



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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THE PART TO BE PLAYED BY CANADA IN
THE MAINTENANCE OF WORLD PEACE.

An address by Right Hon. Louis S. St. Laurent, Secretary of State for External Affairs, at an exhibitors' dinner in connection with the Canadian International Trade Fair in Toronto, June 11, 1948.

It seems appropriate that my first words tonight should be words of congratulation and appreciation. This occasion represents the fruition of plans and preparations that have been a long time in the making. The preparatory period of an International Trade Fair - particularly one which is, as this is, an entirely new venture - is a matter not of months but of years. If my memory is correct, it is now well over two years since my colleague, who occupies the chair this evening, took the initiative in recommending that, for the first time in our history, an International Trade Fair should be held in this country, and in recommending, further, that the Government of Canada should shoulder the primary responsibility for planning the whole project and for carrying it through to completion.

When I say that this primary responsibility was to be assumed by the Government, I do not mean to suggest that, in accepting Mr. MacKinnon's recommendation, there was any expectation that the whole burden of the undertaking would fall upon the shoulders of the Government. We knew that we would need, and we were confident that we would receive, the unstinted support of the businessmen of Canada. In that respect we have not been disappointed.

In organizing this fair - starting with virtually no experience in this very specialized field - the Canadian Government Exhibition Commission has performed an enormous task with great credit to itself. Great as the Commission's labours have been, however, the measure of success that has been achieved could not have been attained without the constant support and the endless variety of aid given by businessmen and by business organizations throughout Canada.

Even if I had the time to do so - and in any event I hardly think that it would fall appropriately within my own assignment - I could not possibly mention by name the individuals, the business firms and the organizations of many different kinds whose voluntary efforts have contributed in a thousand and one essential ways to the result that has been accomplished. Nevertheless, I do wish to convey our appreciation, in the broadest and most unqualified terms, to all those who have helped to make this trade fair a really worthwhile effort on Canada's part towards bringing businessmen of many countries together, and in that manner giving a stimulus of the most practical kind to the recovery of international commerce. I should be guilty of a very serious oversight, indeed, if I failed to make clear that no small portion of our appreciation is due to the great number of businessmen from other countries, who, as exhibitors or as buyers, have travelled long distances in coming to Canada and whose attendance at the fair has entailed a substantial expenditure of both time and money.

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Looking back over the period that has elapsed since the decision was first taken to embark upon this fair, I wonder whether, if we could have foreseen the course that events have taken during those two years, we would have reached the decision that was reached. In the spring of 1946 we had reason to believe that the recovery of world trade was getting well under way. We thought also that the financial and other measures that had then been provided to tide over the immediate postwar period would be sufficient to underwrite the steady improvement of international commerce for quite a long period ahead. We need not now feel that at that time we were taking a shallow and superficial view of the situation, but certainly, in the light of what has since occurred, we may now freely admit that neither here in Canada nor elsewhere, did we have the information required to enable us to realize fully the magnitude of the economic damage that had been wrought by the war. It took the events and developments of 1947 to bring into the open the real depth and nature of that damage. We had been expecting and, in fact, making our calculations to a considerable extent on the basis that 1947 would be a year of continuing improvement in world trade and that by the spring of 1948 international commercial recovery would have reached a much more advanced stage than it actually has reached. Consequently, this Trade Fair is now being held under conditions greatly at variance in many respects with what we had hoped.

Granting that some of our expectations of a couple of years ago have turned out to be rather wide of the mark, we may nevertheless feel well satisfied that the timing of this fair has been abundantly justified. True, the fact that the reconstruction of world trade has not got as far forward as we had counted upon means that business men who have come to the fair either to sell or to buy are faced with many handicaps in trading with one another. But it is also true that the value and the wisdom of holding a major International Trade Fair on this side of the Atlantic are even more clearly apparent now than two years or more ago.

We have gained, largely within the last twelve months, a much more sharply defined picture of the extent to which the sound and enduring recovery of international commerce must depend upon redressing the balance of trade between this North American continent and the countries of western Europe. Moreover, it has become clear that the impulse to reconstruction cannot spring unassisted from the countries of Europe themselves. To a far greater extent than we had at first imagined, the economic rehabilitation of the world is dependent upon the countries of the western hemisphere. Once the full necessities of the case become evident, it was with remarkable speed that a comprehensive programme of economic aid was launched by the passage of the Economic Recovery Act through the United States Congress. The part that Canada will play in this programme has been the subject lately of a good deal of comment and speculation and of speeches by colleagues of mine who are better qualified than I to deal with the purely economic aspect of current events. I should like, however, if you will allow me, to dwell a little upon the similarities between the economic developments of the last few years and those which have taken place in the political field: similarities to be found not only in the picture as a whole, but also in the opportunities and responsibilities which have devolved upon Canada as a result.

The San Francisco Conference was held in the early spring of 1945. At that Conference, as you know, even before hostilities had ceased, representatives of the allied and associated powers met to lay the foundations of an international organization to help us to replace mutual suspicion with international co-operation and to substitute the open and friendly settlement of disputes for the threat or use of armed force.

The moral and psychological wounds of war have, however, proved to be deeper and more stubborn than most of us then thought. Three years after the San Francisco Conference, in the early summer of 1948, it is still not possible to attain the degree of international co-operation for which we had worked and planned. We all know that the chief difficulty

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has been the failure to continue and strengthen the friendly ties which, during the war, united the western democracies and the U.S.S.R. If we had been able to continue that friendly co-operation in the pursuit of peace-time goals of reconstruction, the starvation and distress of the devastated countries would not have been used, as they are now being used, to serve the purposes of aggressive international communism. We feel, I think with justification, that the responsibility lies with the U.S.S.R., but it by no means follows that we should at the present time regard this failure as final or irreparable. As in the economic sphere so in the political, the rebuilding process is slow, and the disappointments, particularly during the last year and a half, have been many. We can no longer blind ourselves to the fact that the United Nations has not been the strong instrument for peace that had been hoped and expected.

Similarly, you have undoubtedly heard opinions to the effect that the two Conferences at Geneva and Havana which have been working towards the establishment of an international trade organization, have revealed more differences than agreement, and that the Charter eventually drawn up contains too many compromises and escape clauses to make it of much immediate value.

I do not believe that the attitude that these organizations are of no use is justified. Such an attitude rests, I suggest, on a mistaken interpretation of what either the United Nations or the International Trade Organization could be expected to do at any early date.

So far as the International Trade Organization is concerned, we must continue to hope for and work towards the ultimate restoration of freely functioning multilateral trade. We must also recognize, however, that at the present time the delicate mechanism of international economic relations has sustained heavy damage and that for some years to come special assistance will be necessary, assistance like that offered in the Economic Recovery Act passed by the United States Congress. But the present exceptional circumstances need not blind us to the desirability of our ultimate goal, nor need they lead us too far from the clear road to that goal. The Charter of the International Trade Organization modified as it is, with the effective dates of some essential provisions postponed for several years, is the signpost along the road, and in the meantime certain countries of major economic importance, Canada among them, are applying many of the basic principles of the Charter and giving one another the full benefits of negotiated tariff concessions by putting the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade into provisional effect.

So too, the United Nations is a signpost along the road to international political co-operation and points the way to our goal of security based upon mutual trust and tolerance. A world divided into two camps - one of them shrouded by a self-produced fog of suspicion and fear - is not a world in which friendly and frank co-operation around the council table can be expected to flourish. No, we must be prepared to endure a great deal at the present time in the United Nations: time-wasting delays and disingenuous evasions, coupled with a deliberate use of the organization as a means of spreading misleading propaganda composed of half-truths or whole lies.

But I do not believe that we should allow this situation to destroy our faith in the United Nations as an organization. The League of Nations was once described as "the sum of public opinion", and it remains true that the United Nations, however well conceived and efficiently organized on paper, cannot do anything that we its members do not fundamentally want it to do. It cannot successfully carry out its political functions unless there is a basic measure of agreement in the world, and a desire and determination on all sides to seek peace by all honourable means. In other words, the United Nations cannot strictly speaking enforce peace, nor can it create peace where no will to peace

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exists. The fact that cotton is growing in the fields does not mean that mankind without further effort can expect to have an adequate supply of cotton cloth. Many agricultural and industrial processes separate raw cotton from finished cloth, and they are carried to a successful conclusion only because we want cloth and are prepared to do the work necessary to get it.

We can surely draw a lesson from these analogies: not the lesson that the United Nations should be given up as a hopeless case, but that we should be prepared to use it to the limit of its possibilities, at the same time accepting the fact that, in present circumstances, those possibilities have limits. In just the same way as we have accepted the ultimate objectives of the International Trade Organization while acknowledging that at this moment there are other special measures necessary, too so it seems to me we should continue to accept the ultimate objectives of the United Nations while acknowledging that, at the present time, other special measures may also be necessary.

It seems especially true in the field of international security that we must be prepared to accept in the United Nations, at least as an interim measure, the possible rather than the ultimately desirable. We must be prepared, for the time being, to do with half a loaf, or, in other words, to begin building up the fabric of international security where and how it is possible to build it and in co-operation with those of like mind. In addition to our Commonwealth association, we have with the United States, as you know, the closest and most cordial relations for our mutual defence. The Permanent Joint Board on Defence has now been in existence for eight years. Recently the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, The Netherlands and Luxembourg signed a treaty in Brussels which is more than a military alliance directed against a possible aggressor from the East. It seeks to mobilize the moral as well as the military and economic resources of Western Europe. It seeks to restrain the aggressive forces of Communism, not by a Maginot Line, but by building up in the liberal, democratic and Christian states of Western Europe a dynamic counter-attraction to Communism.

Neither the Canadian arrangements with the United States for co-operation in defence, nor the Brussels Treaty, is contrary to or in conflict with the obligations assumed under the Charter of the United Nations, which makes specific provision in Article 51 for collective self-defence. If I may again return to the analogy stressed earlier in this talk, they are in principle not unlike the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade: a group of like-minded countries undertakes to apply measures of co-operation and mutual assistance which, it is to be hoped, will eventually receive more general acceptance.

Just as this International Trade Fair - the first to be held in North America - symbolizes the newly expanded responsibilities and importance of Canada as a trading and industrial nation, so our deep interest and concern in the achievement of world security through international co-operation is one of the inescapable consequences of our geographical position in a globe living under the shadow of air-borne atomic weapons. Just as Canadian resources and economic achievements have inevitably made Canada a lynch pin of the war effort during the last two world conflicts so now our geographical position athwart the great circle routes of air navigation between the United States and the U.S.S.R. has thrust us full into the centre of the international political arena. That is a heavy responsibility for a nation of twelve and a half million people, living in a country whose total land and water area is more than three and a half million square miles - little smaller than the entire European continent - and extends over 48 degrees of latitude and 84 degrees of longitude. We cannot do very much alone. We cannot, in the present unhappy state of international politics, expect the United Nations to do very much for us. But we can make our own, most vital

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contribution to world peace by, on the one hand, continuing to give full support to the efforts of free nations to restore a healthy economy and, on the other hand, without abandoning our ultimate goal of security through the universal international organization of the United Nations, by sanely and firmly taking our stand with those nations whose way of life and love of freedom, like our own, make them corner-stones of that better and more peaceful world which we shall yet be able to build.

Six weeks ago, speaking in the House of Commons, I said that the free nations, or some of them, might soon find it necessary to consult together on how best to establish a new collective security league under Article 51 of the Charter. I said that Canada should be willing to enter such a league. I referred to entry into such a league as a fateful decision for Canada.

Why was it that the proposal met with unanimous support in the House of Commons from members of all political parties? I suggest it is because we, in Canada, are agreed upon the essential basis of our foreign policy.

We are agreed, to begin with, that totalitarian communist aggression constitutes a direct and immediate threat to every democratic country, including Canada. It endangers our freedom and our peace. It puts in jeopardy the values and virtues of the civilisation of Western Christendom of which we are heirs and defenders.

Secondly, we have come to a common realization of what Communist totalitarianism means to the people subjected to its tyranny. We have seen the Bolsheviks create in Russia the most omnipotent and pervasive state in history. We have seen them take over what was the worst feature of the Czarist regime, the secret police, and expand it. The Soviet Government, though proclaimed by Communist parties to be the champion of the oppressed, is itself an oppressor on a scale surpassing even Nazi Germany. It has already, in ten countries of eastern Europe as well as in the Soviet Union itself, suppressed the freedom of millions of men and imposed a police regime upon them. It has demonstrated to us that the goal of social justice can never be reached by the Communist methods of terror and violence. It has demonstrated that the division today is not, as the Communists vainly assert, between the forces of reaction with the Fascists on the extreme right and the forces of progress with the Communists on the extreme left. The reactionary parties are those which advocate a police state; and they are reactionary whether they call themselves Nazi, Fascist or Communist. The parties of progress are those which advocate a free society. The police state, by coercion and regimentation, ultimately makes progress impossible. Only in a free society can there exist a firm foundation for social and spiritual progress. Therefore, the things that divide the democratic parties of the free nations, by whatever names they call themselves, are as nothing compared with the gulf that separates them all from the Communists and the regimenting totalitarians.

It is, I suggest, because virtually all the people of Canada have come to realize these things that there are today no fundamental differences between them on questions of foreign policy.

We are all resolved to maintain and to strengthen in Canada the values and virtues of our civilization; values and virtues which the totalitarian societies repudiate with contempt and derision: respect for the worth, the dignity, the inviolability of the individual man, woman and child; the belief that the state exists for man and not man for the state; the belief that all men are brothers; the belief in pity and compassion.

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We do not believe in the blasphemy that a Third World War is inevitable. No war is inevitable. We shall do our best to diminish the possibility of a war breaking out.

We shall do that by pursuing unprovocatively, constructively, and obstinately in the United Nations, in the specialized agencies and elsewhere policies which seem to us best calculated to remove causes of friction between nations and to provide opportunities for fruitful co-operation between all the nations and peoples of the world.

We believe in the maintenance of the United Nations as a possible bridge between the Russian world and the Free World. We have faith in the possibility of a spiritual transformation of the Russian people based on their feelings for justice and human emancipation and the deep human and religious resources which are inherent in this great people. We believe, as the distinguished Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain has put it, that, while "a Nazi people, aiming at world conquest and domination through war, can only be cured of racial paganism by a crushing defeat of their undertakings of aggression,... it is possible for a people now communist to be cured of materialistic atheism by some internal transformation, however hard and difficult such a process may be".

In the interests of the peoples of both worlds - the Communist and the Free - we believe that it must be made clear to the rulers of the totalitarian Communist states that if they attempt by direct or indirect aggression to extend their police states beyond their present bounds by subduing any more free nations, they will not succeed unless they can overcome us all.

The best guarantee of peace today is the creation and preservation by the nations of the Free World, under the leadership of Great Britain, the United States and France, of an overwhelming preponderance of force over any adversary or possible combination of adversaries. This force must not be only military; it must be economic; it must be moral. Just as in the last war, so also today, we are engaged in a "struggle for the control of men's minds and men's souls".

We believe that the menace to the Free World of Communist aggression makes it necessary that the Free World create and maintain a sufficient degree of military, political, economic and moral unity to ensure that its preponderance of force is so used that the Free Nations cannot be destroyed and defeated one by one. No measure less than this will do. We must avoid a fatal repetition of the history of the pre-war years when the Nazi aggressor picked off its victims one by one. Such a process would not end at the Atlantic.

I am sure that it is the desire of the people of Canada that Canada should play its full part in creating and maintaining this overwhelming preponderance of moral, economic and military force and the necessary unity for its effective use.

Victory in war is not won by caution alone. In war caution can too easily become another name for cowardice. Victory in war has to be won by a judicious mixture of caution with a willingness to run calculated risks for great objectives. Victory over war can be won only by a similar willingness on the part of the free nations and the free peoples of the world to run calculated risks for great objectives.

Victory in war requires a pooling of risks and a pooling of resources. Victory over war requires a similar pooling by the Free Nations. Such a pooling cannot take place unless we realize that the giving of aid to an ally is not charity but self-help. The western European democracies, for example, are not beggars asking for the charity

of North America. They should be and, in fact they are our allies in the war against war. We need their assistance in order to be able successfully to defend ourselves and our beliefs. We need their assistance just as they need ours. The spread of aggressive Communist despotism over western Europe would ultimately almost certainly mean war for us, and war for us on most unfavourable terms. It is in our national interest to see to it that the flood of Communist expansion is held back.

To be successful in doing so, we must constantly remember that that Union of the Free World which is now rather painfully struggling to be born will possess the necessary overwhelming strength only if it is based on moral as well as material force; if its citizens are bound together not merely by their common opposition to totalitarian Communist aggression but by a positive love of democracy and of their fellow men, by a determination to make democracy work for the promotion of mutual welfare and the preservation of peace, for others as well as themselves.

It is for each citizen of the Free World to examine his own heart and his own conscience in order that he may make clear to himself the principles of his democratic faith.

We know that, divided, the Free Nations may fall, one by one, before the forces of totalitarian tyranny working within and without their borders, but that, united, they can preserve freedom and peace for all. Let us be not only willing but anxious to unite.
