



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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PEOPLES WANT PEACE, NOT PROPAGANDA

Address by Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker
before the United Nations General Assembly,
September 26, 1960.

Mr. President, I wish to congratulate you on your election. I know that the United Nations General Assembly will benefit greatly from your wisdom, experience and independent judgement, qualities which are so essential in the discharge of those responsibilities that are yours, and may I add, Sir, that one-tenth of Canada's population is of Irish origin and they ask me to convey to you a particular word of congratulation.

I wish as well to join in welcoming the newly-elected member states. I know that they will derive benefit and advantage from their membership in this organization, as the United Nations will benefit from their participation in its work and activities. It is particularly significant that 13 of these new member states are in Africa, a continent in which great changes are taking place and which today holds the centre of the world's stage. I know all of us of the older members of this organization will agree that we have a responsibility to assist these new member states in solving the challenging problems with which they are faced.

Their addition to our membership is a reminder of the need for the Assembly to consider enlarging the Economic and Social Council and the numerical strength of the Security Council, so that all geographical areas may receive adequate representation.

I wish now to speak of the present Assembly. To some observers the Assembly in the past week gave the appearance of being a circus and a drama of personalities. Whatever their views, this fact stands out, that this is the most important and most representative gathering of the world and national leaders in all history. This meeting symbolizes the bringing together of the cultures and philosophies of all races. It is our responsibility to ensure that out of this meeting shall come a testament to the capacity of rational men to achieve rational relations, to bring about the attainment of peace and to practise brotherhood and the raising of standards everywhere in the world. To the new members I say this. As one coming from Canada, I say that the United

Nations constitutes the greatest hope for the middle and small powers, for the new and weaker states, indeed, for all the nations of mankind of every social and political system.

Mischievous Soviet Speech

We meet under circumstances which, in my opinion, mean that this is a critical stage in the history and development of the United Nations. This organization faces its most formidable threat, a threat to its very existence. In the last few days the Assembly has heard from the leaders of its two most powerful members. I had great hopes when I learned that Mr. Khrushchev was going to attend. I came here prepared to accept, to adopt and to agree with any good suggestion he might offer, for I am of those who believe that his suggestions must not be rejected out of hand. I have been disappointed. Mr. Khrushchev, in a gigantic propaganda drama of destructive misrepresentation, launched a major offensive in the cold war. He gave lip-service to the United Nations which, in my opinion, would be destroyed by his proposal for a triumvirate. That speech could not have been intended to bring the world closer to peace; yet, to bring the world closer to peace is the major reason for our being here.

We do not always agree with the United States, but our very existence -- with one-tenth of the population of the United States and possessing the resources that we do -- is an effective answer to the propaganda that the United States has aggressive designs. I say that, to begin with, President Eisenhower made a restrained, a wise and a conciliatory speech. He presented a constructive programme. He looked forward to a world community of peace. He opened the door to international conciliation and world fellowship. I am sorry to say that Mr. Khrushchev tried to shut that door.

Attack on Secretary Rejected

This morning we heard from the Secretary-General, the agent and trustee of this organization. I say at once that Canada rejects categorically the unjust and intemperate attacks that have been made on the office and person of this wholly-dedicated and impartial Secretary-General. The proposal of the U.S.S.R. to replace the Secretary-General with a three-man presidium requiring unanimous agreement to act is a transparent plan to undermine the prestige and authority of the United Nations. Having thwarted the United Nations so often through the exercise of the veto, the U.S.S.R. now seems bent on destroying the United Nations by neutralizing its power to proceed effectively and promptly in emergencies as they arise.

I need not add that Canada is opposed to that bizarre proposal; to accept it would require an amendment of the Charter; to accept it would be to reduce the United Nations to an instrument of indecision and impotence. It would, in fact, multiply the veto to the detriment of the effective operation of this organization.

Co-operation in the Congo

I shall now say a few words on the Congo. What has happened there has given rise to one of the most challenging situations which the United Nations has ever had to face. I agree with the Foreign Minister of Argentina when he pointed out that the results so far attained are a demonstration of what international co-operation can achieve when its members are determined to lend their full support.

Canada has played its part in United Nations operations there; it did so at the request of the United Nations, providing specially qualified personnel -- signals, communications, air transport -- and emergency food provisions. Canada is a member of NATO. Is the fact that we are a member of that defensive organization any indication that the course we took, in providing this type of assistance on request, can be described as being aggressive?

As I see it, one of the larger tasks of the Assembly will be to ensure that sufficient support is forthcoming to sustain the United Nations in its efforts to revive the financial and economic life of the Congo. I take this opportunity to assure the Assembly that Canada will assume an equitable share of this burden.

UN Force Needed

I believe too that the experience in the Congo has demonstrated the need to have military forces readily available for service with the United Nations when required. For its part the Canadian Government has held in reserve a battalion transportable by air and earmarked for such service. That experience in the Congo has emphasized, as I see it, the need for the nucleus of a permanent headquarter military staff being established under the United Nations to be in readiness to prevent confusion and to assure cohesion when called upon in an emergency.

Canada's views on the Congo and on the larger African problem may be summarized in this way. The African continent must not become the focus of an East-West struggle; it must be free from the direct interference of the major powers. The African nations must be permitted to work out their own destinies; when they need help, the best source is through the agencies of the United Nations.

I turn now to a subject dealt with at great length by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R., the subject of colonialism. He asked for and advocated a declaration at this session for "the complete and final elimination of colonial regimes". I think it would be generally agreed that, whatever the experience of the past, there can no longer be a relationship of master and servant anywhere in the world. He has

spoken of colonial bondage, of exploitation and of foreign yokes. Those views, uttered by the master of the major colonial power in the world today, followed the admission of fourteen new member nations to the United Nations -- all of them former colonies. It seems that he forgot what had occurred on the opening day.

Freedom for Colonial Peoples

Since the last war, 17 colonial areas and territories, comprising more than 40 million people, have been brought to complete freedom by France. In the same period 14 colonies and territories, comprising half a billion people, have achieved complete freedom within the Commonwealth. Taken together, some 600 million people in more than 30 countries, most of them now represented in this Assembly, have attained their freedom -- this with the approval, the encouragement and the guidance of the United Nations, the Commonwealth and France. There are few here that can speak with the authority of Canada on the subject of colonialism, for Canada was once a colony of both France and the United Kingdom. We were the first country which evolved over 100 years ago by constitutional processes from colonial status to independence without severing the family connexion.

The Commonwealth now embraces ten nations, including the United Kingdom, all of them free and voluntary members from all the continents, comprising one-fifth of the world's population and representing virtually every race, colour, and creed. We are united not by the sword or the seal but by the spirit of co-operation and by common aspirations; and the process is a continuing one. Within the next week another country, Nigeria, the most populous in Africa, will attain its independence and remain in the Commonwealth family.

Colonial Record of U.S.S.R.

Indeed, in this Assembly the membership is composed in a very considerable measure of the graduates of empires, mandates and trusteeships of the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth and other nations. I pause to ask this question: How many human beings have been liberated by the U.S.S.R.? Do we forget how one of the post-war colonies of the U.S.S.R. sought to liberate itself four years ago, and with what results? I say that because these facts of history in the Commonwealth and other countries invite comparison with the domination over peoples and territories sometimes gained under the guise of liberation, but always accompanied by the loss of political freedom. How are we to reconcile the tragedy of the Hungarian uprising in 1956 with Chairman Khrushchev's confident assertion of a few days ago in this Assembly? Mr. Khrushchev said: "It has been and always will be our stand that the peoples of Africa, like those of other continents striving for their liberation from the colonial yoke, should establish orders in their countries of their own will and choice." That I accept -- and I hope that those words mean a change of attitude for the future on the part of those he represents.

What of Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia? What of the freedom-loving Ukrainians and many other Eastern European peoples which I shall not name for fear of omitting some of them? Mr. Khrushchev went further and said: "Complete and final elimination of the colonial regime in all its forms and manifestations has been prompted by the entire course of world history in the last decades..."

No Double Standard

There can be no double standard in international affairs. I ask the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. to give to those nations under his domination the right of free elections -- to give them the opportunity to determine the kind of government they want under genuinely free conditions. If those conclusions were what his words meant, for they must apply universally, then indeed will there be new action to carry out the obligations of the United Nations Charter; then indeed will there be new hope for all mankind.

My hope is that those words of his will be universally acceptable and that he will give the lead towards their implementation here and now.

Need for Resumed Negotiations

I wish now to say a few words on East-West relations. A year ago we had great hopes. There seemed to be a promise of a decisive change in relations among the great powers. We, the smaller powers and the middle powers, find ourselves in the position of trying to make our contribution to removing fear and distrust, to bring about mutual understanding and cooperation. The Ten-Nation-Committee began its work. Until the failure of even the opening of the Summit Conference, there were high expectations. Then came the collapse of that Conference. Then there was the withdrawal of the U.S.S.R. from the disarmament negotiations in June. Then came those propaganda attacks in degree and intensity during this summer, the very violence of which must naturally lead to the view that various issues were being deliberately exploited for the express purpose of raising tension. With mankind waiting for us to act, what good can there come from threats to rain rockets or nuclear bombs on other countries, large or small, to despatch so-called volunteers into situations already dangerously inflamed, to encourage political leaders to follow the line of extremism? Mankind, the peoples of all the nations, are fearful and anxious, and these fears and anxieties aggravate the tensions. I ask for a return immediately to the path of negotiation. It is the only course that the great powers should follow. It is incumbent on this United Nations General Assembly to press for the resumption of negotiations,

particularly regarding those main issues which divide the U.S.S.R. and those associated with it from the Western powers. That is the paramount issue of this Assembly, disarmament. The Canadian Government takes its stand on behalf of full disarmament, to be assured by effective control and inspection. The major powers today possess the nuclear capacity for mutual destruction and to annihilate all. We, the middle powers and the smaller powers, cannot remain silent. We would be the hopeless victims of any nuclear catastrophe that takes place. Quite apart from our instinct for self preservation, mankind knows of the futility of wanton waste. Without a return to negotiations, we cannot hope to arrest the arms race, we cannot hope to still the process of armaments and continuing armaments. The tragedy of the ten-power negotiations was that the breakdown occurred at a time when there was an appreciable narrowing of the gap between the Soviet and Western positions. I wrote to Mr. Khrushchev on June 30. I suggested then a return to the negotiating table. The unanimous voice of the Disarmament Commission in that regard has been disregarded, for in August it called for the earliest possible continuance of disarmament negotiations. I believe that it is imperative for this Assembly to reaffirm the appeal of the Disarmament Commission.

It is not plans and principles which we need, we have four different disarmament plans and two sets of principles; there may be working methods that should be brought about, to be adjusted by agreement. Canada suggested the appointment of a neutral chairman, and is prepared to examine every constructive suggestion. We do not lack appropriate machinery, but we do lack mutual confidence and a general will on the part of the Soviet Government to negotiate.

To Dispel Mutual Fear

That confidence can be increased by dispelling the kind of secrecy which clouds preparations for war and fills the hearts of men with fear of surprise attack. Canada is the nearest neighbour of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.. Our people fear, and the people of the U.S.A. fear, a surprise attack across the polar regions. No doubt the people of the U.S.S.R. fear an attack from our side. Canada is prepared to make available for international inspection and control any part of Canadian Arctic Territory in exchange for a comparable concession on the part of the U.S.S.R. They say that we prepare, in co-operation with the U.S.A. in our Arctic areas, to attack. I give them the opportunity now to have an answer to their fears. You open your areas, and we will open ours, and that source of fear will be removed.

I find it difficult to understand, if it was reported correctly, why Mr. Khrushchev should have taken the view the day before yesterday that a resumption of disarmament talks should be conditional, among other things, upon the acceptance of demands

by the U.S.S.R. for fundamental changes in the ten-power committee and in the office of the chief executive of the United Nations.

What other kind of measures might be undertaken? I have frequently had occasion to urge publicly the end of nuclear weapon, the systematic control of missiles designed to deliver nuclear weapons of mass destruction, the designation and inspection of launching sites for missiles, the abolition of biological and chemical weapons, the outlawing of outer space for military purposes and, especially, a ban on the mounting of armaments on orbital satellites, an end to the production of fissionable materials for weapons and the conversion of existing stocks for peaceful purposes. Canada over and over again has advocated an end to nuclear testing.

Controls in Outer Space

I need hardly stress the significance of early agreement on measures like these carried out under appropriate verifications and inspection, for there can be no dissipation of fear unless there is control and inspection. Tremendous advances have been made in outer space. It will be too late a year from now. I hope that at this time consideration will be given to jurisdiction in outer space being assured for scientific and peaceful purposes only, so that all nations, great and small, will have equal rights.

I believe, and Canada takes the stand, that no celestial body shall be considered as capable of appropriation by any state; that space vehicles shall be identified by a system of registration of launchings, call signs and other characteristics; that frequencies for communications with and among space vehicles shall be allocated on a rational and agreed basis.

These tremendous problems require the consideration of the United Nations Committee on the peaceful uses of outer space --and that body to commence its work at once.

Economic Aid

I should like to say a word, too, on the subject of aid and assistance. While the Chairman of the Council of Ministers dwelt at length on the evils of colonialism, he had very little to say about economic assistance to the less-developed countries of the world. I read no pledge to make increased contributions to the United Nations programmes of economic and technical assistance. That was one view expressed by President Eisenhower. Mr. Khrushchev asked simply for a declaration.

There is an urgent need to increase the flow of international economic aid to the less-developed countries, and I think particularly of these newly independent states of Africa. I

believe this. Through the United Nations the material resources for economic assistance must be greatly increased if the needs of Africa are to be met without impairing at the same time plans for assistance in other areas. We in Canada have taken one stand in this regard. We have given economic and technical assistance. We do not condone the imposition upon recipient nations of any particular social, economic or political order. We will maintain our contributions to aid programmes. We will make increases.

Commonwealth African Aid

Canada naturally has a family concern for those countries achieving independence within the Commonwealth of Nations. Last week, the Special Commonwealth African Aid Programme was publicly launched. For this purpose Canada will, subject to Parliamentary sanction, make a contribution of \$10.5 million over three years towards the development of African countries within the Commonwealth, including some of the dependent territories. There will be technical assistance and aids to education under this plan and assistance in the field of capital investment. We regard bilateral assistance within the Commonwealth as complementary to the United Nations programme in Africa and we will take every means to ensure that bilateral aid is closely co-ordinated with United Nations programmes. To the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development we have doubled our subscription. We have made financial provision for a contribution to the International Development Association. We believe that the United Nations Special Fund and the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance deserve to have increased contributions. The specific amounts of these contributions will be announced by the Canadian Delegate during this session of the United Nations.

One of these -- the OPEX programme -- has proved its effectiveness in providing much needed assistance to new countries. We think it should be made permanent and expanded.

Roster of Experts

We place before you a complementary proposal to establish a roster. We intend, in Canada, to establish a roster of Canadian experts in various fields -- ready at short notice to be sent under United Nations auspices to newly independent states requesting them. They can help in setting up or restoring civil administration such as in the Congo, in distress areas or in disaster areas. National action of a stand-by nature is obviously desirable to supplement the United Nations OPEX proposal. We suggest that experts, in an 'experts bank', if you will, might be recruited for medicine, public health, sanitation, public welfare, distribution of supplies, communications, transportation, and police services. To set up an 'experts bank' would make for administrative stability instead of having to rely on a crash recruiting campaign for this purpose after the need arises.

Food for the Undernourished

One matter which Canada has pressed in the past, and which I now repeat, is in the field of providing aid through food contributions. The problem of feeding the millions of chronically hungry and undernourished peoples of the world is tragic and urgent. Some of our countries have tremendous surpluses of cereals and other foodstuffs. We also have the capacity to increase our production greatly. Canada's surplus of wheat, as of July 31, was 536 million bushels. Surplus food, piled up in sterile storage, is hard to justify when so many human beings lack adequate food and nutrition. I realize, as the Food and Agriculture Organization has stated, that agricultural surpluses of the more advanced countries would only be temporary relief and therefore would be incomplete. I believe, however, that much must be done on behalf of food-deficit countries, first to help them in their hour of need and then to help them raise their own levels of production. This to me is the responsibility of the United Nations as a whole, to meet this challenge.

A few countries cannot underwrite the costs of transferring their surpluses to the countries in need. What we need is to join together in contributing to a solution of truly world-wide scope to this problem of the world's suffering and starving peoples. We have tried to do that.

World Food Bank

We have no ambitions internationally. We covet no country. We want to change no country's views. We have made available in wheat and flour to under-developed countries aid in the amount of \$56 million. I now welcome and commend the suggestion made by the President of the United States last week that the Assembly should seriously consider devising a workable plan along the lines of the "Food for Peace" programme. We envisage a "food bank" to provide food to member states through the United Nations. Such a scheme would require the establishment of concerted machinery which would take into account established patterns of trade and marketing and co-ordinate the individual surplus disposal to improve the effective utilization of wheat.

International Court

Finally, for some reason, we have never been able to secure agreement on the compulsory authority of the International Court of Justice -- that is the judicial arm of the United Nations -- in the strengthening of peace-keeping machinery. The compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court, in the opinion of the country I represent, is of paramount importance. All members of the United Nations are automatically parties to the statute. Canada accepts the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court except in

matters of a domestic nature, but does not itself decide what is of a domestic nature, and leaves it to the Court to decide. I hope that the nations in this organization will declare their readiness to accept the Court's compulsory jurisdiction so as to give sinew and muscle to the decisions that are made.

I have spoken for Canada. We are, as I have said, a middle power, large enough to bear responsibility but not so large as to have traditions of national power or aspirations which arouse fears and suspicion. As a nation of North America, we have our deep roots in two European cultures -- the British and the French -- and also in the cultures of all the other races of men that have come to us.

By the accident of geography and history we find ourselves squarely between the two greatest powers on earth. We have no fortresses facing either. We want to live at peace with our Northern neighbours, as we have lived so long at peace with our Southern neighbours.

In a world passing through two great human experiences -- the thrust of technology and the thrust of political and social change -- new perspectives have been given for a better life. Must we admit that we cannot control these revolutions of science and society? Shall we rather harness them for the common good, do it now and prevent them from upsetting the all-too-fragile foundations on which peace rests today? That is our task. We hear voices that speak of victories for propaganda. We are not here in this Assembly to win wars of propaganda. We are here to win victories for peace. If I understand correctly the thinking of the average man and woman today throughout the world, they have had enough of propaganda, of confusion and fears and doubts. They are asking us for the truth. We are not mustered here under the direction and domination of any nation. We are mustered not for any race or creed or ideology. We are here for the hosts of humanity everywhere in the world. Peoples and nations are waiting upon us. Man's hopes call upon us to say what we can do. My hope is that we shall not leave this place without having done something for mankind, so that we shall be able to say to the peoples of the world that death's pale flag shall not again be raised in war, that fear shall be lifted from the hearts and souls of men. For this could be our last chance to achieve those objectives.

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