



## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
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### SURVEY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

Statement by the Parliamentary Assistant to the  
Secretary of State for External Affairs  
Mr. Roch Pinard, made in the House of Commons  
on January 29, 1954.

(See also "Statements and Speeches" No. 54/5,  
for the statement on world affairs by Mr. Pearson.)

Mr. Speaker, although on past occasions I have had the opportunity of discussing matters concerning international affairs, this is the first chance I have had to do so as Parliamentary Assistant to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I am indeed grateful to him for this opportunity which he has given me to express certain views on this important subject.

As he suggested this afternoon, I shall deal briefly with the activities of the United Nations at the last session of the General Assembly last fall. As I had occasion to attend only the latter part of that session, I must say that I had to depend upon the assistance and co-operation of the members of the Canadian Delegation in order to form an opinion as to what was going on. Afterward I could follow with ease the developments that were taking place.

While Korean developments outside the United Nations itself held the spotlight of public attention, the General Assembly concerned itself during its eighth session with other matters reflecting a vast range of problems of concern to the international community. The eighth session was shorter than preceding sessions. In fact it began in mid-September and lasted only until the early part of December. In spite of that fact, the agenda was quite lengthy and in every field--political, economic, social, administrative and legal--there was issues pressing for solution. The delegations applied themselves to the work of the various committees in a businesslike manner under the guidance of the chairmen of the committees, including our own Dr. George Davidson, who acted with great competence as chairman of the Social Committee. The various delegations carried on the work at a good pace.

Glancing back at the eighth session of the Assembly, one cannot be aware of much in the way of really constructive achievement. Nonetheless there is evidence of a generally high level of progress on the varied questions with which the Assembly was concerned. This session was something of a transitional one, spanning the period between the termination of the Korean conflict and the post-Korea relationships that may develop in its wake. The Assembly made some progress on problems of long standing, but did not

advance far on issues on which there remained, as usual, a major clash of interest.

The atmosphere of the Assembly was influenced, as it generally is, by the current international climate, and particularly by the fact that some of the major problems, such as the Korea problem and the prospect of a meeting of the big four powers on Germany, were being dealt with elsewhere. Nevertheless the United Nations continued to provide a valuable meeting ground for East and West, and it kept in motion in the right direction the machinery of international co-operation.

#### The Canadian Delegation

At the beginning of the session our Secretary of State for External Affairs had to resume his function as head of the Canadian Delegation after he turned over to his successor, Madame Pandit of India, the duties of President of the General Assembly. I think I express a view which is shared by most members of this House when I say that our country was extremely proud to have as one of its most distinguished sons one who did such a wonderful job as President of that important international body. His sense of duty and the effective way in which he conducted the proceedings gave to the people of Canada another reason to believe that our Secretary of State for External Affairs enjoys the reputation of being not only a great diplomat but a really great Canadian.

I would be remiss in my duty were I not to congratulate the Postmaster General (Mr. Cote) who was Acting Chairman of the Canadian Delegation to the 8th session of the General Assembly during the long absence of the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Pearson). The Postmaster General discharged these duties with ability while losing nothing of his usual geniality.

I would also like to point out the excellent work done by my colleague from Mount Royal (Mr. Macnaughton) who also happens to be my member, since I have the honour of living in his constituency. He was an assiduous participant in all discussions, as a delegate, more particularly in the legal committee to which he brought his long experience in the field of law.

In the work of the Canadian Delegation, we were also assisted by the presence of parliamentary observers from each of the main parties represented in this house; and I feel sure that this arrangement, which is based upon the practice followed in earlier years, has fully justified itself.

As in previous sessions, several major problems which are not new played a large part in assembly discussions and will, I am afraid, continue in the future to challenge our collective resources of intelligence and good will. These arose from issues of nationalism, colonialism and racialism. We have witnessed in acute form the practical problems which arise in this world organization in seeking to reconcile the principle of the domestic jurisdiction of sovereign states over dependent peoples with the legitimate interest of the United Nations in human rights and peaceful progress towards a wider freedom for all peoples. These are not merely arid, constitutional debates. They relate

to issues which, in a dynamic world, arouse strong passions and directly concern the fate of many millions of human beings.

### The United Nations Charter

For the most part these problems have been considered in a spirit of moderation. These great issues cannot be determined by a rigid and formal reference to the letter of the Charter. I would think that the Charter of the United Nations could be compared in some ways with the constitution of a nation. A constitution must have some flexibility, and must never become the master but should always remain the servant of the people. The same thing, I think, should apply to the Charter of the United Nations, so that on occasion amendments should be brought forward in order to have a Charter that will suit in a better way the general interests of this organization.

### Nationalism, Colonialism and Racialism

It must be recognized that the force of nationalism, to which I was referring, and the urge for independence are among the strongest and most explosive elements in the world today. In seeking to direct these forces toward the path of order and non-violence the United Nations has one of its most important roles to play. Such problems arose in the case of the items dealing with Morocco and Tunisia, to which the Leader of the C.C.F. (Mr. Coldwell) referred this afternoon, and other problems relating to the development of self-government and charges of racial discrimination were also discussed.

Here delegations faced alternatives not easy to resolve or reconcile. Here were problems on which the Asian and Arab states feel particularly strongly, because to them the rights and wrongs of the case are so clearly defined. Because of this they perhaps found it difficult to understand why, in the voting in the General Assembly, the Canadian Delegation was not able to be always fully on their side, and at times had to oppose them. The basic reason for this is, I think, the difference of emphasis which we on the one hand, and the Arab-Asian states, on the other, place on the many factors which enter into the problem. We in the Western world and the Arab and Asian states are in principle united on basic aims. It is on the choice of the best means to achieve them that we sometimes differ.

The Canadian people know too well the price to be attached to freedom of government not to be in accord with other countries which are now striving towards the same end. As citizens of a country which has gradually and peacefully transformed its status from that of a simple colony to that of a free nation, it is our duty to look with sympathy upon problems of the same nature which are facing other peoples who are also trying to attain maturity and independence. But we also have our duty to perform according to the terms of the Charter of the United Nations. Our intervention in matters of that kind must not be of a kind which would endanger the peaceful relations of people in those areas.

### Positions of the Soviet Union

At each session of the United Nations we also look anxiously for concrete actions which will provide a test of

the real intentions of the Soviet Union and of the sincerity of the desire of Soviet leaders to reduce international tensions. With the best will in the world, it cannot be said that the eighth session has been marked by any basic change in Soviet actions. The House will be well aware of the difficulties in getting the political conference started in Korea. In other fields Soviet spokesmen and their satellites have persisted in their traditional positions, as, for example on the disarmament issue; or have continued to use the Assembly as a platform for their usual propaganda lines, as in colonial questions or on the issue of Charter revision.

The Soviet Delegation insisted in putting on the agenda near the end of the session an item on international tension. But the way to reduce international tension is not to talk about it; it is to tackle, in a spirit of co-operation, the practical difficulties and current problems which face us. There is as yet no concrete evidence that the Soviet Union is willing to act in this way.

This was especially true on the question of disarmament. When this matter was debated in plenary meeting last spring the co-operative attitude adopted by Mr. Vyshinsky caused many of us to think that possibly the Soviet Union had begun to think that it should not be too inflexible in its attitude. Some people began to feel some hope with respect to this very important problem so far as the attitude of the Soviet Union was concerned. But the position taken by Mr. Vyshinsky at the eighth session of the General Assembly clearly indicated that the U.S.S.R. had no intention of giving way on any of the points on which they have insisted in the past, including a one-third reduction of armed forces. Moreover, under a Soviet resolution on international tension submitted to the Assembly, which deals in part with disarmament, the implementation of a general disarmament programme would be a subject reserved to the Security Council with the result that again the Soviet Union could use its veto rights. In other words, we were faced with a return by the Soviet Union to the original intransigent attitude which it has consistently followed on the disarmament problem ever since it was first considered many years ago.

On the western side Canada, together with 13 other countries which are or have been members of the Disarmament Commission, with the sole exception of the Soviet Union, sponsored a resolution which in our view avoided any provocative or controversial language. The main purpose of this resolution was to ask the Disarmament Commission to continue its work and to make an earnest effort to end the deadlock which has prevented any progress in this field.

I need not emphasize here that in the present state of international relations the Western world cannot afford to deprive itself of its strongest weapon before being convinced that the Soviet Union is ready to accept all the implications of effective international control of atomic energy, including of course continuing supervision of national territories. Moreover, the security of the West requires that the problem of atomic weapons be considered as a part of the general problem of disarmament. Western acceptance of the prohibition of atomic weapons can only take place within the context of a balanced reduction of all armed forces and armaments, including, conventional as well as atomic weapons. As yet there has been no indication that the Soviet Union is prepared to meet us on these fundamental points.

### Economic Developments

In the economic field an important item on the agenda was the problem of economic development of under-developed countries. There has been considerable difference between the points of view of the developed and the under-developed countries both as to the substance of the proposals and the possibility of immediate action. But the developed countries this year took an important step by accepting in principle the desirability of the eventual establishment of an international development fund. This suggestion has been discussed for many years. Governments have been invited to submit their views on certain aspects of this question as a basis for further examination. Study of the proposals for an international finance corporation are also to continue.

Two other important items concerned the raising of funds for technical assistance and for Korean reconstruction. The United Nations expanded programme of technical assistance was renewed, and pledges and contributions from member countries have reached a record total of more than \$24 million. Canada was one of the 23 countries which announced their intention to increase their contributions. Subject to the approval of parliament, the Canadian contribution will be increased from \$800,000 to a maximum of \$1,500,000. I think it is fair to suggest that our action in making this pledge had a significant influence in encouraging other countries to promise more than this programme. The exact amount to be made available by Canada can be decided when more is known about the actual contributions of other countries. The Assembly decided to continue the United Nations International Children's Fund indefinitely, with provisions for periodic review.

On the question of a Korean reconstruction programme a resolution was adopted urging those who had made pledges to make good on their commitments, and recommending that Specialized Agencies and Non-governmental Organizations furnish assistance to the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency.

### Human Rights

In the field of social affairs, the Assembly touched on various aspects of the human rights question, and dealt with two items of general political importance. These were the question of the repatriation of prisoners-of-war from the Second World War, and the question of forced labour. It concerned itself also with the problem of refugees, and a proposed programme for concerted United Nations action for progress in the social field.

In the administrative field, the Assembly concerned itself again with personnel problems. It adopted certain changes in the staff regulations, clarifying in some measure the powers of the Secretary-General. The Assembly also endorsed the Secretary-General's far-reaching proposals for simplifying the top structure of the Secretariat, and for reducing the total staff of the Secretariat by 15 per cent during the next two years. It deferred a decision on the troublesome question of the awards of compensation granted by the administrative tribunal to certain dismissed United States nationals, until it could obtain a legal opinion from the International Court of Justice.

The Palestine Problem

No summary of the political work of the United Nations in recent weeks, however brief, would be complete without mentioning the Security Council's consideration of the Palestine question. On November 24 it adopted a resolution strongly censuring an attack by the armed forces of Israel on a border village of Jordan. It also reaffirmed the obligation of the parties to abide by the terms of the armistice agreement and the Security Council resolutions, in order to progress peacefully toward a lasting settlement of that problem.

The year 1953 witnessed the resignation of the first Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Trygve Lie, and the appointment of his successor, Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld. The task of creating, maintaining and preserving the traditions of an international public service in the climate of the critical post-war years has not been, and is not now, an easy one. The fact that our organization has come this far is a tribute to the leadership which has been given, and to the services rendered, by all who have worked faithfully in the service of the United Nations. From the new Secretary-General, Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, we have already come to expect, as I know we shall receive in the future, service of the highest order.

In speaking to the eighth session of the General Assembly the Secretary of State for External Affairs said:

"The United Nations can still draw on a tremendous fund of world-wide support. Despite the gulf which divides the world, despite the failure of some sections of opinion to recognize the fact of interdependence and the need for unity, despite the inadequacy of our own efforts in translating aspirations into reality, there is a growing world community--spanning continents, races, languages and faiths--which follows and supports efforts towards world co-operation. By the conscientiousness and clarity of thought we bring to the tasks ahead of us, by the extent to which we make the agenda items before the eighth session the sign-posts to practical and concerted action, to this extent the United Nations will merit the continuance of this support."

Mr. Speaker, judging by this standard, I think the eighth session has confirmed the view that is shared, I am convinced, by the overwhelming majority of Canadians that the United Nations must remain a cornerstone of our policy in the modern world.

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