



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 55/4

"NATIONS BUSINESS" BROADCAST

A radio broadcast by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L.B. Pearson, delivered in the "Nations Business" series over the CBC January 28, 1955.

(Comments on the debate in the House of Commons regarding the approval of the Paris Agreements under which the Federal Republic of Germany would be invited to join NATO; and the current situation in Formosa.)

On Wednesday of this week in Ottawa, the House of Commons concluded a debate which extended over four days and included 55 speakers. Afterwards Parliament, by an overwhelming majority, became one of the first of the NATO legislatures to approve the Paris Agreements under which the Federal Republic of Germany, with sovereignty restored, but with its right to rearm limited and controlled, would be invited to join our North Atlantic organization and take its rightful share in the defence and development of the Atlantic and European communities.

The vote which made this result possible was an inspiring demonstration of national and parliamentary unity on a matter which was above party politics. The only opposition came from the CCF party, 12 members of which, but not including their Leader, voted against the resolution, which the rest of us, 213 in number, considered to be so important for the defence and development of the free world. I share the view expressed by the acting Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Earl Rowe, that it was heartening and it was good to see the two historic parties of Canada, the Liberal and the Conservative, standing shoulder to shoulder on this issue.

The decision on this question was taken only after a good deal of soul-searching, and the most careful thought. As I said in introducing the resolution in the House of Commons last week:

"Many Canadians, including many of us in this House, and even more of our allies who are taking this decision with us, with all its consequences, bear on their bodies and in their minds scars from the German war machine."

The Members of Parliament of all parties who supported these agreements have done so not because we have forgotten the past, but because we remember it.

We have learned, from the past, something about the causes of war; how they come from national rivalries, ambitions and fears; from disunity and weakness on the part of peaceful democracies, which make them seem easy and tempting preys to totalitarian aggressors. We must keep on trying to remove these causes, and the Paris agreements will help to that end.

For one thing German entry into the Western European Union, which the Paris agreements make possible, sets up a partnership between Germany, France, Britain, Italy, Belgium, and The Netherlands. This partnership in WEU, within the broader framework of NATO, will serve to overcome Franco-German suspicions and enmities, which have in the past led so often to war. By bringing Germany as a partner into our Western Community, to which the vigorous and hard-working German people can contribute much but which, since Britain, France and the United States are also members, they cannot hope to dominate, we are giving the German people the opportunity to learn a political lesson which they so greatly need. It is precisely by participation in partnership that nations, as well as individuals, learn to prefer co-operation and good will to domination and being feared.

I submit that it is both wrong and foolish to try to deal with Germany now as a rejected, unequal people in international society. Nothing could be more calculated to lead the new post-war generation of Germans to conclude that their choice lies only between isolation and cynicism on the one hand, or the search for domination and aggressive strength on the other. Surely the sensible course is to bring the Germans into the North Atlantic community where they are only one of 15 partners. That is what we are trying to do.

It is also a lesson of history that race theories - including race theories in reverse - and discrimination against large and industrious peoples, breed resentment and that resentment can breed war.

A third lesson is that autonomous, unlimited military establishments, under purely national control, in countries like Germany and also elsewhere, are dangerous. But under the Paris agreements, Germany is not to have such a military establishment. On the contrary, she is to participate with other countries in a defence system which is already highly international in organization and control, and which is becoming more so. Under these agreements, the German forces, when they are raised, will be under the command and control of the Supreme Allied Commander of NATO. This allied Headquarters will have charge of communications and supplies and troop movements, of the German and other national components. Another safeguard, of great importance, lies in the fact that there are stationed on the continent of Europe, and indeed mainly in Germany itself, British, American and Canadian forces. This is all very different from the situation in the 1930's.

There are also, as part of these Paris agreements, a whole series of checks against independent military action by Germany or any other of our allies on the continent of Europe.

Moreover, Germany itself has agreed unconditionally not to manufacture in its territory atomic, biological or chemical weapons; long-range aircraft, guided missiles, mines, warships, except some small ones for coastal defence.

This organization of defence forces on an international basis; this emphasis on collective rather than national action for security is another lesson which has been learned from history, and it is being applied.

If today the democracies are building up adequate defensive strength, it is in order to deter an aggressor by removing any illusion he may have that the democracies would be an easy victim. The Russians and their satellites have all together some 250 Army Divisions. For many years, the Soviet has also been organizing army, navy and airforce units in Eastern Germany, something their Canadian followers never mention. We in the West have no desire, and happily no need, to match them in numbers. But we do have the need and the intention to maintain sufficient strength to make aggression unlikely because clearly unprofitable. The decisions which we and our allies are taking about Western Germany will help in this regard by adding to our defensive strength and they involve no threat to the Russians or anybody else.

Nor is it true, of course, as Communist propagandists have also suggested, that the approval of these agreements will put an end to negotiations with the Russians. On the contrary, they make more likely the possibility of such negotiations being productive. Another of the lessons of history, of very recent history, is that the Soviet leaders, like the Nazis, waste no concessions on the weak, and that a policy of negotiating from strength, however violently the Kremlin may attack it, is the one thing that gets results.

But there is another area in which progress is essential, and this is the most fundamental of all. It lies in improving relations between states: in settling disputes peacefully, and in easing international tensions.

Tonight, as I speak to you, that part of the world where the tension seems greatest is far from Canada in miles, but close enough in every other way. It is as near as a Korean hillside or a field in Flanders, or an airman's grave in Malta.

So Canadians watch with anxiety developments in Washington and in Peking, off the coast of China and on the island of Formosa.

The policies now being worked out in Washington to deal with these matters are American, and Canada is not committed by them. Any obligation which we might have in regard to Formosa could arise only from our responsibilities as a member of the United Nations.

However, though we may not be committed by American policies, we certainly cannot escape the consequences of what may be decided in Washington - or in Peking. And therefore it is surely the duty of the Canadian Government to do what it can to ensure that these consequences are good.

It seems to me that in considering this matter, a distinction should be made between the position of Formosa - whose relation to China is still undecided legally and politically and that of those islands just off the coast, indisputably part of China and now the scene of bitter conflict between the Nationalist Chinese who cling to them and the Communist Chinese on the mainland who are trying to seize them.

It would be tragic indeed if global war were risked by an intervention in this particular phase of what after all remains, especially to those countries who have not recognized the Communist Chinese Government, a Chinese civil war, even though one party to that war is a communist regime which has already committed aggression in Korea and caused widespread distrust and fear.

It seems to me that what is required now (and this is much easier to say than to do) is to try to bring about a cease-fire on terms which will not dictate or prejudice any later political settlement, and which will make possible the peaceful redeployment of Nationalist Chinese forces from the coastal islands which they now occupy, in the words of President Eisenhower, "as a result of historical rather than military reasons directly related to defending Formosa". The machinery of the United Nations will, I hope, prove useful for this purpose. The Chinese Communists would certainly have to be invited to any United Nations discussions to this end - for there could be no cease-fire without their agreement.

The cessation of fighting, and the peaceful and agreed withdrawal of Chinese Nationalist forces from the coastal islands to Formosa and the Pescadores should make possible the de facto establishment of a situation with which all sides could live. The calmer atmosphere which could thus develop should eventually make possible a final political disposition of Formosa in accordance with the wishes of its people.

Pending any overall political settlement, consideration could be given to the neutralization of Formosa, which would be protected against assault from Communist forces on the mainland and prevented from being used as a base for attack on that mainland.

During recent years there have been three areas, on the periphery of China, where local fighting has gravely threatened the peace of the world. Armistice agreements have been signed in two of these areas - Korea and Indochina. The third, Formosa, remains to be dealt with. If an armistice can be secured in the Formosa Straits the main immediate threats to international peace in the Far East will have been dealt

with. It may then, be possible eventually to negotiate a settlement of some of the differences in that area which stand in the way of peace.

Meanwhile the first job, as always, is to stop the fighting.

The second, as I see it, is to avoid provocation on the one hand and weakness and disunity on the other. But, I repeat it would be unutterable folly to allow these Chinese islands which are a hundred miles from Formosa to become the scene or the occasion of a major conflict. I am confident that this is the view of those who are directing policy in Washington under the leadership of a President who is patient, peace-loving and wise. I wish that I had as much knowledge of and confidence in the views of those who rule in Peking.

This question, so difficult, so complicated, so vitally important, will be among many to be discussed at the Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers beginning in London on Monday next - and which will include, let us not forget, representatives from free Asian countries. The Commonwealth is in very truth a family of nations of every creed, colour and race, dedicated to peace and co-operation between States. In the past it has served its own peoples and all peoples well. All of us in Canada earnestly and prayerfully hope that once again a Commonwealth meeting will serve the cause of peace, in its search for a solution to some of these problems which are today filling men's minds and hearts with anxiety and doubt and fear.

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