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CANADA'S ROLE IN THE UNITED NATIONS

An address by Mr. Escott Reid of the Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, at the Canadian Institute on Public Affairs, Lake Couchiching, Ontario, August 13, 1947.

In my talk this morning I shall try to give you a factual, though necessarily general, account of the Canadian contribution to the development of the United Nations since the San Francisco Conference.

It would be inappropriate for me as a civil servant to suggest that Canadian policy in relation to the United Nations has been without error of omission or commission. It would be equally inappropriate for me to suggest possible errors in our policy. I hope, however, that my remarks may help to provide you with a basis upon which you may draw your own conclusions on the adequacy, thus far, of Canadian policy. I believe you will conclude that this policy has shown a pattern of consistency and has had a wholesome, if not always a spectacular, effect during the important formative years of the United Nations and that Canada will have an even more important and exacting role to play in the future.

In assessing the adequacy thus far of Canadian policy in relation to the United Nations, it is necessary to take into account the limitations upon the influence of a secondary power like Canada. Mr. St. Laurent, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, in his Grey Foundation Lecture at the University of Toronto on January 13, 1947, after stating that one of the basic principles of Canadian foreign policy today is willingness to accept international responsibilities and readiness to take its part in constructive international action, went on to say:

"We have, of course, been forced to keep in mind the limitations upon the influence of any secondary power. No society of nations can prosper if it does not have the support of those who hold the major share of the world's military and economic power. There is little point in a country of our stature recommending international action, if those who must carry the major burden of whatever action is taken are not in sympathy. We know, however, that the development of international organizations on a broad scale is of the very greatest importance to us, and we have been willing to play our role when it was apparent that significant and effective action was contemplated."

One contribution which Canada has made to the United Nations is to try the experiment of sending to the United Nations Assemblies delegations which include not only members of the government and government officials but also members of the opposition parties. This is a new experiment for Canada, an experiment which was begun at San Francisco. So far as I know, we are one of a very few countries trying this experiment. One valuable result is that a constantly increasing number of members of parliament on both sides of the House of Commons and Senate possess first-hand knowledge of the work of the United Nations.

Under our system of government, the government of the day, of course, must and does accept full responsibility for every action of a delegation at an international conference. Nevertheless, the members of the opposition parties who have been included in the Canadian delegations to the Assembly of the United Nations have been extremely useful advisers to the delegation and each delegation has worked as a team.

One reason that Canadian delegations to the Assembly are able to work as teams is that they are relatively small. We can all - representatives, alternates, advisers - meet around a table in an ordinary hotel sitting-room and we meet that way every week-day morning from 9 to 10. One advantage of working as a team is that we avoid the danger of pursuing inconsistent policies in the various committees of the Assembly which are meeting simultaneously. Some of the great powers with larger delegations find it more difficult to do this. The importance of this lies not so much in the fact that Canada pursues a consistent policy in the various committees as that by pursuing a consistent policy we draw the attention of other delegations having greater influence to inconsistencies in their policies. That is sometimes the most effective contribution which a secondary power can make. It may affect the whole issue of a debate.

Thus, at the last General Assembly one of the most important issues discussed was the disarmament resolution originally introduced by the Soviet delegation. As soon as the resolution was introduced, we had a meeting of our representatives on the Atomic Energy Commission and our representatives on the Political Committee of the Assembly - a half dozen people. Jointly we worked out the outlines of a policy on disarmament. For the next six weeks we argued in private conversations and on the floor of Assembly committees and sub-committees that the proposals on disarmament which a number of other delegations, particularly that of the United States, were supporting in the Political Committee of the Assembly were at variance with the policies they were supporting in the Atomic Energy Commission. Our efforts were finally successful.

Another contribution which we have made to the United Nations is to set an example by submitting to the parliament and people of our country extensive reports on the participation of the Canadian delegations in the work of the San Francisco Conference and the regular Assemblies in London and New York. So far as I know, these reports are the fullest, the frankest and the most explanatory published by any government. Together these three reports describe the progress of the United Nations and Canada's participation in it from the opening of the

(1) San Francisco Conference to the end of 1946.

To be quite frank, we have solved only half the problem of how to keep the Canadian people informed of the work of the United Nations and of the Canadian contribution to that work. We have produced the reports. We have not been able to persuade Canadians to buy them, even though the first two cost only twenty-five cents each and the third, which is almost three hundred pages long, costs only fifty cents. The King's Printer has sold in Canada less than two hundred copies of each of the first two reports and only about two hundred and fifty copies of the third report. One contribution which the Canadian people might make to the work of the United Nations is to buy and study these reports. The Canadian Government, in the name of the Canadian people, undertook serious commitments when Canada joined the United Nations. The ability of the government of any country to honour its international commitments depends on how well the people of that country understand the extent and nature of the commitments and how far they are willing to honour them.

It is not, of course, merely a matter of the Canadian people realizing the extent of the international commitments which Canada has undertaken by joining the United Nations. It is also necessary for the Canadian people to realize the limitations of the United Nations, some of which are found in the provisions of the Charter, and some of which result from the present strained relations between the great powers.

Most of us had hoped before San Francisco that the Charter would be less imperfect than it is. The most that can be said for it is that it represents the greatest possible measure of agreement which could be reached at the time between the great powers and that probably they were able to reach a greater measure of agreement at San Francisco than they would be able to reach today. The Charter sets up a Security Council to maintain peace but makes it possible for any great power to paralyze most of the operations of that Council. The International

(1) These three reports are for sale by the King's Printer, Ottawa, in English and in French. The prices include postage; remittances should accompany orders. They may also be ordered through bookstores. The reports are:

1) Report on the United Nations Conference on International Organization, held at San Francisco, April 25, - June 26, 1945. Department of External Affairs, Conference Series, 1945, No. 2. (Includes the text of the Charter of the United Nations, the Dumbarton Oaks Proposal and the Statute of the International Court of Justice).
Price, 25 cents

2) Report on the First Part of the First Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations held in London, January 10 - February 14, 1946. Department of External Affairs, Conference Series, 1946, No. 1. (Includes an account of the preparatory work of the Executive Committee and the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations, which held their meetings in London from August 16 to October 27, 1945, and from November 24 to December 23, 1945, respectively).
Price, 25 cents.

3) The United Nations, 1946. Report on the Second Part of the First Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations held in New York, October 23 - December 15, 1946. Department of External Affairs. Conference Series, 1946, No. 3.
Price, 50 cents.

Court of Justice has no jurisdiction over legal disputes between two states unless both states have formally accepted its jurisdiction. The Trusteeship Council has no jurisdiction over any territory until the states concerned have put that territory under its jurisdiction. The Assembly can make no binding decisions except on such matters as the internal organization of the Secretariat. It can merely make recommendations.

It would have been possible for Canada after San Francisco to have taken the line that the Charter needs radical amendments. The Canadian Government, like the governments of almost all the other Members of the United Nations, has, however, considered that to press at the present time for radical amendments would be abortive. Amendments can come into force only when they are approved by all the great powers. There seems today to be no possibility that all the great powers would approve amendments of any importance.

Canada, recognizing that there is no short-cut to salvation, has concentrated on making the best of what we have in the United Nations. This is not a dramatic policy but it is practical. It can give results. It has already given results.

The Charter of the United Nations is not the whole constitution of the United Nations. It is only a framework. It could not become a working instrument for international cooperation until it had been supplemented by rules of procedure for the various organs, by financial regulations, and staff regulations, by the establishment of sound precedents, and by the drawing up of precise agreements between the United Nations and its member states and between the United Nations and the various specialized agencies. In the early years of the United Nations, therefore, Canada has concentrated on trying to secure the best possible development of the constitution of the United Nations within the framework of the Charter as it is.

One of the most fruitful lines of development has been in the drawing up of the rules of procedure for the various organs of the United Nations - the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council. Anyone who has been at an international conference recognizes the importance of rules of procedure. Without unambiguous and detailed rules, an international conference will become embroiled in long and fruitless debates on procedure which frustrate or delay the accomplishment of its real tasks. The San Francisco Conference did not have unambiguous and detailed rules of procedure. Consequently half the time of the conference was taken up with procedural debates - debates not on what the conference should decide but on how it should go about making a decision.

It is probably not an exaggeration to say that Canada has played a larger role than any other country in the development of the rules of procedure for the Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council. The Canadian and Australian delegations also tried without much success in the meetings of the Executive Committee which preceded the first meetings of the Assembly to persuade the Executive Committee to draw up for the consideration of the Security Council as complete as possible a set of provisional rules of procedure. These efforts failed because of the opposition of the United States and the Soviet Union. The confusion which existed at the early meetings of the Security Council was in part the result of this failure.

Having failed to secure in London, in September and October of 1945, an adequate set of rules of procedure for the Security Council, the Canadian delegation returned to the attack a year later at the Assembly in New York. Various suggestions were made at that Assembly

for reforms, within the limits of the Charter as it is, of the practices and procedures of the Security Council, especially in relation to the pacific settlement of international disputes. The Canadian delegation submitted to the Assembly a memorandum setting forth the most comprehensive statement of possible reforms which was put before the Assembly. (1)

One of the most interesting aspects of this Canadian memorandum on pacific settlement by the Security Council is the doctrine which it advances of the responsibility of members of the Security Council. The Security Council is not responsible to the Assembly. Does it follow from this that the eleven states which are members of the Security Council have no responsibility to the other Members of the United Nations? The Canadian delegation said no. It said that Article 24 of the Charter had imposed on each state which is a member of the Security Council the obligation to exercise its rights and responsibilities as a member of the Council not in defence of its own special national interests but in defence of the interests of the United Nations as a whole. This applies to the votes of all members and to the vetoes of permanent members.

One way of developing the Charter in a healthy direction is by the adoption of satisfactory rules of procedure and practices by the various organs of the United Nations; another way is by the establishment of sound precedents in the interpretation of the Charter by these organs. Canadian delegations have consistently taken the position that in establishing these precedents it is necessary to remember that it is a constitution which is being interpreted and not a domestic statute and that a constitution, to be successful, must be interpreted in such a way as to encourage its growth and adaptation to changing circumstances. Therefore, provisions in the Charter which add to the authority of the United Nations or of its organs and officers should be broadly interpreted and those which detract from the authority of the United Nations should be given a restrictive interpretation. Thus the veto rights of the individual great powers should be given a restrictive interpretation. Similarly, the domestic jurisdiction clause in the Charter should not be given an extensive interpretation which would render meaningless or insignificant other important provisions of the Charter such as the obligation of Members to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the right of the Assembly to discuss and make recommendations for the peaceful adjustment of any situation, regardless of origin, which it deems likely to impair the general welfare or friendly relations among nations.

Certain practical conclusions have already resulted from this approach to the interpretation of the constitution of the United Nations. Thus Canada did not support the original South African contention in New York that the domestic jurisdiction clause in the Charter necessarily precluded the Assembly from dealing with the Indian complaint against the treatment of Indians in South Africa though it did agree that the question of jurisdiction was one for the International Court. Moreover, Canada supported in New York a proposal which has since been adopted in practice that the abstention of a great power from voting in the Security Council should not be considered as a veto.

Canada has interpreted broadly the declarations in the Charter on human rights and fundamental freedoms. Mr. St. Laurent, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, has given the following broad interpretation of these declarations in a speech in Montreal on February 24 of this year:

(1) The text of this memorandum is given in "The United Nations, 1946", the Canadian report on the New York Assembly, 1946 pp. 204-6.

"Each Member of the United Nations has, by signing the Charter which contains these declarations, contracted by treaty a solemn obligation to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion. Each national government has, in the name of its people, accepted this obligation knowing the difficulties likely to be encountered in honouring it to the full. The Members of the United Nations have pledged themselves to act together in overcoming these difficulties; they have likewise pledged themselves to act separately. Thus failure by one nation to act provides no excuse for the inaction of others."

Canada has consistently urged the Assembly to weigh carefully the possible long-run implications of certain actions which it had been suggested it should take. In New York in November of last year the Assembly was dealing for the first time with the applications of states for membership in the United Nations. It was therefore essential that nothing which the Assembly did should create a dangerous precedent. For this reason Canada emphasized the importance of an applicant state possessing a sufficient degree of sovereignty to enable it to carry out independently the obligations imposed by the Charter and insisted that the degree of dependence of an applicant state upon another state was a relevant consideration. In developing this thesis Canada expressed doubts about the admissibility of Transjordan to the United Nations.

So far as I can recall, Canada was the only state which emphasized in New York the importance of this criterion. Since then the doctrine has received increasing support. Experience in the Assembly has already demonstrated that the admission of Members so dependent upon another Member of the United Nations that they do not in fact possess a sufficient degree of sovereignty to enable them to carry out independently the obligations imposed by the Charter does not serve the general interest.

Another example of a long-run consideration which has affected Canadian policy on an immediate issue was in the discussion at the last regular Assembly of the proposed incorporation of the mandate of South West Africa in the Union of South Africa. The South African Government had presented as an argument for incorporation the results of consultations which it had had with the non-European population of South West Africa, according to which the non-European population favoured the incorporation of their territory in the Union of South Africa by about six to one. The Canadian delegation felt that it would be extremely dangerous for the Assembly to establish the precedent of accepting as established facts the results of soundings of opinion or plebiscites taken solely under the auspices of interested parties. A precedent of this nature might embarrass the Assembly if it were asked to give its blessing to the annexation of an independent state as the aftermath of a questionable plebiscite. Canada therefore voted in favour of a resolution which stated that the Assembly was unable to accede to the incorporation of South West Africa in the Union of South Africa.

Again, in the debates on Spain the Canadian delegation abstained from voting on the final resolution because it contained a recommendation to the Security Council that it violate one of the most important articles of the Charter. Under this article, Article 39, the Security Council must, before calling on Members of the United Nations to impose sanctions, first determine that there exists a threat to the peace, a breach of the peace or an act of aggression which makes it necessary that sanctions should be imposed. The resolution on Spain was so worded that it called upon the Security Council to consider imposing sanctions against the Franco regime without first deciding the preliminary question of whether the existence of that regime constituted a threat to the peace. To con-

sider only immediate political expediency and to ignore the desirability of establishing sound, long-term precedents was considered most unwise by the Canadian delegation. The Members of the United Nations have pledged themselves to impose sanctions automatically when so directed by the Security Council. One protection against an abuse of this power by the Security Council is Article 39. To recommend to the Security Council that it disregard Article 39 was to create a most dangerous precedent.

Another example of a long-run consideration which has determined Canadian policy on an important question is the desirability of the practice growing up that, even though resolutions of the General Assembly are not binding upon Members of the United Nations, Members of the United Nations will in fact abide by resolutions of the Assembly when they are passed by substantial majorities and are in accord with the provisions of the Charter. Canada voted in the Assembly against a clause in the resolution on Spain which stated that the Franco Government should be debarred from membership in international specialized agencies. This clause of the resolution was, however, adopted by the Assembly Committee by a vote of thirty-two to five and later the whole resolution, including this clause was adopted by the Assembly in plenary session by a vote of thirty-four to six. Because of this, Canada has supported in the specialized agencies the action called for by the Assembly resolution.

One of the recurrent themes of controversy in the Assembly is over the relative importance to be attached to "efficiency" and to "adequate geographical representation". This theme has run through innumerable debates on the Secretariat, on the chairmanship of Assembly committees and on the membership of these committees and of the various councils.

Canada was one of the states which pressed at San Francisco for the inclusion in the Charter of a provision that the paramount consideration in the employment of the members of the Secretariat of the United Nations should be "the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity" and that only a vague "due regard" should be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible. But the inclusion of this provision in the Charter has been only half the battle and it has been necessary to fight constantly for the primacy of efficiency over considerations of national prestige in appointments to the Secretariat.

As part of that battle the Canadian Government has refused to nominate Canadians for the Secretariat. If national governments press the Secretary-General to appoint their nationals, it makes it extremely difficult for the Secretary-General to carry out his obligations under the Charter. Canada has also insisted that any Canadians who are appointed to the Secretariat of any international agency are no longer in any way responsible to the Canadian Government for their activities as members of the Secretariat. This would seem obvious. However, only recently a representative of a not unimportant power, asked us to reprimand a Canadian, who is an international civil servant, for an action which he had taken as an international civil servant, and which had offended that power.

Most of the constructive work at an international conference is done in its committees and sub-committees. They are the creative bodies on the success of which a conference largely depends. The success of a committee is in turn dependent to a very large extent on the efficiency of its chairman. Incompetent or unscrupulous chairmen snarl the work of committees and lower the prestige and effectiveness of the United Nations. It is thus of paramount importance that the chairmen of committees and of sub-committees be chosen, as far as possible, on the basis of their personal competence to conduct meetings expeditiously and well.

Unfortunately, at most international conferences chairmen are not chosen on this basis. Instead of an individual being chosen for his com-

petence, the chairmanships are divided up among states in order to satisfy considerations of national prestige and to secure an adequate geographical distribution of chairmanships. Under such a system, it is only by luck if a chairman turns out to be efficient.

Canadian delegations have opposed this system but so far without much success. We recognize that there must be adequate geographical distribution of chairmanships, that all the chairmen should not come, for example, from Europe or from the English-speaking countries or from Latin America. But we do not believe it is beyond the wit of man to find at any Assembly six competent chairmen who, together, would represent the main geographical areas of the world. This cannot be done as long as the powers which are most influential in drawing up slates draw up their slates on the basis that it is time that "Ruritania" and "Amazonia" were given chairmanships and make no inquiries about the personal competence of the chief representatives of "Ruritania" and "Amazonia". The United States has so far been an offender in this respect. This is perhaps due to the fact that the United States practices this sort of system in its own legislature. In the United States Congress, chairmen of committees are appointed on the basis of seniority.

This same theme of efficiency versus adequate geographical representation appears in the diplomatic discussions which go on over elections to the various councils of the United Nations. The position of the Canadian Government on this question was stated clearly over four years ago by the Prime Minister when, on July 9, 1943, in the House of Commons, speaking on the problems which were likely to face us in the post-war period, he said that representation on the governing bodies of international institutions should be determined on a functional basis under which those countries, large or small, would be members which had the greatest contribution to make to the particular objects in question. The Canadian delegation at San Francisco was largely responsible in having this principle of functionalism set forth in Article 23 of the Charter, which governs the election of non-permanent members of the Security Council. According to this article, the primary consideration which should determine the election of the non-permanent members of the Security Council should be their contribution "to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization". "Equitable geographical distribution" should be a secondary consideration.

This functional principle, however, has not always been adhered to in practice by the Assembly. On the contrary, there is danger of a convention growing up which combines the worst features of regionalism and of the rotation of honours. Under this convention certain groups of states would each be entitled to a certain number of seats on the Security Council and on the Economic and Social Council; each of these groups of states would have the right to choose which of its members should at any time serve on these Councils; in making their choice these groups of states would follow the principle of the rotation of honours. The logical final result of this absurd and dangerous convention would be that ultimately the six non-permanent members of the Security Council might be the six Members of the United Nations which had the least to contribute to the work of that council.

Another aspect of the role which Canada has played in the United Nations is that it has been foremost in insisting on the necessity for use of clear and unambiguous language in the resolutions and conventions adopted by the Assembly. One ever-present temptation at an international conference is to welcome with a sigh of relief any resolution on which everyone says they are in agreement, even though that resolution is so badly drafted that it can be given a number of conflicting meanings. Experience, particularly during the past few years, has amply demonstrated the danger of succumbing to this temptation. The passage of an ambiguous resolution will save time at the moment but, if it deals with important matters, it may lead to a prolonged waste of time in the future, to charges of bad faith and even to grave international resentment.

Precision is one thing, directness and simplicity is another. Canadian delegations have played a leading part in efforts to ensure that the form of presentation and the language used in the official documents of the United Nations should be as simple and direct as possible. This has involved breaking with legal and technical jargon and with a number of formal traditional usages which create a sense of artificiality and are confusing to the general public. This may not seem important but I think it is. The strength of the United Nations depends on the degree of support which individual citizens give to their governments in carrying out their obligations under the Charter. In its important resolutions the United Nations must speak with a clear voice direct to these individual citizens. This means making a clean break with Geneva jargon and League lingo, with the gobbledegook of a resolution which starts with "considering" and goes on to "noting", "realizing", "taking into account", "believing" and "agreeing". An important decision of the United Nations should be embodied in simple, crisp, forceful language appropriate to the importance of the decision.

One fruitful development which Canada is responsible for initiating is the establishment of a committee to economize the time of the Assembly. That Committee will meet a week before the next Assembly and submit recommendations to it. Its work is important because if much of the time of representatives to the Assembly continues to be wasted it will become increasingly difficult for the Members of the United Nations to send first-class delegations to the Assembly, for the time of first-class men is too precious to be wasted. The calibre of the delegations will progressively deteriorate and the effectiveness and prestige of the Assembly will suffer.

Most of the things which I have referred to hitherto in discussing the role of Canada in the United Nations have had to do with Canadian actions at the Assemblies of the United Nations. But that is only part of the story. In the formative period of the United Nations it is the main part of the story but in the long run the vastly more important part of the story will be the actions which Member governments take as the result of the obligations they have entered into under the Charter, and of the studies, recommendations and decisions of the various organs of the United Nations. Will we frame our internal and external policy in the light of our obligations under the Charter, and of the studies and recommendations of the United Nations? Will we obey loyally the decisions of the United Nations?

Up to the present there have not been many opportunities for Canada to demonstrate by actions its good faith as a Member of the United Nations. There are, however, already a few indications of Canadian policy. I shall cite four of them.

Under the Charter, each Member is obliged to impose economic sanctions when so directed by the Security Council. Sanctions, to be effective, must be swift and certain. A government would, therefore, be failing to carry out its obligation if it had to wait for parliamentary approval before imposing economic sanctions against an aggressor. Therefore the Canadian Government secured legislation from Parliament last session giving the government power to implement immediately any decision of the Security Council on economic sanctions. Canada is one of a relatively few Members of the United Nations which have taken this step.

We would like to do the same sort of thing for military sanctions but we could not reasonably be expected to do so until we have negotiated a special military agreement with the Security Council placing Canadian armed forces, assistance and facilities at the disposal of the Council. Under the Charter such agreements are to be negotiated "on the initiative of the Security Council". The Security Council is, unfortunately, not yet in a position to take this initiative. All we have been able to do, therefore, is to express at the last regular Assembly our concern over the failure of the

Security Council and of the Military Staff Committee to make substantial progress towards concluding the special military agreements, to state that Canada is anxious to conclude its agreement, and to urge the Security Council and the Military Staff Committee to go ahead with all possible speed in the constructive work of negotiating the special agreements and of organizing military and economic sanctions.

Another indication of Canada's willingness to carry out the recommendations of the Assembly is the action of the government in securing parliamentary approval at the last session of parliament of a United Nations convention under which the government will give to the United Nations and its officials the facilities, privileges, and immunities on Canadian territory which they need to carry out their work. Only fifteen of the fifty-five Members of the United Nations have so far taken this action.

Still another example worth citing is the appointment during the recent session of parliament of a special joint committee of the Senate and the House of Commons "to consider the question of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the manner in which those obligations accepted by all Members of the United Nations may best be implemented."

I have deliberately in this address said little about the specialized agencies of which there are now eight and may soon be twelve or thirteen. To have tried to cover Canada's role in these agencies would have carried me into too large a field.

This much, however, might be said. Canada has recognized that peace cannot be established on stable foundations unless agencies of this character are brought into effective operation. Canada has played a leading part in the establishment of most, if not all, of the new agencies established since the war and has joined all of them.

Four months ago the United Nations published a table showing the membership of the eight specialized agencies - I.L.O., U.N.E.S.C.O., F.A.O., Fund, Bank, Aviation, Health and Refugees. The U.S.S.R. was a member of only one of them - the world health organization. Only six of the fifty-five Members of the U.N. were members of all eight agencies. Since then four more states have become members of all of them. The ten states are: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Peru, the United Kingdom and the United States. Canada is proud to be one of these ten. We have joined these agencies not because we are "joiners" but because we believe that the successful working of this series of agencies not only provides a great opportunity for the Members of the United Nations to co-operate to achieve the economic and social purposes of the Charter but it also makes easier the achievement of the political purposes of the Charter.

Nations do not go to war because of disputes with each other over tariffs, monetary questions, cartels, shipping, aviation and such things, but we know from experience that, if nations are constantly quarrelling over questions such as these which involve national prestige, national security and national prosperity, it is much more difficult for them to co-operate in a world security organization to that very high degree which is necessary if world peace is to be preserved.

Canada has also played a leading part in the work of the Economic and Social Council - one of the main purposes of which is to co-ordinate the activities of the specialized agencies. It is a member of five of the nine commissions of the Council - the economic and employment commission, the narcotic drugs commission, the population, social and statistical commissions.

One contribution which Canada has made to the work of the Economic and Social Council and of the specialized agencies has been its insistence

that each national government is under an obligation to pursue consistent policies in the United Nations and in the specialized agencies. The economic and social problems with which the world is confronted are so difficult and vast that they can be solved only if all the international bodies concerned work in harmony: if these international bodies get in each other's way, refuse to cooperate, pursue conflicting policies, the difficulties of solving the problems will be greatly increased. But, since the policies of the agencies are the result of policies advocated by national delegations at the meetings of those agencies, the policies of the agencies will not conflict if each government follows a consistent policy in the United Nations and in each of the agencies. Each Member of the United Nations must, therefore, accept the responsibility of ensuring that its delegates to specialized agencies and to the various organs of the United Nations carry with them instructions which harmonize with each other. The work of the agencies will be co-ordinated if each government co-ordinates its own political, economic and social foreign policy. Co-ordination begins at home.

Towards the beginning of my talk I said that, in view of the deficiencies in the Charter, it would have been possible for Canada after San Francisco to have taken the line that the Charter needs radical amendments, but that the Canadian Government, like the governments of almost all the other Members of the United Nations, had considered that to press for radical amendments at the present time would be a sterile task since amendments can come into force only when they are approved by all the great powers and there is today no possibility of all the great powers approving amendments of any importance. The government had therefore concentrated on the practical though undramatic task of making the best of what we have in the United Nations. In my talk I have outlined some of the things which Canada has tried to do in order to make the best of what we have in the United Nations.

The question which some people ask is whether such a policy ought to be continued much longer. Should we not, they ask, press for far-reaching changes in the Charter of the United Nations in order to make it a more effective instrument for maintaining peace? Some advocates of changes would be content with the abolition of the great power veto. Others go a good deal further; they advocate proposals, the adoption of which would mean the creation of a world government in a limited sphere.

The supporters of all the proposals for far-reaching changes in the Charter realize that, under present circumstances, their proposals could not be adopted except at the expense of the secession from the United Nations of the Soviet Union and the Eastern European states.

Such a secession would mean the destruction of the only constitutional structure which now exists which includes both of the two worlds into which our one world has now so tragically been divided. It seems to me that as long as that structure remains in existence - faulty and weak as it is - there is some hope that the two worlds can learn to live together. If that structure goes the changes of the two worlds learning to live together will become much more remote.

A rejection of proposals for immediate, drastic revision of the Charter does not necessarily mean that those states of the Western world which are willing to commit themselves to a much closer degree of union than that embodied in the Charter should not, if they so desire, work out such arrangements. Indeed, they have already done so. The mere fact that the Soviet Union has not so far been willing to cooperate in international organizations charged with dealing with food and agriculture, aviation, refugees, international lending, monetary questions, education, science and culture has not prevented the other nations of the world from establishing F.A.O., I.C.A.O., the I.R.O., the Bank, the Fund and U.N.E.S.C.O.

Most of these agencies have today very little executive power. There is not much they can do except make recommendations to national governments, which national governments are free to carry out or to disregard. If the peoples of the Western world feel that there should be a greater transfer of effective power from national governments to these international organizations, the international agreements constituting these organizations can be amended. If, for example, they want the International Civil Aviation Organization to become an international civil aeronautics board, all that is necessary is to revise the I.C.A.O. constitution along the lines of the draft convention proposed by Canada at the Chicago Conference in 1944.

Since the Soviet Union is by its own choice not a member of most of the international economic and social organizations, it would have no voice in the adoption of amendments of this character to the constitution of these organizations. Thus the states of the Western world are not debarred by a Soviet veto or by Soviet membership in the United Nations from the creation of international federal institutions to deal with international economic and social questions if they decide that such institutions are required.

Nor are they debarred by the Charter of the United Nations or by Soviet membership in the United Nations from creating new international political institutions to maintain peace, if the time should come when it was generally agreed by them that this was necessary. Nothing in the Charter precludes the existence of regional political arrangements or agencies provided that they are consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations and these regional agencies are entitled to take measures of collective self-defence against armed attack until the Security Council has acted. The world is now so small that the whole of the Western world is in itself a mere region. If the peoples of the Western world want an international security organization with teeth, even though the Soviet Union is at present unwilling to be a member of such an organization, they do not need to amend the United Nations Charter in order to create such an organization; they can create it consistently with the United Nations Charter. They can create a regional security organization to which any state willing to accept the obligations of membership could belong. In such an organization there need be no veto right possessed by any great power. In such an organization each member state could accept a binding obligation to pool the whole of its economic and military resources with those of the other members if any power should be found to have committed aggression against any one of the members.

I am not saying that the time has come when these things ought to be done. What I do say is that it is not necessary to amend the Charter of the United Nations in order to do these things and that it would perhaps be better to do these things than to try to turn the United Nations itself into something which the Soviet Union is not at present prepared to accept.

We are fortunate today in this divided world to have in the United Nations an international organization which will soon include almost every state in the world. That universal international organization is far from perfect but, unless it stands in the way of something better, it would seem to be wise not to scrap it. I do not think it stands in the way of something better.

If this analysis is correct, it seems to me that Canada should continue to try to make the United Nations work as effectively as possible within the limits of the present Charter. That has been Canada's role in the past. I have tried to demonstrate that, by playing this role, we have helped to strengthen the prestige and authority of the United Nations, its organs and the specialized agencies, and to keep the United Nations in close touch with the peoples of the world in whose name the

Charter was written. Much still can be done to improve the United Nations within the limits of the present Charter. (1) We must not lose hope or relax our vigilance. The task will be tedious and undramatic, long and heavy. The United Nations has, however, survived so far and is still afloat in troubled waters: that in itself is an accomplishment. If the peoples of the world exercise the virtues of goodwill, forbearance, patience and stubbornness - and above all, faith and hope - the time may come when it will be possible, by general consent, to make those radical changes in the Charter which are required to make the United Nations into a really effective instrument for maintaining world peace.

- (1) The unofficial "Commission to study the organization of peace", under the chairmanship of Dr. James T. Shotwell, has recently completed a report which contains more than twenty specific recommendations for making the United Nations more effective. The Commission states that none of them call for amendment of the Charter. The recommendations are worthy of close study. The report is printed in "International Conciliation" for June, 1947 (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace", 405 West 117th St., New York 27).

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