

Canada emerged from the Second World War with military capacities and economic strength second only to that of the great powers. It had developed close working relations with the U.S.A. and British Governments, and from an early stage was consulted about the post-war institutions and arrangements which were under discussion by these powers. It was aware, therefore, both of a new-found status in world affairs and anxious to enter into commitments which would satisfy this status. Bismark is said to have once remarked about a European rival that it had developed an appetite for power without the teeth. About Canada it might have been said after the war that it had developed both the appetite and the teeth for a new international role. This was in sharp contrast with Canada's pre-war policies, which, by and large, had been directed to avoiding commitments and involvement in the affairs of the world even though it remained a member of the League of Nations.

At San Francisco, therefore, Canada directed its efforts towards strengthening the provisions of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals in respect of the rights and responsibilities of the so-called middle powers. Canada pressed strongly for the adoption of qualifying rules for election to the Security Council which would recognize the contributions member states might make to the maintenance of international peace and security. This idea was incorporated into Article 23 of the Charter. Canada was also responsible for the adoption of what became Article 44 of the Charter, providing for consultation between a member state and the Council before the latter called for the provision of that member's armed forces for enforcement action. The Prime Minister of Canada explained at the time that the imposition of sanctions would "raise especially difficult problems for secondary countries with wide international interests" because, while the great powers would be able to prevent by the veto any decision to impose sanctions, the so-called secondary countries would apparently not have any choice in the matter, despite the possibility they would be called upon to participate. Thirdly, Canada was responsible for the provision of the Charter now incorporated in Article 24(3) which requires the Security Council to report periodically to the General Assembly. The purpose was to give the Assembly some sense of supervision of the Council's acts, although it has not turned out that way. On all these issues, Canada pursued policies which were consistent with its wartime record and its post-war position as a leader of the secondary powers.

In subsequent years, Canada continued to look for and to follow policies which satisfied these general capacities and needs. We fully expected to play our proper part in the building of the collective security system sketched in Chapter VII of the Charter and we were alarmed and disappointed by the early signs of disunity in the Security Council and by the breakdown in 1947 of negotiations between the permanent members of the Council on the question of UN armed forces. We were obliged to turn elsewhere for the satisfaction of our security requirements. Yet, even as we ratified the NATO Treaty in 1949, we did not despair of the UN's capacity to fulfill its primary purpose. The present Canadian Prime Minister, Mr. Lester Pearson, said in Parliament at the time, for example, that "the North Atlantic Treaty will serve as an instrument which...will make it possible for (the free democracies) to use the UN with greater confidence and more hope of success".