

doc
CA1
EA
45S73
ENG

M
b3168207

STATEMENTS IN 1943 AND 1944

ON

GENERAL INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATION

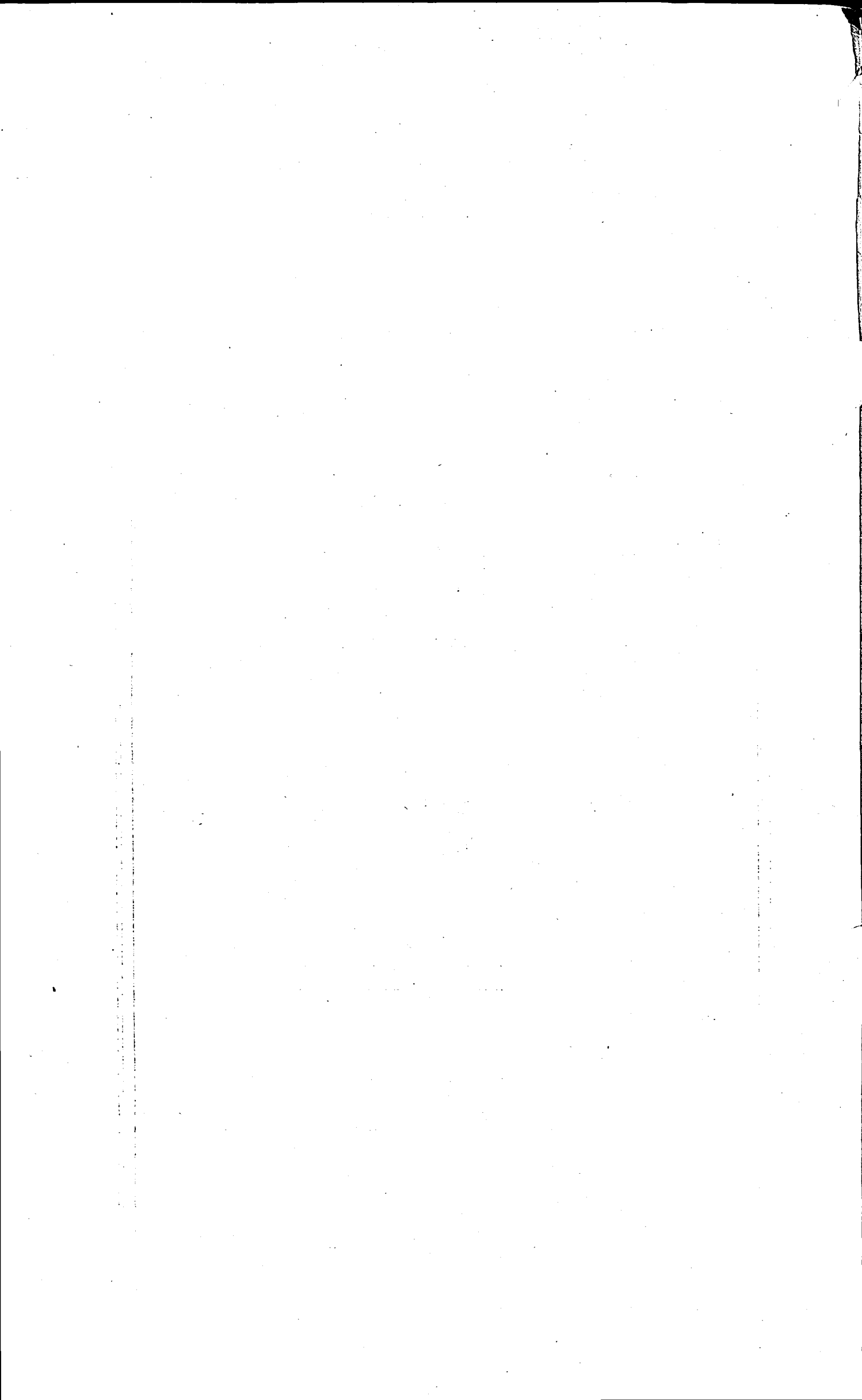
BY

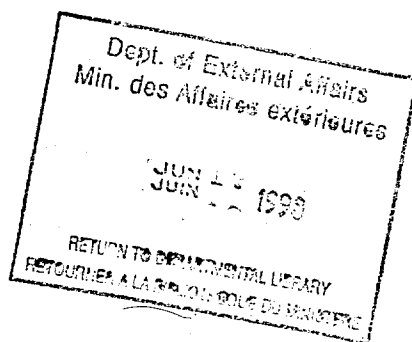
The Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING,
Prime Minister of Canada



Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, January 15, 1945

OTTAWA
EDMOND CLOUTIER
PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY
1945





STATEMENTS IN 1943 AND 1944
ON
GENERAL INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

BY

The Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING,
Prime Minister of Canada

1. *From speech on estimates of Department of External Affairs in
House of Commons, July 9, 1943*

53711-281

It is too early for me to attempt even a shadowy outline of the form of the international settlement, political and economic, which may follow the ending of hostilities. It may be useful, however, to say a word about one of its aspects. The strong bonds which have linked the United Nations into a working model of co-operation must be strengthened and developed for even greater use in the years of peace. It is perhaps an axiom of war that during actual hostilities methods must be improvised, secrecy must be observed, attention must be concentrated on victory. The time is approaching, however, when even before victory is won the concept of the United Nations will have to be embodied in some form of international organization. On the one hand, authority in international affairs must not be concentrated exclusively in the largest powers. On the other, authority cannot be divided equally among all the thirty or more sovereign states that comprise the United Nations, or all effective authority will disappear. A number of new international institutions are likely to be set up as a result of the war. In the view of the government, effective representation on these bodies should neither be restricted to the largest states nor necessarily extended to all states. Representation should be determined on a functional basis which will admit to full membership those countries, large or small, which have the greatest contribution to make to the particular object in question. In the world there are over sixty sovereign states. If they all have a nominally equal voice in international decisions, no effective decisions are likely to be taken. Some compromise must be found between the theoretical equality of states and the practical necessity of limiting representation on international bodies to a workable number. That compromise can be discovered, especially in economic matters, by the adoption of the functional principle of representation. That principle, in turn, is likely to find many new expressions in the gigantic task of liberation, restoration and reconstruction.

2. From speech on the motion for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his speech at the opening of the session, in House of Commons, January 31, 1944

A concrete issue in external policy has been raised in recent speeches delivered by Lord Halifax and Field Marshal Smuts. It relates to the domination of certain great powers. Both speeches expressed the view that the future peace of the world depended on the attainment of an equal partnership in strength and influence between the great powers among the United Nations. Both took the position that the resources and man-power of the British Isles were too small to enable the United Kingdom to compete with the United States and the Soviet Union in power and authority after the war. Both, therefore, argued that it was necessary that the United Kingdom should have the constant support of other countries, in order to preserve a proper balance. Field Marshal Smuts thought that this might be achieved by a close association between the United Kingdom and "the smaller democracies in western Europe"; he had little to say of the place of the British Commonwealth as such. Lord Halifax on the other hand declared:—

Not Great Britain only, but the British Commonwealth and Empire, must be the fourth power in that group upon which, under Providence, the peace of the world will henceforth depend.

With what is implied in the argument employed by both these eminent public men I am unable to agree.

It is indeed true beyond question that the peace of the world depends on preserving on the side of peace a large superiority of power, so that those who wish to disturb the peace can have no chance of success. But I must ask whether the best way of attaining this is to seek a balance of strength between three or four great powers. Should we not, indeed must we not, aim at attaining the necessary superiority of power by creating an effective international system inside which the co-operation of all peace-loving countries is freely sought and given?

It seems to me not to be a matter of matching man-power and resources, or, in other words, military and industrial potential, between three or four dominant states. What we must strive for is close co-operation among those great states themselves, and all other like-minded countries. Behind the conception expressed by Lord Halifax and Field Marshal Smuts there lurks the idea of inevitable rivalry between the great powers. Could Canada, situated as she is geographically between the United States and the Soviet Union, and at the same time a member of the British Commonwealth, for one moment give support to such an idea?

The Moscow declaration on general security forecast a system which would involve for its effectiveness firm commitments by all peace-loving states to do their share in preserving peace. Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union were all represented at the Moscow conference. What would seem now to be suggested is that the prime Canadian commitment should be to pursue in all matters of external relations—"in foreign policy, defence, economic affairs, colonial questions and communications," to cite the words of Lord Halifax—a common policy to be framed and executed by all the governments of the Commonwealth. I maintain that apart from all

questions as to how that common policy is to be reached, or enforced, such a conception runs counter to the establishment of effective world security, and therefore is opposed to the true interests of the Commonwealth itself.

We are certainly determined to see the closest collaboration continue between Canada, the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth countries. Nothing that I am saying should be construed as supporting any other view than this. Collaboration inside the British Commonwealth has, and will continue to have, a special degree of intimacy. When, however, it comes to dealing with the great issues which determine peace or war, prosperity or depression, it must not, in aim or method, be exclusive. In meeting world issues of security, employment and social standards we must join not only with Commonwealth countries but with all likeminded states, if our purposes and ideals are to prevail. Our commitments on these great issues must be part of a general scheme, whether they be on a world basis or regional in nature.

We look forward, therefore, to close collaboration in the interests of peace not only inside the British Commonwealth, but also with all friendly nations, small as well as great.

3. *From an address to members of both Houses of the Parliament of the United Kingdom, London, May 11, 1944*

Like the nations of which it is composed, the British Commonwealth has within itself a spirit which is not exclusive, but the opposite of exclusive. Therein lies its strength. That spirit expresses itself in co-operation. Therein lies the secret of its unity. Co-operation is capable of indefinite expansion. Therein lies the hope of the future.

It is of the utmost importance to the Commonwealth that there should continue to be the greatest possible co-operation among its members. In like manner it is, I believe, of the utmost importance to the future of mankind that, after the war, there should be the greatest possible co-operation among the nations of the world.

Our wartime co-operation is not the product of formal institutional unity; it is the result of agreement upon policies of benefit to all. Moreover, they are policies that make an appeal "to all sorts of men in all sorts of countries," provided only they are men of good will.

If, at the close of hostilities, the strength and unity of the Commonwealth are to be maintained, those ends will be achieved not by policies which are exclusive, but by policies which can be shared with other nations. I am firmly convinced that the way to maintain our unity is to base that unity upon principles which can be extended to all nations. I am equally sure that the only way to maintain world unity is to base it upon principles that can be universally applied.

The war has surely convinced all nations, from the smallest to the greatest, that there is no national security to be found in the isolation of any nation or group of nations. The future security of peace-loving nations will depend upon the extent and effectiveness of international co-operation.

It is no less true that it is not the great powers only that are needed to defend, to preserve, and to extend freedom. We should be false to the freedom for which we are fighting if, at any time, we failed to remember that no nation liveth unto itself; and that nations, great and small, are members one of another.

It is not merely the security of nations that is indivisible. Their prosperity also is indivisible. Few would wish to return to the years before the war, when almost every nation sought economic security in economic isolation from its neighbours. What happened was that the economic security of all nations was destroyed. Now is surely the time for the whole world to realize that, just as no nation of itself can ensure its own safety, so no nation or group of nations can in isolation ensure its own prosperity.

For my part, I profoundly believe that both the security and the welfare of the nations of the British Commonwealth and, in large measure, the security and welfare of all peace-loving nations will depend on the capacity of the nations of the Commonwealth to give leadership in the pursuit of policies which, in character, are not exclusive but inclusive. How far such policies can be successfully pursued will, of course, depend on the extent to which other nations are prepared to pursue similar policies. But let us, as least, wherever that is possible, give the lead that is in the interests of the world as a whole. . . .

Over many years Canada's relations with the United States have been especially friendly. Throughout the war, we have followed the path of co-operation. We like to think that our country has had some part in bringing about a harmony of sentiment between the United States and the whole British Commonwealth. That harmony is the foundation of the close military collaboration which is proving so fruitful in this war.

It will ever be a prime object of Canadian policy to work for the maintenance of the fraternal association of the British and American peoples. When peace comes it is our highest hope that the peoples of the British Commonwealth and the United States will continue to march at each other's side, united more closely than ever. But we equally hope that they will march in a larger company, in which all the nations united to-day in defence of freedom will remain united in the service of mankind.

4. *From speech on estimates of the Department of External Affairs, House of Commons, August 4, 1944*

The organization of peace was one of the chief subjects which was discussed at the meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in May. Mr. Churchill on May 24 gave to the British House of Commons an outline of the views which had been considered at that meeting. President Roosevelt in a statement of June 15 indicated that he had a similar conception of the means which should be adopted to give effect to the fourth paragraph of the Moscow declaration of last autumn. A lot of hard thinking is being given to these problems in Moscow, in London, in Washington, in Ottawa and in the other capitals of the United Nations. Mr. Cordell Hull has announced that they will be discussed in Washington this month by representatives of the four largest powers.

I said in the House of Commons last January that it was indeed true beyond question "that the peace of the world depends on preserving on the side of peace a large superiority of power so that those who wish to disturb the peace can have no chance of success." In recent weeks the Germans have added to their armoury of weapons a new instrument of blind destruction, the use of which may serve to underline the thought which I then expressed. The "flying bomb" of to-day is a weapon in its infancy. If it is developed with all the resources and ingenuity of modern science, we may find in a few years that it has become an engine of war which without warning and in no time at all could be used to destroy peaceful countries from afar. The weapon which the Germans are using so indiscriminately against southern England may be as crude in performance in comparison with its successors as was the tank first used in battle on the Somme in September, 1916, in comparison with the latest tanks now in production.

We must indeed preserve a large superiority of power on the side of peace. We shall have that power among the United Nations from the hour of victory. We must keep it in the first place to disarm our enemies and prevent a revival of barbaric militarism in their countries. We must keep it also not only to meet dangers from other quarters which might arise, but to further constructive solutions of the problems which give rise to such dangers.

Canadians should, I think, approach these great questions of the organization of security with two main objects in mind: first, that the methods adopted should be as effective as can be contrived; and, second, that they should safeguard the interests of Canada and commend themselves to the Canadian people so that they can secure steady public support.

There is no constitutional cure for the diseases of international society. Indeed, perhaps one of the errors into which many people fell between the two wars was to feel that the establishment of the League of Nations had somehow itself removed the danger of war. The League was an institution which provided a method and occasion for international co-operation. Without the will to co-operate through the League machinery on the part of countries possessing a large superiority of power, the League could not succeed. It used to be said, in the language current at Geneva, that what was the matter with the League was its lack of universality. This did not mean that a League to which some states did not belong was ineffective; it did mean, however, that unless all or nearly all the most powerful states belonged to the League and accepted its basic principles the League machinery was inadequate to prevent the possibility of war.

We should be able to make a better start now. The four greatest states among the United Nations have joined in the Moscow declaration and there can be no doubt that the rest of the United Nations fully endorse its terms. In the organization of power it is for the most powerful states to take the lead. This is a correct application of the functional idea of international organization. The outlines of the plan which are now emerging involve a constitution generally similar to that of the League of Nations, including an Assembly in which all member states would be equally represented and a Council consisting of representatives of the greatest powers, together with a few other members. Great emphasis is being placed on the authority

of the Council as the central agency for watching over the peace of the world and initiating action to remove threats of war and other causes of serious disagreement or dissension.

If the Council is given these large powers—and I do not question the need for making it an effective centre for initiating action—its composition becomes a question of great importance. The suggestions made by President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill, which are indeed implicit in the Moscow declaration, are that China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States should always be represented on the Council. In the function of maintaining world security the part of these countries is so vital that one must unhesitatingly agree. It is also suggested that there should be added, by a process of election or selection yet to be worked out, a number of representatives of other states who would have temporary membership on the Council and it is to this question that I wish to direct attention.

The co-operation of the greatest powers is necessary to maintain peace. They must co-operate not only with each other but also with other states of lesser power. Especially among our European allies the memory of the Munich agreement of the autumn of 1938 is still vivid. In the circumstances which prevailed then, the Munich agreement may have been the best means of postponing war with Germany. In it, however, two great powers bought from Hitler and his Italian partner, at the expense of a small country, time to prepare themselves for war. Unless the smaller countries can play their due part in the new international system, there will be ever present the fear that great powers may settle their differences at the expense of the smaller countries. The mere existence of such a fear would in time greatly prejudice the whole scheme.

What then should the due part of the lesser countries be, especially in connection with this question of the composition of the new World Council? The simple division of the world between great powers and the rest is unreal and even dangerous. The great powers are called by that name simply because they possess great power. The other states of the world possess power—and, therefore, the capacity to use it for the maintenance of peace—in varying degrees ranging from almost zero in the case of the smallest and weakest states up to a military potential not very far behind that of the great powers.

In determining what states should be represented on the Council with the great powers, it is, I believe, necessary to apply the functional idea. Those countries which have most to contribute to the maintenance of the peace of the world should be most frequently selected. The military contribution actually made during this war by the members of the United Nations provides one good working basis for a selective principle of choice.

I have emphasized the necessity of basing world security on the maintenance of a large superiority of power. Between the two wars too many people in too many countries placed too much faith in general promises like those in the Kellogg Pact, in expressions of good will, in constitutional mechanisms. The world has been disillusioned, but the reaction in the other direction can go too far. If the new world system is conceived in terms of power alone, peace may be kept for a time, but not for long. If it is to last and broaden

out from precedent to precedent it must embody a dynamic idea and ideal. The concentration on security, and on the need to marshal overwhelming force to meet threats to security, is not enough. Security from war is indeed essential, but real security requires international action and organization in many other fields—in social welfare, in trade, in technical progress, in transportation, and in economic development. The general aim must be to lower the temperature of nationalism, while preserving its good features, and thus to diminish national rivalries and reduce the importance of frontiers. This requires that there should be a wide and fruitful area of collaboration, including the continuance of part of the elaborate system of war-time co-operation which we have built up among the allies under stress of danger.

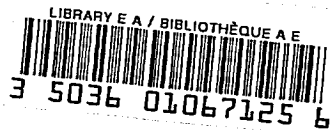
It is perhaps natural that after so many weary years of war some people, looking back perhaps to the high hopes of twenty-five years ago and recalling their disenchantment, should take a gloomy view of what can be accomplished. We must not fear the future. Canadians have every right to be proud not only of what their country has achieved but of what it can achieve. We must not on the other hand think that everything will be simple, that in facing the issues both at home and abroad we can slip into easy ways, and postpone decisions or leave the decisions to other and more powerful states. The opportunity is great, perhaps the greatest that has ever faced mankind. So too will the effort be great which is required to take advantage of the opportunity. Men in all countries will need to make that effort if success is to be attained.

We and the other nations of the Commonwealth already have with the United States what Mr. Churchill has called a "fraternal association". Inside the Commonwealth we already have between its members the type of international relations which we hope to see in wider fields. Many times in recent months, though not too often, there has been described and praised the intimate system of collaboration which prevails within the commonwealth. There is little that I should add to-day, although I think it would be desirable for me to place on record, as I did in an address before the two houses of parliament in London, the methods of co-operation between different parts of the Commonwealth which we believe will best serve to bring about the unity of policy which is desirable for us to have in all matters of imperial concern, and also best serve to keep as largely together as may be possible the points of view of all nations in regard to policies that may make for future peace.

On one point, however, I have noticed since my return from the meeting of Prime Ministers in London a tendency in certain quarters in Canada to revive controversy over an issue which has been settled. This is the issue whether the British Commonwealth should seek always to speak with a single voice and should be permanently represented as such on the new world council.

Right Hon. Peter Fraser, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, was questioned on this by the press when he was recently in Ottawa. He answered:—

There is no question about any of our Prime Ministers or countries delegating to the United Kingdom or any other Dominion the right to speak for our respective countries. That is fundamental. . . . Co-operation, solidarity, help in peace and war, yes; but not subordinating any opinions that our respective governments arrive at.



In response to a further question about the possibility that the Commonwealth should act as a unit in the world security organization, Mr. Fraser said:—

I think that would destroy the whole idea of world organization. I may say this, that there is no British leader I have ever heard who has put that point.

I should like to add to what Mr. Fraser said a few observations of my own. Inside the Commonwealth we can and do manage as a rule to reach agreement on the general lines of policy which our governments should pursue in dealing with major issues. We find it possible to agree because we have the will to agree and cherish similar international ideals and purposes. If, however, the countries of the Commonwealth had to reach agreement by some political process yet to be devised, so that all were bound to carry out a single policy, there would be a very different story. The World Council is to be an executive body. It must be capable of prompt and singleminded action. The United Kingdom, which is indisputably a great power, will sit on the Council in its own right, and its influence there will be enhanced by its special relationship with the countries of the Commonwealth. The United Kingdom representative will, however, be responsible to London and will take his instructions from London alone.

Supposing we were to change this so that he would become a representative of the British Commonwealth, should he have to withhold action until he has received instructions from half a dozen governments? What should he do if these instructions were in conflict? Should he follow the majority opinion even if it is violently opposed by the government, parliament and people in one or more Commonwealth countries? At the very best, action would be delayed and decisions blurred. At the worst we would run the risk of rendering the Commonwealth impotent in international affairs and perhaps of disrupting it.

I say to the few in Canada who have advocated such a change that the prestige abroad of the British Commonwealth was never higher than it is to-day. The prestige is based upon a belief that in the British Commonwealth there has been evolved a unique alliance of a peculiarly tough and enduring kind whose members act together not because they are under any strict obligation to do so but because they have the will to act together. Our friends abroad, furthermore, have discovered that the primary objects for which the members of the Commonwealth act together are objects which can be shared by other countries of good will. They realize that the Commonwealth is not a power bloc exploiting its own interests but a group of like-minded nations whose close association has in the past formed, and should form in the future, a most reliable element within the framework of the world order.

5. Statement issued to the press on publication of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals, October 9, 1944

The Prime Minister, Mr. Mackenzie King, in commenting on the statement issued to-day in Washington, London, Moscow and Chungking on the discussions looking to the establishment of a general international organization which have just concluded in Washington, said that the Canadian Government welcomed the very large measure of agreement which had been reached between the representatives of the Governments of the United Kingdom, United States, Soviet Union and China at the talks at Dumbarton Oaks.

Mr. King continued: "Canada is vitally concerned that an effective international organization should be established for the maintenance of peace and security. It is generally recognized that agreement between the countries which have taken part in the discussions in Washington is an essential condition of success. Without the full participation of the greatest countries it would be impossible to establish an international system which could effectively maintain the peace of the world and achieve the necessary co-operation, not only in adjusting disputes and preventing war, but also in solving the great international problems of human welfare.

"The statement issued to-day deals with matters which deeply affect the future of every Canadian. I commend it to the careful and earnest study of the people of Canada. The issues raised will, I hope, not become a matter of party controversy, since they far transcend party lines. They should not be made the subject of hasty judgments. The tentative proposals are receiving the serious and urgent study of the Government of Canada. It is the Government's intention to refrain from passing judgment on them until this study has been completed.

"It is indicated in the communique covering the proposals that they constitute a basis for further discussion in the first instance between the Governments which have been represented at the Washington talks. These Governments are not themselves committed to the acceptance of the plan. The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom said in the House of Commons at Westminster on September 28 that in his view a satisfactory agreement between the United States, the United Kingdom and Soviet Governments could only be reached after a further meeting of the three heads of Governments, which he earnestly hoped might be brought about before the end of this year.

"The official delegations in Washington were unable to reach agreement on some points. The proposals there framed are, therefore, but the first stage in the development of a draft Charter for consideration by all the United Nations. They have still to be accepted and supplemented by the initiating Governments before they are submitted to other countries for their consideration. When they are so submitted the intention is that a full United Nations Conference should be convened at which it is hoped that final proposals will be developed. Before the draft Charter takes its final form, there will be full opportunity for its revision in the light of the views expressed by other countries.

"Mr. Churchill, in the speech to which I have already referred, said: 'It would not be prudent to press in a hurry for momentous decisions governing the whole future of the world'. I endorse this opinion. There is still a hard road to victory that must be travelled, and victory itself is much more than the end of fighting. The war has brought great changes which will leave their permanent impress on the entire world. We are living in an era of great and rapid transition, and it would be folly to think that we can now determine with precision the forces which will shape the world to come.

"It is scarcely necessary for me to say that, before any final commitment is entered into with respect to the participation of Canada in a general international organization, there will be the fullest opportunity for discussion in the Parliament of Canada."

DOCS
CA1 EA 45S73 ENG
King, William Lyon Mackenzie,
1874-1950
Statements in 1943 and 1944 on
general international organization
53711281