



# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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## CANADA'S ROLE IN THE UNITED NATIONS

An address by the Minister of Health and Welfare, Mr. Paul Martin to the Women's Canadian Club of Quebec City, Chateau Frontenac, Quebec City, Quebec on March 19, 1956.

I am most happy to have the opportunity of visiting once again this historic city of Quebec which holds such an honoured place in the annals of Canada's development as a nation. It is also a particular pleasure for me to join the ranks of the many distinguished guests who, over the years, have had the privilege of meeting with the members of the Women's Canadian Club of this city.

Your Chairman has suggested that I say something about Canada's role in the United Nations. This I am pleased to do for during the last four months of 1955, my time was principally taken up with the affairs of this world organization. As Chairman of the Canadian Delegation to the General Assembly, I had the good fortune to be associated with an outstanding group of delegates. I shall not soon forget the assistance of Col. Oscar Gilbert, President of Le Soleil, whose wise counsel and understanding friendship were of inestimable value to me and to our delegation. Col. Gilbert devoted most of his attention to the work of the Second Committee which concerns itself with economic affairs and his wide experience and wise judgment were of great value in the discussion of such important questions as technical assistance and the economic development of the less fortunate nations.

This is not, of course, the first time that this city has made its contribution to the work of the United Nations. Indeed, my first United Nations assignment was in 1945 when I had the privilege of accompanying our present Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Louis St-Laurent, who was then Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the First Session of the General Assembly in London. At subsequent sessions of the United Nations both the Hon. Hugues Lapointe and the Hon. Jean Lesage have represented Canada on occasion and have made important contribu-

tions. I recall, too, that in 1953 at the Seventh Session of the General Assembly, I had the pleasure of working with Mme. Louis Berger of this city who served with distinction on the Assembly's Third Committee.

On August 29th last, I went to New York to represent Canada on the five-power Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission which, incidentally, is reconvening in London on this very day. This Sub-Committee was set up in 1954 in an effort to break the long deadlock on disarmament. It comprises representatives of the United Kingdom, the United States, the Soviet Union, France and Canada. My distinguished colleagues at last fall's meetings were the Rt. Hon. Anthony Nutting of the United Kingdom, Mr. Harold Stassen of the United States, Mr. Arkady Sobolev of the Soviet Union, and Mr. Jules Moch of France.

In the course of our discussions which extended over a five-week period and which were later carried to the floor of the General Assembly itself, it became increasingly clear that we are still a long way from complete agreement on a disarmament program with the necessary safeguards to guarantee its implementation. At the same time, it was also evident that -- perhaps for the first time in recent history -- there is now substantial unanimity among the nations on certain basic features that must be included in any satisfactory program of arms reduction.

- Disarmament must cover all types of weapons, both conventional and nuclear.
- It must be supported by adequate safeguards and controls.
- It can only be achieved in stages, carefully worked out so that, at no time, will any country have genuine cause for believing that its security is endangered.
- Any disarmament program must also include provisions for an early warning system to guard against surprise attack since it is technically impossible at the present time to ensure the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons.

Obviously, these four points provide only the barest outline for a comprehensive disarmament program but they do represent an important measure of agreement without which further progress would be impossible.

The main stumbling-block would seem to be the difficulty of establishing an effective system of controls. While the Soviet Union in its disarmament proposals has agreed with the Western Powers on the necessity for establishing a control

organ adequate to enforce the implementation of any disarmament program, its representatives have repeatedly refused to spell out in detail the various powers and functions which this organ would exercise. The Western Powers, on the other hand, have insisted that a knowledge of these details must precede any agreement on other disarmament measures.

It is not surprising that we have encountered so much difficulty in this matter of controls for it is indeed the crux of the whole disarmament problem. Not only does the proper exercise of control have important implications for the internal sovereignty of states but it presumes the existence of at least a measure of confidence and trust between nations. The problem has been further complicated by the fact -- and this is recognized even by the Soviet Union -- that the most thorough system of inspection could not, in the present state of scientific knowledge, ensure the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons.

It was in the light of these sober facts that the President of the United States, Mr. Eisenhower, proposed at Geneva last summer that his country and the Soviet Union exchange complete blueprints of their military establishments and provide each other with facilities for aerial photography within their respective countries.

Canada, and indeed the whole free world, welcomed this bold and imaginative plan as typical of a great man and of his country. There is little doubt that its implementation would greatly lessen the danger of surprise attack and would do much to establish an international climate that would make further progress in disarmament possible.

Unfortunately, the Soviet Union has not yet accepted this proposal but I would like to think that they have not entirely rejected the conception. A hopeful sign perhaps is the reported reaction of the Soviet Premier, Mr. Bulganin, to President Eisenhower's latest suggestion that -- assuming the satisfactory operation of an air and ground inspection system -- steps be taken to ensure that future production of fissionable materials would not be used to increase existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons. It is certainly to be hoped that the resumed meetings of the Disarmament Sub-Committee that are beginning in London today will reach some measure of agreement on this and other proposals that are before it for consideration.

The United Nations has wrestled with this question of arms reduction ever since its inception ten years ago. In fact, the first Resolution ever passed by the General Assembly, which called for the establishment of an Atomic Energy Commission, concerned itself with the subject of disarmament.

These efforts have now taken on added urgency with recent scientific advances in the development of intercontinental

ballistic missiles which will be the nearest thing to an "ultimate weapon" yet projected. These missiles, which would travel high in the ionosphere at 10 or 20 times the speed of sound, would be ominously different from anything yet conceived in the mind of man. The perfection of such devices would not only provide the means of delivering atomic and thermonuclear weapons almost instantaneously to any part of the world but would involve the nations in an arms race on a scale even vaster than those of the past.

We have already seen the results of our failure to control the development of atomic weapons at a time in their evolution when effective control was still a technical possibility. Surely we ought to learn from this bitter experience and take steps now to control the development of these weapons of the future while there is still time. His Holiness Pope Pius XII in his last Christmas message, when he put forward three points that paralleled closely the Western proposals made during the General Assembly debate, warned the world of the cataclysmic destructive possibilities of future warfare in these words:

"There will be no song of victory, only the inconsolable weeping of humanity, which in desolation will gaze upon the catastrophe brought on by its own folly"

While our talks in the Disarmament Sub-Committee were still in progress last fall, the General Assembly of the United Nations convened for its tenth annual session and for some time I had to divide my attention between the Sub-Committee and the work of the General Assembly itself. I might say that I was greatly assisted in the work of the Assembly by the help of two of my colleagues, the Hon. J.J. McCann and the Hon. Roch Pinard who were valued members of the Delegation.

Some idea of the wide range of subjects which was considered at this anniversary session may be gained from the fact that its agenda, as finally adopted, included no less than sixty-six different items. Of these, perhaps the most important were disarmament itself, the peaceful application of atomic energy and the admission of new members.

The efforts of the United Nations to speed the peaceful development of atomic energy date back to December 1953, when President Eisenhower appeared before the General Assembly and made a dramatic proposal to help solve the world's fearful atomic dilemma. He proposed the establishment under the aegis of the United Nations of an international agency to coordinate the peaceful application of atomic energy in the fields of agriculture, electrical energy, medicine and other humane pursuits.

The Government of Canada welcomed this generous and far-sighted proposal put forward by the President of the United

States, and at the Ninth General Assembly in 1954 co-sponsored a resolution to help give effect to the Eisenhower plan. This resolution won the unanimous support of all sixty member nations.

In addition to expressing the hope that an International Atomic Energy Agency would be established without delay, the 1954 Resolution called for a scientific Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy. This conference was convened at Geneva last August and was one of the largest and most successful scientific meetings ever held. Since the origins of atomic science are international, one of the most valuable features of the Geneva scientific conference was the opportunity it gave to nations with large and long-established atomic energy programs to repay their debt to international science by making information acquired in secrecy during the past fifteen years available for the benefit of all.

In the light of this encouraging progress, the Tenth General Assembly took another important step forward in implementing the Eisenhower plan. It adopted a resolution -- again unanimously -- calling for the establishment of a negotiating committee, consisting of representatives from twelve nations, to consider the draft charter for an International Atomic Energy Agency which had already been drawn up by eight Western nations and circulated for comment to all members of the United Nations.

Perhaps the most fundamental question to be considered by this Committee -- which began its deliberations in Washington earlier this month -- is the relationship of the proposed Agency to the United Nations. It must decide whether the Agency will report to the Security Council and so be subject to the paralyzing effect of the veto -- as the Soviet Union has proposed -- or whether it will be a semi-autonomous body having a relationship to the United Nations similar to that of the Specialized Agencies like the World Health Organization.

The recommendations on this and other questions that are made by this twelve-nation negotiating committee will later be considered by a wider conference attended by representatives of the many nations that might be expected to participate in the work of the Agency.

In addition to laying the groundwork for international co-operation on the peaceful uses of atomic energy, the Tenth General Assembly, by unanimous resolution, set up a fifteen-member scientific Committee to make a comprehensive study of all available information on the possible effects of atomic radiation on human health. A great deal is already known concerning the health effects of radioactivity and the work of this Committee in assembling and reviewing the body of existing scientific knowledge will do much to ensure that we will not leave to future generations a legacy of ignorance on this vital matter.

In recent years there has been a slight, though appreciable, increase in radiation all over the world. The health implications of this fact, for our own and succeeding generations, warrant the most sober and thorough consideration. It must be acknowledged that some conflicting views have been expressed, but the consensus of the best scientific evidence available indicates that no significant immediate or long-range harmful effects of serious proportions will result from the increased radio activity that has occurred. Nevertheless, it would appear to me as a layman that there remain a number of unanswered questions, particularly in relation to possible genetic effects, which underline the need for the compilation and co-ordination of existing information by a body such as the new international Committee and which call for continuing research by competent scientists.

I suggest that Canada's own atomic energy program merits attention. For I believe that we have demonstrated in this country in this field, and yet establish and develop an independent national program which in quality, if not in size, is unsurpassed.

Canada's contribution of most immediate value during the war was the supply of uranium ore although we contributed as well to the basic research. Since the war, we have continued to carry out in this country a very active program to find and develop new sources of uranium supply. Besides providing raw materials, Canada has undertaken a vigorous program of research and development on the applications of atomic energy. During the past decade these efforts have been devoted exclusively to peaceful purpose -- power for domestic and industrial use and radioactive isotopes for medicine, agriculture and industry. In addition, Canadian-produced Cobalt 60 Beam Therapy Units for the treatment of cancer have been placed in upwards of thirty hospitals and treatment centres in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Switzerland and Brazil.

We are anxious to assist other countries in getting their atomic energy programs under way and, although we cannot offer assistance on the same scale as the United States and the United Kingdom, we have already given, and intend to continue to give, every measure of help within the limitations of resources available for this purpose.

I have spoken briefly of the results of our discussions on disarmament and the peaceful uses of atomic energy. I turn now to the question of new members. The General Assembly's action last December in admitting sixteen additional states to membership in the United Nations marked the end of a decade of difficulty and division. It had given new hope to all those who share the belief that this world organization is destined to become, in the words of its Charter, "a centre for harmonizing the actions of all nations".

As one of the original members of the United Nations, Canada has taken an active part in its deliberations and has given whole-hearted support to its varied efforts to promote world peace and understanding. It was, therefore, a source of deep satisfaction and encouragement to us all that the Government of Canada was able to make some contribution to the membership negotiations, the outcome of which will undoubtedly strengthen the United Nations and enhance its influence in international affairs.

The election of sixteen additional members means in fact that there is now a new United Nations -- a United Nations of 76 instead of 60 members. Not only has the membership of the organization been increased by one-quarter, but representation has been given for the first time to more than 150,000,000 of the world's peoples from the four corners of the earth.

Historic European nations like Spain, Portugal and Finland will take their places around the world conference table for the first time. Italy with its ancient legacy in literature and the law, and Ireland, island home of poets and singers, will add their voices to the discussion of world problems. The new states of Laos and Cambodia will sit down side by side with Austria, one of the great centres of old-world diplomacy. Then, too, there will be representatives from the Arab kingdoms of Jordan and Libya and Asiatic states like Nepal and Ceylon, the birthplace of the Commonwealth Colombo Plan.

We approached the membership question in the only way that would be consistent with the ideals of a Christian and democratic country. For we believe that the United Nations was never intended to be an exclusive club with membership restricted to those who happen to think alike or share the same ideals and traditions. Rather it was envisaged by its founders as a meeting place to which all nations could bring their problems and receive a hearing before the bar of world opinion. And we are not ashamed to pit our way of life against those godless regimes in which individual human values are of little or no account.

We who believe in freedom know the value of frank and open discussion in solving the many problems which confront us in our community and national life. The same opportunity should be given to the nations which make up the world community. I am confident that the introduction of these new voices -- though some may be discordant -- into the councils of the United Nations will contribute to its effectiveness in dealing realistically with the many vital issues that divide the world in these troubled times.

Secondly, it must be remembered that the only way in which it was possible to break the deadlock of the past ten years was through a so-called "package deal". Because all other formulas had been rejected by one side or the other, a compromise was necessary. In order to bring into the United

Nations twelve countries such as Ireland, Italy, Austria and Finland -- nations which have political, cultural and economic ties with the free world -- it was necessary to accept the admission of four states whose governments do not, at the present time, share our belief in the validity of free democracy.

There are some who suggest that there is something sinister in an honest compromise. Surely, adjustment of conflicting views by the process of give and take is one of the mainstays of our democratic system. Here in Canada, where the descendants of two historic races live side by side in friendly harmony, we recognize that without this kind of approach to our problems, we could never have achieved nationhood or developed that basic sense of unity which is the fundamental source of our strength as a nation. The art of compromise is just as necessary in international affairs. It is only as the nations learn to approach their problems in an attitude of mutual respect and understanding that we will succeed in building a world-wide community in which a secure peace will be possible.

Finally, it should be noted that admission to membership in the United Nations carries with it the assumption of definite obligations -- obligations which go far beyond those which are normally demanded of members of the international community under the law of nations. As a people nurtured in freedom and dedicated to peace, we disapprove of the policies followed by countries beyond the Iron Curtain. But surely they are not likely to become less acceptable members of the world community as adherents of the United Nations, committed as they must be to its purposes and subject to its rules.

We have all had reason to deplore the inhuman religious persecutions which have raged practically everywhere behind the Iron Curtain and which have disposed in the most horrible manner of human beings whose only crime has been their desire to be free. Speaking for Canada, I have raised my voice repeatedly in protest against the treatment of Cardinal Mindszenti and other leaders of the Church in violation of the most elementary principles of humanity. But I have been speaking to empty benches. Now, with the admission of Bulgaria, Hungary and Roumania to membership in the United Nations, I will be able to confront their representatives face to face with these charges. I will be able to ask them why they have made these ruthless attacks on the most precious of all freedoms -- the freedom of conscience -- and why they have permitted human beings to be so crudely tried and so unjustly condemned to death. It may well be that in bringing these nations to account for their actions before the bar of world opinion, this exposure in itself will prove to be a powerful deterrent to further violations of basic human rights.



It was for reasons such as this that the Canadian membership proposals received such widespread support in the United Nations. I will not soon forget the encouragement and reassurances we received from so many delegations during the course of these difficult and delicate negotiations. I recall especially the support of the Latin-American nations and, in particular, the delegation of Costa Rica headed by that vigorous and enlightened Catholic priest, Father Bengamin Nunez.

I have indicated why I believe that Canada's efforts at the United Nations in pressing for the admission of new members have once again demonstrated our faith in the value of freedom itself and in the United Nations as an instrument for its achievement throughout the world. But the United Nations alone is not enough. Impelled by the intransigence of the Soviet Union the free nations of the West have been forced to buttress their security by the establishment of a regional collective security arrangement under the terms of the North Atlantic Treaty. Indeed, our Prime Minister, Mr. St-Laurent, was one of the first world statesmen to recognize this fact and to give public expression to the NATO idea.

Canada's participation in NATO does not in any way imply that we have abandoned the United Nations. In fact, NATO was set up and operates in full accordance with the terms of the United Nations Charter. By maintaining the strength and security of the free world, we believe that we will be in a better position to negotiate solutions to the many problems that now divide the world. And, in the long run, NATO can be a powerful factor in enabling the United Nations to carry out more effectively the objectives of its Charter.

The United Nations is still in the process of evolution but it has already proved itself a potent force for good in the world. It has succeeded in keeping the peace in many troubled places where violence threatened. It has provided the only world forum for international discussion and debate. It has offered the nations an instrument for collective action to secure the peace. Finally, it remains the one place where guilt for international misconduct can be squarely assigned to the responsible parties. And now the United Nations has taken a step which has made it more truly representative of the people of the world.

To build the ideal of the United Nations is much more than to build a fine skyscraper in New York to house its organization. This vast structure of a way of life for the world is built not of marble nor of glass but in the minds and hearts of men.

For me, for every delegate who is sent to speak for the hopes and aspirations of his fellow-citizens, there can be no doubt about our resolution to make the United Nations and all its agencies serve the cause of humanity. Unfortunately, some delegates are sent by states in which individual men and women have little influence on policy. Indeed, it is this wide divergence of opinion on the rightful place of the individual human being that has created the great gulf between the free world and the godless empire of Soviet communism.

In closing, let me recall the fervent plea I addressed to the late Andrei Vyshinsky of the Soviet Union in an earnest effort to find some means of closing the gulf that now divides the free nations from the part of humanity that is held in the heartless grip of Communism:

"Cannot we remove these Iron Curtains?  
Cannot we abandon these barriers which  
seek to divide the people of the Soviet  
Union from the rest of us?"

"Cannot we recognize that the basic reality  
of international politics, as of village  
affairs, is the individual man and woman?--..."

"It is the beginning of sanity and wisdom  
to recognize that the individual man and  
woman is never the personification of  
categories, economic or otherwise. The  
individual is nothing less than the image  
of God. To the extent that this principle  
is recognized, we will be on the path to  
human brotherhood and the achievement of  
lasting peace."

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