

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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CANADA AND WORLD AFFAIRS

A broadcast delivered by Mr. L.S.
St. Laurent, at Ottawa, on the occasion of
Remembrance Day, November 11, 1948.

Today is Remembrance Day. Remembrance Day belongs to the whole nation - indeed, to the whole free world. This is not a day on which I would want to make a speech in support of a political party.

This Eleventh Day of November is consecrated to the memory of the men and women who in two Great Wars gave their lives to assure peace to men of goodwill. We have today paid tribute to their sacrifice and given expression to our deep and abiding sympathy for their families. The peace for which they died has not yet been assured. That is not to say their sacrifice has been in vain. Those who died for us have given the world a greater vision of international solidarity and of mutual aid.

You all remember that even before the end of the last war, the United Nations met together at San Francisco to establish an organization which we all hoped would be capable of keeping the peace between nations. All the nations, large and small, which took part in that historic Conference apparently wished to perpetuate the spirit of brotherhood which had united them during the war. At that time all the nations seemed, on the surface at least, to be prepared to co-operate sincerely and actively to maintain international security and to promote the progress of civilization.

That was the spirit in which Canada signed the Charter at San Francisco. We are proud to be able to say today that our country has always respected both the letter and the spirit of this great international instrument. The external policy of Canada is based on the principles of the San Francisco Charter. We are resolved to do anything we can to defend the ideals and the purposes expressed in the Charter.

The United Nations has achieved a good deal, mainly in the economic and social fields. But we have to admit that it has not succeeded in banishing the threat of a third world war. In spite of the patience and tolerance of those nations which are genuinely democratic, one of the great powers has through ill-will and constant obstruction prevented the establishment of international security and international co-operation. War, however, is not inevitable. But anyone who considers war an impossibility must be lacking in the most elementary realism.

I am one of those who still dares to hope that Providence will spare our generation and many generations to follow, the scourge of another world war. But we should never forget the wisdom of the old saying: Heaven helps those who help themselves.

In the face of this growing insecurity those nations which really wish to keep peace and to safeguard their freedom are obliged to combine their strength to face the menace of totalitarian and imperialistic Communism. That does not mean that those nations have lost hope in the ultimate triumph of the universal principles of the United Nations Charter.