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SEMINAR ON UNITED NATIONS POLICY

The Canadian Institute of International Affairs, in consultation with the Department of External Affairs, has arranged a seminar on United Nations policy, to take place at the Guild Inn in Toronto from March 28 to 30. The discussions at the seminar will be based on a draft review prepared by Mr. George Ignatieff, former Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations in New York, and on papers prepared by private participants in the seminar. The Chairman of the seminar will be Mr. Gordon Hawkins, Executive Director of the C.I.I.A.

Attached are a statement and a special message to be delivered to the seminar on behalf of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp. Mr. Sharp will be represented at the conference by his Parliamentary Secretary, Mr. Jean-Pierre Goyer.

STATEMENT BY THE
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
THE HONOURABLE MITCHELL SHARP

This is the third seminar on foreign policy arranged by the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. We have found the previous two of great help in considering Canadian policy in Europe and in Latin America.

As has been pointed out in the draft review, there is no wish to change policy merely for the sake of change. What has guided us has been the desire to examine the fundamentals of Canadian foreign policy in the light of a changing Canada and a changing world. We want to try to ensure that the priorities we choose are the right ones in that they take into account the best way in which Canada can make its contribution in the international sphere.

It is a particularly interesting task to review Canadian policy in relation to the United Nations. I have referred to the fact that we have already had seminars to discuss two areas of importance to Canada - Europe and Latin America. In the last twenty years there have been profound changes in Europe and Latin America. The United Nations has also changed profoundly. The increase in membership through decolonization, and the emphasis placed on economic development by two-thirds of the members, have been reflected in procedure, conduct of business, and size and numbers of subordinate organs. At the same time the basic realities of world power as reflected in the military and economic strength of a minority of members have not changed. It is this paradox that results in so much frustration and dissatisfaction on the part of those who really expect far more from the organization than it is able to do and results too, sometimes, in the perfect becoming the enemy of the possible. Thus we too often have what Mr. Arenales, the President of the Assembly, referred to in his statement closing the 23rd session, as the unrealistic and emotional approach of a majority of delegates. He described them as using their talents to produce resolutions while "forgetting that the evils of this world are not cured simply by negotiated resolutions but by the action of governments". He went on to say that the task of the organization was not fulfilled only by the adoption of resolutions but required an essential counterpart, "namely, the fulfillment of its objectives by the governments which make up the international community".

Mr. Arenales also referred to the disillusion with

the U.N. clearly felt in some countries with a long period of membership. I believe that though the Canadian people have always been basically sympathetic to the United Nations, to a certain extent they share this disillusion, and that the importance attached to the U.N. in the consideration of individual Canadians has deteriorated. I believe also that the main reason for this is perhaps a failure to realize the truth of President Arenales' statement - the United Nations can only achieve its objectives if its individual members are willing to take the appropriate action. I hope that the members of this seminar who, I am sure, understand why the United Nations has not measured up to all our original hopes and aspirations, will play a part in leading Canadian opinion towards an enlightened understanding of the difficulties which the U. N. faces and especially to an understanding that effective action by the U.N. is primarily the responsibility and obligation of the individual member states.

This leads me to the question of Canadian participation in the United Nations. Mr. Ignatieff has emphasized in the review and will again today that it is a draft for frank discussion. But I think I should make it clear at the outset that I accept his basic premise that Canada should continue to do everything in its power to support the U.N. in its efforts to fulfill the principles and purposes of the Charter, which remain as valid objectives today as they were twenty-four years ago. They are indeed the only principles possible to follow if the international community is to survive and to progress.

Last year when for the first time I participated in the General Debate, by which traditionally the General Assembly starts its business each year, I referred to many of the matters covered in this draft review. I spoke of the special efforts which Canada had made since 1945 to implement the principles of the Charter and to nurture the growth of the United Nations. I said too that Canada's contribution, as in the past, would continue to be pragmatic and realistic and be based on our assessment of what the situation required the United Nations to do and what Canada could best do in the fulfilment of its responsibilities as a faithful member of the United Nations. The review before you is such an assessment. Because of the nature and variety of the questions before the United Nations we thought it useful to put forward for your consideration specific recommendations on the major fields of United Nations action.

In keeping with the government's desire to have as full participation as possible in the review of foreign policy,

we have taken this opportunity to have you, as persons outside the public service noted for your knowledge of and interest in the United Nations, participate in arriving at an assessment of how best Canada can contribute to the work of the United Nations.

The first chapter of the review refers to the opportunity for self-realization that the United Nations offers to its members. To a great extent our very membership in the United Nations has influenced the direction and preoccupations of Canadian foreign policy. Our response to the demands of United Nations membership has had an appreciable effect on our economic relations, our defence establishment, our political horizons.

Now the time has come to take a new look and consider the future. In thinking of the future we will have to have in mind the past. The best of the past in the United Nations has, in my view, called forth what has been best in Canada. I hope therefore that in your deliberations you will take into account Canada's obligations and responsibilities to the rest of the international community as well as our responsibilities towards Canada's national interest and the satisfaction of the needs and aspirations of the people of Canada.

I hope too that as a result of the discussions at this seminar and of other discussions our future participation in the work of the United Nations will be undertaken with a renewed sense of what is our purpose and a clearer understanding of how best we can fulfill it.

MESSAGE TO C.I.I.A. SEMINAR ON
UNITED NATIONS POLICY
FROM THE HONOURABLE MITCHELL SHARP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

First of all I should like to say how sorry I am not to be with you for this seminar on Canada and the United Nations. I derived great benefit from taking part in the earlier seminars we have held, on Canada and Europe and on Canadian relations with Latin America. I know that this seminar will be equally important and that it will bring new knowledge and new ideas to both government and non-government participants. As you know, the Cabinet is devoting this weekend to final consideration of some aspects of our policy toward Europe. This is the culmination of a six-month process involving a seminar such as this, the preparation of a report by an inter-departmental task force and the presentation to the Government of a special report from the Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs and National Defence. The task force report is confidential and takes into account the results of the C.I.I.A.-sponsored seminar on Canada and Europe; the Parliamentary Committee report is public, based on some weeks of public hearings and a recent trip to NATO and neutral countries of Europe.

The importance of these two reports can hardly be exaggerated but at the same time it is useful to remember that the review of foreign policy in general and of our relations with Europe in particular is the responsibility of the Government, of the Cabinet if you like. The Parliamentarians on the Committee and the officials on the task force have collected and sifted a great deal of material and had their say in their respective reports. Only the Government has decision-making power in these matters. The decision must serve Canada's national interest as the Government sees it.

So, while I regret that my part in the decision-making process on the review of our relations with Europe prevents me from being with you it can, perhaps, serve as a reminder that your seminar is a very important step in the review of our United Nations policy, that things said here may well have their effect on Cabinet decisions when the time comes.

I am very glad to know that my Parliamentary Assistant, Monsieur Jean-Pierre Goyer, will be with you. Having spent a good part of his time last fall at the 23rd General Assembly of the United Nations he will be able to make a valuable contribution to your discussions.

UNITED NATIONS POLICY REVIEW

As part of the Government's review of foreign policy a study is being made of policy towards the United Nations. Mr. George Ignatieff, who was formerly Canada's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, returned to Ottawa in January to start the process of examining Canada's role in the United Nations and he has prepared a draft review for discussion both within and outside the government. While he has consulted with a number of persons both within and outside the public service, the views expressed do not necessarily carry the official endorsement of the Department of External Affairs.

A basic premise of the review is that the interdependence of nations in today's world makes essential a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations. The United Nations is the most ambitious effort ever made to reconcile the political, economic, social and cultural differences in the world. Though the goals of the Charter - peace and security, economic and social justice, and individual human rights - have not been realized, they remain a valid rule of conduct for the signatory states. It follows that it would not be realistic to postulate as a policy alternative that Canada withdraw from the organization or play in it merely a passive and disengaged role. It is therefore also a basic premise that Canada should continue its policy of working actively to achieve the goal of making the United Nations an effective instrument for international cooperation and improving its capacity to discharge its Charter responsibilities.

The review takes into account the changes in the last two decades affecting the United Nations, its composition, its structure and its functions. Two developments - de-colonization and the scientific and technological revolution of the last two decades - have had a major impact on the world and on the United Nations. Decolonization has radically changed the composition of the organization and the representatives of the developing world now have the majority to dominate the conduct of the affairs of the General Assembly and its subordinate bodies. The impact of science and technology on relations between nations has meant that the problem of maintaining international peace and security has acquired new dimensions since the invention of thermo-nuclear weapons, intercontinental missiles and spy satellites. Technological progress has also meant the development of increasingly sophisticated

communications systems which have brought home to all the interdependence of states. Economic and social change throughout the world has occurred as a by-product of scientific and technological change but, partly as a consequence of this, the gap between the rich and the poor tends to widen just at the time when the potential benefits of a highly developed society are greater than ever before. Internationally this imbalance is a most serious source of friction dividing the privileged minority in the industrial countries and the under-privileged majority in the less developed regions.

Canada has the opportunity in the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies to draw on Canada's abundant resources, its bilingualism in two universal languages, its excellence in modern science and technology and its experience of a complex system of democratic government (federalism) to communicate with other countries, particularly the developing countries, and to contribute to international cooperation in selective fields of endeavour, thus attaining a major measure of national self-realization for Canada as well as helping other countries to realize their potential.

In order to provide a focus for Canadian efforts at the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies, the review selects a number of specific goals which are intended to take account of the changing circumstances in the world situation and in the world organization and the possibility for constructive action by governments. These goals have been selected as worthy of special consideration because of their importance intrinsically, as well as because they give maximum opportunity to Canada for self-realization in terms of Canadian resources and capabilities:

- 1) contributing to economic and social development;
- 2) working to stop the arms race;
- 3) promoting peace-keeping and peace-making through the United Nations;
- 4) establishing an effective dialogue with the governments of Africa on the problems of southern Africa;
- 5) establishing an effective dialogue with the People's Republic of China;

- 6) taking measures to prevent further deterioration in the human environment;
- 7) promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of satellite systems;
- 8) promoting international cooperation in the use of the seabed beyond the limits of national jurisdiction;
- 9) promoting observance of human rights including adherence to and respect for various United Nations conventions;
- 10) contributing to the progressive development and codification of international law;
- 11) projecting Canada as a bilingual country within the United Nations context;
- 12) contributing to the institutional development of the United Nations as a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations.

The review contains recommendations proposing some specific ways in which the national goals as outlined above might be pursued by Canada in common cause with other countries, through the United Nations family of international organizations. There has not been a deliberate attempt to change policies for the sake of change; rather the aim has been to re-define and re-examine Canada's goals in relation to the United Nations in terms of current changes in the international environment and in anticipation of expected development in the future. The methods and techniques by which these aims might be pursued have also been examined. The draft review will be re-examined in the light of the comments received during this seminar and from other government departments and a final version will be submitted to the government for approval.