

for the preservation of the world's peace. For "the balance of power", which, for more than three centuries has been the expedient of statesmen to guard against the ambition and aggression of great powers to increase at the expense of the weaker, it substitutes an agreement among all the nations to secure and maintain international peace. It means the substitution of co-operation for competition and conflict.

Canada's participation in the League means a complete reversal of our traditional attitude toward foreign policy and world affairs. In the past Canadian public opinion has demanded that our Governments concern themselves almost exclusively with our own domestic problems, that we should not mix in the maelstrom of European or world politics, that we should go our own way and live unto ourselves. The war has changed all this. It has shown that no one nation can live unto itself, that that which vitally affects one ultimately affects all; and whether we welcome or regret the prospect we must face the new condition and accept our share of responsibility for international co-operation and world peace.

The formal organization of the League of Nations at the meeting of the Council of the League in Paris on the 16th of January marks the dawn of a new era in international relations and should mark a great advance in human progress. One cannot but note the regret expressed by the statesmen of the world at the absence of the United States from this meeting, a regret which we in Canada, their neighbours, sincerely share. We earnestly hope that the United States will become a member of the League and that the whole weight of her influence will be thrown on the side of the great principles for which the League stands.

The ratification of the Treaty and the inauguration of the League, with Canada as one of the original members, also marks Canada's advent into the family of nations as a member of

the Britannic Commonwealth of free, self-governing states. The British constitution is so flexible in its character, is so easily modified to meet changing conditions, that even we who lie within the Empire are scarcely conscious of the momentous character of the changes which are being silently wrought in its constitution and in the relation of the different portions of the Empire to each other. The British Empire has ceased to be an Empire in the real sense of the term, composed of one central power with lesser powers dependent on her, and has become in a very true sense a commonwealth of free, self-governing nations of equal status, though not of equal power, all owing allegiance to a common Sovereign and bound together by historic ties and by a community of interest and sentiment which are the surest guarantee of its strength and permanence. It did not require any Act of the Imperial Parliament to bring about this change; it has been a gradual development. That such a change has been brought about is recognized by the statesmen of Great Britain and of all the Dominions. The position could not be stated more clearly than in the Report of the War Cabinet for the year 1918, presented to the Imperial Parliament by the British Government, from which I quote the following:

The common effort and sacrifice in the war have inevitably led to the recognition of an equality of status between the responsible Governments of the Empire. This equality has long been acknowledged in principle and found its adequate expression in 1917 in the creation, or rather the natural coming into being, of the Imperial War Cabinet as an instrument for evolving a common Imperial policy in the conduct of the war.

In a statement issued in September, 1919, by the British Government on "National needs and National policy", the Secretary of State for the Colonies defined the national status of the Dominions as follows:

The Peace Treaty recently made in Paris was signed on behalf of the British Empire, by Ministers of the self-