

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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GOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD

An address by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L.B. Pearson, before the Golden Jubilee Convention of Rotary International, at Chicago June 1, 1955.

To appear before so vast and representative an audience as this is not only a great honour but a stern test of a man's confidence that he has something to say, and a way of saying it worthy of so great an occasion.

In addition to your obvious and heartening goodwill, there is one other fact which reassures me. All of us here, whatever our calling and wherever we may come from, are working toward the same objective: peace, security and the promotion of human welfare.

It is altogether fitting that this jubilee convention is being held in Chicago - a city which has at time been alleged to be a centre of "go-it-alone-ism"; inhabited by sturdy patriots inclined to be suspicious of foreigners, as slick and tricky people! The welcome given to this convention, with delegates from all parts of the world, helps to dispose of any such allegation.

The very fact that the Rotary movement, product of and flourishing in this city and this area, has as one of its fundamental objectives the advancement of international understanding and goodwill, suggests the true sentiments of the people who live in the mid-west of this great country. There is no trace of national superiority or self-sufficiency in the ideals of Rotary, which 50 years ago began flowing from this city to all those parts of the world represented here today. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine any notion more flatly contrary to your objectives of unselfish service and mutual aid than the idea that one person, or one community, or one nation - or even one race - could be sufficient unto itself.

For more than twenty-five years, I have been concerned with the study and the conduct of international affairs. In view of what has happened in that field over those twenty-five years, you may wonder why I should boast of that. Be that as it may, perhaps this morning I might regard myself as a minor member of the management reporting to the shareholders of his international company.

What my colleagues in other countries and I have been attempting to do in our official capacities - or what we can do - stems, of course, entirely from the principles and policies which you and many thousands of your fellow-citizens wish to see converted into working realities. We who are

engaged professionally in the daily business of international affairs have no authority and no sanction for our discussions and our decisions apart from the desires and the hopes of the people whom we serve. In these discussions and decisions, our objectives should be the same as those of Rotary - the promotion of peace and goodwill. Rotary stands also for good neighbourly conduct, not only in purely personal relationships but also between communities within a country and between the nations of the world. There never was a time in history when the practice of good neighbourhood was more necessary.

It has become trite to point out that our globe has been shrinking. This is merely another way of saying that for all of us the area of our neighbourhood has been expanding; till now, for some purposes at least, it embraces the entire earth. Neighbourhood is to be measured in terms of the distance over which men and ideas and things can be readily and rapidly transported. But whatever its area, neighbourhood is only a fact. As far as our problem goes, it is only a starting point. The real question is whether we can match this expanding fact of neighbourhood with a corresponding increase in the area, and the depth, of good feeling of neighbourliness.

It is precisely here that great popular and international movements such as Rotary can make so great a contribution.

As the area of neighbourhood expands, from towns to states, from countries to continents, until it covers the world, so does the area of personal and national responsibility especially for those nations with greatest power.

Today the people of the United States are unquestionably the most powerful on earth. Their foes and detractors say that they have schemed to bring about this power and some even that they are plotting a new war to extend it. Their friends know that this is a grotesque falsehood; that there has never been a nation less grasping or ambitious for powers; or one which has discharged its global responsibility more unselfishly and less aggressively. We in the rest of the free world have reason to be deeply grateful that Americans have not shrunk from the burdens, moral and intellectual, as well as military and economic, which leadership always involves and which predominant power has now thrust upon them.

Good neighbourhood requires not only friendly contacts and the freest possible exchange of material things. It requires also the freest possible exchange of views and ideas.

International misunderstanding in fact is at its worst when the people of different nations have the greatest difficulty in exchanging ideas.

One obstacle of this kind of fruitful exchange is the fact that many words which enshrine noble ideas have now been tortured and abused by communists until they have become far removed from their original and true meaning. They have suffered a terrible battering in the propaganda of the cold war. This makes it all the more necessary to reaffirm precisely what we mean and do not mean by certain words and expressions which have fallen into ignoble and distorted use. Words in themselves have a power - and they can be dangerous as weapons. We should do our best to prevent their use and meaning from becoming corrupt.

The word "peace" - which I have already used - is a good example. When you and I talk about peace, we do not mean merely an uneasy interim period between fighting, during which a rapacious state can gather its resources and strength for an attack on a neighbour, nor do we mean the peace of a cemetery or even the enforced order of a prison. For us, the notion of peace includes freedom to enjoy a long period of secure tranquility in which an honest and a hardworking man can make long-term plans for himself, for his family and for his community.

As another example, look what has happened to the word "freedom". We are asked, for instance, to believe that a people, with its own language, historical tradition, and religious and social ideas, has gained some sort of new freedom because it is entirely subservient to an alien power which happens to be communist. We are asked to believe in the validity of "free" elections where the entire population of voting age is compelled to vote for pre-selected candidates of a single party. We are presented with the solemn farce of a "free" press which does not venture, on pain of drastic punishment, to print anything which is not approved by the central authority. We are also expected to interpret "freedom of speech" as freedom to say only those things which give pleasure to the ruling authority. Freedom is slavery when it is only freedom to conform. It must be freedom to differ, to protest, to indict, and in politics, to "turn the rascals out" by due process of election.

If the deceivers of communism try to befuddle us by distorting and twisting the meaning of good words to cover bad actions, we can take comfort from the fact that, as George Orwell, the English writer, once said: "The solid world exists, its laws do not change. Stones are hard, water is wet, objects unsupported fall toward the earth's centre freedom is freedom to say that two plus two makes four. If that is granted, all else follows."

On certain fundamental things, I take it, all of us who are here assembled are in deep agreement; that peaceful persuasion is a better course than violence; voluntary co-operation is to be preferred to control and compulsion; compassion to cynicism and convictions to indifference; that truth does exist and is a better thing than falsehood. These are simple things, but they make up the texture of our free life. Their loss we will not endure. To defend them we are prepared to make great sacrifices as we have already done twice in this century.

Exchange of ideas, then, can be confused and obstructed by the distortion of the meaning of words. It can also be hindered by the deliberate policy of totalitarian governments. It is easy to understand why they try. The most powerful forces on earth for freedom and goodwill among men are the ideas and ideals which are spread through spontaneous contacts - "Rotary" contacts, if I may call them that - between individuals.

That is why dictators go to such extreme lengths to deny possibilities for the development of any genuine sense of community both among their own peoples and between different peoples. They know that an idea, such as freedom, once it develops and finds expression in a word, a song, a slogan, or a prayer, may become something that no force on earth can kill. It is no wonder that rulers of totalitarian states are afraid of ideas that are not their own or are not tailored by them to their own ends.

The essence of the Iron Curtain lies, of course, precisely in this; it is the attempt by men who are in dread of human nature and fear the real forces of history, to prevent free contacts and the exchange of ideas between individuals; to obstruct the growth of neighbourliness. They fear this development of a sense of community because it is something bigger than any man can control. What tyrants cannot control they fear, and try to destroy.

By the same token, we who are free must be on guard lest our own societies prove vulnerable to the contagion of this evil virtue of the fear of ideas.

If we become afraid of certain words and ideas because of their bad association in the past, or because the totalitarians have tried to give them evil meanings; if we hedge in our arguments or in our expressions in order to avoid having a label pinned on us, then that free exchange of ideas which is the life blood of democracy - and which is poison to communism - is weakened and placed in jeopardy. So is the cohesion and unity of the democratic community - and democratic neighbourliness.

Today in the relations between the communist and non-communist worlds a lessening of fear and suspicion must be the first step toward anything that even approaches neighbourliness. When this takes place ideas can be exchanged and contacts made. These may not end in any deep friendship, but that perhaps may not be necessary if they produce some understanding. The editor of this "New Yorker" magazine (I can't remember his exact words) once said something like this "Don't try to love your neighbour. It may only make him uncomfortable. Try to earn and deserve his respect". Good advice, at least politically speaking.

There is another reason why we must keep everlastingly trying to extend the boundaries of good neighbourhood - the H-Bomb. A hundred years ago the people of a village had to be united against a common menace like fire. They banded together to prevent it, isolate it, or extinguish it. If a fire was allowed to begin and spread, good and bad neighbours suffered together. Today the world is a village against the awful menace of nuclear weapons that can destroy it and ensure that its people, the good and the bad, to perish together.

We should remember these things, - the danger to freedom from exaggerated fears; the certainty of common universal destruction if nuclear war comes, as we enter, in diplomacy and in international affairs, a new period where trench warfare is being replaced by manoeuvring in the open. This will give us new opportunities, but will confront us also with some new problems, and the same old dangers. It is certainly no time to lower guard or weaken our defences; to take things easy. The world is still a dangerous place for the weak and unwary. There are, however, greater opportunities now than there were before the strong and the wise and the patient to take advantage of an international situation which seems now to be more fluid, so that progress can be made toward the right kind of peace; and even toward global co-operation.

We are approaching meetings at the "summit", incidentally not always the most comfortable place for meetings, and on the foreign ministers' level, which is also, I naturally insist, fairly high up! In my opinion these meetings are to be welcomed;

not with uncritical acclaim but with sober satisfaction because they may give opportunities to create a better atmosphere and to solve some concrete problems. We should guard against excessive optimism on the one hand and cynicism on the other. The one will lead to hopes that cannot be realized, with consequent disillusionment. The other will prevent us from making the most of the new opportunities that may present themselves.

It would be unwise, and might be dangerous, to expect immediate and exciting results because four heads of governments will come together and exchange ideas. Peace, firm and final peace, will not come from one meeting at the highest level, but from many meetings at lower levels. The talks ahead are only a beginning, not an end, and all men of goodwill should be very happy if they begin something constructive and worthwhile.

So, if there are proposals from the other side, which seem to promise an easing of tension. I hope they will not be rejected but tested, explored and made the most of. It would be tragic indeed if fears and suspicions paralysed our diplomacy and made us incapable of moving forward and responding to any genuine advances that may be made.

But it would also be tragic - and might be fatal as we move forward - if we grew careless and complacent and indolent in protecting our security; if we thought that the millennium had arrived because communist kisses have been thrown from a balcony in Vienna and from other places! We should remember the difference between tactics and strategy, between means and ends; that dictatorships are capable of very sudden changes of policy, and in either direction. A sense of proportion and a sense of balance will be valuable, and may be essential, in the weeks ahead.

Meetings at a high political level can be, and I hope will be of great value. But our ultimate goal must be friendships and fellowships at the grass roots. Security which shows itself in a relaxation of tension and a limitation of armaments can ultimately be based only on understanding and goodwill; on a feeling of community between peoples. That will take a long time, even with the incentive of sure knowledge that if we fail and nuclear warfare results, it would be the end of us all.

This knowledge of the certainty of co-destruction if war comes makes this talk about "co-existence" - another one of words - sterile and meaningless. Of course we must "co-exist" with Russians and Chinese Communists and everybody else. I get no particular comfort out of that. What we must work for is not "co-existence", but conditions which will convert co-existence into co-operation; the kind of "co-existence" that we find between the United States and Canada and which is based on friendship and good neighbourhood.

Though I am aware of the fact - and rejoice in it - that this is no mere United States-Canadian occasion, it is far wider internationally than that, I hope that I may be permitted to say a few words on this somewhat narrower, but to us in Canada vital subject of U.S./Canadian relations.

I am aware that in certain quarters it is fashionable today and at times possibly exhilarating, to pluck, or try to pluck feathers from the American eagle. It is a political sport

which has replaced that of twisting the lion's tail. This shouldn't worry Americans, any more than it worried Englishmen once they appreciated its significance. It is a tribute to the high flying power and quality of the king of birds, just as it was in early days to the power and primacy of the king of beasts.

On this occasion I am going to try to add - rather than subtract a feather on this occasion; by affirming that all peoples in the world, Canadians are in the best position to testify to the quality; to the generosity, decency, and good neighbourliness of the American people. We know that beneath certain frothy outpourings that may from time to time perplex people in other countries; behind the sensational headlines, there are ideals and high principles, there is patience and dignity, decency and great wisdom in this country, and a determination to play a good part in the effort to make our little world not only secure, but one worth living in.

Canada which would make such a rich and useful and natural addition to United States "living space", is, of course, the decisive refutation of the evil and envious accusations of those who claim to see in the United States of America a bomb-rattling, power-hungry menace to peace and freedom.

If there were any truth in that caricature, there would be no delegates called Canadians attending this great Rotary conference, and there would be no Secretary of State for External Affairs of an independent Canada offering from this platform today, and be with great sincerity, a character reference to a good neighbour.

During the last 15 years or so men and women in scores of countries on every continent have become increasingly conscious of something that we in Canada have known about for a long time; of Americans as neighbours, friendly, vital, generous, at times disconcerting but never-to-be-ignored neighbours.

Many people in these other countries, to whom Americans are a relatively new sensation, have reacted to this situation not only with eager interest, but often with some of the uncertainty, even apprehension with which men are likely to view any novel and powerful influence on their lives; such as matrimony, television, or Chicago hospitality!

They should ask Canadians about the people of the United States; what it feels like to live in the shadow of this dynamic and powerful land. We have known its people for a long time, and by now have become mixed up with them through such things as Rotary, baseball, Jackie Gleason, a common language, Hollywood, tourists, and a border which is very easy to cross, unless you are on the Attorney-General's black - or rather red - list.

We are, in fact, and in many ways the closest neighbour that the United States enjoys, if I may use that word. I think it is true to say that no two nations in history, who are not politically associated, have ever developed such close and extensive contacts as those which exist between the peoples of the United States and Canada.

I do not say this with any feeling of smugness or any assumption of superior virtue. We have been fortunate in our two countries in the circumstances of our development and in the influences that have been brought to bear on our relationship.

There has been a tendency, especially, if I may say so, in the United States, to take this happy state of affairs for granted; to assume that it has always been so and will continue that way without any special effort on anybody's part. There has been no war and no warships, no guards and no shots for 140 years. Everything is O.K. about Canada, so we can worry about Guatemala or Germany or Gaza or Matsu.

This, I suggest, is the wrong attitude, unjustified historically and unwise politically.

We have not always been good neighbours. If there has been peace, it was, for a century after our last war in 1812-15, peace with friction. For fifty years after, indeed, it was peace never far removed from conflict. The "unguarded border" of every contemporary speech on Canadian-American relations was disturbed by incidents, patrolled by soldiers and the scene of many a bitter dispute. If there were no warships on the Great Lakes after the Rush-Bagot Agreement of 1817, it was due in large part to the fact that so many huge warships had been or were being built at that time on Lake Ontario that both sides were going broke!

Why, forts were being built on the border as late as 1872. It is amusing to learn that the United States were so worried about us at one time, in the early 19th century, that they built a strong stone tower to block an advance down Lake Champlain. Then the border was resurveyed and it was found that the fort was on the Canadian side. That, incidentally, is in our view (which, of course, may be prejudiced) the only boundary settlement with our neighbour in history that didn't cost us territory. There was no doubt a congressional investigation into such gross carelessness!

The history of our border has not, in fact, been one long, sweet song. From those earlier hostile times, when United States troops burnt Toronto and, in return, the Red Coast burnt the White House, down to the Fenian raids of the '60s and '70s, this song has been frequently interrupted by war whoops.

Lots of trouble there was, but common sense and generosity and vision prevailed. Good neighbourliness was achieved long ago and has been maintained. From guns across the border it has become hands - and cars - across the border, with a short period during prohibition times when it was hiccups! We have moved from hostility to tolerance, to an abiding friendship and, on the part of the United States, to an increasing interest in its northern neighbours, who are now on the march to a great destiny.

That destiny cannot, however, in the dangerous, but inter-dependent world of today, be separated from that of the United States. The facts of geography, strategy and economics make this certain. We are inevitably linked together as mountain climbers scaling an Alpine peak. While this gives us comfort in Canada and a feeling of security, it also, at times, makes for some uneasiness. We are, you know, behind you on that rope, so we like to know where we are going, and even why! We are not the type of people - we are too much like you for that - who can be pulled along automatically. This means that when we have our differences of opinion - as we do and will - being North Americans, we will express our views in the frank and straight-forward idiom which you understand.

These differences and misunderstandings sometimes arise from the fact that while we are so alike in so many ways, we are different in others. And Canadians, believe it or not, are satisfied with the differences. Their occasional irritations arise not so much over the fact that Americans object to these differences, as that they don't even recognize them. There is for instance, our parliamentary as contrasted with your congressional system of government; our monarchical institutions which without limiting our democratic freedom in any single respect, makes it easier for people to distinguish between the majesty of Government as such, and the activities of governments which are not always considered majestic. There are also differences in our system of justice and the organization of the judiciary; in the fact that we spring from two races, French and English; in our membership in that group of independent nations who make up the British Commonwealth. These and many other things foster in our own minds a sense of separate national identity from you which we cherish and in which we take an increasing pride. They help to explain why we do not take the same point of view on every subject that is taken in the United States. The glory - because it is not less than that - of our relationship is, however, that we are not pushed around and pilloried by our great neighbour, because we hold and express these differences and that we now settle our problems by frank, friendly and very informal discussion, leading to fair agreement. This is all the more notable because of the disparity in power and influence between the two countries. It is good neighbourhood based on partnership - and a far cry indeed from the relationship between a big and smaller Communist state.

The relations between our two countries, however, (and I wish to stress this) reaching as they do into every aspect of human activity - political, economic, cultural and recreation are not simple; and it is going to be no simple and easy matter to keep them in the good and healthy condition which is now more desirable than ever, as we become increasingly important to each other.

In the field of hemisphere defence, for instance, we have had - and will have - great and complicated problems to face. We know that this continent must be defended as a whole or lost as a whole. The implications of this for Canada have been particularly weighty. We have primary responsibility for the defence of a vast area. We have limited financial and human resources at our disposal for that purpose. Many of the northern defence projects which now have to be undertaken would not be practicable if we had to do them on our own; or possibly even necessary if we were geographically more remote from you, instead of being as we are a northern buffer between the United States and the great land mass of Soviet Russia. These projects have become essential in the common defence. But if they must be undertaken on our soil our rights, as well as our responsibilities must be preserved.

All this makes necessary the closest possible kind of friendly and careful co-operation. It requires on the part of the vastly more powerful partner an appreciation of the status and even the sensibilities - of the smaller. It requires on Canada's part an awareness of the whole global picture; an understanding of the world power and world responsibilities of the United States, which remains our surest shield against aggression until the cold war can be transformed into a warm and secure peace.

I am very happy to state here that these joint continental defence policies are being carried out in a way which reflects the very best in our good neighbourhood. It is something in which we can take great pride on both sides of the border. It is a fine example of partnership, made all the more

impressive by the fact that while both countries are taking on new obligations for continental defence - which is part of the common defence - and sharing the cost - we are also maintaining forces in the European sector of that common front. For my country, this involves an army brigade group, many warships, and an air division of jet fighters. A two-front peace-time effort of this kind is no inconsiderable burden for a country of 16 million people and explains why a young country, sparsely populated, with terrific problems of development at home, devote between 40 and 45% of our budget to defence.

While we can be satisfied with our record of co-operation in defence, we in Canada are somewhat less happy about co-operation in trade and commerce. The reason is simple. Our population, less than one tenth of yours, buys nearly \$3 billion worth of American goods (incidentally, much more than the whole of South America). But your 165 million bought only \$2 1/3 billion worth of our goods. When we make an effort to redress the balance by increasing our exports, especially of agricultural and fisheries and other primary products, the clamour for protection against any success that this effort may achieve grows in Washington and we are in trouble. So trade problems are increasing between us, as indeed they are throughout the world. I would be less than frank if I did not add that Canadian worries and occasional irritations on this score are also increasing.

We should realize in all our countries, and act on the realization, that common defence requires the greatest possible co-ordination and unity of foreign and economic policies. This means that a boundary line cannot be ignored for defence purposes and recognized as a very real obstacle every time more exports wish to cross it. If I may adopt a well-known quotation, "If guns are to cross boundaries, goods should too".

On this occasion, however, I prefer to emphasize not our problems, but the deep and genuine cordiality and closeness of this neighbourhood, this U.S. -Canadian partnership. I devoutly hope that such a relationship can be extended over a larger and larger area; and I am encouraged, as you are, by the progress that has been made in this direction through such international agencies as the Organization of the American States, the Commonwealth of Nations and NATO, and through the work of unofficial organizations of the people, like Rotary International. One day, please God, with the help of our world organization, the United Nations, we can move forward to this kind of neighbourliness on a global scale, then indeed peace, deep and genuine, will have been assured.

It is this kind of universal good-neighbourhood, based on freedom and friendship which Rotary is pledged to support and promote.

That is one reason why I am proud to appear today before this great convention and to extend my good wishes and earnest hope for its success.