



# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
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## NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE

A review of international developments in 1957 by Mr. Sidney E. Smith, Secretary of State for External Affairs, as broadcast on the International Service of the CBC.

The year 1957, now coming to a close, has seen significant changes both in Canada and abroad.

Outside Canada, the deep conflict between the Communist world and the Western nations continued this year to cloud international relations. But something new has occurred in this context. To the threatening but now familiar rumblings of nuclear thunder, Soviet science has recently added some ominous bolts of lightning. This spectacular evidence of Russian progress in the field of guided missiles and rocket propulsion does not represent, however, an overwhelming, or lasting or even a matching military advantage. But it has brought closer to all of us, by a giant stride, the grim problem of human survival in the nuclear age.

As I review briefly the highlights of our external relations and activities during 1957, it is with the awareness that there has been a change in the international weather, of incalculable consequence.

During the past year, Canada has continued to play an important role in the Commonwealth as in the affairs of the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the other various organizations to which Canada adheres.

### United Nations

The United Nations represents today a great hope for peace, and its most useful mission lies perhaps in the field of discussion and reconciliation of ideas and interests: in providing a forum where 82 nations can sit down together and discuss face to face their differences and their agreements. As a microcosm of an imperfect world, the United Nations reflects the ambitions and the conflicts that often divide its members; but its successes also have been noteworthy.

The major topic discussed at the United Nations this year was the question of disarmament. To a world living in the shadow of nuclear weapons, this is a grim and vital issue.

But it is not a new problem. Canadian representatives with those of other nations have been trying to find an acceptable solution to it for eleven years. During the past year we assisted in the preparation of proposals for a first stage of disarmament - proposals which would contribute not only to our own security and that of our allies but also to the security of the Soviet Union and its associates. The General Assembly endorsed the basic principles of those proposals but the Soviet Union rejected them, even as a basis for discussion, and called them valueless. The Soviet Union has even refused to continue negotiations in the Disarmament Commission of the United Nations, although the Assembly reconstructed the Commission to meet the Soviet point of view. So the Soviet Union, once again, bears the responsibility for having frustrated the painstaking efforts of almost every other country to come to grips with a problem affecting our very lives.

Although the Assembly's hopes for progress in disarmament thus went by the board, something has been done, on the other hand, in easing the tensions that had been building up in the Middle East.

There was evident at the recent session of the Assembly a notable, if tentative, spirit of compromise on Middle Eastern questions which, if encouraged, might lead us at long last towards more peaceful relations. Included among the factors that have helped to ease tension and preserve peace in that area is the presence of the United Nations Emergency Force under the command of a Canadian, Lieutenant General E.L.M. Burns.

Canadian troops make up one-fifth of that Force of 6,000 and we are proud of the work all have done in arresting a movement that might have resulted in war. The value of such a force in such a situation has been fully demonstrated. Its example may well lead us to provide for a United Nations emergency force which could be swiftly recruited and deployed when similar needs arise on other fronts.

### Colombo Plan

Turning now to our programmes of assistance to less developed countries, there is no single task Canada has undertaken in the international field which deserves more support than, and promises such beneficial results as, the Colombo Plan. This form of co-operation, which is designed to assist our friends in South and South-East Asia, to raise their standards of living is an investment in friendship, peace and security. Canada's budget of Colombo Plan aid amounts to

\$35 million a year, the bulk of which is being allocated to basic economic development projects which the countries concerned in South and South-East Asia are undertaking to provide themselves with a broader and more secure economic foundation. Canadians are proud to be associated with this great international co-operative effort.

In South-East Asia, I mention also the International Supervisory Commissions in Indochina, of which Canada has been a member since their establishment three years ago. The work of these commissions has been important to the development of democratic institutions. It has been an arduous task, but its reward for us has been a deeper understanding of the problems of the people of Asia and admiration for their courage and endurance in adversity.

#### Commonwealth

In Commonwealth affairs, I had the great pleasure during my first visit to the General Assembly of the United Nations this year to endorse the admission of Malaya and to welcome that country as the United Nations' latest member. The Canadian Government has now appointed a High Commissioner to Malaya, who will take up his post very shortly. We have had the pleasure also, of sending a High Commissioner to Ghana establishing diplomatic relations with the government of another new sister nation in the Commonwealth. To me, one of the most brilliant pages of British history is this bringing of colonies to nationhood, this growing association of countries with various climes, of various religions and cultures, held together not as a bloc but as a group, bound by no treaty but rather by their adherence to common ideals of the dignity of the individual, of justice and fairness.

#### Latin America

Of similar benefit to Canada are the excellent relations which we enjoy with our neighbours in this hemisphere. The development of a century-old trade, the increased exchanges of personnel, be they visitors or businessmen, between Canada and the Latin American republics, the growing number of students and tourists coming to Canada from these nations, all these factors point to a growing and mutually profitable expansion in our relations with them. I know that the cordiality that marks our exchanges with the Latin American nations will be enhanced and increased.

#### United States

Our relations with the United States have long been influenced by a kindly providence that willed the geographical location of our two countries. With the United States we share a continent and a common heritage from many lands beyond the seas.

As comrades in arms during two world wars and more recently in Korea, as close associates at the United Nations and in NATO, we Canadians know the value of our American friends. Other ties that form the warp and woof of our daily lives - education, trade, investments, personal relations, the press and other means of communication - also bring us together.

This is not to say, however, that Canadian policies and attitudes can be merely a reflection of United States policies and attitudes.

Canada is an independent nation with views and problems of its own, apart from those which it shares in varying degree with its great neighbour.

From our earliest years, there have been problems between us and these have continued down to the present day. Characteristic of our relations also has been a true frankness, the kind of frankness that is possible only between friends. This we cherish, just as we hold to the idea that friendship really means the existence of a positive and effective interest on the part of each nation in the welfare of the other. The United States and Canada, unequal in military and economic force, but equal in their common respect for the dignity of the individual, set a continuing example to the world of how friendly nations can live together.

### NATO

Nowhere better than in NATO has the essential solidarity of Canada with the United States and the Western nations been exemplified.

The sole military purpose of NATO is to deter aggression by providing firm evidence that an attack against any member of the Alliance would be quickly and successfully met. The Canadian Government's conviction is that the value remains intact.

We believe that it is incumbent upon us in the organization to exploit without delay the opportunities that exist for closer co-operation among us in the fields of political consultation and of military, economic and scientific affairs.

Underlying the conflict which divides the communist countries from the Western nations today, and that vitiates in some measure the political stability and economic development of the rest of the world, is a problem of faith - faith built on understanding among nations. Every effort must be made to re-establish that faith.

As we enter the new year, the prospect with its overtones of growing danger imposes heavy obligations upon us. These obligations were acknowledged, and plans made to fulfill them, at the meeting of Leaders of Governments of NATO countries, which took place recently in Paris. As a result of that Meeting, the year 1958 will see an intensified effort on the part of NATO to raise the strength and efficiency of the organization to the level required by new Soviet challenges in the military and economic fields. Prudence requires that we seek this defence insurance first, and that it be adequate to our needs. But the key to peace and progress lies as much in reducing armaments and raising standards of living as in countering threats to our security. We, therefore, in the United Nations, in NATO, and in other forums, continue our efforts to improve economic standards in the less developed areas, and we will endeavour to find an acceptable solution to the question of disarmament and to probe, with appropriate safeguards, for opportunities to move toward a settlement of the differences which divide us from the Soviet bloc. We particularly hope that the Union will reconsider its decision to withdraw from further talks on disarmament within the Commission established by the UN and that, in this and other ways, it may at last give us genuine proof of its desire for peace.

In brief, although we have to keep our powder dry, our hand is out in friendship to all.

May 1958 fulfill our prayers for an abiding peace. That is my New Year's wish for Canada and for the world.

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