

**2. From speech on the motion for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his speech at the opening of the session, in House of Commons, January 31, 1944**

A concrete issue in external policy has been raised in recent speeches delivered by Lord Halifax and Field Marshal Smuts. It relates to the domination of certain great powers. Both speeches expressed the view that the future peace of the world depended on the attainment of an equal partnership in strength and influence between the great powers among the United Nations. Both took the position that the resources and man-power of the British Isles were too small to enable the United Kingdom to compete with the United States and the Soviet Union in power and authority after the war. Both, therefore, argued that it was necessary that the United Kingdom should have the constant support of other countries, in order to preserve a proper balance. Field Marshal Smuts thought that this might be achieved by a close association between the United Kingdom and "the smaller democracies in western Europe"; he had little to say of the place of the British Commonwealth as such. Lord Halifax on the other hand declared:—

Not Great Britain only, but the British Commonwealth and Empire, must be the fourth power in that group upon which, under Providence, the peace of the world will henceforth depend.

With what is implied in the argument employed by both these eminent public men I am unable to agree.

It is indeed true beyond question that the peace of the world depends on preserving on the side of peace a large superiority of power, so that those who wish to disturb the peace can have no chance of success. But I must ask whether the best way of attaining this is to seek a balance of strength between three or four great powers. Should we not, indeed must we not, aim at attaining the necessary superiority of power by creating an effective international system inside which the co-operation of all peace-loving countries is freely sought and given?

It seems to me not to be a matter of matching man-power and resources, or, in other words, military and industrial potential, between three or four dominant states. What we must strive for is close co-operation among those great states themselves, and all other like-minded countries. Behind the conception expressed by Lord Halifax and Field Marshal Smuts there lurks the idea of inevitable rivalry between the great powers. Could Canada, situated as she is geographically between the United States and the Soviet Union, and at the same time a member of the British Commonwealth, for one moment give support to such an idea?

The Moscow declaration on general security forecast a system which would involve for its effectiveness firm commitments by all peace-loving states to do their share in preserving peace. Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union were all represented at the Moscow conference. What would seem now to be suggested is that the prime Canadian commitment should be to pursue in all matters of external relations—"in foreign policy, defence, economic affairs, colonial questions and communications," to cite the words of Lord Halifax—a common policy to be framed and executed by all the governments of the Commonwealth. I maintain that apart from all