

Mr. Anderson



PRESS RELEASE

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
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THIS STATEMENT MAY BE USED AS SOON AS IT HAS
BEEN READ TO THE CANADIAN PEACE CONGRESS IN
TORONTO OR AT 9 P.M. E.D.T. SUNDAY, MAY 7.

The Department of External Affairs announced today that Mr. L. B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, had been invited by the National Council of the Canadian Peace Congress to make a statement on the foreign policy of the Canadian Government before the Congress, which met in Toronto on May 5, 6 and 7. Mr. Pearson replied to the invitation that he would be unable to attend but that he would make available such a statement for the use of the Congress. He invited the officers of the Congress to have the following statement read at the meeting.

"The maintenance of peace and the establishment of security is the greatest single problem facing all the peoples in the world today. Every freedom-loving, peace-loving nation must build its foreign policy on the solution of that problem. But in our passion for peace in an insecure world we cannot blind ourselves to the necessity for taking adequate precautions against aggression from whatever source it may come.

"No country is, of course, entirely blameless in its international policies and all countries have made mistakes against peace. But public discussion in Canada in recent years demonstrates beyond question that the great majority of the Canadian people believes that the chief threat to peace lies in the aggressive and expansionist policy of the Soviet Union; in its determination to prevent friendly intercourse between its citizens and those of other countries; in its poisoning of the minds of its own people against the governments and peoples of the free democracies; in its aggressive and subversive interference in the domestic affairs of other countries through the use of the communist international as the agent of Russian imperialism; in its arrogant refusal to participate in the work of the United Nations, except on its own terms. All these things have aroused fear and apprehension in the minds of all free peoples. They have necessitated large expenditures for defence which might have otherwise been devoted to progressive social betterment. The Canadian people have indicated clearly, however, that they see no alternative to such expenditures in the face of a Russian army of more than 170 divisions and of an organization of society where every individual is conscripted to the service of a ruthless police state.

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"Adequate defence against aggression - external and domestic - is only one aspect of a policy of peace. Another is the necessity of conducting our external affairs with a view to removing the causes of international conflict; political, social and economic. The Canadian Government is committed to that policy in its relations with other states. The Canadian Government is also pledged to support the United Nations and the manner of our participation in its work proves our good faith in fulfilling that pledge. Canada is no country's satellite at Lake Success. The facts of voting there prove that. No communist state has ever - except by accident - voted against the U.S.S.R. Canada's record, however, is different, and Canadian delegations without fear or favour have supported United Nations policies that in our opinion make for peace; and have opposed those that do not.

"The Canadian Government recognizes, however, that mainly, though not entirely, because of the obstructive tactics of the U.S.S.R., the United Nations cannot now guarantee any state's security. Until, therefore, the United Nations becomes more effective for this purpose, and we will support any good move to that end, the Canadian Government supports regional security arrangements such as the North Atlantic Pact. In present circumstances, these are essential complements to world-wide collective arrangements. They threaten no one who does not contemplate aggression.

"The North Atlantic Treaty is not and never was intended to be exclusively military. It is no alliance of the old-fashioned type. In fact, Canada took the lead in having inserted in it an article calling upon the signatory powers to strengthen their free institutions and to bring about total understanding of the principles upon which these institutions were founded and in this way promote conditions of stability and economic well being. This same article imposed an obligation to terminate conflicting international economic policies and to encourage international economic co-operation. The implementation of this article, as one more step toward peace, is one of the points which the Canadian Delegation to the meeting of the North Atlantic Council will discuss in London next week.

"Unfortunately, co-operation, economic and social, with the U.S.S.R. and its satellite states is not now possible. Many overtures have been made by the western democracies for the purpose of encouraging easy and normal contacts between our people and the people of the Soviet Union. These approaches have been systematically rebuffed.

"The road to universal peace is not easy. In the face of determined aggressive and expansionist Soviet imperialism the leaders and peoples of the free world will require patience to overcome the difficulties which lie in the way. Impatience which expresses itself in provocative tactics must be opposed from whatever source it comes - friendly or unfriendly. In addition, we will require strength, intelligence, imagination and sincerity. As I had occasion to say recently in the House of Commons, "We must never give up trying. We must not ... refuse to examine any proposal from any quarter which may be put forward". We must, however, be on our guard against any false sense of peace and security. We must be watchful of the pitfalls into which easy catchwords of communist propaganda can lead us.

"In conclusion, I give you the assurance that for its part, the Canadian Government, with the support of the Canadian people, will do its best to preserve peace, to promote progress and to guarantee our security against aggression."
