

## Steps to the Charter

The Allied Powers in the Second World War began to plan for the United Nations several years before hostilities ended. The Atlantic Charter, issued by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill on August 14, 1941, spoke of the need for the establishment of a wider, and permanent, system of general security, the abandonment of the use of force, and the desirability of bringing about far-reaching collaboration among all nations in the economic field. Prime Minister Mackenzie King indicated Canada's support of these objectives when he told the House of Commons on November 3, 1941:

"What all have still to learn is that today no nation is sufficient unto itself, no continent and no hemisphere great enough, in its own strength, to maintain its own freedom. A recognition of interdependence and combined action based thereon is necessary to the democracies of the world, if they are to maintain their freedom . . . . We can no longer afford to think of our own freedom and the freedom of others as two things which may be considered apart from one another. We are all members one of another. The freedom of all is bound up in the lives of all."

The aims of the Atlantic Charter were formally endorsed by 26 nations, including Canada, in the Declaration by the United Nations of January 1, 1942.

At Moscow, in October 1943, Britain, the Soviet Union, the United States and China recognized "the necessity of establishing at the earliest practicable date a general international organization, based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all peace-loving states, and open to membership by all such states, large or small, for the maintenance of international peace and security". Even at this stage there were indications that the principle of equality would not be followed in practice, and Canada recoiled at the prospect of a concert of great powers being solely responsible for order in the postwar world. Canada