

Therefore, I place my faith in the future not so much in the declarations or pledges of nations as in the necessity of preventing wars which have proved disastrous even for the victors.

At any rate, the fact remains that to-day in spite of the solemn declaration of principles which included in the charter, Russia, for one, holds in the Security Council a power which might frustrate the aims we wish to achieve. Is that sufficient ground to justify Canada's refusal to join this new League of Nations? Such is the practical question that arises at this time.

In view of the confusion into which the world has been thrown by war, is it not advisable that we should attempt to establish an organization for the prevention of further wars, in the belief that the experience of this one will have taught some nations that war does not benefit even those who win them; and that another war waged with the new weapons recently discovered would be fatal. I think so. And in spite of the defects of the United Nations charter, and on account of what is good in it, I think it is preferable to accept it as a lesser evil in the hope that we may improve it, or withdraw from it if we do not succeed.

The San Francisco conference has already made some changes in the Dumbarton Oaks proposals, thanks to the attendance of a number of small and middle states. This should encourage us to continue the fight for other amendments, especially the elimination of the veto power.

In order to avoid all misunderstanding, we must also define the word aggression; we ought to make the institution more democratic and include as soon as possible the neutral countries that have been ignored.

I wish to outline briefly the reasons which prompted my attitude.

I opposed Canada's participation to the present war. I then objected to our exaggerated war effort. I stood against conscription for overseas service, and I am now more than ever opposed to war. That is why I view with sympathetic consideration any proposal seeking to prevent war.

The United Nations charter contains many censurable clauses which I have pointed out and which will need improvement, but, on the other hand, it includes many important provisions, such as the formation of a social and economic council to promote international cooperation, and the setting up of an international court of justice which will greatly help to eradicate the causes or threats of

war. Add to this the statement of principles which form the basis of the organization and which I heartily endorse.

Economic and social cooperation on an international scale will do more to prevent war than any other institution.

May I be allowed to recall the words I used in this house on March 27 last:

Border disputes are of little moment in comparison with the disorder in production and trade which reduces certain countries to famine.

The publications of the universal assembly for peace, a body established by the league of nations with a view to deal with international situations which are apt to provoke war, contain a detailed analysis of the three principal economic causes of war: the problem of raw materials, that of labour and that of trade outlets.

In one of these works it is stated that:

"No more than individuals, can the proletarian countries resign themselves forever to remain such in neighbourhood of richly endowed and satisfied nations. Until such time as the world takes the necessary steps with a view to systematically and logically solving these problems in a spirit of international fellowship, there shall exist this struggle for economic life, too often the prelude of military war."

Walter Lippmann, the famous American publicist, openly sympathetic to the so-called democratic nations, has written:

"The great crime of post-war politics in Europe, was that the victorious powers took advantage of their supremacy to monopolize the resources of the world."

This economic and social council is a body of the highest importance.

What would happen if we refused to become a member of this new league of nations?

It would carry on without us, but it is in our interest to belong to it because decisions detrimental to us would surely be taken without our having had the opportunity of expressing our views.

It would be another matter were we not free to withdraw whenever we decide to do so. This we can do at any time, as stated in the charter.

Section 43 provides for the use of armed forces to maintain peace. It stipulates that if a member nation is called to contribute armed forces, it will be in accordance with an agreement between the said member and the security council and it will be subject to ratification by the signatory states in accordance with their respective constitutional processes.

By this I understand, and I request the hon. Minister of Justice (Mr. St. Laurent) to correct me if I am wrong in my interpretation of this section, that any agreement which Canada may sign for the purpose of sending armed forces would have to be ratified by parliament.