



## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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I have undertaken to talk to you on a topic that is a constant subject of public discussion both in print and from the platform. There is very little that I can say which is original, and it would not be proper for a civil servant to attempt either to define the policy of the Canadian Government on this or any other aspect of its foreign policy or to comment upon that policy. I have only one pretext for choosing the United Nations as a subject. From day to day, in an administrative role, I am working on the question of our relation with the United Nations, and I know something of the way Canadian policy in this respect is put into effect, and of the way the machinery works. It is, however, an unhappy official who cannot say that his heart is in his work as well as his mind, and whose imagination is not stirred by the events in which he participates. For my part, I count it my good fortune to be engaged, even at the official level, upon this project in the national life of this country. I am fully convinced that, no matter how discouraging are the circumstances, nor how pessimistic the outlook, there is yet no aspect of our foreign policy which is more worth the time and effort that we put on it, for the hopes of countless people, both here and abroad, are bound up with its fortunes; nor could I fail to feel the challenge of this project even at moments when I am having to admit the enormous possibility that it will not succeed.

Throughout history there have been repeated efforts, by one means or another, to widen the areas within which common rules and practices of government prevailed. Sometimes this has been done by consent, or a measure of consent, and systems have evolved or agreements entered into by which people conducted their affairs under the rule of law and settled their differences without resort to force. Against the dark passages of war and violence are set the pages of great achievement by which large areas and sometimes whole continents have been brought within areas of enlightened and progressive administrative systems. It is a truism now that we have within our hands the technical means, either to destroy our civilization or to cast about the world a network of arrangements and agreements upon which we may build a rule of law for a very large section of humanity. I think there is a reasonable chance that we are at the beginning of such a movement. I sat recently at an international conference in which the representatives of many nations were trying vainly to reach some measure of agreement about a disputed border. They were confronting the

difficult task of reconciling national interests with international obligations, and their dilemma had so obstructed and confused them that the meeting had fallen into a mood of angry frustration. Even there in the presence of cynicism and defeat it was possible to discern the larger issue for here were men who, despite the circumstances which forced them to think and act narrowly in terms of national interests, were nevertheless struggling in the physical agony borne of long days and sleepless nights to maintain their conception of an international community.

For a Canadian official the line of march is plainly marked. In numerous public statements members of the Canadian Government have reiterated the theme that membership in the United Nations is a basic principle in Canadian foreign policy and that the effort to establish world Governments of international co-operation is one which has its full support. The Resolution of Parliament in which approval was given to the acceptance by Canada of an invitation to participate in the establishment of the United Nations contains these words, "the establishment of an effective international organization for the maintenance of international peace and security is of vital importance to Canada, and, indeed, to the future well-being of mankind; and (that) it is in the interests of Canada that Canada should become a member of such an organization". In a statement in the House of Commons on December 17th, 1945, the Prime Minister made the following reference to this aspect of Canada's foreign policy, in relation to the problem of atomic energy:

"As political problems affecting the relations of governments, the solution of the problems presented by atomic energy must be sought in the realm of world politics. The more deeply one ponders the problems with which our world is confronted in the light - 'the terrible light', as Mr. Attlee said - of the implications of the development of atomic energy, the harder it is to see a solution in anything short of some surrender of national sovereignty. With a limited surrender of national sovereignty, there must be instituted some form of world government restricted, at least at the outset, to matters pertaining to the prevention of war, and the maintenance of international security.

"The United Nations Organization is not a sufficient answer to the problems of peace and security which the world is now seeking. It is a first step, and an all-important step, in the direction of that co-operation between nations which is essential to the survival of civilization. It is not, however, the only, much less the final step. The United Nations Organization is an indispensable medium and channel and forum through which the peoples of the world can work out new institutions and arrangements which their peace and security now require".

Again, in a statement made in this diversity a little over a year ago the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. St. Laurent, made the following remark: "If there is one conclusion that our common experience has led us to accept, it is that security for this country lies in the development of a firm structure of international organization."

I shall give one further quotation only. In the statement last September in Ottawa, Mr. St. Laurent, in announcing the fact that Canada would be prepared to accept a position on the Security Council, used the following words: "In spite of its shortcomings, we in this country continue to believe that the best hope for mankind lies in the establishment of a world organization for the maintenance of peace. We, ourselves, in this country have built a nation which is as wide as the continent and which is based on the consent of many diversified groups. There is no reason to believe that our experience here and the experience of other peoples who have built political organizations over wide areas cannot be repeated amongst the nations. We believe that, particularly for a people such as our own which wishes to maintain its freedom and to leave other people in the enjoyment of theirs, the greatest hope for our survival lies in the development of machinery for international co-operation."

These quotations make clear the extent to which we have been committed to this venture in world government. The United Nations as it now stands is little more than a tentative first step in that direction, but we have taken it along with 56 other countries, and unless the policy of the government changes, we have stated our willingness to travel the road so long as the path is discernible and we are reasonably sure that we are not stepping on any land mines.

It is still too early to take stock of the United Nations in any definitive way. If, three years after Confederation, someone had been asked whether or not the Dominion of Canada would survive, I think we could have done little more in response than point out the evident dangers and at the same time try to discern the elements of vitality and say if there was anything there to live or if survival were possible. Perhaps we may do the same thing now with the United Nations. Is there any heart there to beat? Are there any lungs to breathe - apart, that is, from the countless ones which provide the wind-power for some of the longest and most repetitive debates in history? Most important of all, perhaps, has it a backbone, or is there at least somewhere within the enveloping and lumpy flesh of this organization a little gristle that might grow into a backbone?

Let us, at the beginning, admit the enormous difficulties. These spring partly from natural causes. After all it is no simple thing to hold together the political organism with which we are familiar - ones as well founded and as homogeneous as Canada or the United States. The United Nations experiment is vastly more complex. Basically, however, the greatest danger lies not in our administrative or constitutional problems, but in the political division which has grown up between the Eastern European States and the rest of the world. The United Nations was created in the hopeful atmosphere of wartime co-operation. The Allies had raised and deployed and carried into action a great international military force, and the auspices seemed good for similar co-operation in peacetime. But we are now confronted with this great division, which--both political and philosophical--is so complicated and pervasive that it reaches down into

almost every single activity of the United Nations. There is scarcely any subject discussed in which the unresolved differences between the Eastern European States and the western world do not reveal themselves. There is no member of a United Nations body who does not sooner or later stub his toe on the unresisting reality of this solid mass of conflict.

Sometimes the issue is joined on some question that divides the Great Powers specifically. The peace settlements were jealously kept out of the terms of reference of the United Nations when that body was created. The Peace was to be made by the Big Powers alone but they have failed to make peace in either of the important areas where war was waged, and questions relating to the peace settlement cannot help getting on the agenda of United Nations meetings. At the last Assembly, for example, we had to deal with the question of Korea. An arrangement in regard to the unity and independence of Korea was made by the Great Powers during a wartime conference. They have been unable to put their agreement into effect, and Korea remains divided and under occupation. This year a question was put by the United States on the agenda of the General Assembly and a United Nations Commission is in Korea at this moment trying to see if a National Government can be established. It has already been refused admission to the Soviet Zone and I do not see how it can possibly accomplish its mission. The Korean debate at the Assembly in November was long and acrimonious. It could not possibly result in any really constructive conclusion simply because the problem of Korea is part of the great unresolved problem of the peace settlement. Those of us who are engaged in the work of the United Nations must admit quite frankly that until the major political issues left over from the war have been settled, until some kind of equilibrium has been worked out between the two great blocs of power that have emerged in the world there will be serious limitations on the effectiveness of that organization. It may be that the United Nations itself can help in developing the new equilibrium which is so greatly needed. Until there is greater stability, however, we must be satisfied with limited results.

There are other times when the issues are not specifically those which arise between the Great Powers but are part of the general propaganda warfare that is now going on between Eastern European States and the rest of the world. We, ourselves, sometimes get innocently involved in this conflict in a wholly unexpected manner. At the last Assembly, for example, the question of refugees and displaced persons found its way into the discussions. It has recently been possible to absorb into the industrial life of this country a very considerable number of displaced persons who have been brought to Canada under various agreements which guaranteed them immediate employment upon their arrival here and which also made their employment subject to Government supervision in a variety of ways. This has not perhaps been a spectacular contribution to the solution of the refugee problem but it has nevertheless opened new lives to several thousand homeless persons. This effort, which, on the whole we regard as the humanitarian one, has made us the target

for some very heavy artillery in the propaganda warfare. It was said at the Assembly that we had forced these people to come to Canada, that they were driven to labour in forests and mines, that the conditions under which they worked made them slaves, that they could never escape from their servitude. Thus was a constructive and intelligent policy, the benefits of which had been joyfully accepted by the few thousands of people when they were available, pilloried and debased and sullied in the organization through which it had been arranged.

At still other times a conflict arises from the basic difference in our forms of social and political organization. Take, for example, the most vociferous or the great debates at the last session of the General Assembly - the debate on war-mongering. The discussion went on for days. There were speeches two, and two and one-half hours in length. There were charges and counter-charges, quotations and counter-quotations in an atmosphere which became more and more heated and in language which became more and more disheartening but there was really no use talking about the question at home. The plain fact is that a State organized on the Russian model has one kind of a press and we have another. In a controlled press everything that appears is, in some way or another, a direct reflection of the views of those who exercise control. With us, it is otherwise. If anyone in this country feels strongly that either his own government or any other government is a menace he is at perfect liberty, within the libel and sedition laws, to say so with any paper and ink he can find for the purpose and it is essential to our system of Government that he should be able to do so. No amount of argument can ever remove the discrepancy between our two systems in this respect, and so long as items such as war-mongering find their way into agendas of United Nations conferences we shall have to resign ourselves to a great deal of futile and windy talk.

There is, then, a great and prolific debate going on between the East and West. It is discursive, voluminous and persistent. It reaches down into almost every conference and committee and sub-committee and drafting group of the United Nations. It envelops and holds fast every group of negotiators. There is nothing so discouraging as to watch, with gradually sinking spirits, the particular assembly or council or commission from which you had hoped so much being slowed down almost to a standstill by this pervasive argument which settles upon it and clogs it in the manner of a great snowstorm gradually deadening the life of a modern city.

At the present time, there is very little we can do in the presence of this basic division between East and West except to ride out the storm. It is not enough, however, merely to be passive for many of the values in our way of life are at stake. In the propaganda debates, for example, we are at a great disadvantage because our national life is so organized that almost everything is done under public scrutiny. We believe that our weaknesses and our mistakes, that our stupidities and our scandals, should be freely known and freely discussed. In this way, of course, we are making available to those who wish to destroy our

political system the ammunition with which to attack it and we have no way of securing similar information from them. We cannot possibly restrict our liberties on this account, and we must simply accept the disadvantage of our position, and at the same time that our own people will not unnecessarily expose us to attack by gratuitous distortions of the facts about our country. We shall have also to face in the United Nations the problem created by deliberate efforts to destroy the organization by making it ineffective. This is a danger which we face in our own political life at home, and it is interesting to see the same techniques being used to impede the working of international political organizations. The United Nations is based on essentially democratic conceptions but our democratic political organization is subject to the weakness that a determined minority can make use of its privileges to discredit it and destroy it. We are all familiar with this technique as it is applied within our own community. We have seen small groups in meetings who, because they could not get what they wanted, prevented the majority getting what it wanted. We have seen meetings break up in angry confusion because of the deliberate interference of a handful of people who knew precisely how to use the rules of procedure in order to prevent any procedure taking place. Exactly the same tactics are being used in the United Nations itself and we shall have to make up our minds there, as at home, that we will not let our political institutions be distorted and discredited in this manner.

I have been speaking to you about the difficulties we are encountering in the United Nations because of the division between the Eastern European States and the rest of the world. There are other difficulties which are inherent in the nature of the organization itself. A great deal has been said and written for example about the veto power. This is the common expression for the voting procedure in the Security Council. It requires seven out of eleven votes for any important motion to carry in the Security Council, but a motion is lost, no matter how many votes it receives, if one of the five permanent members of the Security Council votes against it. It applies only in the Security Council, because that body is the only organ of the United Nations which has been given the power to enforce its decisions. It is a rough and not very satisfactory solution to a very difficult problem. The United Nations is, as I said, based on democratic principles, and in a democratic community one man has one vote. But the inequalities amongst states are so great, not only in power and resources but also in responsibility that the principle can not be fully applied. It is impracticable to suggest that a number of small states by their votes should be able to put in motion the resources of the large ones. It was therefore decided that before action could be taken in the Security Council the votes of all the large states should be required. The word "action" was so liberally interpreted that in practice it was impossible to secure any decision in the Security Council if any permanent member were opposed. This voting procedure is generally unpopular and a number of suggestions have been made for its modification, including some very useful Canadian proposals. No one, however, has proposed a satisfactory alternative, and I do not think it probable that any essential modification will be made in this procedure until the United Nations has gained a great deal more stability and wisdom than it has yet

shown and until the major issues which now divide the Great Powers have abated. Indeed, even in the best of circumstances, I think it will be only by a very gradual process of evolution in custom and precedent, by the constant exercise of self-restraint on the part of both of those who possess the veto and those who do not possess it, by the working out of techniques for reaching agreement, by experiment and often by trial and error that the veto shall be allowed to fall into disuse. In the meantime, we shall have to make the best of a situation in which it may at any time be used to frustrate action which is proposed in the Security Council.

There are other and even more intangible difficulties which complicate the work of the organization. An attempt is being made to lay down the basis for a world government, but both the principles and practice of government in various parts of the world is so varied that people often have the greatest difficulty in understanding each other's conceptions. I will give you one example although many others could be cited. It was originally thought that the United Nations might make use of groups of experts who would make judgments on international problems, not as representatives of states but as international civil servants. Provision was made for commissions and committees of this nature in the structure of the United Nations but when the time came to establish these commissions, it became clear that the idea of an independent expert, acting without instructions from a government, was completely foreign to officials of the Soviet Union. I listened, on one occasion, to a representative of the Soviet Union discussing this problem. He was genuinely perplexed by the proposal to establish commissions of independent experts. International commissions, he said, should negotiate. How could a member of a commission negotiate unless he were told by his government how far he could go? Experts were to advise the negotiators and to produce the figures which they needed, but in the last analysis the result of any discussion in an international body must represent the compromise between the wishes of all parties. Experts could not make compromises, he said, only the diplomats had the doubtful distinction of being able to engage in this kind of activity. Because of these objections, the conception of the independent technical expert operating without instructions from his government has almost, though not quite, been surrendered, for the time being at least. I do not think this is because of any deliberate effort to undermine the United Nations, but because of a genuine inability to fit this type of activity into the political system of some member states.

In the face of these enormous and complicated difficulties, one may very well ask whether the United Nations is worth the time and effort. This, of course, is a question of high policy and all that I can do is to fill in a few of the things which to me seem at the moment to make it imperative to continue the experiment. In the first place we have at the moment, in a real sense, beginnings of a government organized on a wider scale than has ever before been attempted. It may be that some of the parties will eventually contract out of the agreement, but it is not certain that the experiment will fail for that reason. Interesting comparisons have recently been made with the situation existing in the United States after the American Revolution. The American Constitution, and the

effective union which it represented, required many years of experiment before it was completed and within a century was challenged in a civil war that very nearly destroyed it, but the conception of a central government, of a united states, remained and by 1860 this conception had become so firm that the great conflict which broke out during that decade was a civil war and not a war amongst the states. I don't suppose that made much difference to the people who were killed, but it made a very great deal of difference to the people who went on living, and who undertook the work of reconstruction. The beginning which we have made in this direction now on a much larger scale is too important to surrender while the last sign of life remains in the body.

It would, however, be a mistake to suggest that the United Nations at the moment lacks vitality. It has, if anything, too much energy and is trying to accomplish more than is possible in an organization which is, as yet, scarcely three years old. Within that time an elaborate ingenious constitutional structure has been worked out, and all the parts are functioning with the highest degree of energy. An international Secretariat has been recruited and put to work, and for my own part I am constantly surprised at the efficiency with which they go about their business. I cannot imagine a more difficult task than that of recruiting from amongst 57 nations a group of people competent in almost as many different varieties of work, getting them together, getting them trained in common procedures, getting them to understand the objectives of their service. I know that the efficiency of the Secretariat will not save the United Nations if the member states themselves do not wish to use the organization, but I think that the way in which this staff has been recruited and set to work is a most encouraging example of human ingenuity and adaptability.

So successful has this preliminary work of organization been, that I am quite confident that, if some measure of political stability can be restored to the world, the United Nations could quite readily become a kind of gyroscope to help maintain that balance. If some nation is eventually determined to go to war, nothing, of course, can prevent a war from breaking out. But, if over a period of years, we have built up customs and procedures by which conflicts can be localized and machinery of settlement put in operation, we shall at least have improved our chances of keeping the peace and if, at the same time, we have built up a body of loyalty amongst the majority of nations in support of the organization itself, we shall have greatly increased the risks that face any nation that is attempting an aggressive act.

There are other considerations more immediate and more practical which justify this organization. In one sense, the General Assembly at its last session before Christmas may be said to have gone into business. Previously, the main attention had been on structural organization. On this occasion, however, an attempt was made to face up to some of the political problems of the world. In a clumsy and inadequate manner, haltingly, often mistakenly, the Assembly began to experiment in methods to circumvent the frustration which had fallen upon the Security Council. It took action with regard to Korea and Greece. It established a continuing body of its own - the Interim Committee.

It recorded a very important decision about Palestine. Without attempting to make a judgment about the wisdom of any of their decisions, we can say at least that the Assembly was trying to act as an international legislature, in spite of the difficulties which handicap it. Not all the problems of the world fall within the area of the conflict between the Great Powers. Outside the range of that conflict there are other dangerous situations and there is no reason why the United Nations, in its present form, should not deal with them. At the present moment there are three such problems on the agenda of the Security Council. It is no exaggeration to say that the lives of many millions of people depend upon the ability of the United Nations to find a solution to these questions. There is no one else to deal with them. If the United Nations fails there will be no solution except by violence and bloodshed. The questions to which I refer are the dispute over Kashmir between India and Pakistan, the Indonesian question and the Palestine question. I am not going to go into any detailed discussion of these problems. I say quite seriously, however, that within the next few weeks constructive solutions must be found in both India and Palestine or we shall encounter violence of an unprecedented kind. There are, roughly, thirty-five million Moslem people in India and fifteen million Hindu people in Pakistan whose lives quite seriously depend upon the ability of the little group of men who are sitting together in a room at Lake Success to assist the Governments of India and Pakistan to settle their differences over Kashmir. In Palestine there are seven hundred thousand Jews and about twice as many Arabs who are at the moment arming themselves for a tragic conflict, which can be avoided only if the United Nations can intervene with resolution and wisdom. In regard to the third problem, Indonesia, there is now good reason to hope that the Security Council has brought about an important settlement. This settlement, if it is indeed brought about as present indications promise, suggests a wider area within which the United Nations may operate. The receding imperialism of the 19th century is leaving in its wake a whole series of political problems. Adjustments of one kind or another are being made throughout the colonial areas of the pre-war years. Sometimes the change is radical and complete, as in the case of the British withdrawal from India. Sometimes it is more gradual, as in the case of Indonesia. But nowhere is it a simple matter simply to withdraw and turn responsibility over to the new regime, as Kashmir, Indonesia and Palestine all reveal. The existence of this problem alone - the emergence of new political organisms within the old colonial empires - is itself a compelling reason for an international organization.

I am glad that I have been able to talk to this Association about the United Nations because of our common interest in the University with which we are associated. This experiment in international government will never succeed unless it is based on an informed and intelligent and active public opinion. The times through which we are passing call for statesmanship of a very high order which succeeds only if it is sustained and encouraged and indeed produced by the constant demand of a public which is aware of the issues which confront the nations. I do not think there can be any doubt that we are moving toward a world government in some form. In the United Nations we are trying to make it a government by consent, but if we do not get it that way we may very well get it in forms which are strange to us and which we shall find intolerable. In a recent statement,

Professor Einstein said that "in a healthy nation there is a kind of dynamic balance between the will of the people and the government which prevents its degeneration into tyranny". I think that is equally true for a healthy international community but this dynamic balance can be achieved only in a society whose citizens have been trained not only technically but also in the humanities, and most important of all, in methods of analysis and criticism, and who are capable of bringing their constant judgment to bear on their political activities.