

The international situation was to have been discussed in the House earlier this week, but domestic problems intervened to cause a slight delay. Members on all sides of the House are expected to take part in the debate and we shall witness one of those important occasions when Parliament genuinely attempts to take stock in the widest possible terms of some basic aspect of our national life. Each year we have a larger number engaged in a serious attempt to assess our external position. I am satisfied that this is due in large part to the increasing public demand for periodic consideration of our position - a demand which is increasing due, in no small part, to the pressure of education carried on by service clubs and other informed public bodies. No one can take great comfort from the facts as they will be brought out in the debate. During the long years of war, we thought that one of the few advantages of waging war twice in a generation would be that we should know better the second time how to re-organize the world when the fighting stopped. We might have known better if we had read our history books more carefully. Great wars create more problems than they solve, and the last one was no exception to this rule.

There are still some Canadians who think that the best answer to the complexities of our foreign relations is simply to ignore them. For some reason there is a tendency for their number to increase as the dangers of the situation become more apparent. These are the people who say "the world is in such a terrible state we can do nothing about it." "The best course is to mend our own fences and leave the rest of the world alone." Then there are those who say "we are a small country. Even with the best of intentions, we are incapable of influencing events. We had better let the others do the work." Happily they are fewer than they used to be. I am not surprised for in the past few decades, a good deal of tail plumage has been lost by people who insisted on protecting their heads in this manner. It must be clear now to any really thoughtful person that events which may take place today on the plains of Outer Mongolia or the foothills of the Hindu Kush mountains may well affect the lives of individual Canadians tomorrow. Take for example the question of Palestine. I took part in the discussion of the Palestine question during the General Assembly in October and November last. At that time no aspect of my political responsibilities seemed more remote to the interests of my constituents than the future of this small land at the east end of the Mediterranean. I felt very much that way about it myself. Many of the place-names, like Dan and Beersheba, were very familiar but only on account of events that had happened there two thousand year ago. Yet here I was sitting on a committee which was trying to decide what should be done about these places now in the twentieth century. What conceivable difference did it make to the farmers and the townspeople of the constituency of Grey-Bruce? On second thought it obviously made a great deal of difference, it was a serious business, affecting every one of the 57 United Nations, so serious that many tried to avoid a decision. There may be difference of opinion as to whether we were able to make very much of a contribution to the solution of this problem. There can be no doubt that the catastrophe which may take place in Palestine within the next few weeks and which if it happens will endanger the stability of the whole Near East, will very soon affect the welfare of this country. Therefore, let us continue to study the problems of that unhappy country to see if we can find a solution which will bring peace where there is now conflict and at the same time remove the possibility of a much greater tragedy.

Now, with regard to the United States. Let us make no mistake. The problem of a small country spread out like the frosting