

end of the War, the Canadian economy has enormously expanded, and this expansion is still continuing -- towards what limits we hardly venture to predict.

It might now be noted that there has been an equally great transformation in Canadian foreign policy, though, of course, this cannot be so readily measured, nor so quantitatively demonstrated, except perhaps in the vast increase in our representation abroad and our financial commitments to the United Nations and its affiliated agencies and to NATO.

What I have in mind is this: at the Peace of Versailles, Canada insisted, somewhat strongly, upon signing the Treaty in her own name and became a Charter Member of the League of Nations. This was our entry on the world stage. A little later we signed a Treaty with the United States, in 1923 to be precise, on Halibut Fisheries -- the first Treaty to be signed by Canada as a sovereign power in her own right. Looking at it from the perspective of 1955, I think it is true that our original membership in the League of Nations did not so much show a recognition in Canada that we were prepared to take on grave international responsibilities, but was rather more a symptom of our own self-consciousness and of our desire to make a gesture of our independence, which had not hitherto been formally proclaimed or recognized.

In general, I think it is true and perhaps safe to say now, thirty years later, that during the twenties and middle thirties, we in Canada -- and we were in good company -- were somewhat timorous of committing ourselves to any responsibilities which would engage us beyond our own country. There were many reasonable explanations, compelling ones, in fact, for our attitude. Be that as it may, it nevertheless remains that, although a Charter Member of the League of Nations, we made it clear, particularly on one memorable occasion, that Canada could not assume obligations to participate in such military or economic sanctions as the League of Nations might decide to impose.

Our population in Canada is, in many respects, similar to that of the United States. It is a mosaic, composed essentially of people or their descendants who fled from difficult or even intolerable conditions in the old world. Most of us, I think, in Canada, during the twenties and thirties, wanted nothing more than to be left alone, and we were inclined to agree with the late Prime Minister of Canada that it was intolerable that Canada should be engaged, once each generation, in the quarrels of Europe which, we thought, were none of our business. They were, as was shown again in the Second World War.

We have come a long way since, and hence I venture to suggest that the transformation in our foreign policies has been just as striking as anything which has occurred in our economy. The two, of course, are closely related and we have come to realize that our country, as an important middle power, must accept the international responsibilities which stem from our power and our interests in world affairs. International commerce is a good example.

We have, indeed, come so far that the commitments which we have voluntarily accepted -- in the past decade particularly -- would be unthinkable to Canadians, let us say, of thirty years ago. We have, with many other countries