For a group of states who wish to act collectively but preserve national control in doing so, it is - as I know from my own experience - far more difficult. It is the sort of problem we are continually discussing at our NATO meetings and there is never an easy or a final answer to it. Conditions change and our diplomatic and military plans often have to be changed with them. Satisfactory solutions will only be reached by patience, understanding and good will.

They will be reached, I am sure, because we have the greatest compulsion to do so; our very existence as free nations and free men is at stake. Because, let us not fool ourselves, if we fail to make ourselves secure, militarily, economically, politically, our weakness may end in disaster. That will give an opportunity for aggressive Communism to march in and take over, for that doctrine and its adherents are always the beneficiaries of chaos and despair.

Military strength, economic and social health, interdependent - one to be achieved without sacrificing the other; that is the task ahead of us. To get the tanks and keep the tractors working, that is our national and international job for 1952.

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