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CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS

By THE HON. PAUL MARTIN

MR. Albert Einstein was once asked what he thought would be the most important weapon if there were a third world war. He is reported to have replied:

"I do not know. But I do know that the important weapons of World War IV would be bows and arrows."

This view of the future may be pessimistic, but it underlines the urgency of the task before us. The United Nations today is the one thing which stands between mankind and the frightful prospect of further world wars. If the United Nations—or some such world agency—cannot succeed, then peace, in the long term, is impossible.

When the United Nations observed its eighth anniversary, the Prime Minister of Canada said that this occasion had perhaps a greater significance than any earlier milestone the United Nations had passed on the pathway to peace. He pointed out that, with the signing of the armistice in Korea, the Organization had met and overcome the first great challenge to the principles on which it was founded; that it had justified, in part at least, the faith which had brought it into being; and that it had helped to secure the peace which it was formed to protect.

Much has happened in the eight years since San Francisco's Golden Gate seemed to open for all nations on the splendid vision of a world without war. Since then, the gates to

the future have narrowed, the horizons have been darkened by world dissension, but despite the failures and disappointments, there have been many solid achievements in the short history of the United Nations Organization.

CANADA'S APPROACH TO THE SAN FRANCISCO CONFERENCE:

Canada was proud to share in the task of drafting the Charter of the United Nations. Our Delegation set out for the San Francisco Conference, which opened on April 25, 1945, in an atmosphere of hope and confidence. The composition of the Delegation itself—made up as it was of representatives from both Houses of Parliament and from both sides of each House—was such as to ensure the widest possible measure of support from the Parliament and the people of Canada. Parliament, after a full debate, had approved by an overwhelming majority a resolution which stressed the vital importance to our future well-being of the establishment of an effective international organization in which Canada would play its full part.

This wide-spread support grew from principles which had come to determine Canada's foreign policy—the need to maintain national unity, to resist threats to political liberty, to support the rule of law in national and international affairs, to maintain moral values, and finally, to accept responsibility in keeping with our role in world affairs. Underlying the Canadian approach to the San Francisco Conference were two basic convictions—that aggression could be prevented or defeated only through the organization of an effective system of collective security; and that peace could be maintained only on a basis of economic and social progress.

Two world wars had confirmed our belief in the validity of these principles. The nations which, between the wars, had pinned their hopes on the League of Nations had done so without being willing to use collective force to deter aggression. This led to the Second World War from which we learned that peace was the responsibility of all and that strength was needed to deter and, if need be, to resist aggression. Canada's growing strength, which had been shown during the war in the effort of the fighting services and in our increased productive capacity, was also reflected in the development and strengthening of the external affairs service, both at home and abroad. Thus, at the end of hostilities, Canada stood prepared to participate in the challenging task of international co-operation.

When the framers of the Charter began their work, they

were able to benefit from the tremendous amount of preparatory work that had already been undertaken. Its beginnings had been forecast in the Atlantic Charter and endorsed by the United Nations Declaration of 1942. Discussions of increasing breadth and purpose had been carried on at the Moscow Conference in 1943; at the Prime Ministers' meeting in London in 1944; in extensive exchanges of views between the Great Powers; and finally, in the Dumbarton Oaks conversations which took place in Washington from August 21 to October 7, 1944. While Canada was not represented at Dumbarton Oaks, its views were made known through the United Kingdom Delegation. The Dumbarton Oaks Proposals formed the general basis for the San Francisco Conference, although several questions—notably voting procedure in the Security Council—were later agreed upon at Yalta.

The Charter concerns itself with five distinct spheres of responsibility: settlement of disputes; resistance to aggression; international economic and social co-operation; international trusteeship responsibilities; and maintenance of justice and international law. To carry out these responsibilities, six principal organs were established: the General Assembly; the Security Council; the Economic and Social Council; the Trusteeship Council; the International Court of Justice; and the Secretariat.

CANADIAN INFLUENCE ON THE CHARTER:

Without examining in detail how the Charter took shape at the San Francisco Conference—a fascinating study in itself—a few instances in which the Canadian position was of particular interest might be noted.

It was recognized at the Dumbarton Oaks meeting that any permanent security system must depend on the continued collaboration of the greatest military powers. This recognition underlay the wide powers given to the Security Council and the privileged position the permanent members were accorded by virtue of the veto. Nevertheless, at San Francisco, the rule of unanimity—that on all questions of substance the votes of the five permanent members must be included in the total of seven votes required—aroused great controversy. As some of the smaller states pointed out, this veto power would permit any one of the Big Five to paralyze the activities of the Security Council and thus to weaken the peaceful settlement provisions of the Charter. The Canadian Delegation could

not regard the voting procedure as entirely satisfactory, but considered that it was not too high a price for an international organization that was satisfactory in other respects. Along with other participants, Canada was influenced by the statement of the Great Powers that they would use their special privilege with a sense of responsibility and a full recognition of the rights of smaller states.

In endeavouring to achieve the most effective security system, Canada pressed strongly for a method of election to the Security Council which would recognize the principle that power should be combined with responsibility. Other states of middle power with wide international interests shared the Canadian view that some distinction should be made between the contribution such states could make to the Organization and that of the smallest and weakest states. Otherwise, there would simply be two groups: the five Great Powers with the special advantage of the veto, and the rest of the members of the United Nations. Largely as a result of Canadian initiative, Article 23 of the Charter provides for the election of non-permanent members with due regard to their contribution to peace as well as to geographical distribution.

It was Canada's pursuit of the question that also led to the inclusion of Article 44 under which the Security Council is required to invite a member to participate in decisions concerning the employment of that member's armed forces. These provisions appear less important at the present time when, unhappily, the Security Council has not been able to exercise the powers given to it. They remain, nevertheless, important parts of the machinery for keeping the peace.

Canada also supported an objective, sought by many, of linking the preservation of the peace in a more direct way with the maintenance of justice and international law, and helped to secure amendments in Article 1 to that effect. Prior to the Conference, a Committee of Jurists of the United Nations met in Washington to prepare a draft statute of the International Court of Justice. Canada was represented by Mr. Justice John E. Read, Q.C., a distinguished alumnus and former Dean of Law of Dalhousie University. Mr. Read, who is now serving on the International Court of Justice, was then Legal Adviser to Canada's Department of External Affairs.

Among other Canadian proposals which had a strong influence on the final form of the Charter was that providing for the subsequent review of the Charter. A second Canadian

suggestion strengthened the international position of the Secretariat, while still another proposal helped establish the relationship of the General Assembly and the Security Council as organs of varying functions but with equality of status.

THE SEARCH FOR SECURITY:

In the wake of the San Francisco Conference, with its great hopes for progress and its basic assumption that there would be unanimity of outlook and harmony of practice amongst the five major powers, came disappointment and disillusionment. First there was the bitter realization at the first meetings of the Security Council that the Soviet Government had not been sincere in its assurances that the veto power would be used with discretion and a sense of responsibility. Then, in 1947, the Soviet Union refused to participate in the Marshall Plan or to allow any of its satellites to do so. This made it clear that the Soviet leaders were more bent on disruption than on co-operation. The cold war had begun.

A year later the Soviet blockade of Berlin made the cold war dangerously warm, and in February, 1948, the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia revealed clearly the true nature of Soviet imperialism. Unanimity amongst the Great Powers, on which the prospect of collective security through United Nations action was originally planned, swiftly gave way to mistrust and hostility. In this situation, certain countries felt impelled to make more limited collective defence arrangements of their own. Thus was born the idea of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The present Prime Minister of Canada was among the first publicly to suggest—as he did at the General Assembly in September 1947—that some nations might wish to seek greater safety in an association of those willing to accept more specific international obligations. In April, 1948, Mr. St. Laurent spoke in more specific terms in favour of a collective security agreement uniting those nations which believed that Soviet imperialism was thwarting our hopes for universal collective security through the United Nations. For Canada, the North Atlantic Treaty represented a marked departure from traditional policy in that we undertook specific defence commitments in advance and agreed to have Canadian forces sent abroad for defence purposes in peacetime.

NATO is quite consistent with the terms of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter under which member states are

permitted to make arrangements for collective self-defence. It is an example of the exercise of this right in the face of a very real threat of aggression. Its formation represented an effort to realize the aims of the United Nations within a regional framework, by demonstrating to potential aggressors that any attempt to take advantage of the power vacuum in Europe would be resisted by a group of nations acting collectively.

KOREA:

But the threat to peace is a global threat, as the world learned on June 25, 1950, when the forces of aggression were unleashed in Korea. This was the major challenge to the United Nations, and the response was swift. Because of the happy accident that the Soviet Delegate was not present in the Security Council to exercise the veto power, a decision was made to take collective action against aggression in Korea. This action was made possible by the agreement of an overwhelming majority of the United Nations members to support the decision to resist aggression, and the determination of sixteen of these nations, under the leadership of the United States, to back up their decision with armed forces.

The United Nations met its responsibility promptly and squarely when the North Korean aggression occurred. In determining to take collective action against the aggressor, the nations concerned accepted the fact that aggression in one part of the world constitutes a threat to every other part. Failure to face up to this issue would have made a mockery of the whole collective-security principle and would have been an open invitation to international lawlessness.

Canada's role in Korea has been an honourable one. Our country contributed to the Unified Command the third largest number of armed forces from outside. We helped out with transport planes and destroyers, and our cash contribution to Korean relief and rehabilitation ranked third among the member nations. In every stage of the difficult negotiations that finally led to an armistice, our role has been that of a country with a responsible recognition of the duties of United Nations membership. The significance of the Korean action was described in the Canadian statement in the Political Committee of the General Assembly at the historic special meeting of the United Nations called last August:

"The United Nations forces have done all they were ever asked to do by force of arms. It has been the first major application of the principle of collective security by an

international organization, and it has been successful. We are thereby marking certainly one of the greatest achievements in human history. Had the United Nations failed to act, or had it acted and failed, not only would a brave and ancient people have lost their freedom, but the United Nations itself would, I fear, already have become the dead husk of another great idea unrealized, not for lack of resolutions but of resolution."(1)

COLLECTIVE MEASURES:

Experience in Korea has shown that collective security can be effective. Despite the many difficulties encountered in achieving collective action, the United Nations forces have repelled aggression in Korea and, in so doing, have deterred aggression elsewhere. Their action has revived faith in collective security. This faith has been increased by the extent of co-operation and the success achieved in common aims by the member states of NATO. Since the beginning of the Korean conflict, study of collective security on a wider basis has been actively pursued in the United Nations.

Canada was one of the fourteen members of the Collective Measures Committee established by the General Assembly at its Fifth Session in 1950 under the "Uniting for Peace" resolution. The Committee has concentrated on the preparedness of states, and on techniques, machinery and procedures relating to the co-ordination of national and international actions. It has dealt primarily with the political, economic, financial and military measures which would be involved in collective action by the United Nations. It has studied the problems involved in the planning of embargoes against aggressors, and it has examined the financial aspects of sharing the burden of collective measures. An effort has also been made to improve the security machinery of the United Nations. For example, a section in the "Uniting for Peace" resolution makes it possible for the General Assembly to take action on a breach of the peace if the Security Council is blocked by the veto. A recommendation has also been adopted that each member state should maintain elements within its own armed forces which could be made available as a UN unit.

TENSIONS REFLECTED IN THE UNITED NATIONS:

Tensions and divisions that exist throughout the world are faithfully reflected in the United Nations. The fundamental

(1) Statement by the Hon. Paul Martin, Acting Chairman of the Canadian Delegation, to the resumed Seventh Session of the U.N. General Assembly made in the Political Committee on August 19, 1953. External Affairs Monthly Bulletin—September, 1953, p. 282.

cleavage is that between the Soviet world and the free nations. It is this conflict of interests and ideals which made NATO necessary, gave rise to the Korean crisis, and keeps the world in a continuing state of tension. In the face of the current cleavage between the Soviet world and the free world, there have been suggestions that the United Nations should be so re-organized as to leave out the Soviet and its satellites.

Pursuit of this line of approach, however, would only solidify the cleavage and heighten suspicions and fears on both sides. While the policy of the Soviet group seems designed to frustrate the achievement of United Nations objectives, this does not alter the fact that the rest of us in the United Nations can work together, however slowly and painfully, toward the ideal of nations living together under the rule of law. By reason of its universal character, the United Nations, as it stands today, keeps alive the idea of a human community—however remote from reality that idea may sometimes seem. Nor should it be forgotten that the United Nations still provides the only continuing point of contact between East and West, as well as a meeting-ground for contact with some of the free countries which do not wish to align themselves categorically with either side.

STRIVINGS FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

While our main attention is usually given to the fundamental division between East and West, two other problems have been occupying the thoughts of those at the United Nations to an increasing extent. These are the relationships between developed and under-developed countries, and between anti-colonial countries and those administering dependent territories. Canada, as a nation which has achieved a high level of prosperity within a framework of full self-government and national sovereignty, cannot be indifferent to the aspirations of those seeking either economic development of their territories or the achievement of self-government.

Modern history has witnessed the emergence of a whole new list of independent states—Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Burma, India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Israel, Indonesia and Libya. The United Nations has played its part in creating conditions that have enabled certain of these to proceed along the road towards self-government. Canada, of course, has a special appreciation of the national ambitions that motivate dependent peoples in other areas not yet self-governing. However, while we are in sympathy with these natural aspirations, we are aware also

of the danger of premature action. The legitimate aspirations of dependent peoples must be balanced against the desirability and the necessity of recognizing the domestic jurisdiction of the parent states. Thus, one of the most vital services the United Nations can perform in this age of transition is to help direct the explosive forces of nationalism into orderly and non-violent channels.

FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS AND HUMAN RIGHTS:

Many problems arise in the United Nations in which little direct action is possible, but in which the United Nations can serve as the conscience of the world. One such issue has been raised at recent sessions by the Arab-Asian countries who assert that race conflict in South Africa resulting from the Union Government's policy of apartheid is creating a situation which threatens the peace and violates human rights.

Another question in this category has been the issue, first raised in 1949, of the observance of fundamental freedoms and human rights in Bulgaria, Hungary and Roumania. The General Assembly has since passed resolutions condemning the three governments for refusal to fulfil their obligations. At the Eighth Session of the Assembly, the Canadian Delegation questioned the sincerity of the Soviet Government in putting forward a resolution calling for measures to reduce international tensions when, at the same time, it not only permitted but organized religious persecution within its own borders. Mention was also made of the situation in Poland where religious persecution has recently been renewed. It was pointed out that similar instances could be given affecting various branches of Christianity and other faiths. The Canadian position on this question remains as it was described at the Seventh Session of the Assembly:

“. . . . It is now with the greatest regret that we realize that the good faith and the goodwill of those governments responsible for these persecutions have not shown any improvement. On the contrary, if there has been any change, I would say that it has been towards a greater absence of goodwill and of good faith. In the light of these considerations, my delegation is painfully aware of the futility at this moment of placing before the General Assembly any draft resolution or of inviting the United Nations or the Secretary-General to take specific action on the problem. But the Canadian Delegation, nevertheless, desires to protest formally and with all its energy, before this Committee and

before the United Nations, against the systematic persecutions which rage practically everywhere behind the Iron Curtain and which are disposing in the most horrible manner of millions of human beings whose only crime has been their desire to be free"(1)

MEDIATION THROUGH THE UNITED NATIONS:

With the Security Council lacking the power to bring force to bear upon parties to a dispute, the United Nations has gradually developed less forthright but more flexible means of carrying out its responsibilities. In dealing with threats to the maintenance of international peace, there has been increasing emphasis on mediation and conciliation by United Nations bodies and frequently by special groups or individuals appointed for the purpose. It was the United Nations that brought an end to large-scale hostilities in Palestine. The United Nations also effected a cease-fire in Kashmir and brought the dispute between India and Pakistan within a framework of negotiation. In helping to create the independent state of Indonesia, the United Nations not only halted a serious war but assisted a fine and ancient civilization in taking its place in the family of nations.

Our background of tolerance and compromise, made necessary within our own borders by reason of our dual language and heritage, and our freedom of action as a middle power have enabled Canada as a member state of the United Nations to serve on occasion as an informal mediator. Late in 1949, in his capacity as President of the Security Council, General A.G.L. McNaughton was appointed to assist representatives of India and Pakistan in finding a solution to the dispute over Kashmir. His efforts to secure agreement on demilitarization were not successful, but the Security Council adopted a resolution embodying the proposals he had advanced.

In the dispute which followed the return to Indonesia of the Netherlands administering authorities after the war, Canada also played a constructive role. At a critical stage in this problem, the Canadian representative on the Security Council proposed a practical course of action which helped the Netherlands Government and the Indonesian representatives to work out an agreement on the aspects of the Security Council's proposals on which they differed. This led to preliminary

(1) Statement by the Hon. Paul Martin, Acting Chairman of the Canadian Delegation to the Seventh Session of the U.N. General Assembly made in the Third Committee on December 17, 1952—External Affairs Monthly Bulletin, January, 1953, pp. 28-31.

talks at Batavia, followed by a round-table conference at The Hague, and ultimately to the establishment of the Republic of the United States of Indonesia. Throughout, Canada took a special interest in and responsibility for the settlement of the Indonesian dispute.

On the question of Palestine, Canada also played an important role. Two Canadians served on the special committee on Palestine which visited the Middle East early in 1947, and our present Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable L. B. Pearson, presided over the special session of the General Assembly called to consider the Palestine question in the spring of 1947.

In an informal way, Canadian representatives at the United Nations have been able to help find middle of the road solutions in a number of other situations. Their contribution in this way had taken the form of private conversations and informal discussions, and little of it shows up on the public record. Mr. Pearson's achievements along these lines have been outstanding and have brought him world-wide recognition. His influence was particularly strong in shaping the course of events in the earlier stages of the Palestine dispute and in successive stages of the Korean situation. In his capacity as President of the Seventh Session of the Assembly, Mr. Pearson made a truly great contribution to the success of the United Nations and to the achievement of international accord, both as an astute and alert Chairman and as a conciliator in the informal discussions which so often succeeded in bringing harmony out of discord.

While Canada's contribution to the United Nations cannot be measured in dollar terms, it is noteworthy that this country is seventh in the list of contributors—accounting for 3.30 per cent of the budget. Our subscriptions to the Specialized Agencies also compare favourably with those of other countries. For 1953, Canada's contribution to the United Nations was, in Canadian funds, \$1,394,504; to the Specialized Agencies, \$1,220,655; to the United Nations Expanded Program of Technical Assistance, \$795,000; to the United Nations Children's Fund, \$500,000; to the United Nations Refugee Emergency Fund, \$100,000; or a total of \$4,010,159. Previously, Canada had also made substantial contributions for the relief and rehabilitation of Arab refugees.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRESS:

It was recognized in the Charter that lasting peace could

fic and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Bank and the International Monetary Fund—devote themselves primarily to the task of improving the economic and social conditions of the people of the world. A distinguished Canadian, Dr. Brock Chisholm, was Director-General of WHO from its inception until his retirement in 1953, and a number of other Canadians occupy key posts both at headquarters and in these various agencies.

FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR PEACE:

While it has been necessary, in the face of Soviet imperialistic policies, to use all possible means to strengthen collective security—both within and outside a United Nations framework, including the rapid build-up of defensive strength—we have not forsaken the ultimate hope of reducing armaments and of devoting efforts and funds instead to peaceful and constructive endeavours.

Canada serves as a member of the Disarmament Commission of the United Nations and participated also through long, weary months of discussion and negotiation in the Atomic Energy Commission and the Commission for Conventional Armaments which preceded it. The story has been one of almost unrelieved deadlock between the Soviet Union and the Western Powers. In the course of the eighth session of the Assembly, considerable interest was shown in the question of disarmament, although the Disarmament Commission itself was inactive during the year. This interest, which had been intensified by reports of progress in the development of the hydrogen bomb, was greatly heightened at the close of the session by the speech of President Eisenhower in which he proposed a basis of co-operation for peaceful pursuits in the atomic field.

It was in a resolution on disarmament, co-sponsored by Canada and passed by the Assembly in late November, that a proposal was advanced for private talks to be held by the powers principally involved. The President expanded this suggestion with the proposal that more than the mere reduction of atomic materials for military purposes be sought. Specifically, he proposed that governments possessing stockpiles of uranium and fissile materials should make joint contributions of such materials to an international atomic energy agency. The United States Secretary of State, Mr. John Foster Dulles, has since held private talks on this question with the Soviet Ambassador in Washington. The private talks have special interest for Canada be-

cause of the prominent role this country has had in the development of atomic energy for peaceful purposes. The Prime Minister has welcomed President Eisenhower's imaginative and constructive approach to what is perhaps the greatest problem of the day.

It would be unrealistic to suggest that the United Nations is a perfect instrument. Like all things contrived by humans, its charter must be examined periodically to see whether it is capable of improvement. Canada had an influence at San Francisco in arousing support for revision arrangements which came to be embodied in Article 109. This Article stipulates that, if a conference to review the Charter has not been held before the tenth annual session of the Assembly, the question of holding such a conference is to be placed on the agenda of that session. In anticipation of such a conference, a number of member countries of the United Nations, including Canada, have felt that some preparatory work is desirable. At the Eighth Session, the Canadian Delegation co-sponsored a resolution, calling upon the Secretary-General to compile unpublished San Francisco documents and to prepare a study of the practice of U.N. organs in preparation for the possible review of the Charter.

There is no doubt that the Charter requirement calling for consideration of this question in 1955 will cause the record of the United Nations in the first ten years of its existence to come in for careful examination. Serious study of the Charter and of the record of the United Nations cannot, in itself, reduce international tensions, but it is bound to have a beneficial effect in deepening public understanding of the issues with which the United Nations is grappling and public appreciation of what the United Nations has accomplished. At the same time, it should be remembered that no amendment to the Charter can be effected without the unanimous support of the five major powers. In other words, the veto can apply to any proposed revisions of the Charter. It should be remembered, also, that we cannot know at this early date what the international climate will be in 1956—the earliest year in which it is at all likely that a conference to review the Charter would be held.

When one examines the record of the United Nations it is easy to see the failures, the frustrations, and the futilities; it is, unfortunately, just as easy to overlook the successes, the solid achievements, the positive accomplishments of the United Nations. It should not be forgotten that, while this

bold adventure in united world action is only eight years old, the massive problems with which the U. N. must come to grips are almost as old as human life. Setting aside extravagant and unwarranted expectations, there remains a solid core of accomplishment in the present and a real possibility of progress in the future. The organization has not yet fulfilled all of its potentialities and it will be a long time before it does so. But the adaptability it has shown during these difficult years is one of the surest guarantees of its capacity for further development.

The Canadian attitude towards the United Nations continues to fit the description given by the Prime Minister some time ago:

"In these few years the United Nations can be proud of its achievements. The intervention of the United Nations in Korea, we are justified in believing, has had a salutary effect on would-be aggressors. In other parts of the world during these seven years the United Nations has been effective in bringing armed hostilities to an end. The member states of the United Nations are engaged in great co-operative undertakings to promote social progress and raise the standard of living throughout the world. If these are but small beginnings in comparison with the magnitude of the task, they are nevertheless of importance and significance.

"To men of past generations, these achievements would not have seemed possible. The soldiers who have laid down their arms, the sick who have been treated, the hungry who have been fed and the struggling countries whose economies are being assisted through international co-operation are witnesses to the fact that the aims and purposes of the United Nations are worthy of all our efforts. What the United Nations has already achieved is evidence that international co-operation is not an unattainable dream but a goal, that, with God's help, will be reached some day."