



# Bulletin

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## CANADA'S ROLE AS A MIDDLE POWER

The following passages are from an address by Mr. Mitchell Sharp, Secretary of State for External Affairs at Carleton University in Ottawa on February 20:

...We are now reviewing our membership in and commitments to NATO in the light of the situation that has evolved since the alliance was formed in 1949. I have yet to hear any convincing argument that, if Canada wants to play a part in ensuring her own security, in the resolution of the security problems of Europe that directly affect our own fate, and in mitigating the confrontation between the super-powers, we could do so as effectively as within some such collective effort as NATO. We could opt out, of course. That is an alternative. We could decide not to participate with our NATO partners in the search for collective security and a settlement in Europe. But the problems of a divided Europe will not disappear if we opt out. In or out of NATO, Canada cannot isolate herself from the consequences of failure to establish a stable order in Europe.

### PEACEKEEPING PROBLEMS

There are problems of peace-keeping outside Europe and, here too, Canada has attempted to make sure that our contribution is most effective by combining it with the contributions of other nations. Canada has been among the foremost supporters of peacekeeping operations under the auspices of the United Nations. We have participated in every peacekeeping operation undertaken by the UN since 1948. Unfortunately, because of the stubborn opposition of some important members of the United Nations, the prospects for permanent peacekeeping arrangements or further United Nations *ad hoc* peacekeeping forces are not

## CONTENTS

Canada's Role as a Middle Power .....	1
Recipe for Maple Magic .....	3
Canada-France Joint Commission .....	3
Trade Office in Thailand .....	3
Aid for St. Vincent Bereaved .....	4
Scientific Titles by Computer .....	4
Success at U.S. Boat Show .....	4
Mint to be Crown Corporation .....	5
Suzor-Côté Stamp .....	5
Aviation Editors Visit .....	6
Births, Marriages, Deaths .....	6

good. I see no reason, however, not to go on patiently trying to find a way round the roadblocks that have been thrown up in the United Nations. There are a good many other middle powers in the United Nations that share our views and that are willing to join with us in maintaining pressure for the development of the peacekeeping concept.

### COMMONWEALTH TIES

There are numerous other instances of Canada fitting itself into groupings of nations organized to achieve some common purpose. One of the most interesting, and perhaps the most peculiar, of such institutions is the Commonwealth. It is, as you know, a very loose association of independent nations, with a modest secretariat. All are graduates of the British Empire school of nationhood.

The Commonwealth has achieved notable success over the past 20 years in easing the transition from colonial dependence to national independence for many members of the world community. It has still a significant role to play in bridging the gulf between the rich and the poor nations and in easing the racial tensions which, unfortunately, very often coincide with disparities of wealth and poverty. For Canada, the Commonwealth has continuing value as an instrument through which we may exert some influence upon the course of events in a large and important part of the world.