



## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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### THE SURVIVAL OF FREEDOM

An address delivered by Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker at Bishop's University, Lennoxville, Quebec, June 14, 1958

The life of this university spans the history of Canada from its small beginnings in 1843, and it has been, from the days of its small beginnings, one of Canada's centres of light and learning. According to the intention of its founders, Bishop's was to have two functions: "to offer to the country at large the blessing of a sound and liberal education upon reasonable terms", and to provide training for future clergy.

Since the launching of Sputnik and other events recording Soviet achievement, we have been plunged into a renewed and sterner struggle between the liberal arts and sciences. The modern view is humourously expressed in a new version of Gilbert and Sullivan's epigram:

"Every boy and every girl that's born  
into the world this year  
Must be a little scientist or a little  
engineer."

To meet the challenge of the tyranny of Communism does not mean that we must adopt the techniques of its tyranny.

Over-emphasis of scientific achievement and production at the expense of the spiritual things may achieve temporary advantages but will ultimately lead to the loss of freedom.

The danger to mankind's survival was anticipated with prophetic accuracy by the Right Honourable Herbert Asquith, one of the First War Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom, when, in 1920, he said:

"The experience of this war has made actual what was unimaginable before. But there are, or would be, if the old system were continued, two new factors at work. The first and most obvious is the unexplored and still incalculable effect of the harnessing of science to the chariot of destruction. We have seen

in these four years only the rudimentary application of methods and agencies unknown and undreamt of in the campaigns of the past. Science has in these matters not said her last word; she is still lisping the alphabet of annihilation. If she is to be diverted for another 20 years into the further elaboration of the mechanism and chemistry of destruction, we may as well pray for the speediest possible return of the glacial epoch".

What would he have said today in this era of hydrogen bombs and atomic warheads and intercontinental missiles?

The alternative was stated by Theodore Roosevelt, in these words:

"Scholarship that consists in mere learning but finds no expression in production, may be of interest and value to the individual, just as ability to shoot well at clay pigeons may be of interest and value to him, but it ranks no higher unless it finds expression in achievement."

The happy medium of compromise without the sacrifice of principle provides the answer to this as to all democratic problems.

We live in an age of crisis - an age in which the final human catastrophe has become possible. We think of our world dilemma as unique, and certainly with our technology of destruction - with our nuclear and thermo-nuclear bombs and our missiles - it is unique. It was announced today that there will be a meeting of nuclear experts of the United States, Great Britain, France, the U.S.S.R., Czechoslovakia and Poland.

In the global nature of the struggle for men's minds it is unique. But apart from this technology of destruction and the shrinking of our once vast world to a single neighbourhood, is the threat to our civilization as unique as we tend to think? Other civilizations have been destroyed, to be superseded by dark ages in which resurgent barbarism enveloped the world. These civilizations fell, not to superior forces, but to inner contradictions and spiritual decadence. Incapable of a positive response, they first lost their soul, and then life itself.

An age of crisis is an age of challenge - a spiritual struggle for the minds of men. Challenge can instill in a person, in a nation, in a civilization, a sense of expectation, of hope, even of exaltation in the possibilities of new achievements of the human spirit. It can also instill despair, and if despair should triumph, that person, that nation, or that civilization, is lost.

The New World is far more complex and dangerous than any known before. The explosive population increase, accompanied by comparable revolutionary trends in world opinion, has unleashed forces that men may channel but not stem. These multiplying millions, with their pyramiding demands for a better life, are one result of our science and technology. At the same time, our technology offers greater hope than ever before of providing for the material welfare of mankind. But social, political and economic institutions have lagged behind so that our scientific achievements have not only enlarged our vistas and increased the heights to scale, but have deepened the depths of man's alternative fate.

When I was born there were only 1.5 billion people in the world. You graduates may live to see a world of 6 billion people, struggling not merely for subsistence, but for the material means for a better life. In the 19th century world population only doubled. In this century it may multiply by four. By 1980 Asia may contain more people than all the world in 1930. One must wonder whether our ideas and institutions for international co-operation are not tailored to the population pressures of an earlier age.

In the under-developed areas of Asia, Latin America, and Africa, 70% of the world's population lives. There a new idea is developing with revolutionary force -- the idea that all the peoples of the world should be able to benefit from technological change. The Soviet offer of material salvation adds urgency to the need of the adoption of measures now.

In an apparent endeavour to outflank the political and military defences of the free world, the Soviet Government has launched an all-out attack on the vulnerable and comparatively weakly defended economic front of the free world. Less than a month ago an eight-nation conference of the Warsaw Pact countries made its plans which are designed to extend political controls over needy countries.

The U.S.S.R., in changing its emphasis, demands counter-action on the part of the western nations. Counter-action requires not only the mobilization of western resources to assist under-developed countries but co-operative action to meet the Soviet trade offensive.

The uncommitted world is watching the comparative economic performance of the Communist and free worlds, judging which system provides the greatest economic progress and stability. Expanding trade could be the strongest weapon of the free world in the defence of freedom, but at the moment is the weakest.

The monetary reserves of most of the countries of the free world are inadequate to sustain expanding trade and economic growth. The supply of investment capital is quite inadequate

to sustain even a moderate rate of growth in the under-developed countries. All the western nations have at one time or other experienced extreme fluctuations in commodity prices and consequent economic instability, but the problems of Asia, Africa and South America, where 70% of the world's people live, are infinitely greater than our own.

Those and other related economic problems require the attention of those who realize the inter-dependence of the free world.

It is my conviction, and that conviction is now reinforced once more by the visit of Prime Minister Macmillan, that while in no way decrying the exceptional contribution that has been made by the United Nations and various world economic institutions, the Commonwealth, with its membership of so many races and colours in all parts of the world, has a vital role to play. My hope is that the Commonwealth Trade and Economic Conference will provide further means for the nations of the Commonwealth to make their contribution in meeting the strategic change in the course of Communism which has shifted from aggressive action to competition in the market places of the world.

The western nations are organized for and united in defence. The Soviets have laid down the gauntlet.

I believe too that the western nations, to maintain their independence, will have to adopt inter-dependent economic measures analagous to the united action which in defence has preserved the world from possible armed conflict.

The free world, with its vast resources of material potentialities, must unite in an economic policy for the under-developed areas in the world, so as to assure development and the raising of standards everywhere -- not only as a manifestation of the spiritual foundations of democracy, but as well to meet the challenge of Communism everywhere in the world where hungry and needy human beings will, unless action is taken, exchange their freedom for this and future generations for the material advantages of the present.

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