



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 54/42 CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS

Speech by the Minister of National Health and Welfare, Mr. Paul Martin, made at the Annual Convention of the United Steel Workers of America, at Atlantic City, September 22, 1954.

I am honoured by this invitation to address the Annual Convention of the United Steel Workers of America. Yours is a mighty union with intimate and continuing connections with the Steel Workers, and so with the people and indeed the whole economy of my own country - your neighbour, Canada.

Any Canadian would be proud to be in the midst of this company today and to pay tribute to this gathering. Your convention is a symbol of that combination of industrial strength linked to the ideal of free association and civic responsibility which is one of the roots of your national greatness.

As a neighbour of the United States, Canada welcomes the moral power and material strength of the United States. Two years ago in speaking of the free partnership which exists between our two countries my colleague, Mr. Pearson, Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, said:

"In some parts of the world where smaller countries lie next to more powerful neighbours, the dominant keynote is fear and subordination. In North America, it is friendship and confidence, founded on a free and fruitful association. Proximity arising from the facts of politics and geography can often breed mistrust. In the case of our two peoples, it has bred deep and mutual respect. Proximity does not for us mean the imposed leadership of the master or the enforced obedience of the reluctant satellite. It means partnership, based on consultations and cooperation, and includes the right to agree - or to disagree.

"This tradition of the good neighbour derives not merely from the fact that we are the joint occupants of a continent endowed with great material resources and developed by the industry and spirit of Americans and Canadians. Nor is it due only to the fact that we know - and act on the knowledge - that our defence recognizes no national boundaries; that it lies in collective measures shared with our neighbours and our friends, and in the pledges we have made - and which we are honouring - as members of the United Nations.

"The sources of our good neighbourhood lie deeper. They are found in the faith which illuminates our search for the security and the welfare of our own peoples, and of others as well; in respect for freedom, and for the rights and dignity of individual men and women."

Whether we think of the vast extent of the governmental and non-governmental areas of direct cooperation between our two countries; whether we think of the many international associations in which we share a common partnership and pursue a common goal, we do not need a "Declaration of Interdependence" to emphasize how close we are to one another.

In our time, there is one thing that doesn't change: that is the complexity and the scale of world problems and the size of the stakes for the human race if the efforts to resolve them peacefully should ever be abandoned. That effort depends not only on the wisdom and foresight of national governments, or on the effectiveness of the institutions and techniques for international cooperation which are steadily being evolved. It depends in the last analysis on the degree to which there is a comprehension and understanding among the peoples of the world of the real forces at work in the international community. It can only be sustained by a recognition of the collective responsibility we share in the search for peace, and in the choice of the best means of achieving it.

In reaching the goals you have set for yourself in this vast industrial association, you have pursued the path of collective action. To my mind the approach to peace lies along the same path. You will not be surprised with the ninth session of the General Assembly only two days old if I speak to you today of the organization from which I have just come in New York - the United Nations - an international experiment in the field of collective action which your organization and others like it have a right - and a duty - to examine.

For it is clear that the thoughts and feelings of the people of the United States towards the United Nations and what it is trying to do will in the long run weight more heavily on the scale, and tilt it further towards success or failure than any other single factor. Never in the world's history has a nation had more awesome responsibilities mere abruptly thrust upon it than those which face the people of the United States today. You have come to your position of world leadership with traditions of freedom, of efficiency and of grass roots common sense which enable you to choose your ends with honour and your means with shrewdness and determination. It is of vital importance to all of the world's peoples who now are free, or who seek freedom for the future, that you should continue to let these qualities guide you and should not, in anger or discouragement, fail to make the fullest and best use of the tools which lie to your hand in the struggle for peace.

It is just nine short years since San Francisco's Golden Gate provided a frame for the founding fathers of the United Nations Charter to look beyond the immediate horizon towards the vision of a future safe from global

war. Since 1945 the gates to the future have narrowed, while the vistas of the horrors of modern warfare have expanded beyond our imaginations.

But this cannot be blamed on the United Nations. We all know that failures and frustrations can easily be detected, just as steady achievements can be overlooked. In the United Nations we are suffering on the international plane the same headaches that nations like yours and mine experienced in setting up our domestic machinery of government. In Canada, as in this country, the extension of the rule of law to the frontiers of the nation state did not come overnight. It will take longer than nine years for the United Nations to establish beyond question the supremacy of the law in the vastness of the world community.

Yet can we visualize the sort of world we might inhabit today if, even with all its defects, we had not developed this instrument for collective action?

Some of its achievements should be briefly noted. The United Nations succeeded in bringing an end to the conflict in Palestine. The United Nations worked out a partial settlement in the dispute between India and Pakistan. The United Nations has aided states in the achievement of their independence, and devised a solution to some of the issues arising in the aftermath of war, such as the disposal of the Italian colonies. Above all, the United Nations acted to resist aggression and to achieve an armistice in Korea.

These are concrete illustrations of effective collective action. Let us look more broadly at two main areas of collective action in which the United Nations has proven its usefulness and vitality:

- (1) Collective security;
- (2) The economic and social basis of collective security.

The principle of collective security is basic to the United Nations Charter. It means acceptance of the fact that aggression in one part of the world constitutes a threat to every other part. While it may be necessary at times to balance our collective security obligations against the resources at our disposal, to deter aggression has become the continuing concern and responsibility of all.

Korea provided a test of the collective security principle in action. True, the intervention of the United Nations in Korea was possible only because of a happy accident which prevented the Communist representatives on the Security Council from exercising their veto power. True the burden fell unequally on the member nations. True, too there was much improvisation in arrangements. Nevertheless, the historic decision to take collective action to resist this unprovoked aggression has significance not only for Korea, but for the whole world.

Because the paralyzing effects of abuse of the veto power in the Security Council imperilled the ability of the United Nations to implement the collective

security provisions of the Charter, certain countries - like yours and mine - have felt impelled to make more limited collective defence arrangements of their own, in other vital areas.

Thus was born the idea of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. NATO was set up in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter, and its formation can in no way be interpreted as an abandonment of the United Nations. In the search for peace the world needs both NATO and the United Nations, as it needs the new regional organizations which have since come into being. I believe that such regional and self-defence agencies will enable the United Nations to survive in a stronger, more effective form.

But security rests not on armed defence alone. It depends also on collective action in the economic field. It depends on an organized attempt to come to grips with the fundamental economic and social problems that condemn peoples to privation and that, as a consequence, predispose them to seek desperate solutions in false dogmas or even armed conflict.

In the under-developed areas of the world, a vast field exists for common effort. Here much of the poverty springs not from a lack of resources but from a lack of the technical knowledge and ability that would enable the peoples of those countries to develop their own resources for their own benefit. Through the sharing of technical knowledge, which has brought such striking advances to the Western World, other regions of the earth can themselves develop along the same path and towards the same goal.

Already Canada and like-minded nations have shown their determination to help their neighbours across the globe by the development of co-operative programmes through the Specialized Agencies.

Many of you here may be thinking at this point of the International Labour Organization, which has been performing such useful functions in the field of labour relations and working conditions since the end of the First World War, and you will recognize that collective action is a concept and a technique which can usefully be applied to many other areas of man's social and economic life.

It is being so applied by other organs of the United Nations and through many of the Specialized Agencies in which the discussion of problems common to a number of nations, and of important significance for all countries, has led to tangible understanding of the value of international co-operation.

Perhaps the most dramatic example of this is the United Nations Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance for Under-Developed Countries. As you no doubt know, the inspiration for a multi-nation largescale programme to help the economically less well-developed countries to help themselves to improve, not merely their average, but their minimum standards of living, came from your former President, Mr. Truman, when, in his inaugural address to Congress in January 1949, he announced the creation of the "Point Four" programme.

The example of your own imaginative approach to this problem had a direct bearing on the decision to establish in 1949 a complementary United Nations programme, which is operating now on a budget of more than \$25 million contributed by 72 countries. These funds are allocated to seven Specialized Agencies and the United Nations Technical Assistance Administration, which, in turn, arrange technical assistance in the form of expert services, training equipment, fellowships and scholarships to meet the requests received from a variety of recipient countries in most parts of the world. In 1953 alone, more than 1800 United Nations experts were serving in some 66 countries; while in the same period more than 2000 fellows and scholars from 115 countries, colonies and territories were studying abroad under United Nations auspices.

I do not need to emphasize to an audience such as this, with its intimate understanding of the relationship between technical skill and human mastery of environment, the tremendous fillip to economic and social advance that is being derived from this mass exchange of technical knowledge and experience. The significance of such a programme, in terms of helping to relieve countless millions of depressed peoples from the burden of their relentless struggle for survival and of assisting them on their way forward to an expanding prospect of material well-being, is fully appreciated in my country as it is in yours. Besides your own unprecedented national programmes of foreign aid, you contribute the major portion of the funds required for the Expanded Programme. For this year, the total United States pledge amounted to nearly \$14 million. The corresponding Canadian contribution, representing an increase of almost 90 per cent over the previous year, was \$1,500,000. None of us, I am sure, would hesitate to make this small contribution to the welfare of the millions of less fortunate peoples who are so bravely waging their pitiless "war on want".

Like your country, Canada is also contributing technical assistance and economic aid in addition to its participation in the United Nations programmes. Under the Colombo Plan, with which your country is associated as a full member, Canada has in the last four years made \$102 million available for capital and technical assistance to a number of countries in South and Southeast Asia. Out of the roughly \$2.4 million set aside for technical assistance since 1950, the services of 52 Canadian Colombo Plan experts have been placed at the disposal of the area while facilities for some 194 Colombo Plan fellows and scholars as well as substantial amounts of technical training equipment have been supplied to the countries concerned. \$100 million has been allocated for capital assistance of various kinds designed, in accordance with the requests of the governments concerned, to further the economic development plans in India, Pakistan and Ceylon.

The United Nations Expanded Programme can, I believe, take its rightful place beside your own Foreign Operations Administration and the Colombo Plan as an important and useful means of giving expression, in a positive fashion, to the desire for international co-operation. Such programmes represent not only mutual aid but also self-help, for no nation can remain healthy and prosperous in a diseased and bankrupt world. In this

interdependent and shrinking world, no man and no nation can "go it alone".

Despite these achievements, there have been criticisms of the United Nations in this country and in others, some of them very severe - and some of them, I believe, not justified. Let us examine them and see whether they will stand up to our questions.

There are three principal charges that we hear made against the United Nations. They are mutually incompatible; but that does not prevent them from sometimes being held all three by the same people.

First and most serious is the charge that the United Nations has not brought us security. The counts in this indictment you have all heard - that the United Nations does nothing, that it is a talking shop, and that it did not prevent the loss of thousands of lives (many of them American) in Korea. The second charge, which as I said is hardly compatible with the first, is that the United Nations is a super-government, and that it imperils the tradition of the sovereign right of any nation to protect its independence and guide its own destiny. Third and noisiest is the charge that the United Nations with its membership including states from the Communist world, in some way threatens the safety and independence of the United States - that it is being used as a cloak for Soviet expansionism.

To deal with the third count first: I am sure that those who believe it have never had any first-hand experience of the United Nations. If there is one thing that can be said about those meetings, it is that they are not a cloak for anything. In fact, I personally have felt, and sometimes said, that they are too much the other way, that when those of us who have the same fundamental objectives want in a friendly way to iron out our minor differences of opinion as to ways and means, the glare of publicity sometimes makes it hard to maintain the flexibility and the give and take which are essential to any successful negotiation.

You, as representatives of one of the major labour unions of the United States, know very well that negotiation is just that; it is a means to arrive at a solution acceptable to both parties in which each both gives and gets. But to return to the United Nations, so far as our relations with the communist bloc countries are concerned, this rigid and public nature of the proceedings has its advantages for us, because it pitilessly exposes the nature of communist policy and propaganda and gives all the world an opportunity to see and to form its own judgment.

Anyone who has followed the voting at the United Nations and has counted how often the five countries of the Soviet bloc have stood alone will realize again the truth of Abe Lincoln's famous remark about how many people you can fool how much of the time. If there is one place where you have to lay it on the line it is the United Nations, and so far the communist countries have not shown up very well. This is not to say the principal use of the United Nations is to serve as an anti-communist

club, or as a useful weapon in the cold war. Rather, the United Nations is and should be a place where all our ways of living and thinking must meet the challenge of our times, which is quite simply the challenge of survival - survival, not of one culture or of one group of humans, but of humanity itself - and where they must be measured against our common need for peace, for freedom from want and fear, and for a positive and constructive drive towards what we acknowledge as good.

Now about that second charge, that the United Nations is, or is trying to be, a "super-government". The United Nations is prevented by the terms of its Charter from such a course. What it is has been well described by the present Secretary-General, Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, in an address to the University of California convocation at Berkley. He said then:

"The organization does not exert any powers beyond what the member states at any given moment, and in any given situation, collectively are willing to give it in order to cope with problems they have in common. It is an organ for free co-operation of the nations, inside the framework of agreed procedures, and supported by a permanent civil service".

The United Nations acts only with the consent of its members, and in the case of certain of its most important functions, particularly those concerned with the maintenance of peace, only with the consent of the five permanent members of the Security Council, one of which is of course the United States. What the United Nations can do and most often successfully does, is to give an opportunity for focussing the collective will of the nations and peoples of the world.

Finally, there is the accusation that the United Nations has failed to assure world peace, that it has not brought us the military security we had hoped for and expected. It must be admitted that there is truth in this - but it is not the whole truth. The failure is not that of the United Nations which, I must say again, can do only what its members collectively want it to do, what they are prepared to have it do. The collapse of the wartime partnership among the five great powers has robbed much of its force and efficiency from the machinery set up by the Charter for the maintenance of peace and the halting of aggression, but has not robbed the United Nations of all usefulness in this sphere. Regional and collective defence arrangements such as the North Atlantic Treaty, the Organization of American States, the ANZUS Pact and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization recently launched in Manila, were envisaged in the Charter and have provided a useful thought restricted form of security. In addition, the Uniting for Peace resolution of 1950, which was adopted after the United Nations had taken the first steps to halt aggression in Korea, establishes a procedure by which the General Assembly could, if such action were regarded as desirable, take over functions for the maintenance of peace which the Security Council might be unable to use effectively owing to the abuse of the veto by one of the five great powers.

There is little doubt therefore that the United Nations will serve our purpose if we really want it to. That is of course the main point. The United Nations is our instrument, not our master; the means, not an end. Too often, its critics tend to assume that it can do things apart from its members, that by establishing the United Nations we have somehow rid ourselves of all responsibility to use it. Thus, it is often we hear the complaint that the United Nations did not prevent the war in Korea, that it failed there and (by implication) will fail everywhere. The United Nations in Korea did what it was set up to do: it mobilized the forces and implemented the will of the majority of its members and thus enabled them to put a stop to a local conflict and prevent it from developing into a general war. It is true that this was done at a cost - a particularly heavy cost to the United States in men and material - but that does not alter the fact that it was done; that it was a demonstration, however imperfect and costly, of something that the United Nations was set up to do, and that the United Nations did because the majority of members, including the United States, wanted it done.

We should regard the United Nations as something that works, not in spite of us, but because of us, that we accept the basic give and take principle of negotiation and determine to make the best and most constructive use we can of this instrument which we have created and which is at our disposal.

Over the nine short years in which the United Nations has existed, it has been threatened from within, and attacked from without. But with all its short-comings it is impossible for any of us to envisage a world without the network of practice and precedence, the institutions and procedures for peace making and peace enforcement which we mean by the phrase "the United Nations". If the United Nations did not exist, the prospect for humanity would be grim indeed.

The fate of all of us in the long term depends on the success of the United Nations. There are moments of irritation over its ineffectiveness in given situations but responsible men and women will give it their support unchangingly during the periods of weakness as well as when it is strong, because if we support it consistently it will become a mighty force contributing towards the maintenance in our world of peace, security and freedom.

S/C