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THE GREATEST VISION IN MANKIND'S HISTORY

A speech by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Paul Martin, to the Annual Awards Dinner of the Overseas Press Club of America, in New York, on May 28, 1963

I am very pleased and honoured to have this opportunity of addressing the Annual Awards Dinner of the Overseas Press Club of America. Among your ranks are to be found some of the foremost journalists of the world; men and women who have made substantial contributions to the reporting and analysis of international problems. Those of us who are daily engaged with these problems share with you very heavy responsibilities in this world of rapid change and recurring risk.

This is the third public speech which I have made since taking office. I intend making a complete statement on Canadian foreign policy to the House of Commons at the earliest possible opportunity. You will appreciate, I am sure, that in keeping with Canadian Parliamentary traditions, I must make any new policy statements before Parliament.

The new Government assumed office in Canada just a little over a month ago. It has been a busy and an eventful month. We have been engaged in a wide-ranging review of Canadian policies in all fields, in surveying and assessing both problems and opportunities and in preparing our legislative programme, a portion of which has already been placed before Parliament.

Our primary aim in these first weeks has been to re-establish confidence in Canada, confidence among Canadians about the great promise which the future holds, and confidence among our allies of our determination to make our utmost effort to work for solutions of our mutual problems and for the relief of tensions in the world.

The Prime Minister has already undertaken highly successful visits to London and Hyannis Port. These meetings signified the Government's intention to reaffirm our historic ties with Britain and the Commonwealth and also with our closest

neighbour, the United States. Both visits can, I think, be judged outstanding successes. Indeed, I look upon your invitation to me to speak here this evening as evidence of renewed confidence and interest this side of the border in Canadian affairs.

Canada-U.S. Relations

Few aspects of Canadian external policy are more important today than our relations with the United States. None has been the target of more misunderstanding recently, and none has in fact been the cause of so much concern to thoughtful Canadians. The Canadian Government is well aware of the complexity and the difficulties which face us in problems of defence questions, trade and balance-of-payment matters, the Columbia River Treaty and many others. It is to be expected that our two countries would have differing interests in some of these matters. The differences in our foreign policies are natural and healthy. The task of the two governments is not to permit these differences to divide us, but rather to work together in harmony and in trust to seek equitable solutions.

The recent meeting between President Kennedy and Prime Minister Pearson in Hyannis Port served as a dramatic re-affirmation of the mutual trust and respect which exists between our two nations. The whole atmosphere of the meeting and the communiqué which followed it showed the determination of the heads of both governments to re-establish our historic relationship. I am quite certain that the meeting in Hyannis Port will take its place with other significant events, such as the meeting at Ogdensburg between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Mackenzie King in August 1940, as a historic landmark in Canadian-American relations.

As you know, the ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council was held in Ottawa last week. I was particularly pleased that the meeting was held in Canada this year because of the early and very valuable opportunity it provided for me personally to meet and to hold wide-ranging discussions with the 14 foreign ministers of the alliance.

I am anticipating an early visit to Washington to continue discussions with Secretary Dean Rusk, with whom I had some most rewarding talks during the NATO meetings.

Review of NATC

NATO was born 15 years ago, when the intransigence of the Soviet Union had rendered the Security Council increasingly inoperative. NATO is a defensive alliance. It seeks to strengthen Western security and ultimately the cause of peace. Indeed, the very first line of the treaty affirms "our faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and our desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments."

So far, through our combined efforts, NATO has been successful in preventing acts of aggression against us. NATO must continue to be militarily strong so that our efforts may be equally successful in the future. But NATO is more than a military alliance, central as that undoubtedly is to our joint effort. Canadians believe that NATO is a stage in the evolution of a true Atlantic coalition between like-minded states who uphold the same basic ideals and values about human rights and dignity.

Throughout my private conversations with our distinguished visitors, there ran an underlying awareness that the success of the alliance, in the last analysis, will rest on the ability to achieve a true partnership of the peoples of Western Europe and North America. In other times the key to that partnership rested mainly on British-American understanding, with Canada from time to time making some contributions to such understanding. The gratifying result is the intimacy which now exists between Washington and London. Today, with Europe fully recovered from the devastation of war, the Atlantic Community must rest on broader foundations. Canada, as a North American nation with a cherished heritage and bilingual culture stemming from two great mother countries, may have useful opportunities to exert quiet influence towards complete trans-Atlantic entente.

Canada's Military Commitments

This meeting was timely in another sense: it gave the Government an opportunity to remove the doubts which continued to linger in the minds of our allies concerning the position of Canada with regard to the commitments undertaken on behalf of our armed forces by the former Government. To that end, the Minister of National Defence took the opportunity on the first day of the conference to set the record straight by confirming to the Council in ministerial session the information which had already been given to Parliament two days before by the Prime Minister, namely, that negotiations had been resumed with the United States relating to defensive weapons systems which have been the subject of previous discussions with the United States.

The Ottawa meetings not only strengthened the military side of NATO but also strengthened the bonds of co-operation between us as we pursue our common ideals. As Mr. Pearson stated:

"We have a responsibility to the future and to humanity to make sure in the North Atlantic community that our dealings with one another and with the rest of the world are marked by justice, tolerance and charity. If we can discharge that responsibility while at the same time building up energetically our defence we may then also pray that providence in its own good time will bring in a world whose ramparts can be dismantled and where peace will prevail.

"I believe that five years from now history will say that this Council meeting marked one more good step in the evolution of the Atlantic coalition, for the security of its members and for peace in the world."

There can be no lasting security in a world in which great nations threaten each other, and their smaller allies, with nuclear destruction. The achievement of stable security through general disarmament -- balanced and safeguarded -- is the stated goal of members of the NATO alliance, a goal which has been unanimously endorsed by all members of the United Nations. Disappointing as the results of the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee at Geneva have been to date, we must persevere in these complex negotiations. We must persist in our efforts to put an end to the arms race which imperils all mankind.

We must do more. We must strengthen the international capacity for keeping the peace. The notion of international peace-keeping under the United Nations has been firmly incorporated in the programmes for general and complete disarmament. The proposals of both the Soviet Union and the United States envisage the creation of international military forces during the stages leading to a disarmed world. It is obvious, from the bare skeleton of these proposals, that much remains to be done to elaborate and reconcile them before any agreed system of security can be developed. But it has been accepted in principle that progress toward disarmament must be accompanied by the development of effective international machinery for maintaining peace and security.

The Canadian Government is determined to explore and support practical ways of strengthening the peace-keeping methods of the United Nations. We are not deterred by the fact that significant elements in the membership are opposed to the establishment of a stand-by force. We believe that, even in the absence of formal arrangements, there are steps which still can be taken to make the peace-keeping machinery more effective.

Importance of Preparation

As a first step, national governments can improve their own arrangements for providing military assistance to the United Nations. Canadian experience in participating in almost every peace-keeping operation under the United Nations flag - in UNEF, in the Middle East and in the Congo force - has taught us the importance of advance preparation within our own defence establishment. Canada maintains an infantry battalion and facilities for movement control and air transport which would enable us to place troops at the disposal of the United Nations on short notice anywhere in the world. We are constantly reviewing ways of improving these stand-by arrangements.

The recent announcement by the defence ministers of the Scandinavian countries about arrangements which they have made for the formation of a composite Nordic contingent has been welcomed by Canada. I believe that this practical approach to the problem of providing prompt assistance to the United Nations, when it is needed for peace-keeping operations, can be extended. I hope that other member states will follow this example of Scandinavian co-operation in the cause of peace.

Another step would be to improve further the Secretariat machinery for co-ordinating and conducting international peace-keeping operations. I suggest that a compact military planning team attached to the Secretariat could periodically review the national availabilities for providing contingents to United Nations military forces. It could also examine operational, logistical and administrative problems with a view to improving United Nations procedures in the conduct of peace-keeping operations.

UN Finances

Canadians are deeply concerned about the immediate financial crisis before the United Nations in this Special Assembly. This deficit of approximately \$120 million that now faces the United Nations has resulted mainly from the fact that some member states have failed to pay their assessments to meet peace-keeping costs.

You know, it is staggering and not a little ironic that this world of ours, which spends upwards of \$120 billion a year on armaments, would dare to jeopardize the whole United Nations for a sum of \$120 million. It makes one think that perhaps George Bernard Shaw was correct when he said: "If the other planets are inhabited, they must think of earth as their lunatic asylum."

For several years now the United Nations has tried to sidestep the financial crisis by adopting unsatisfactory ad hoc measures, which not only failed to produce adequate resources but served to delay an assault on the fundamental issue.

Recognizing the risks in allowing this situation to drift, Canada has sought in the past few years to concentrate the attention of the General Assembly on the need to establish sound financial procedures that would place peace-keeping on a firm footing. Ideally, the Assembly should agree on a long-term formula that would serve as a pattern for financing in the future and as a basis for planning, both by the Secretariat and by national governments. Under the prevailing circumstances, however, we recognize that the special session must concentrate on the immediate problem of finding funds for the remainder of this year.

A Canadian Formula

The Canadian Government is determined to help the United Nations to surmount this present crisis, which endangers the whole peace-keeping future of the United Nations. During this special session, the Canadian Delegation has been seeking support for a formula containing the following elements:

1. The principle of collective financial responsibility should be observed by placing a pre-determined level of peace-keeping expenses under the regular scale of assessment and by ensuring that any excess is shared among the whole membership, even though some assessments may be reduced substantially from the regular scale.
2. Member states with a low capacity to pay should be offered some reduction from their regular assessments for peace-keeping costs above the pre-determined level, the size of such reduction being related to the country's capacity to pay and its demonstrated financial responsibility as regards the payment of arrears.
3. To meet the shortfall resulting from reductions granted, the developed countries, including Canada, should be prepared to make voluntary contributions in addition to their normally assessed shares.

This afternoon I had the privilege of meeting with Secretary-General U Thant. Canadians watch with respect the way in which he is fulfilling his difficult and lonely task with quiet courage and a firm determination to maintain the United Nations as an effective instrument for international co-operation. He shouldered squarely the heavy responsibility for restoring calm and confidence in the United Nations at a time when it was shattered by the sudden and ominous tragedy of the death of his brilliant predecessor.

I shall always remember Dag Hammarskjold as a close friend, as a tireless fighter for the United Nations and as a great champion of its purposes and principles.

During a period of unprecedented ferment in the public affairs of nations, in a few short turbulent years the United Nations has exhibited a remarkable evolution in international institutions.

In the Canadian view, the difficulties and the limitations imposed during this period of evolution are not reasons for losing faith in the United Nations. They are reasons for striving energetically to make this international system work. They are reasons for seeking practical ways of surmounting or getting around obstacles in the path of the idea of the United Nations.

Townhall of the World

We know that the General Assembly spends much time in emotional and repetitious debate. But we are not impatient of this. It was a distinguished American, Senator Vandenburg, with whom I had the honour to serve in the first and second Assemblies of the United Nations in London and New York, who referred to the Assembly as "the townhall of the world". The ideals of liberal democracy that come to mind when one thinks of the old New England townhall have been embodied in the structure of the Assembly. Indeed, contrary to some of the critics, the General Assembly has exhibited a notable responsibility in many of its decisions, and in its deliberations has made tangible progress toward the establishment of a world public opinion and an international morality.

A striking fact of our age is its revolutionary character. The same gigantic strides in science and technology that have given man the weapons of terror, the wonders of "Telstar" and the early prospect of landing on the moon, have drawn the peoples of the entire world much closer together. National boundaries become hardly visible from the vantage point of a man orbiting the earth every 86 minutes.

The effect of the communications media upon international affairs has been profound. A new diplomacy of the fast plane trip, the hasty press conference and the formulation of policy amid the glare of lights and publicity has been created. The United Nations itself has become the focal point of world public opinion and the General Assembly a well-lit stage upon which international drama is enacted. From this platform, national representatives speak for and to their own people and also address themselves to public opinion in other countries. This is understandable for, as the British diplomat Lord Strang put it: "In a world where war is everybody's tragedy and everybody's nightmare, diplomacy is everybody's business."

But it is not easy, under these circumstances, to ensure the fundamental requirements of successful diplomacy, shared confidences and quiet negotiation and, in fact, they are easily and often abused.

There are great advantages in quiet diplomacy. In the conference halls, in the corridors and in the lounges of the United Nations, opportunities abound for government representatives to exchange views and to hammer smooth the wrinkles that contribute to international friction. Here we find the facilities for quietly probing and penetrating the veils of suspicion, mistrust and misapprehension which keep the nations divided.

Toward the Rule of Law

In recent years, much has been said and written about the need to provide a rule of law in the world. If the nations are to establish an orderly world community, they must be prepared

to live according to some standards of conduct. This kind of international law can best be developed through step-by-step progress, patiently built on solid foundations. The work of the International Court of Justice and the International Law Commission is contributing to the establishment of that foundation. Standards of conduct are also being set in many specialized fields - in meteorology, civil aviation, postal service, health, agriculture and labour relations, to name a few. We have begun to consider the principles that should regulate the exploration and use of outer space.

In 1961 Canada strongly supported the United Nations Development Decade resolution in the hope that its adoption would focus world attention on the pressing economic and social needs of the less-developed countries of the world.

Last year, the General Assembly agreed to hold, probably in the early part of 1964, a Conference on Trade and Development. This conference will concern itself primarily with the broad range of trade and development problems of the less-developed countries. We have supported the idea of the conference and are members of the Preparatory Committee, the body making preparations for the conference. We intend to make a positive contribution to the success of the conference. It is our hope that the work of this conference, combined with parallel efforts of GATT relating the trade problems of less-developed countries, will lead to more favourable conditions for the accelerated promotion of the trade of the less-developed countries.

These developments are but a beginning and much remains to be done. The principal error in appraising the United Nations may be that people have come to expect too much too soon. In President Kennedy's words: "Our instrument and our hope is the United Nations, and I see little merit in the impatience of those who would abandon this imperfect world instrument because they dislike our imperfect world."

The removal of these imperfections is mainly a matter of modifying the attitudes of member states and particularly the attitudes of those who possess the real attributes of power in today's world. This kind of change will come not by drastic reform of constitutional arrangements but by an evolutionary process which will require high statesmanship and great foresight.

There is a tendency these days for us to be captivated by the perpetual short-run crisis dramatized for all the world in a six-word newspaper headline. It is part of my task to deal with the unending succession of events of the moment and part of your task to record them. But somehow both of us must find the ability and summon the courage to raise our eyes and our thoughts forward beyond tomorrow toward the ideals for which we strive.

Those ideals that are expressed so nobly in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights constitute the greatest vision in the history of mankind - a series of goals that will be fully worthy of the sacrifices of countless men and women who have lived and died in their pursuit, and which are justifiably demanding of our greatest endeavours.

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