



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS

Text of a speech by the Honourable Paul Martin, Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the Nineteenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly on December 8, 1964.

Mr. President:

May I begin by congratulating you on your election to preside over the deliberations of this Assembly? In electing you to this high office, the Assembly has given recognition, at one and the same time, to the distinguished services you have rendered to the United Nations, to the prominent part your country has played in the affairs of this organization, and to the growing stature of Africa in the world.

I would also wish to extend a welcome to the Delegations of Malawi, Zambia and Malta, who have joined our ranks for the first time. Their presence among us serves as a reminder of the transcendent political changes that have marked the first two decades of the existence of the United Nations. It also takes us yet another step closer to universality of membership, which was the great issue of our debates some ten years ago and which must remain our ultimate goal so long as any significant segment of the world's population remains unrepresented in this forum.

Your own country, Mr. President, and mine are associated with these three new countries in the Commonwealth. We regard the development of this association as an imaginative response to the political changes of which I have spoken. We believe that it provides a unique framework for constructive co-operation among peoples of different races, creeds and cultures. This co-operation rests on a partnership of equals, and it is designed for our common benefit. We have recognized that, if the Commonwealth association is to continue to be meaningful, we would have to meet the challenge of racial equality and non-discrimination which is central to our partnership. We have not sought to avoid this challenge but have met it firmly and unequivocally by pledging ourselves to work towards "a structure of society which offers equal opportunity and non-discrimination for all its people, irrespective of race, colour or creed".

We are now on the threshold of the twentieth anniversary year of the United Nations. On an occasion such as this it is fitting that we should look back on the record of our accomplishments and our failures. It is equally fitting that we should cast our glance forward into the future to survey the

opportunities that are open to us and the means we must deploy towards their attainment.

The United Nations was born of disenchantment -- disenchantment with an order of things which, twice in a single generation, had engulfed us in armed conflict with all the attendant destruction and human suffering. But the United Nations was also born of a determination to build a new and more rational world order based on constructive co-operation in the common interest of the world community as a whole.

It was the assumption and expectation of the framers of the Charter that along this course the United Nations would be sustained by the strength of resources of the great powers acting in concert. As matters developed, this assumption was not fully realized. This has slowed the pace of our progress towards a more rational world order. It has not diminished the impetus which must inevitably lead us in that direction.

Indeed, when we look back over the past two decades, we are bound to be struck by the extent to which we have come, over an increasingly wide area, to organize our activities on a basis of international co-operation. There is scarcely an area of human concern which we have not brought within the focus of one international organization or another. We have joined in concerted attacks on famine, disease and illiteracy. We have co-operated in freeing the flow of trade and capital. We have begun to mobilize the resources of the affluent world in support of the efforts of the developing countries. We have made arrangements for disseminating the achievements of science and technology. We have collaborated in drawing up a Charter of Human Rights. And we have endeavoured to work out ways in which the disputes of nations can be contained and brought within the compass of negotiated solutions. In short, we have recognized that international co-operation, far from being incompatible with our national interests, is in many areas the most effective as well as the most enduring way of securing them.

This is, I think, a creditable record of achievement. It surely demonstrates that the United Nations has not become, as many feared that it might, a more debating society. But it does not afford us any grounds for complacency. The world in which we live is one of change -- change on a scale, and at a pace, unprecedented in the affairs of men. If the United Nations is to become the dynamic instrument of governments which the late Dag Hammarskjold envisaged, it must not only be able to meet our present needs but must have the capacity to serve as an instrument of peaceful change.

Already the focus of emphasis in the United Nations has shifted. And it has shifted, in large part, as a result of the emergence to independent nationhood of countries which now constitute more than half of our total membership. These countries are seeking to broaden out the basis and the meaning of their newly-achieved independence. They are seeking to provide improved conditions of life for all segments of their populations. And they are seeking to absorb the impact of the scientific and technical revolution of the twentieth century in conditions of reasonable social and economic stability. These are formidable tasks. They cannot be accomplished by these countries acting in isolation. They can be accomplished only in a co-operative world environment.

Inevitably, the new balance of forces in our organization has brought in its wake problems that will need to be met. For my own part, I am confident that they can be met. I say this because it is surely in the interests of all of us that the United Nations should continue to command the widest possible support of those who are involved in the determination of policy in its member states. Clearly, the greater the size of our membership and the more diffuse the interests represented in our deliberations, the more important it becomes that the conclusions we reach and the recommendations we put forward should reflect the broadest possible consensus of views. In this respect, I am encouraged by the new emphasis that is being placed on the instrument of conciliation as one best calculated to reinforce the effectiveness of the United Nations. Conciliation was responsible, in large measure, for safeguarding the results of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. Conciliation was also instrumental in enabling this Assembly to embark on its work this year in circumstances which we, Mr. President, regard as among the most critical which the United Nations has had to face in the 20 years of its existence.

The crisis we face is not merely a financial crisis. Nor is it limited to constitutional issues. It is a crisis which touches upon our whole conception of the United Nations as the custodian of international peace and security. It is a crisis on the outcome of which hinge the hopes and aspirations of the vast majority of its members for a peaceful and securely-ordered world.

Canada attaches the highest importance to the concept of peace keeping. We regard the evolution of that concept, as distinct from the concepts envisaged in Chapter VII of the Charter, as affording the most significant example of the vitality of the United Nations and its capacity for change in response to changing circumstances. Peace keeping has evolved steadily from the designation of an Observer Group to assist India and Pakistan in avoiding further conflict in Kashmir to the despatch of a United Nations Force to the island of Cyprus earlier this year. This is a period which is almost coterminous with the whole period of existence of the United Nations. Increasingly, over this period, there has been recourse to, and reliance upon, the United Nations presence to prevent unstable situations from erupting into open conflict.

Because of the importance which Canada attaches to this development and the implications it has for the maintenance of world peace and security, we have participated in every peace-keeping operation mounted by the United Nations since 1948, and we have done our best to meet its calls for logistic and financial support. We have also, over the past eight years, maintained a stand-by force which is available on short notice should it be requested by the United Nations for participation in duly-authorized peace-keeping operations.

The same motives which prompted us to respond readily to the calls of the United Nations also prompted us, last month, to convene a conference in Ottawa for the purpose of taking stock of the practical experience which has been gained in past peace-keeping operations. The Conference was attended by representatives from 23 countries, and I am pleased to take this opportunity of paying tribute to the excellent work they did. There was no attempt made by the Conference to produce formal conclusions or to chart any forward course of collective action. I am confident, however, that the Conference has done

something to improve the capacity of the participating countries to respond more effectively and more rationally to future appeals by the United Nations.

Since the conclusion of the Conference, I have been encouraged to note the proposal of the Secretary-General that the whole question of advance planning for peace-keeping operations be studied by the United Nations. In putting this proposal forward in the introduction to his annual report, the Secretary-General expressed the hope that such a study might "yield recommendations for consideration by the competent organs", which may then authorize him "to proceed along such lines as may be generally approved". Canada strongly supports this proposal, and we will naturally be prepared to play our full part in carrying it forward at the appropriate time.

The availability of properly trained and equipped forces is one element of an effective United Nations capacity to keep the peace. The availability of the necessary financial resources on an assured basis is another. It would be tragic, indeed, if, in a future crisis, the United Nations were debarred, for lack of funds, from intervening in the cause of peace.

Canada has always supported the view that the responsibility for maintaining peace and security is one which is shared by all member states of the United Nations. We regard it as a logical consequence of that view that the cost of peace keeping must also be shared equitably by all, with due regard to their relative capacity to contribute. We believe this principle of shared responsibility to be inherent in the Charter, and we find ourselves confirmed in that belief by the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice. According to that opinion, the expenses incurred by the United Nations in the Middle East and in the Congo are expenses of the organization and the assessments for them approved by the General Assembly are binding assessments.

I am bound to acknowledge that some important member states do not share our view either of the principle or of the law involved. In circumstances where the five Permanent Members of the Security Council between them are responsible for meeting two-thirds of the costs of our organization, the dissenting views of two of these Permanent Members are clearly of critical importance. The divergence between their views and those of the majority of members have set us on a collision course which, if not diverted, can only have the gravest consequences for the United Nations, whatever the outcome. In this situation, it is incumbent on each and every one of us to reflect on the implications of our present course and to explore all avenues of reaching an accommodation to which we can all subscribe.

The vital importance of this problem has, of course, been recognized for some considerable time. As far back as 1961, the Canadian Delegation, in an effort to find a solution to this problem, sponsored the proposal which led to the establishment of the Working Group of 15. In this Group -- and subsequently in the Working Group of 21 --, we sought actively to reconcile the fundamental divergences of view which have threatened the capacity of the United Nations to keep the peace. We deeply regret that it has not proved possible so far to arrive at any accommodation.

Such an accommodation must be found. If it is to be found, there will need to be a willingness to make concessions on all sides. I am confident that, in the same spirit of conciliation which has attended the opening phase of this Assembly, the necessary concessions can and will be made. Agreement on this issue is vital to the future of our organization, but I believe it will also have implications beyond the United Nations. It could be as important as the nuclear test-ban treaty as a means of broadening the basis of international understanding. For it is surely in the interest of the great powers that the international community should be free to act in situations which might otherwise have the effect of extending the area of confrontation between them.

The search for agreement must be initiated at once and pursued vigorously. We welcome the steps which have already been taken by the Secretary-General to this end. We look forward to the early advancement of the more restricted discussions now under way, to the point where the Working Group of 21 can be called into action. We believe that, at that stage, the detailed exploration of this issue which has been carried out by the members of the Working Group over the past year will prove to be of value.

The Canadian objective in these discussions will be to achieve an accommodation, not a capitulation. I would not wish to leave this subject, however, without affirming once again our belief that the principle of shared responsibility must form the basis of any ultimate consensus. We believe, in particular, that the responsibility for meeting the costs of operations such as Cyprus, the need for which has been acknowledged by the Security Council, must be shared by all member states, rather than left to a few.

With regard to the maintenance of peace and security, I wish to emphasize as strongly as I can that it is not enough for the United Nations to rely on the goodwill of a few. It must be able to count on the response and the responsibility of the whole membership.

I believe that there will continue to be a need for peace-keeping operations in the foreseeable future. I say this because we have witnessed great political and social changes in our world which will take time to work themselves out and which cannot be counted upon to do so without some element of upheaval. Meanwhile, there is an obligation which the Charter places upon us to settle our disputes by peaceful means and to refrain from the threat or use of force against one another. We also have an obligation to carry forward our pursuit of peace and security by working towards our agreed objective of general and complete disarmament.

The events of the past few months have made it clear that the central issue in the disarmament field at this Assembly is the need to limit the spread of nuclear weapons. When I speak in terms of events of the past few months, I have naturally in mind the nuclear test conducted by Communist China on October 16. We deeply regret that the Chinese Communist Government should have chosen to disregard world opinion in such deliberate fashion. We also look upon this development as profoundly disquieting for the future. If it does nothing else, I would hope that it will impart fresh urgency to our efforts to reach agreement to limit the spread of independent military nuclear capability.

The nuclear test-ban treaty is, for the time-being, the only international instrument inhibiting an expansion of the number of nuclear powers. The Canadian position has been that nuclear and non-nuclear powers should be bound reciprocally in an undertaking to prevent the dissemination of nuclear weapons. The need for such agreement is greater now that the number of nuclear powers has increased. It is no longer sufficient to depend on the restraining of the nuclear powers themselves. What is now required is the elaboration of an international agreement or agreements by which the nuclear states would undertake not to relinquish control of nuclear weapons nor to transmit the information necessary for their manufacture to states not possessing such weapons, while the non-nuclear states, for their part, would pledge themselves not to manufacture or otherwise acquire control of nuclear weapons. In the Canadian view, an agreement on these lines would have a significant contribution to make to the enlargement of world peace and security.

Canada has been in the forefront of the development of nuclear energy. The manufacture of nuclear weapons has long been within our technical capability. It has, however, been the deliberate policy of successive Canadian Governments to refrain from exercising that capability and to concentrate on the peaceful uses of the atom. That remains the position of Canada. There are other nations -- notably India -- which, though within range of a nuclear capability, have taken the same position of self-denial. We believe that this is the position best calculated to advance the cause of peace.

I have been speaking so far about the part the United Nations has played and must continue to play in the enlargement of world peace and security. Let me now turn to the other major field in which the United Nations has a part to play in pushing outward the boundaries of international co-operation, the enlargement of world prosperity.

World peace and world prosperity are closely linked together. A climate of world peace is indispensable if the struggle against poverty, hunger and disease is to be waged effectively and with the full mobilization of all the resources at our command. Conversely, there cannot be any assured prospect of peace and security in a world in which affluence and poverty are so unevenly distributed.

We are now approaching the mid-point of the United Nations Development Decade. The object in designating the 1960s in this way was to achieve in the developing countries targets of economic growth that held out some prospect of narrowing the gap between their living standards and those of the developed countries. These targets were set as minimum targets, representing, as they did, a compromise between what needed to be done and what was considered to lie within the realm of practical achievement. Experience has shown that even these minimum targets can be met only if domestic effort in the developing countries is properly deployed and if it is supported by appropriate international policies. Experience has also shown that trade has a vital contribution to make to the total development process.

It was with the object of bringing trade and development into closer focus that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development was convened in Geneva earlier this year. This was the largest economic conference held in the history of this or any other organization. It was also the first such

conference to concern itself comprehensively with the problem of under-development which affects two-thirds of the world's population. It enabled us jointly to take stock of the magnitude of the problem. It brought about a substantial measure of identification of the interests of developing countries as a group. Indeed, the coalescence of the 75 developing countries within the larger community of interest, which includes us all, was perhaps the most significant single feature of the Geneva Conference. I think it is fair to say that the Conference enabled us to arrive at a much better understanding of the broad lines along which domestic and international effort must henceforth be directed. It also produced broadly agreed recommendations on a number of important questions, especially those relating to development planning in a framework of international support.

Inevitably, the Conference did not go as far as many would have wished it to go. But I think we would be wrong to judge the Conference in terms only of its short-term results. World public opinion is now seized of the problem of under-development as never before. We can also now look forward to the establishment of an institutional framework within which the work that was begun at Geneva can be carried forward in depth. For my part, I look upon the Conference as a turning point in history. It has set in train developments which, I am sure, will not be reversed and which are bound to make a lasting imprint on the whole pattern of international economic relations.

The Canadian Government is prepared to play its full part in the great co-operative effort that will be required if the developing countries are to be brought to the threshold of self-sustaining economic growth. We are expanding and broadening our programmes of economic assistance. We were able, at the Geneva Conference, to announce a 50 percent increase in the volume of Canadian assistance during the current year. Only last Friday, on behalf of the Government of Canada, I signed an agreement with the Inter-American Development Bank under which we have agreed to make loans on very favourable terms to Latin-American countries for programmes designed to accelerate their economic, technical and educational development. I mention this agreement because it provides for the first concerted programme of Canadian assistance to our neighbours and friends in Latin America and thus an extension of the area in which Canada has carried out such programmes in the past.

I would also wish to say a word about the World Food Programme of the United Nations. We regard this programme as contributing significantly to economic development, and look forward to its renewal in 1965. The present contributions to this programme have been either used up or committed. In these circumstances, the Canadian Government has decided to make a further contribution of \$2 million, to be added to the \$5.4 million of our original pledge.

The United Nations itself is on the point of consolidating its own development assistance by merging the Special Fund and the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance. The Canadian Government supports the considerations which have prompted this move. We attach importance to the new combined programme carrying forward the same sound policies which have characterized the operation of the present programmes and commanding the same confidence and support.

We recognize that there will be a continuing need for both bilateral and multilateral assistance to sustain the efforts which the developing countries themselves are making to mobilize their resources for development. We also recognize, however, that these countries look towards a world trading order that is in the closest possible harmony with their interests. The Canadian market imposes no barrier other than the tariff to the products of the developing countries. We are prepared, in the context of the negotiations which have now formally been launched at Geneva, to reduce our tariffs with particular regard for the trading interests of the developing countries. In common with other developed countries, we are prepared to do so without requiring an equivalence of concessions from the developing countries. As Canadians, we believe that a stable world trading order is of interest to all countries, including, particularly, those in the process of development, and that there cannot be such a trading order without some balance of rights and obligations. On the other hand, we are prepared to recognize the special position of the developing countries in the world trading context. I believe that the agreement which has now been reached to give statutory recognition to this special position of the developing countries in the context of GATT is one we all welcome as a significant step in the right direction.

In the introduction to his annual report, the Secretary-General speaks of the new conciliation procedures which have emerged from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development as adding to "the broad concepts of negotiation and co-operation inherent in the Charter". As I have already indicated, Canada attaches particular importance to this concept of conciliation. We regard it as a valid and efficient concept in the management of our domestic affairs, although its application demands patience and goodwill. We also believe that, if we are to proceed to a closer identification of the attitudes and activities of members of the world community at large, we can best do so by taking serious and realistic account of one another's concerns. Any other course is likely, in our view, to weaken the very organizations which embody our hopes for a new world order and among which the United Nations itself stands first and foremost.

World peace and world prosperity -- these are the twin pillars on which the UN must stand or fall. We have now reached a critical juncture in our affairs. What we must decide is whether the United Nations is to be enabled to play its appointed part in securing world peace and world prosperity or whether its capacity to do so is to be seriously impaired, if not crippled. For let us not think that the ability of the United Nations to serve the broader interests of the world community will be unaffected by the way in which we solve the present crisis.

We have made substantial progress in the course of international co-operation over the past two decades. We must now consolidate that progress and build upon it. We cannot afford to go back on what we have achieved.

Here in the United Nations are embodied the hopes and aspirations of mankind for a better world order. We have an obligation, each and every one of us, acting within the concept of shared responsibility, to see that these hopes and aspirations do not go unrealized. Let it not be said in this Assembly that we failed to discharge that obligation, with all the consequences this could have for the future course of international co-operation.