

Public Affairs

Why Canada Must Rearm

The Honourable L. B. Pearson

TO be effective any foreign policy must be grounded in a knowledge of the world in which it has to operate. The world in which we live is divided by conflicting aspirations, by national rivalries and by competing ideologies. Above all, it is torn by a deep schism between those who wish to make a success of the great experiment of freedom and those who are bent on frustrating that experiment and reducing the world to slavery. On the one side are the free countries in which the exercise of power is checked by law, by custom and by deliberate efforts to associate everyone in the community as fully as possible with political decisions. On the other side of the line of division are the Soviet Union and its satellites. Freedom had never for any length of time flourished sturdily in Russia; and now its Communist rulers have used their power to extinguish the slightest remnants of political freedom, to make independent thought impossible

and to chain the work and spirit of every Soviet individual to the service of the state. Their power is absolute within the Soviet Union and virtually absolute within the unfortunate countries which have become its satellites. It has extended in ever-widening circles. It should cause no surprise that this unbridled power has proved expansive and aggressive.

Men who have fed constantly on power and have ruthlessly stamped out opposition must be a prey to fear. Moreover, the desire for power, when unchecked by other considerations, can never be satiated. Explain it as we may, the fact remains that after subjugating their own people the Communist oligarchs have moved with increasing audacity to subjugate their neighbours.

There is then a dangerous and predatory force abroad in the world. This expansive force for the most part follows the lines laid down by the designs of Russian

imperialism. Its eyes are fastened on many of the same prizes. But it is, of course, immensely more dangerous to the freedom of other countries than Russian imperialism ever was because it can depend on the assistance of the Communist Party throughout the world. It is this combination of Communism and Russian imperialism which presents us and other free peoples with such a serious challenge.

Since 1939 the Soviet Union has incorporated within its own boundaries 18½ million people in Europe alone. In addition, the Red Army has brought the Iron Curtain down upon 107 million people who live in the satellite countries of Eastern Europe. In most cases, the subjugation of these countries was accomplished because there was a military occupation which put Communists into key positions. It should also be remembered that there are still Soviet troops in Germany, Austria, Poland, Roumania and Hungary. Thus, gradually and systematically, all forms of public life which were in any way opposed to Communism were destroyed. Nor is the process of absorbing these areas yet complete. They are being reduced to the role of puppet states and are being exploited economically more ruthlessly than any Western "colony" has ever been.

II

BEFORE the attack last June on the Republic of Korea, the Soviet Union had preferred to achieve its ends by agitation, subversion and civil war. These methods were cheaper than the outright use of armed force, and they also had the advantage that they involved less risk of precipitating a general war. The armed attack on Korea, however, in which the Soviet Union connived, demonstrated that the strategists in the Politburo were prepared to use naked aggression as well as more covert means of increasing the area of the world under their control. It is, therefore, clear that the period of greatest military danger to the free world has already begun.

Whether the Soviet Union and its satellites will embark on fresh military ven-

tures, no one can tell. But there are many countries in the world which are immediately threatened by their aggressive designs. In Indo-China, Chinese guerrillas and volunteers have been assisting the Viet Minh in their war on the Viet Nam Government. At present, the position there has been stabilized and heavy losses have been inflicted on the insurgents. If, however, the stubborn resistance which is now being offered were to fail, and if Indo-China were to be overrun, the whole of South-East Asia, including Burma, Malaya and Indonesia, with their important natural resources, might well come under Communist control. The position of India and Pakistan in that event would then be precarious.

Persia and the Middle East are also vulnerable. At the present time the armed forces of the Soviet Union face this area and its vital oil fields in strength sufficient, I think, to overrun it without too much difficulty.

Across the Mediterranean another country immediately threatened is Yugoslavia. Marshal Tito's government is facing great economic difficulties, partly as a result of the serious drought there last year, and partly as the result of the economic blockade imposed on that country by the Cominform. Moreover, Roumania, Hungary and Bulgaria are now, contrary to the provisions of the peace treaties, in possession of sufficient military forces to make them collectively powerful, as well as threatening and aggressive, neighbours.

The immediate reason for the danger in which these threatened countries stand is the disparity between Communist military forces and the forces of the free world. It is in Western Europe that this relative weakness creates the greatest danger, since Western Europe would probably be the main objective of the initial Soviet attack in the event of a general war. For that reason, strenuous efforts are now being made to increase rapidly the forces in being in Western Europe as a deterrent to Soviet aggression. The way in which that is being done, and the problems which have been encountered in the process, are described in another article in this issue of PUBLIC AFFAIRS, so that I do not need to

mention them in detail. However, I should like to emphasize that, in our view and in the view of our friends and allies, the main front which must be defended is Western Europe. Under present circumstances, that is the key bastion of the free world; and the efforts now being made by Canada, and by other countries in the North Atlantic alliance, to strengthen the defences of Western Europe should be regarded as a contribution to the defence of the free world as a whole.

III

IN a situation so full of danger as I have briefly outlined, there can be no blinking the necessity for Canada and other free countries rapidly to advance their state of military preparedness. A foreign policy which did not realize this basic necessity would be futile and doomed to failure. We have, therefore, initiated the greatly expanded defence programme which was announced by Mr. Claxton in the House of Commons on the 5th February.

At the same time, it would be wrong to believe that because of the acute military danger facing the free world, there is now no room left for the exercise of diplomacy. Above all, we must not allow our programme of re-armament to become a rigid carapace beneath which our perceptions become dull and our reactions sluggish. The purpose of our increased defence programme is to assist in deterring Soviet aggression. If we are successful,

the present period of tension may last for a decade or more. Such a prolonged period of strain will present a different challenge from any that Canada has ever faced before. We will need to have all our wits about us in order to solve the problems which it will involve. We will have to be resourceful in adapting our military plans to meet what may well be a highly novel and protracted situation of strain. We will also have to show good judgment in striking a balance between the requirements of defence and the requirements of the civil economy over a long period.

There is also a third and very important reason why we must not allow re-armament to dull our intelligence or atrophy our responses. We hope that, as they see the strength of the free world increasing, the rulers of the Soviet Union will come to the conclusion that it would not be in their interest to touch off the third world war. If and when they are of that mind, it will be necessary for the Western powers to enter into negotiations with them in order to establish some *modus vivendi*. We must, therefore, keep sensitive antennae out in order to pick up any indications that the Soviet Union may be willing to enter the profitable negotiations. To re-arm with speed and vigour and, at the same time, to retain enough suppleness to be on the lookout for genuine opportunities for lessening the existing tension by negotiation, will not be an easy task. But I feel confident that it is not beyond the power of the Canadian people. If we can re-arm without, in the process, losing our resourcefulness or our willingness to seek agreement, we need have no fear of the future.

Free Slaves

Corrupted freeman are the worst of slaves.

DAVID GARRICK