

REALISM IN FOREIGN POLICY

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CANADA is badly in need of a foreign policy. We are not likely to be allowed to settle back into absorption in the non-military pursuits which engrossed us from 1919 almost up to the outbreak of the war. Or if we do, we must count on having to do all over again what we have been doing the last two years. We have got ourselves into this world war; and if there is another, we shall probably be in it also. We need to take a look ahead. We are naturally interested in the sort of world we are to live in after the war. It may be some years before the war is over, but it will not do to wait until then to consider our course of action. The present experience should be lesson enough for us in this respect.

Our policy in the past has been one of faith in round table conference. We thought we could sit down with any country and persuade it to be a good neighbour. We now know that is a futile hope. The nations are not going to live peaceably with one another—unless they are forced to do so. Our official judgment has been that the League of Nations should use persuasion, not force, to back up its decisions. That policy has got us into a mess. We have got to take a more realistic view of world affairs.

If the world is to have permanent peace, there must be a force in existence to keep the peace. Disarmament is not the way. We have tried to go along that path, but not all nations have been willing to tread it. So we have had to fight—and to fight unprepared.

Canada has not a good record in regard to the League of Nations. Our delegates were among the first to start sapping at its foundations. At the Second Assembly of the League in September, 1921, our delegate (Hon. C. J. Doherty) proposed the abolition of Section Ten of the Covenant which guaranteed existing boundaries in Europe. It was reasonably clear at the time—and later was made abundantly clear—that the obligation did not interfere with Canada's own right to make war or peace. It bound us only to join in a unanimous finding of the League declaring an offending country an aggressor—and then to give what aid we thought necessary in the enforcement of the decrees

of the League. The requirement of unanimity in League action was a strong guarantee that we would not be committed to make war unnecessarily. And what has happened now? We were drawn into this war by the violation of the boundaries set for Poland under the Peace Treaties. This has happened in spite of the League acceptance of our interpretation of our obligation under Section Ten. Moreover, this has happened without the invocation of Section Ten. And instead of being asked to provide a limited measure of assistance to the League, we are—with full willingness—committed to war without limit.

Again in 1935 the present Canadian government gave the fatal blow to what might have checked the bombastic empire-building schemes of Mussolini. During the Ethiopian campaign it was proposed to apply oil sanctions to Italy. The United States, though outside the League, was willing to support these sanctions. But, by an odd chance, the proposal for oil sanctions was made by the Canadian representative at Geneva; and in Mr. King's absence—though with his consent—the acting Prime Minister (Rt. Hon. Ernest Lapointe) issued instructions disavowing Canadian responsibility for the proposal. Other sanctions had failed to stop Mussolini. The oil sanction might have checked his mad career. But Canada's action may have put the quietus on the whole plan.

We had already in 1932 missed an opportunity to serve notice on the aggressor nations, although in this case the error of our government was in keeping silence rather than in speaking out. Japan had just begun her inroads into China. China appealed to the League of Nations. Hon. Henry L. Stimson, who was then United States Secretary of State—and who is now Secretary of War—made a proposal (though the United States was not a member of the League) for a joint British-American demarche under the Nine-Power Treaty which guaranteed the integrity of China. Mr. Stimson has stated—in a book which he published to put on record his policy at the time—that he never received a reply from the British government. What has happened since is too well known to need recapitulation. The aggressor nations—Japan, Italy and Germany—went ahead with their plans, which have brought on the present war. The point of the story for our present purpose is that it is just possible that the failure of Britain to respond to the American invitation in 1932 was due to the absence of pressure from the government of Canada. Canadian interests were involved at the time in two directions. It is a

Canadian interest that Japan should not get hold of China; it is a prime Canadian interest that there should be the fullest possible co-operation in international affairs between London and Washington. The Canadian government should have been active at the time in urging the British Foreign Office to accept the Stimson invitation. Our High Commissioner in London may have taken such action; but if so, the Canadian people have not been informed of it.

The League of Nations appears at the present time to be in a state of dissolution. But it—or some similar body—will again come into active existence—unless we are to have a series of world wars which will menace civilization. Moreover, it must have compulsory powers—and a military force to back them up. The exact nature of that force it is not now possible to define. Probably at the outset the power behind the League will have to be exercised by agreement among independent nations. They must be ready, however, to exercise it; and it will be very unsafe for us all if we allow the League to be once more sabotaged. A strong central body to keep would-be aggressors in check is a necessity if we are to have security. Security is most important to small nations; and as a small nation Canada has a vital interest in the existence of a powerful international control.

When the League of Nations is again in operation, Canada should be forward in its support. We should be willing to make sacrifices for it. For one reason, those sacrifices are bound to be much less—as we should be well aware—than those we shall have to make if no international control is established. In support of a League of Nations we should be ready to keep up an effective army, air force and navy. In deciding the strength of our military force, we should be guided by what is a reasonable course for a country of the size and wealth of Canada. This Dominion cannot, at the present time at least, aspire to be a Great Power. Our armaments should be consistent with our financial and economic strength. Our natural allies are the British Commonwealth of Nations and the United States. Our military plans should be made in co-operation with both these Great Powers. At the same time we should build up a military force—on land, on sea, and in the air—which is as great as we can reasonably support.

Having recognized our responsibilities as an adult nation—and having provided ourselves with a military force consonant

with our position—we should let our naturally associated nations know what are the principles for which Canada stands in international affairs. For this purpose we should have a close liaison, not only with London, but with Canberra, Wellington and Capetown; and with Washington as well. We should not leave our foreign policy to chance as we did in the past. Situated as we are on the main thoroughfare of international rivalry, we can no longer afford to remain a Hermit Nation.

A BIRTHDAY ALLEGORY

(For Fiftieth Birthday of Alan E. Cameron)

W. S. H. MORRIS

The Colonel came tramping along the high road,
 And his mind was uneasy as onward he strode;
 "I am sick"—so he thought—"of this tiresome grind,
 Tramping mile after mile with Duty behind
 And Duty before with its constant demand
 To give one's whole self to the business in hand.
 I've well earned the right—and the time's over-ripe—
 To relax in soft comfort with slippers and pipe."
 Nearby a small drummer boy pattered along,
 He loved the new road, in his heart was a song;
 "This is jolly," he thought; "there's adventure ahead,
 I mustn't fall back, tho' my feet are like lead."
 He glanced quickly behind, then held his head high—
 "If the Colonel can stick it, then surely must I."
 But the Colonel had caught that quick turn of the head,
 Old memories prompted the words that he said—
 "Tomorrow, my lad, we'll be tramping again,
 Let us whistle the 'March of the Cameron men'."