

CANADA'S INTERNATIONAL MISSION

GEORGE ADAMKIEWICZ

ONE fact stands out with singular clearness against the background of the world situation, as it now appears. It is the courageous fight put up by the self-governing communities of the British Empire, both within the United Nations Organization and at the Paris Peace Conference, for the establishment of the supremacy of the Rule of Law in international relations.

Canada, in particular, has come to the fore as an active factor in international politics. This may be due largely to one of those evolutionary processes by which nations, as well as individuals, are called upon, in view of some special concurrence of circumstances, to assume historical missions of a scope by far transcending their immediate national or personal interests. It must, however, be emphasized that both outward conditions and the dominant trends of her internal evolution up to date combine to enhance Canada's position in the world.

The realization of the possibilities inherent in this position will bring with it not only a corresponding expansion of Canada's influence in the international sphere, as expressed in terms of effective power, but also a rapidly increasing burden of responsibilities incumbent on all exponents of her national policy.

* * * * *

Ever since the Fathers of Confederation, in 1867, laid the foundations of Canadian unity, the Dominion has been steadily advancing along the road leading, through perfect self-government, both economic and political, to an international status of great potential magnitude of her own. The broad outlines of Canada's national policy have been determined by natural factors of a specific character. Her nodal position between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, coupled with the abundance of her natural resources, have given her a pre-eminent standing as a producer of wealth and an element of strength, within the British Commonwealth of Nations. Her neighbourhood with, and dependence on, the U. S.A. for the supply of essential raw materials, such as coal and oil, a number of producer's goods such as agricultural machinery, and money capital, and, on the other hand, her highly favourable balance of trade with the United Kingdom resulting, in a large and steadily increasing net profit from trade with these two countries alone, combine

to heighten her economic interest in a policy of promoting Anglo-American friendship. Last, not least, there has always been, in enlightened political circles, English and French, a keen understanding for specifically Canadian interests, as distinct from those of the Mother Country, which has secured the necessary parliamentary support for every action of the Government directed towards the attainment of national aims.

Evolving gradually from the field of domestic politics, provincial and federal, as defined by the *British North America Act*, the rights of self-government came, in due course, to be asserted also in the external sphere. For it was here that Responsible Government, while fully aware of the community of interests uniting the Members of the British Commonwealth of Nations on vital issues of Empire policy, found itself confronted, in an increasing number of cases where these interests did not coincide, with the inevitable necessity of encroaching upon powers which the Mother Country had reserved to herself.

It was the First World War, together with the fundamental changes it brought about in the international status of medium and small nations, which gave a decisive impulse to a movement already well under way. The Second World War, from which Canada has emerged morally and materially strengthened, has completed this process. It has added a growing consciousness of national achievement and national unity to the other factors determining this development. Recent legislation in the matter of Canadian citizenship and the popular demand for a separate Canadian Flag are the outward expressions of these underlying tendencies.

Canada's military contribution to the Allied war effort, in particular as regards such decisive actions as the liberation of Antwerp and the campaign in Italy, has been forcefully emphasized, during his recent stay in Halifax, by Field-Marshal Montgomery. Her economic contribution, including industrial production which has been making rapid progress since the First World War, is illustrated by the following figures: The estimated value of her War Production, from 1939 to 1945, totalled \$11,501 millions, the net value of her normal production, both primary and secondary, averaged \$4,680 millions p.a. During these years the value of her total exports has risen from \$924.9 millions to \$3,218.3 millions, comprising increases in such important items as: Textiles, from \$14.4 to 56.9 millions; wood products and paper, from \$242.5 to \$488.0 millions; iron and steel from \$62.1 to \$555.1 millions; chemicals, from \$24.3

to \$111.3 millions. The value of food products, exported during this period, increased fourfold, from \$264 millions in 1939 to \$1.052 millions in 1945.

Moreover, the revolutionary changes in the production of armaments during the war have brought into evidence, with great clarity, Canada's exposed position as a vital link in the chain of Empire defences in general, and those of the Western Hemisphere in particular. As a country bordering on the Arctic, she must now reckon with the possibility of having to defend, in an emergency, her northern front against enemy attack.

The world situation with which Canada is now faced differs in many respects from that with which she was confronted in 1918, at the close of the First World War. At that time she enjoyed almost complete immunity from aggression within her own frontiers. Whilst profoundly concerned, as a Member of the British Commonwealth and the League of Nations, in the maintenance of international peace and security, she could pursue, in both these capacities, a policy aiming at ensuring for herself complete freedom of action in the event of a new conflict. She had given clearly to understand, already in 1914, that the Dominion Parliament must have a free hand in deciding whether or not Canada is to take part in an imperial war, and it was in recognition of this principle that Great Britain, at the time, made no formal demand for Canadian aid. Again, after having received separate representation in the Assembly of the League of Nations and being elected, in 1927, to a non-permanent seat on the Council, Canada insisted that this body must be a world organization, not dominated by European interests. She consistently opposed the implications of Article X of the Covenant which pledged all members to "preserve against external aggression the existing territorial integrity and political independence" of member states. It was agreed finally, in accordance with her wishes, that the Council, "taking into consideration the special conditions of each State", should decide, "to what degree it was bound to put its military forces at the disposal of the League."

Canada's present concern in the preservation and strengthening of world peace is of a more immediate and primary nature. She is interested in the outcome of a struggle for ascendancy between two diametrically opposed sets of world forces. This struggle can be decided either peacefully, within the framework of the United Nations Organization, or by force of arms.

of arms. In the former case, the stability of Canada's politico-economic system would be threatened, if the fundamental principles on which it was based were to suffer defeat; in the latter case, there is little doubt that Canada would be drawn, automatically, into an armed conflict of world-wide scope. The insertion, at Canada's proposal, of a safeguard, similar to the one already referred to, in Art. 44 of the U. N. Charter, to the effect that any member not represented on the Security Council must be consulted before its armed forces can be employed in an enforcement action contemplated by that body, would not, obviously, constitute any effective guarantee of her security, if this latter contingency were to arise.

Thus, on the face of it, Canada has reached a new stage in the evolution of her national policy at which she will have to expand her contacts with the outer world not only in the field of economic, social and cultural co-operation provided for in the U.N. Charter, but also in the sphere of individual relations with other governments and peoples, for the preservation of rights and liberties which are her national heritage. For, with the advent of a new age, Canada's position, as already indicated, has undergone a significant change: From a sheltered place in the rear of world events, she has moved into the front line of defence of Christian culture and Western civilization. Henceforward her influence for good or evil is bound to make itself felt more decisively than ever before.

* * * * *

Already now her growing influence in international affairs is resented in circles anxious to shape the post-war world according to their own revolutionary doctrines. This is evidenced by a recent attack on Canada's position as a member of the U. N. Atomic Energy Commission, and by other incidents which, though less striking, nevertheless have their significance. It is precisely the attitude that could have been expected, on the part of these circles, with regard to a Democracy that has achieved success under a capitalistic system of production and a parliamentary form of government, thus ensuring evolutionary progress without revolutionary changes.

The issue of lasting peace is in the balance and, therefore, it can no longer be said of any domain of international politics that it is of no immediate concern to Canada. Problems like those of Central and Eastern Europe, which formerly did not appear to have any direct bearing on her policies, have now

become major subjects of observation on her political weather chart. She has been invited to take part, at Paris, in the discussion of the terms of the peace treaties with Italy, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland. In the words of the Prime Minister, it is "her national interest to see that, as far as possible, the peace treaties are based on broad and enduring principles of justice and equity." Accordingly, Canada has firmly resisted attempts to impose such harsh terms on Italy as would reduce that country to a state of permanent impotence as a Mediterranean power. Furthermore, she has explicitly reserved her rights as a party directly concerned in the terms of the forthcoming peace settlement with Germany.

What makes these declarations and actions of official Canadian representatives particularly significant at the present time is the fact that they show how Canada is now definitely shaping an external policy of her own. This policy has been gradually evolving ever since, at the Paris Peace Conference of 1909, she took the lead in defining, before an international assembly, the autonomous and co-equal status of the self-governing communities of the British Empire, which later, in 1931, was legally sanctioned by the *Statute of Westminster*. Although the Canadian Department of External Affairs was established as early as 1909, it was not until 1926 that Canada's right to entertain diplomatic relations with foreign countries was formally recognized. The tasks and powers assigned to Canadian representation abroad have since been increasing in multiplicity and weight, as adumbrated by Mr. Mackenzie King in the following words: "In regard to foreign affairs, there are some things which we feel to be of our own immediate and direct concern, and of no concern to other parts of the Empire."

No less remarkable have been the successive changes in inter-imperial relations which, to a large extent initiated and devised in legal form by Canadian statesmen, have paved the way, for the Dominion, from Commercial to Diplomatic Autonomy and from a semi-colonial status, burdened by legislative disabilities and subservience to the Mother Country, as embodied in the *Colonial Laws Validity Act*, to a full measure of national sovereignty, subject only to the limitation still subsisting, in theory, in the matter of the amendment or abrogation of her Constitution.*

*For constitutional changes which may become necessary for the enforcement in Canada, of international laws enacted by the U.N., see *Canadian Constitution and U. N. Charter*, by H. A. Angus, in the "Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science," May, 1946.

Canada, at an early date, demanded to be consulted *in advance*, before committing herself to any definite policy originating from Empire treaties with foreign powers. She also asserted her right to a separate voice in extra-imperial policies, involving Canadian interests, especially in respect of questions bearing on national defence. Canadians were, more and more frequently, appointed on Imperial Commissions or to serve as plenipotentiaries for the Empire, thus bringing their weight to bear, directly, on the determination of Empire destinies. Canada, furthermore, effectively maintained the principle that the Dominions are entitled to the same representation accorded to smaller nations at peace conferences, and it was in accordance with a memorandum drawn up by the Dominion Prime Ministers, at the instance of Canada, that the *Treaty of Versailles* was signed on behalf of the self-governing communities of the British Empire, by their respective plenipotentiaries. Finally, Canada claimed full liberty of action as regards the initiation and conclusion of all international agreements made in the name of the common sovereign. Thus the Dominions came to be recognized as separate international entities, in no way restricted in the exercise of their external sovereignty, save for the fact that they are committed to certain overruling principles of Empire policy, in the framing of which they are themselves taking an increasingly active part. An object lesson has thus been given to other nations in the methods by which, in a Democracy, national self-determination can be achieved constitutionally and peacefully, and in a spirit of equity and mutual co-operation of which the world, today, stands badly in need.

Canada, it has been officially announced, is not interested in territorial aggrandizement or other material gains to be derived from a defeated enemy. This, and her long experience in the practice of parliamentary democracy, federal government and inter-government co-operation, together with her present exposed position in world affairs, combine to give her a unique standing of authority in all matters appertaining to the organization of peace and post-war reconstruction. She is, therefore, specially qualified to collaborate, as closely as possible, with all nations upholding democratic principles similar to her own. This implies continued action, on her part, with a view to strengthening the new system of collective security, which she has so effectively helped to build, in an all-out effort to preserve the peace of the world. That she is fully alive to her responsibilities in this respect, is indicated by all her actions in recent

times, including the generous aid she is giving to the stricken peoples of Europe.

Broad prospects of constructive work have opened up for Canadian statesmanship in all fields covered by the United Nations Organization: in the General Assembly whose powers, thanks to the efforts of the Canadian delegation, have been considerably amplified, so that it may well become a dominant moral force in world politics, expressive of the true will of the majority of its members; the Economic and Social Council whose powers have been extended beyond the strictly economic and social fields to include cultural and educational co-operation, public health and the defence of human rights and fundamental freedoms; the Specialized Intergovernment Agencies to be brought into relation with the United Nations, in accordance with proposals put forward by the Canadian delegation; the International Court of Justice; the Trusteeship Council whose members, in part, will be elected by the General Assembly; the Secretariat etc.

Great importance attaches, in present world conditions, to the activities of the International Labour Office, although its relationship to the United Nations Organization has not, hitherto, been fixed. In 1919 Canada was elected a member of this body as one of the eight principal industrial countries of the world. She was foremost in making the social legislation, carried out by the International Labour Organization, including hours and conditions of work and welfare regulations, operative within her own sphere of jurisdiction. It can safely be said that the ideals for which this organization stands are today shared by an increasing number of workmen throughout the civilized world.

Clearly, successful action in all these fields will require not only high qualities of leadership on the part of representatives of member nations, but also a steady growth of knowledge of international affairs, backed by a continuous flow of first hand information from the countries concerned. This applies, in particular, to situations which may develop into disputes constituting a threat to, or a breach of, the peace. The corollary of intensified activities in international institutions will be a corresponding expansion of the means of direct intercourse, through diplomatic, consular or other channels, with individual nations.

So far as Canada is concerned, these developments are foreshadowed by the momentous changes, already referred to, which have taken place in inter-imperial relations. They may

well result in situations in which Empire policies will not be decided in London, but in the rising capitals of the self-governing Dominions, or any one of them, as the case may be.

These changed conditions will call for an expansion of existing machinery for dealing with international questions. Facilities must be provided not only for the training of experts and professional personnel, but, above all, for educating public opinion, on a nation-wide scale, on all vital issues of national policy. Citizenship, in a Democracy, implies a share in the responsibility for the welfare, including good government, of the nation as a whole; these duties cannot be fulfilled, if the main body of citizens is deprived of the means of forming a sound judgment of international situations affecting, or likely to affect, their own national interests. As recent examples have shown, ignorance breeds disaffection and this, in turn, becomes an easy prey to subversion.

Already Canadian colleges and universities are organizing special courses of international studies. These should be supplemented by extended facilities for acquiring adequate knowledge of the history, geography, political, economic and social conditions of foreign countries, as well as of foreign languages.

Thus equipped, Canada will be able to accomplish her mission, as a factor of stability, in a world thrown out of balance by uncontrolled forces. To counter these forces, not appeasement, but the building up of solid defences, based on a higher level of moral, cultural and material values, would appear to be the most effective method.