

It has been a good plan to celebrate this anniversary of the Charter as United Nations Day. In spite of the setbacks and disappointments of these last three years, in spite of the dark shadow that menaces us from totalitarian states, we in Canada have not lost that faith in mankind and that resolve to live in peace and justice which led us to sign the Charter three years ago.

The United Nations Association in Canada is the lineal descendant of the League of Nations Society in which I was for some years greatly interested. Speaking to you reminds me very vividly not only of the hard, sometimes very uphill, work which we did then, but also of the almost revolutionary change that has come about in Canadian thinking about international affairs and Canadian foreign and external policies.

It may be that some of you who are now striving to enlarge your membership, to stimulate study, thought and discussion to persuade others to launch the policies you want, will occasionally grow weary of the effort and despair of success. Time seems so short; the vast body of public and international machinery so immovable; the outlook for peace so sombre.

But in all sincerity I can say this to you. As a democracy, the weight and power of Canada's words and actions in the long struggle for a law-governed world are measured by the knowledge and convictions of our people. The arms, industry, and scientific skill we have to offer in the service of a free and organized world community draw their creative spark and their striking force from the intelligent and informed support of the Canadian people. And that support is made possible by the day to day efforts of groups like your Association.

You have an advantage over your predecessors in the League of Nations Society. Many of you here will remember the almost breathless hope with which we spoke and wrote and discussed the constitution, principles and activities of the League; and you will remember also the immense resistance of ignorance, indifference and even hostility against which our campaign was waged.

The peoples, and the governments which reflect their will, indulged in wishes and hopes for peace, but evaded the sacrifices and labour by which alone it can be realized. And it was exceedingly hard to persuade most people to face this uncomfortable fact.

Today you must still educate and argue and explain the issues and constitutional problems of the United Nations and its associated bodies: children must be taught about it; adults must study and discuss, if they are to vote and voice an effective public sentiment.

But the day of indifference and isolationist self-delusion has almost entirely gone from Canada: and while of course the vast tempest of war and its anxious aftermath have done most to bring that about, do not underestimate the part that has been played by devoted citizens like yourselves in changing public thought on international matters.

Citizen organizations spreading knowledge and keeping discussion alive are mainsprings of a healthy democracy. And if the United Nations is to succeed where the League failed it will be because our definition and practice of democracy is a better guide to action than any totalitarian philosophy.

Everyone who loves Canada and wants peace should wish you well and give you strong help in your important work.