

Internationally, through agreements with the Commonwealth, the United States and other countries, steps were taken to open the way for an increasing volume of external trade. Canadians took an active part, too, in the conferences of this period by which nations sought co-operative means to shake off world depression. On the international political scene the pace was slower; Canadians were feeling their way. Our country had but recently acquired the full trappings of sovereignty. There was no great desire among us that Canada should play a significant part in the affairs of the outside world. True, we watched with anxiety the ominous march of events in Europe and the Far East. But few of us thought our young country had much to contribute to the debate that accompanied the gathering storm. During the anxious thirties most Canadians - like most Americans - had little stomach for more than their own troubles.

In September 1939 Canada - like the other peaceful nations - was sadly unprepared for the fury of the Nazi onslaught. But, as in 1914, the second great challenge provoked a response which opened a new chapter in the history of this country. From Canadian farms, forests, mines and factories poured the mounting volume of resources so critical to the Allied effort. Our naval and merchant forces, our soldiers and airmen brought new distinction to the name of Canada in almost every arena of the global conflict. As the war went on, Canadian representatives participated increasingly in the decisions that marked the road to victory for the Alliance.

When the fighting was over, Canada had taken a new place among the nations of the world. In the post-war period, she confronted new and larger responsibilities.

From its very beginnings, Canada has given full support to the United Nations in its many and varied activities in co-operation between nations and in the great effort to work out a more permanent and stable basis for world peace. From an early stage more conscious than most countries of the importance of external trade, Canada has taken a leading part in efforts to remove the barriers to multilateral commerce and has made a real contribution to the developing stability of the free world economy.

Looking back over these past twenty-five years, we have much to be thankful for, and a record of national accomplishment in which we may take some pride. A gross national product which last year reached the record level of over \$26 billion is in striking contrast to the bare \$4 billion of 1931. Today employment is high and the prospects are for further steady increase. Personal income in 1955 rose by almost