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CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Speech by the Honourable Paul Martin, Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the Joint Service Clubs, Medicine Hat, Alberta, February 5, 1968.

A recent book surprised a good many Canadians by pointing out that Canada has been the source of a galaxy of great technological innovations in the past 100 years - from the diesel locomotive and the telephone through automation to the zipper and the foghorn.

I sometimes think that Canadians are equally surprised at our accomplishments in the field of foreign relations. For example, how many of us are aware that Canada has become the sixth-largest trader in the world; that we are sometimes called the founder of the "new" Commonwealth; that we were instrumental in the creation of NATO, the Colombo Plan and the United Nations, that we are the sixth-largest provider of foreign aid in the world and the only major donor whose aid has been rapidly increasing; or that we have participated in all the peacekeeping operations of the UN and were the key country in the establishment of the UN Forces in the Middle East and Cyprus?

These are significant achievements. They, and the policy which has made them possible, should be better known. Today I should like to report on what Canada has been doing in recent years on the international stage and suggest some of the opportunities for the future.

The role we have been playing can be dealt with under headings: maintenance of world peace, international economic development and the furtherance of specific Canadian national interests.

No country in the community of nations has put a higher priority on the attainment and maintenance of world peace than has Canada. Our dedication to these objectives has been apparent in everything which we have been doing abroad. For example, the war in Vietnam. Canada has had no direct responsibility in the Southeast Asian region and no military alliance with the nations of the area. As members of the International Control Commission, however, we have not been able to stand by while the war in Vietnam raged on, causing tragedy to the participants and threatening even wider and more dangerous conflict. We have felt that the war must be brought to an end and that we must do everything in our power to help in suggesting ways by which

de-escalation, a cease-fire and final settlement might be achieved. To these ends, we have been repeatedly in contact with both sides; we have discussed the role that the ICC might play; in April of last year, I put forward a four-stage plan for a return to the Geneva cease-fire arrangements, and in September, at the United Nations General Assembly, Canada joined with a number of other countries in calling for an end to the bombing of North Vietnam as a first step in the process of de-escalation. So far, neither we nor any other country has succeeded in finding a formula which was acceptable to the parties, but the search continues, and we shall not slacken our efforts.

But Vietnam is not the only area in which Canada is persistent in the cause of peace. In the UN, Canada's name is associated with the concept of peace-keeping. We gave impetus to the idea of UN peacekeeping forces and observer missions and we have participated in the operations which have been mounted. Peace-keeping is not a substitute for peace-making. But we believe that, in certain circumstances, peacekeeping activity has been indispensable in giving the parties to a dispute an opportunity to find a permanent solution. That is why the Canadian Government was so concerned in 1964 to urge the creation of UNFICYP in Cyprus. Without this force, large-scale hostilities might have resumed between the island's communities. That danger still exists. It is the Canadian view that the peacekeeping potential of the United Nations should be strengthened so that in the expectation of future crises the international community will be able to assist in defusing a conflict wherever it might arise.

There is a further way in which we are contributing to the drive for world peace. This is through collective-security arrangements. We are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. This alliance has acted through the years to reduce the likelihood of aggression or miscalculation in Europe, has created a climate of relative stability in Central Europe and, increasingly, is providing a means by which the avenues to a peaceful and permanent settlement of East-West differences might be found. Canada has made its full contribution to the Atlantic alliance -- not only in military but also in political terms. We were the first country to suggest, for example, three years ago, that the alliance should re-examine its goals and future role. A fundamental review of strategy and political policy has now taken place which shows that the alliance is taking account of changing circumstances and adapting itself to meet the requirements of the 70s. While seeking with its allies a mutual and agreed reduction of forces between the Warsaw Pact and NATO, Canada will continue to make an appropriate contribution to the Atlantic alliance.

Membership in the Commonwealth is also a method of contributing to peace and international understanding. Originally an outgrowth of the Empire, the Commonwealth today is a very different association. It acts as a bridge -- albeit, as the Prime Minister has said, at times a somewhat unsteady bridge -- between the races of the world. It provides a forum in which potential conflict and antagonisms can be mitigated. Mutual confidence has been built up in relations that otherwise would have been tense and fraught with danger for international peace. In such issues as Rhodesia, Canada has worked within the Commonwealth framework to find common ground among countries whose basic aims may be similar but who differ in approach. Canada will continue to do what it can through the Commonwealth to strengthen the bridge between the races and between peoples in different regions with very different ways of life.

Finally, we have been working to ensure lasting international peace through arms control and disarmament measures. A member of every major disarmament forum since the Second World War, Canada helped to achieve such advances as the ban on atmospheric nuclear tests in 1963 and the treaty on the peaceful uses of outer space which was signed last year. We have been engaged in the arduous negotiations in Geneva and New York over a period of more than two and a half years to work out a universal treaty to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. Our efforts -- and those of many other countries -- are, we hope, close to bearing fruit as the Geneva Disarmament Committee is aiming at the presentation of an agreed draft treaty to the United Nations for consideration in a short time. It is a long, difficult process, in which the notable gains are often obscured by inevitable setbacks, but necessary considering the threat to world security posed by an escalation of the nuclear-arms race and the prospect of nuclear arms spreading to a score of countries around the globe. Our ultimate aim is general and complete disarmament; we must press on patiently but resolutely with our international efforts to reach that objective..

The second major area of Canadian foreign policy lies in the field of economics. The potential for economic growth and development through the world is unlimited. This applies both to the developed and to the less-developed nations. Canadian foreign economic policy has been directed to translating the potential for growth into reality. Canada is an internationalist country. We believe that only through co-operation among nations, through multilateral and bilateral negotiation and agreement, can we maintain real economic progress. Only through a dramatic but sustained effort can we narrow the gap between rich and poor nations.

There is evidence that poverty and instability are causally connected. We cannot remind ourselves too often that the outlook for a stable world order is dim indeed if the majority of the globe's population are frustrated in their legitimate hope for a better life. As I emphasized at the last General Assembly, hunger, disease, poverty and ignorance threaten the peace just as surely as disputes over frontiers or antagonism between races. Poor countries must be given the assistance required to supplement their own efforts to "take off" economically. International development assistance cannot do the job alone, but it seems to be an essential ingredient.

Canada has responded to the needs of the third world. We began slowly back in 1950. But in the past four years we have made great strides forward. We have tripled our aid allocations. We have extended our assistance to more than 60 countries in three continents. We are making good progress towards reaching our objective -- the international aid goal of one per cent of national income.

Just as important as the size or extent of the programmes has been the involvement of the Canadian people. This support has manifested itself in personal participation by thousands of Canadians, sometimes in official programmes, often in non-governmental programmes such as the Canadian University Service Overseas and, most recently, in the Canadian Executive Services Overseas. Canadians see that we have a vital part to play in international development, that we must combat the trends which have resulted in a levelling-off or reduction of development funds in other Western countries. Indeed, we must encourage an even greater effort everywhere.

The problems of under-development have resulted in the creation of the multilateral institutions necessary for a concerted international search for their solution. Although it was set up only four years ago, the UN Conference on Trade and Development has become a major forum for the discussion of the complex questions involved in stimulating the economic growth of the underdeveloped world. The second UN Conference opens its two-month session in New Delhi this week. It will provide the occasion to draw the balance-sheet on the current state of international development efforts, chart the course which future action should take and lay the basis for new co-operative endeavours to assist developing countries. With its great interest in both aid and the further liberalization and expansion of world trade, Canada will make every effort to contribute to the success of this important conference.

Because of our position as a major world-trader, we have long been active in promoting the creation and enlargement of markets within a healthy world economy. An example of our efforts was our participation in the long and arduous negotiations within the framework of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade completed in 1967 - the so-called Kennedy Round. We welcome the results of the negotiations, which represent a significant step forward in reducing trade barriers. As a grain exporter, we also welcome the price and food-aid provisions of the new International Grains Agreement which is to go into effect on July 1, 1968. In 1967, Canada continued to participate in discussions among ten leading industrial countries to ensure that the future expansion of the world economy would not be hampered by a shortage of international liquidity - that there would be sufficient gold and currency to finance trade and other international transactions. We played a prominent part in the search for a formula by which new liquidity would be both flexible in use and attractive as an asset. We must now build upon the gains of the past year, resist any tendency in present world conditions to reverse the progress we have been making and work for measures which will sustain the movement toward freer multilateral world trade.

World peace and international economic development are the great themes of Canadian foreign policy. How are they related to Canada's national interest? In my view, in two ways.

First of all, it is obvious that Canada would find it more difficult to build at home if the world were in turmoil. A secure peace is essential to our national well-being and security. It is also apparent, because of our dependence on world trade, that increased economic prosperity abroad is a prerequisite for long-term Canadian economic development.

National and international interests in the Canadian experience have not been in conflict. By working to establish a stronger, more influential and better-known Canada in the world, we can contribute to the well-being of other countries. It must be our objective to ensure that the interaction of national and international interest continues in the future.

I cannot, in these remarks describe all of Canada's specific policies in promoting our national interest. I should, however, like to suggest three areas of particular importance: our relations with the United States, our international influence compared to that of other countries and national unity as a factor in our international relations.

Our relations with the United States are vital. It is a truism to say that the super-power to the south affects us in innumerable important ways. Both officially and privately, Canadians welcome their close ties with the United States and cherish the mutually beneficial relation which has grown up. But there can be no question of Canada's conceding its freedom of action. As part of the Western world, we work together with the United States internationally in many areas. But, if we differ with the United States on international issues, as, for example, on Cuba and trade with Communist China, we adopt our own position and follow our own course of action. Similarly, we welcome American investment and count on the contribution it continues to bring to our industry and resource development; yet we insist that foreign companies in Canada act as good corporate citizens within the laws of this country.

All countries, large and small, must accept restraints on their freedom of action - the twentieth century has made us increasingly interdependent - but, within this general framework, Canada pursues an independent foreign policy. At the base of our policy decisions is our concern to promote Canada's long-term interests.

Canada's influence in the world has grown significantly. Before the Second World War, we had little power, little influence and little interest in the world. In a generation, there has been almost an explosion in our involvement and influence. Based upon our wartime contributions, economic growth, political and military alliances, international experience and involvement in world-wide issues, we have significantly enlarged the area in which our views and actions have had an impact upon the course of events in the world. We have a knowledgeable and positive voice, which is listened to with respect everywhere. The power relations of countries have been changing; the relative influence of countries will not be the same in the next ten to 20 years as it was in the past. In the not-too-distant future Canada will be, by rough reckoning, as influential a country as any in the world with the exception of the super-powers.

The future for Canadian foreign policy depends on national unity at home. If we cannot come to grips with our domestic problems, if we cannot re-create our country in a way which will give equality to both our broad linguistic communities, we shall not have the strength and self-confidence to fulfil our destiny abroad. I think that Canadians are coming to appreciate the magnitude of our problem. They are also prepared to do something about it. I am confident that, with goodwill and a desire to see a new Canada, we shall emerge from our present crisis stronger and more united than ever. Not only more united but better able to realize our full potential in world affairs. Our bicultural-bilingual character will enable Canada to extend its close contacts and co-operation with countries sharing a common French language and culture.

Whatever our different views on how to deal with the problem of unity, there is one point on which Canadians should agree: we should solve our difficulties ourselves. We should not condone the unwelcome intrusion of any outsider, however prestigious, in our affairs. Only if we attack our problems ourselves can we hope to resolve them and be worthy of our future.

Our international goals of peace and development will remain unchanged. The forums and the methods we have used to reach these goals in the past, however, may have to be altered or even discarded. They have served their purpose well,

but they are not sacrosanct. Canadian foreign policy has been created in a world of change. As a result, it is a flexible instrument. It can be remoulded to fit the evolving patterns of the future.

We have the opportunities; we must seize them and act with imagination and wisdom in the cause of international accord and economic prosperity among nations. In the final analysis, only in this way shall we serve our own national self-interest.

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