



## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 54/47      THE CHALLENGE OF CO-EXISTENCE

An address by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L.B. Pearson, made at the Economic Club, Detroit, Michigan, November 8, 1954.

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We cannot escape the challenge of what is called "co-existence", because we live in a divided world, and under the menacing shadow of a thermo-nuclear cloud.

In the narrow, and often misleading meaning which has been given to it by the policy-makers in the Kremlin, co-existence is a thin and sterile word, without any of the warmth and the life, the mutual respect and esteem, implicit in such a word as "co-operation".

The people of these friendly neighbouring cities of Detroit and Windsor will quickly and easily understand and appreciate the gulf that lies between these two words, co-existence and co-operation. It would be a drab and poor relationship if Detroit and Windsor merely co-existed; if all the neighbourly, constructive, and enriching elements of your joint lives were replaced by a mere tolerance of each other across a river. Fortunately, there is no possibility of such an unhappy development.

There is also another happy example of co-existence but on a wider scale which includes close and constructive co-operation. It is found in the relationship between our two nations.

There are no two countries whose relations are closer and more friendly than those between the United States and Canada, or where the obligations and the advantages of good neighbourhood are more obvious. This is a case where continental co-existence requires and secures continental co-operation. That co-operation rests - indeed it can only securely and satisfactorily rest - on partnership. Our - the Canadian side of the partnership - the smaller but rapidly growing side - must, of course, recognize the far greater world responsibilities which, thank God, you have accepted, and for no selfish, merely national purpose. We recognize and salute as well, your massive and essential contribution to collective security and the maintenance of peace. This recognition imposes on us the duty of weighing carefully the effect of everything we say or do, when it differs with your policy, on the unity of the great coalition for peace of which we are both members. But this doesn't mean that our response to your policies will be automatic. We are not automatons. Nor does it mean that we are to be gagged in the expression of our own views. We don't gag easily! But it does mean that Canada has an obligation -

as indeed you have - to foster unity and co-operation inside our coalition as well as to protect our own national interests.

On your part, I hope you will accept the fact - with all its implications - that Canada is a nation in its own right; that Canadians are intensely proud of the progress their country has been making; feel that we have a great destiny ahead of us, and that we have an increasingly important part to play in the free world. It will I hope be a Canadian part but it will be one which cannot be separated from yours.

Your importance to us is obvious; the effect on Canada of every move you make, political, financial or cultural, is quick and considerable; sometimes it is decisive. This ranges from Congressional elections to new models for cars, or the abolition of the two platoon system in football.

We are, however, on our part becoming more important to you. That is shown in our joint arrangements - far-reaching and co-operative - for continental defence in which we are essential; in the fact that we are by far your largest market and your biggest field for investment. Our growing importance to you is shown in many other ways. Without Canadian co-operation, Detroit cannot become a seaport! Nor can it win the National Hockey League Championship without Canadian players who should be over in Europe this Winter getting the World Championship back from the Russians!

It should also be remembered that as our relations become more important, they are becoming more complex. If these relations are good, it is certainly not because we have not a great variety of tough problems. It is because we approach their solution in this spirit of good neighbourhood and friendly partnership. But this relationship cannot be taken for granted or allowed to develop, without planning or understanding, or care. If so it might soon lose much of its good and special quality.

There will, of course, be times when we will differ - that happens in the best of partnerships when they are voluntary. On occasions Canadians when they don't agree with you, will express their own views frankly and in a North American idiom that you will understand. But behind it all will be the kind of co-existence between nations that those in power in Moscow and, say, Warsaw, would not be able even dimly to comprehend; because it is based on friendship and freedom, on trust and understanding.

When we talk of "co-existence" now, however, we are not likely to think of the United States and Canada and their good neighbourhood. The word has now acquired a suspect specialized meaning - most words do which are taken over and debased by communism - and another greatly abused word, "peaceful", is put in front of it by the Kremlin to supply the answer to what is indeed the central question of our time; can the free nations live in the same world with the nations that belong to the international communist conspiracy; without war - which would be total destruction; or without submission - which would be total degradation?

In facing up to the challenge of this question, what we need is not some blind and wishful faith that "peaceful co-existence" with communism on honourable, or at

least tolerable terms, is possible, but a sober realization that it may only be possible if our own policies and actions make it so, by their wisdom, steadiness and firmness.

"Co-existence" must, of course, be viewed in the light of its alternatives. If we accept the view at the outset that "co-existence" can be nothing but a snare and delusion, to be spurned at all costs and that those who are willing to examine it should be investigated as security risks then we are driven logically to the thesis of the inevitability of an atomic war, whether of aggression or prevention; to the conclusion that co-existence must lead to "co-destruction". Such a grim and despairing view would restrict the area of human control, to not much more than deciding where and when the global smash-up is to take place.

If however we refuse to accept the inevitability of "co-destruction", and to deny to ourselves any power over our own destinies, we can best meet the challenge of "co-existence" by considering sincerely, without easy illusions, but without passionate prejudice - whether or how we can convert it into some form of co-operation.

In meeting the challenge in this way we cannot afford - indeed it would be most foolish - to reduce our strength or relax our vigilance. But neither should we adopt an attitude of defeatism, or a posture of provocation.

As I see it, we must seek to get what advantage we can out of the present situation without prejudicing our safety or surrendering our principals; accepting the imperative need to work toward something better than a situation where humanity resembles two scorpions in a bottle, co-existing only because each knows that the other can sting it to death.

This positive policy can, at the present time, be applied both generally and to specific areas of tensions. It requires that we should be hard-headed but open-minded about recent moves in Soviet policy, which seem to be conciliatory. It requires that we should go half-way, or even beyond that point in order to meet these overtures, with a view to seeing - to testing by concrete proposals whether a basis can be found on which the issues that now so tragically divide the world might be solved; remembering, however, as we move forward, that there may be a point of no return!

One example of the kind of realistic, yet flexible and forward-looking policy I have in mind is provided by recent discussions at the United Nations Assembly on disarmament. For the first time since 1946 the Western Powers and the Soviet Union, by their joint sponsorship of a resolution proposed by the Canadian delegate, your neighbour from Windsor, Mr. Paul Martin, have agreed on a common approach to the study of this vital question. That is a development of importance. Agreement on a common procedural approach is a long way from an agreement on substance. Nevertheless we are now in a better position to find out whether such agreement on substance is possible, and to attach responsibility for failure if it is not possible.

The Western powers are sometimes taxed with the charge of inconsistency in this matter, because at the very time that we are actively pursuing the goal of disarmament

in the United Nations, we also seek to provide for strengthening the NATO defensive coalition by modifications of the Brussels Treaty and by inclusion of the Federal Republic of Germany in the Western defence and political system.

There is no inconsistency here, for the two policies are complementary. We must not reduce our collective strength relative to that of the Soviet Empire. We must not slacken our vigilance as long as the present danger persists. But we must also never adopt a position so rigid or follow a diplomacy so frozen that we refuse any reasonable offer to negotiate in order to reduce that danger and eliminate current tensions. To maintain our security and at the same time to work towards practical solutions, which will replace this precarious security based on military strength with one based on common interest and a growing confidence, is consistent with our most enduring aims. The fact that opportunities may now exist at the United Nations for negotiation in the disarmament field, as in other areas, is itself the best justification of the collective policies which we have been pursuing on the political and the security fronts in London and Paris.

There may soon be other moves from behind the Iron Curtain - indeed there already have been some - designed to convince us that the clouds of fear and suspicion and animosity can easily be blown away. Let us not get too excited then, one way or the other, as we are increasingly subjected to this enticing appeal of "peaceful co-existence". It is more important to try to find out what is behind the words and to relate them to communist theory and practice.

As long ago as 1927, Stalin spoke of the possibility of "peaceful co-existence" between the Soviet Union and Capitalist states. It is undeniable that according to orthodox Marxist doctrine, there exists an irreconcilable conflict between capitalism on one side, and Communism on the other. This basic conflict between the two hostile worlds is manifested by periods of war and revolution. But these, in communist theory, may alternate with periods of peaceful co-existence between the two camps. It is during such periods that the states on the Communist side hope to be able to strengthen their economic, military and political system in preparation for the next crisis. Communist doctrine assumes that, on the other side, the "imperialist and capitalist" governments will emerge from their "peaceful" competition with the "socialist" world in these periods of relaxation weakened and divided because of their internal contradictions; by the class struggle, by national rivalries and colonial revolts. These Communism will then be able to exploit in its next surge forward.

In ultimate terms of power politics, this may mean that to-day the Communists regard a period of peaceful co-existence as merely a stage in their march to achievement of a communist world. But it may also mean that in that stage - which may be of long or of short duration, depending on - us they are not interested in precipitating or risking world war because they believe the irresistible forces of historical development are on their side. During these "peaceful" intervals they will apply a dual policy; using traditional diplomacy to maintain technically peaceful relations with non-Communist states and using Communist parties in those states to divide and to weaken them;

accentuating the inherent contradictions of capitalism. All this need not frighten us into panic action. Indeed, if we realize what is going on, we may be able to use the present period to advance our own ends, which are to ensure peace, to strengthen security, and remove tensions.

Above all, we should remember that the present world conflict is not being fought between national groups, economic systems or social classes but between our form of free society based on the primacy and moral worth of the individual and totalitarian Communist despotism in which the individual counts for nothing except as a small cog in a great inhuman machine.

We have the right to believe that the dynamism of a free society, despite all its faults and weaknesses, has a greater vitality and capacity to adapt itself to new conditions, and, therefore, to survive than rigid, monolithic Soviet Communism can ever hope to achieve. It follows, then, that we can welcome "peaceful co-existence" not as a way of avoiding a contest but of winning it without war. Peace can also work on the side of freedom - provided we know how to use it.

If the Russians have, for various reasons, now ruled out war as a means of furthering their ends, and since we ourselves do not intend to resort to violence, we are faced now with the problem of adjusting our sights to a new situation. This demands skilful and patient diplomacy by Governments; steadiness and discipline by their peoples. We must avoid provocation on the one hand and on the other the military weakness which would tempt aggression.

But the situation will also require imaginative and creative policies to overcome social tensions and national differences within the free world as well as aid to the underdeveloped countries, and an understanding of their new urges and their old suspicions.

Above all it will require a realization of the fact that co-existing with the Russians is going to continue to be a trying, frustrating and difficult business. So we must not lose heart or patience or expect that either the "cold war" or "peaceful co-existence" or whatever you wish to call our relations with Russia, is going to lead to any spectacular victories, any sensational, sudden and clear-cut solutions for which we have a passion because decisiveness has been the keystone of material advance on this continent. We will never win this game by a home run with three on and two out in the last half of the ninth! There is not going to be a sweeping, sudden victory over Communism, either through the bomb or diplomacy. On the contrary we are, I think, in for a long, often depressing, exasperating and frustrating period of armed peace, or what passes for peace in this modern age, leading we may hope, to a peace which will rest on something more enduring than arms.

In short, gentlemen, and to repeat, if Soviet Russia and its followers have chosen to continue the struggle in "peaceful co-existence" we should welcome this while making ourselves strong enough economically, and resilient enough morally to win it. At the same time we must maintain the military strength to make it unprofitable for them ever to wish to change the form of struggle and resort to the awful arbitrament of a war which would be the annihilation of everything.

This, gentlemen, is not a very rosy picture that I have brought you from across the border. But, after more than twenty-five years working in the field of diplomacy and foreign affairs it is the best design for living in our hydrogen age that I have been able to achieve.

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