



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
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No. 59/31 LOOKING AHEAD IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Notes for an address by Mr. John G. Diefenbaker, Prime Minister of Canada, at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, on September 29, 1959.

Fifty years after the foundation of this University, following the kaleidoscopic changes of peace and war and cold war, the peoples of the world have within the last few weeks gained new hope that the benefits of science, medicine and education will be used to raise man's standards everywhere in the world, and that in Asia and Africa the eternal serfdom of poverty will end.

Has mankind learned its lesson? Will the bounties of science and learning be used for peaceful purposes? Will some of the tens of billions spent each year for armaments be used for peaceful purposes? The world is passing through a period which, when the story of this century is written, may well be regarded as one of the great watersheds of human history.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier looked ahead when he laid the cornerstone of this University -- may I follow his example?

The first penetration into outer space, the first contact with the moon, the harnessing of nuclear power -- these and other unparalleled scientific achievements are taking place in a world depressed by fear, yet uplifted with hope for the future. Humanity's hopes alternate between danger and promise. Are the results of technological advance to be the bitter fruits of war or the fragrant comforting breath of lasting peace?

Differences of frightening extent divide the major powers. In Europe, the German problem remains intractable, although as the President of the United States said yesterday, Soviet threats on Berlin have ended. In China, a new power of the first magnitude is moving mysteriously and threateningly on to the whole scene. The agenda of the General Assembly of the United Nations is crowded with issues testifying to the complexity and tension of relations between states.

Fourteen years after the last World War, progress towards a disarmament agreement is still plagued by the disease of mutual suspicion and international rivalry. It is an age calling forth every quality of mind and sinew. It is an age calling for steadiness and common sense. It is a time neither for dire foreboding and panic, nor for optimistic hopes. Recent months have been marked by a trend which I believe gives ground for encouragement.

The Foreign Ministers of the major powers, including the Soviet Union, held two conferences earlier this year, and while in concrete terms the results were disappointing, in psychological terms they were beneficial. The practice of negotiation was reinforced. The trend towards calm and reasoned discussion in place of threat and bluster was strengthened. The fuse of the explosive Berlin crisis was dampened.

Personal Diplomacy

The world has just passed through a further phase. The process of personal diplomacy, in which Prime Minister Macmillan of the United Kingdom played an originating part with his visit to the Soviet Union in the spring of this year, has now begun to unfold.

With the background of international disagreement, the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union have embarked on an historic effort to replace mutual suspicion with mutual understanding. Premier Khrushchev's visit to the United States has been an epochal one. The question which has now to be answered is whether Soviet communism will take a militant and warlike form, or whether Mr. Khrushchev's professions of peaceful co-existence can be taken at their face value. Do Khrushchev's words constitute a colossal hoax, or are they evidence of mankind's hope of a continuing easing of tension?

What of the concrete results as far as they can now be assessed? The determination that the Berlin question be settled by peaceful negotiation is a welcome and significant advance.

Disarmament

There are signs of progress on disarmament. In his address to the United Nations, Mr. Khrushchev advocated general disarmament of all states. He proposed that within four years all armaments and weapons, except those needed for internal police purposes, should be destroyed.

These proposals of Mr. Khrushchev have generated world-wide interest because they find a response in the deepest instincts of all men who love peace. In practice, however, it should be noted that these proposals would achieve no more radical objectives than those which the Western powers have proposed in the past, particularly between 1954 and 1957.

As an alternative to his proposals for total disarmament, Mr. Khrushchev offered a number of more detailed suggestions. They have been put forward before, and have not provided the basis for agreement. They lack an element which is a precondition of any successful disarmament agreement -- mutual willingness to accept appropriate measures for inspection.

Disarmament without inspection would be a fateful and tragic course for the free nations. The touchstone of success for any disarmament plan must be the system of verification that goes with it. In his address on returning to Moscow yesterday, Mr. Khrushchev indicated that the Soviet Government might be prepared to come some way towards meeting this basic requirement.

Canada has a special interest in the disarmament problem since this country is a neighbour of the Soviet Union. In the past the Soviet Union has expressed concern at the possibilities of a surprise attack over the polar regions, and has even implied that Canadian territory might be used for aggressive purposes.

As Prime Minister, I have repeatedly stressed, since September 1957, Canada's readiness to open all or part of her territory to aerial and ground inspection, providing that the U.S.S.R. grants the same rights on an equitable and reciprocal basis.

With other members of the United Nations, and in particular as a member of the new ten-power disarmament group, Canada will join in examining the Soviet proposals. Canada is prepared to contribute any honest endeavour to lighten the armaments burden and free men's hearts from fear.

What can this and other universities do to further the attainments of peace? In many fields universities are better placed than governments or companies to turn the searchlight of knowledge on the mysteries and complexities of human relations.

Scientific and Cultural Exchanges

Canadian universities can encourage more scientific and cultural exchanges and visits between our country and the U.S.S.R. and other Iron Curtain countries. The expansion of student exchanges between various countries, particularly in Asia and Africa, will assure greater dividends in meeting the contest for the hearts of men than any other means, not excluding economic aid.

In recent years, exchanges of visits between Canada and countries of the Soviet bloc, particularly in the scientific, cultural and technical fields, have been increasing to a limited but promising degree.

The Canadian Government is in favour of broadening this interchange on a generally reciprocal basis throughout the spectrum of human activity -- not only because such exchanges will be of practical and mutual advantage, but also because a free international interchange of ideas and information is a goal of the highest principle to which Canadians generally subscribe.

An accumulation of personal contacts can do more than an infinity of words to communicate the quality of life, ideas and attitudes, through exchanges in science, culture and education, and in the course of tourist visits. Thus, so long as visits are positive in purpose and are of genuinely mutual interest and advantage, the Government is always ready to encourage such exchanges.

In September 1958, I advocated in Montreal, at the Commonwealth Trade and Economic Conference, the setting up of a system of fellowships and scholarships to be made available to teachers and students in 25 Commonwealth countries. This plan was accepted by the Conference, and recently, in July, a Commonwealth Conference on Education attended by leaders of education, including Dean Leddy, was held at Oxford, which laid the foundation for progress in this field. Under this plan, 1,000 students and teachers will be receiving, in the next few years, scholarships and fellowships provided by the nations of the Commonwealth, with Canada paying one-quarter of the cost.

The U.S.S.R. is stepping up its programme to provide students from Asia and Africa with schooling in the U.S.S.R. or other countries inside the Iron Curtain. The free world can do no less, if it is to meet the communist world competition to mobilize mankind which, whatever progress is made towards the maintenance of peace, will continue in intensified form for many years, if not generations.

There is a need in Canada for understanding the ways and thoughts of people in other nations. An understanding of the communist system is, of course, essential, and most universities in Canada make provision for such studies. But it would be shortsighted to concentrate on communism and neglect an understanding of other regions. A greater effort should be put forth to understand Asia and Africa.

The placing in Canadian universities of greater emphasis on Asian and African affairs, perhaps by setting up additional facilities in these fields, and by establishing chairs

for such studies in more universities, would not only qualify Canadians to understand Asian aspirations, but would also help to interpret the objectives and the faith of the free world to those nations which are coming now upon the world scene, and whose people are often confused as to what the West stands for in the struggle of ideologies.

Knowledge knows no frontiers in space -- and the application of knowledge cannot be circumscribed by meridians on a map or differences in political ideologies.

Exchange of Arctic Information

The solution of the scientific problems posed in the polar regions is a matter of common concern to the two countries which share most of the northern area of the world; a solution to which both have much to contribute and gain from a full exchange of information in this field. To this end the Canadian Government has officially proposed to the Soviet Government that Canada and the U.S.S.R. embark on such an exchange.

Mr. Khrushchev said in Washington that he was in favour of international co-operation in the field of northern development, which would imply that a positive response to the Canadian proposal for an exchange will be forthcoming from the Soviet Government.

The U.S.S.R. has been advised that Canada would be glad to send a delegation on northern matters to begin contacts and discussions. Such a delegation would include specialists in the fields of northern research and administration, probably under the chairmanship of the Minister of Northern Affairs, (Mr. Alvin Hamilton).

I also want to make it clear that Canada would welcome a delegation from the U.S.S.R. There is scope for further and continuing exchanges of scientific information in the administrative and operational techniques which have proved effective in meeting problems in many fields of northern development.

I believe that these exchanges and discussions regarding "the frozen North" might well contribute in a constructive measure to bringing about a thaw in the cold war.

The University of Saskatchewan has done much for agriculture and in the opening of the northern areas for development. I suggest that northern research might become another field in its curriculum in the years ahead as the North will come into its own.

Peace can be achieved and freedom maintained if the same spirit which brought about the foundation of this University is translated into the world sphere. What is needed is co-operation among the peoples of the world. Freedom cannot be purchased or achieved without co-operation -- the price of freedom is co-operation and the prize of co-operation is freedom.

This University has contributed mightily to the welfare of this province, to the Dominion, and to the world. It must do no less in the next 50 years.

May this University always provide that education described in the words of Rabindranath Tagore, the Indian poet:

"Where the mind is without fear, where the head is held high, where knowledge is free, where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls, where words come out of the depth of truth, where tireless striving stretches its arm toward perfection, where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit, where the mind is led forward in ever-widening thought and action."

These words exemplify my hopes for the future of the University of Saskatchewan as it enters on its second half century.

The motto of this University, "Deo et Patrie", signifies that each of us, we, its graduates, will endeavour:

"In thought (to have) faith;
In words, wisdom;
In life, service;
In death, courage."

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