



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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WESTERN POLICY RE-EXAMINED

A speech by Prime Minister Diefenbaker
on June 5, 1960, at Depauw University,
Indiana.

... I do not intend today to indulge in retrospective judgments about the failure of the summit conference in Paris. Various explanations are possible and there is no shortage of experts and commentators to argue the merits of their interpretations. On this point I would say only one thing: that what happened in connection with the summit meeting demonstrates how fragile is the state of confidence between nations, and how long and hard and stony is the pathway to peace.

It may be that in North America the longing of men and women for peace is such that we have been psychologically too ready to assume an attitude of optimism. If this is so, and if we have been jolted into a realistic assessment of the international outlook, then the breakdown of negotiations among the major powers may have done a service to mankind.

Khrushchov-Pavlov.

I believe that it is well for the free nations to be reminded of the baffling unpredictability of Soviet tactics in international affairs. Mr. Khrushchov and his comrades in the Kremlin are specialists in the application of the technique of carrot and stick, of alternating smiles and threats. They do not lack a theoretical foundation for their policies but sometimes it appears that they have adapted to their purposes, for international use, the Pavlovian theory of psychology as practised on dogs. According to this theory the way to break down a dog is to apply positive and negative stimuli, and in turn to be nice, unkind or cool, to feed it, forget it, ring bells, flash lights, so that the dog will go all to pieces in a desperate effort to make head or tail of what is going on.

No doubt the Soviet leaders would take pleasure if by the sequence and substance of their pronouncements they could induce the Western nations to lose their equilibrium. Let us resolve to deprive them of that hope.

What of the future? Where do we go from here? What are the problems to be faced? And what measures should the West apply to their solution?

Let us begin with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, upon whose strength and cohesion the United States and Canada are dependent for their security. The NATO reaction to the failure of the summit meeting has passed through stages of disbelief, dismay, and disappointment, but at no time defeatism. The calm steadiness shown in Paris by President Eisenhower, President de Gaulle, and Prime Minister Macmillan in the face of provocation has been reflected in the alliance as a whole. NATO has not lost its balance in the face of the recent crisis, and it remains a central, indispensable instrument of United States and Canadian defence and foreign policy.

What I am about to say about the future of NATO in no way arises from a lack of confidence in the alliance, or from doubts as to its future usefulness. My concern is the concern of one determined to build higher on strong foundations. I believe that there are certain principles and objectives which should govern the conduct of the alliance and which need to be re-examined at this time.

Basic NATO Principles.

First among these is the need for increased emphasis on the processes of consultation among all members of the alliance. Human friendships fade if they are neglected or taken for granted; in the same way an alliance of nations cannot achieve the full measure of its collective impetus for the common good unless its members persistently devote themselves to the pursuit of the collective interest. It needs constantly to be recalled that NATO is an alliance of sovereign states each bearing its own responsibility for the safeguarding of peace, each with its survival at stake. A special obligation falls on the larger, more powerful members to make a reality of consultation, and to reconcile the responsibilities of leadership with those of true partnership. I tell you frankly that, although in recent months considerable progress has been made in NATO consultation, still more can be done towards the assurance of a genuine and fruitful state of partnership in NATO. There is no substitute for intimate consultation on a basis of mutual trust. Nothing less will suffice if the alliance is to survive.

NATO's Future.

There is a need too for a searching re-assessment of NATO's future. Last December the United States Secretary of State, Mr. Herter, called upon NATO governments to embark on long-range planning for the 1960's. I believe that it is now more important than ever to give a sense of direction and purpose to this planning. There is no shortage of projects requiring study:

- How will the responsibilities of the alliance develop over the next decade?
- What estimates can be made of changing military requirements?
- How can we ensure that military requirements are co-ordinated with, and yet do not submerge, our political aims and objectives?
- What more can be done to ensure that progress achieved in military co-operation is not discounted by economic or political rivalries which weaken the collective effort?
- How can NATO's purposes be explained to the uncommitted nations so as to reduce suspicion and misunderstanding of why the alliance exists and what it stands for?

All of these and many more questions demand the active attention of member governments. I believe that they should be studied with a sense of urgency over the next several months in the NATO Permanent Council.

I further believe that, as this preparatory work develops, the member states should give serious attention to the calling of a NATO conference at heads-of-government level, so that those who have the responsibilities of leadership might join in a carefully-prepared, collective effort to chart new courses for NATO in the years ahead.

While this process of re-examination is going forward it will at the same time be essential to deal purposefully and intelligently in our relations with the Soviet Union. We must not be blown off course by Mr. Khrushchov's bellicose verbosity, ominous as it may sound. The language of insults is best answered with restraint. The repetition of military threats has not proved effective in the past and will not in the future. I do not know what Mr. Khrushchov hopes to achieve by delegating to his generals the authority for world destruction. Such words underline the wisdom of strengthening the unity of the Western alliance.

Whatever the interpretation given to Mr. Khrushchov's tactics, a renewal of the state of frigid mutual isolation which marked East-West relations during the cold war must, if it is humanly possible, be avoided. Mr. Khrushchov must know that in a nuclear war the Soviet Union would suffer indescribable destruction. But events cannot always be controlled even by the most dominating of dictatorial leaders, and sometimes I wonder if Mr. Khrushchov realizes how damaging to peace, and how self-discrediting, is the language of vilification.

There is the danger, therefore, that the Soviet handling of the U-2 incident and the aftermath of the summit meeting in Paris could, if the West allowed emotion to triumph over reason, lead to a renewal of serious tension. How can the Western nations help to keep the temperature down?

West Must be Temperate.

First, whatever propoganda excesses may be indulged in by the Soviet leaders, let us in the West not reach in our turn for the lexicon of abuse.

In my reading of the press, I am disturbed from time to time that there are those in positions of military responsibility who indulge themselves in the dangerous course of vocal rocket-rattling. I can think of no more sterile or irresponsible use of the responsibilities of office than a tendency to brandish the symbols of military power.

Secondly, President Eisenhower has made clear his determination that, while Western vigilance must in no circumstances be relaxed, contacts with the Soviet Union must be maintained and relations conducted in a business-like manner. The Canadian Government supports the President's position. We consider that it offers the only reasonable avenue for the conduct of relations with the Soviet Union. The inability of East and West to begin summit discussions in Paris does not deny the importance of establishing processes of negotiation. It is essential for the West to pursue whatever fields of contact exist with the Soviet Union, notably, at the present time, on nuclear weapons tests and disarmament. Nothing could damage the Western interest more than to refuse to treat these negotiations seriously.

Latest Soviet Arms Proposal.

A few days ago Mr. Khrushchov produced another version of his earlier disarmament plan. It is an elaborate document and demands, and will receive, careful study in the Committee of Ten Nations which resumes its negotiations in Geneva on Tuesday, June 7. Much will depend, in estimating the significance of the new plan, on its provisions for inspection and control, for no disarmament plan can be motivated by serious intent unless it contains practical verification procedures.

It is obvious from the fanfare with which Mr. Khrushchov paraded his new plan that the propoganda effect was to the forefront, but the important thing for the West is to determine whether in a package wrapped to appeal to world opinion there may be some item of genuine value. However unacceptable the contents may appear on first inspection, I hope that the West will never allow itself to be accused of dismissing any proposal without careful scrutiny.

There is much public discussion at this time of the prospects for a future renewal of summit contacts. The important thing is to work towards the creation of conditions in which effective discussion can take place. The present atmosphere is clearly not propitious, and it may be that, in order to emerge from the present state of broken confidence, we should not be too hasty to get back on the climb to the summit. A premature meeting at the summit level would be worse than none at all; the aim should be to restore through patient preparation the necessary degree of confidence to enable productive discussion among the major powers at the highest level.

"Open-Skies" Offer.

Let us take steps to show that, notwithstanding our determination to defend our freedom, aggression is not our purpose. President Eisenhower has spoken recently of an "open-skies" proposal whereby, perhaps under the agency of the United Nations, a system of aerial inspection might be introduced in order to forestall the terrors of surprise nuclear attack. I have already on numerous occasions made known the Canadian Government's willingness to open Canadian territory to international inspection, and I have gone further, to the extent of offering to the Soviet Union the right to inspect Canadian Arctic territory in return for reciprocal concessions from the Soviet side. This offer was disregarded by Mr. Bulganin and later Mr. Khrushchov, with whom I corresponded. But the offer stands and it is the Canadian Government's intention, if the occasion arises, to be among the sponsors of any international effort that may be made in the United Nations toward the achievement of an aerial inspection agreement to guard against surprise attack.

Finally, in speaking of the problems we face, we must look not only within the limits of the Western community of nations or to our relations with the Soviet world, but beyond to that vast section of the world which by the accident of history and geography is less developed and less fortunate than we. For one quarter of the world's population the per capita income is not more than \$100 a year. These figures illustrate the scope of the problem and acquire an even more frightening character when it is realized that 250,000 babies are born every day, that in 40 years the population of the world will double, and that this increase will be taking place largely in those areas of the world which are still underdeveloped.

Aid Programmes.

I do not need, in view of these statistics, to underline the arguments for sacrifice on the part of the industrialized countries in the field of economic assistance, including exchanges of experienced personnel. The United States

has been generous, even lavish, in its programmes of assistance in all forms of foreign aid. Canada too has done its part. Canadian contributions up to the end of March 1960 have been estimated at \$4,422 million, or about \$250 from each Canadian, which compares very favourably with per capita contributions from other Western countries.

There is no alternative to continuing with, even increasing, this type of international assistance and co-operation. Until the day comes when the less-developed nations expand their capacity to trade and achieve self-sustaining growth, there is an unanswerable argument in favour of assisting them. It was with this argument in mind that, at the recent meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in London, it was decided to begin work on a programme of economic aid to the emerging nations of Africa, the largest remaining area where international assistance has yet to be launched on a scale remotely consistent with present and future needs.

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