

VERNMENT



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# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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Text of an address by the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L.D. Wilgress, delivered to the Canadian Club of Toronto, October 27, 1952.

... Some figures of the growth of the Department of External Affairs give an idea of the sudden and wide increase in Canada's international activities. At the outbreak of the war in 1939, there were only thirty-two officers in the entire service, both at home and abroad. Some were busy collecting information and representing Canada in seven capitals; others in processing this information and sending out instructions from the East Block. By 1945 their numbers had grown to ninety-four. There has been a steady expansion since then, until today we have a total of two hundred and seventy-seven officers, of whom about 60 per cent are in Ottawa and the remainder are abroad amongst our forty-nine Missions. This increase in diplomatic and consular activity signifies Canada's rise to the important international position of a middle power.

Apart from the growth in quantitative terms there has been a great increase in the complexity of its activities since I joined the Department ten years ago. At that time the functions of the Secretary of State for External Affairs were discharged by the Prime Minister. I do not think that he found this burden to be unduly onerous when added to his other duties. Those who wished to find out what our foreign policy was had to be content largely with the occasional statements delivered in the House of Commons by the Prime Minister in his capacity of Secretary of State for External Affairs. Now we have a separate Secretary of State for External Affairs who is regarded as one of the busiest members of the Government. Hardly a week passes that Mr. Pearson is not required to make some statement that has a bearing on our foreign policy.

In fact, those who now wish to ascertain what our foreign policy is have an almost embarrassingly large number of statements to consider. Not only are frequent speeches dealing with external relations made in Parliament, but there are also the statements made by Canadian representatives in a whole series of international organizations, in nearly all of which we play a leading part. By participating in this way in international organizations we have to take a position on the many and varied questions which make up the sum total of foreign affairs. It is perhaps through the establishment of positions in these international organizations that the foreign policy of Canada is becoming most clearly defined.

When therefore I am asked what is the foreign policy of Canada, I feel that the best answer is to refer enquirers to what Canada has stood for in relation to the Commonwealth, to the United Nations, to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, to those important bodies which regulate so much of our relations with the United States namely the International Joint Commission and the Permanent Joint

Board on Defence, and finally in relation to the many Specialized Agencies in which we contribute to the solution of those functional problems that arise between nations.

I am sure you have heard it suggested many times that Canada is at one side of a triangle. We have interests and associations of great importance at one side with the United Kingdom and at the other side with the United States. Our foreign policy is inevitably conditioned by both influences. This does not mean that we do not have interests and important relations with other nations. For instance, we have a very special relationship with France. It does mean, however, that we always have to bear in mind how any action we may take can affect our relations with the United Kingdom and those with the United States.

Our relations with the United Kingdom are inseparably bound up with our attitude towards the Commonwealth of Nations. With the Commonwealth we have ties of blood and tradition which make it inconceivable that we should ever break away from that sometimes anomalous, always changing, and ever powerful grouping of free countries. Our independence within the Commonwealth has been gained by slow stages but now we stand on our own feet and have chosen to walk together with our fellow members.

In recent years the changes which have taken place in the Commonwealth have weakened the centralizing urge. As this has come about, Canada's hesitations have died away and we have found new vitality and new positive advantages in the Commonwealth. My three and a half years in London brought home to me more vividly than I ever realized before the benefits that we derive from close association with our fellow members in the Commonwealth. It provides a forum for us to consult together and exchange views so that the influence of each in world affairs is much greater by reason of the very fact of membership in the Commonwealth. It is difficult to over-estimate, for instance, the value of the information which we receive through this association.

Moreover, the Commonwealth has undergone recently a great change - a change which reflects credit on the good sense and genius of those who have been guiding the affairs of the leading Commonwealth countries. Shortly after I arrived in London there took place that conference in which the members gathered together for the purpose of considering in what manner India as a republic could remain within the Commonwealth. The solution that was found to the satisfaction of all made me conscious that I was witnessing an historic development.

Since then we have experiences, with increasing emphasis, how our position in the world has been helped by our Commonwealth association. As equal members with Ceylon, India and Pakistan we are able to consult with them about current happenings in world affairs. We are thus brought into contact with the mind of Asia. By reason of their great numbers the peoples of that continent are bound to be of increasing influence in the world of the future. That world as I see it is one in which all those parts which have not kept pace in economic development with Europe and North America will be seeking to attain as nearly as possible the same level of development in order to improve their standards of living. As they progress towards this goal these countries will become more important factors in determining the course of international affairs. It is indeed fortunate that we, remote as we are from Asia, are brought through the Commonwealth into close relations with leading countries of that continent. This is also the significance of our contribution to the Colombo Plan, for which we have appropriated \$25,000,000, both last year and this. The Commonwealth now symbolizes for us much more than our

relations with Great Britain. It means for us membership in a free association whose members are scattered over five continents.

The other main external influence on Canada comes, of course, from the United States, with which country our economic and cultural ties are growing daily stronger. There is now a very different balance of power situation to what there was during the adolescent period of Canada's growth. We now have two giants among nations - the United States and the Soviet Union. One of these has much more productive capacity than the other. In fact, taking any of the factors commonly used to test economic strength, the United States represents about one-half of the world economy. The development of the productive resources of that country is changing the very basis upon which our own economy has developed. The United States has ceased to be self-contained in respect of many raw materials. They are now looking for convenient sources of supply outside their own borders. To what country could they more conveniently turn than to Canada? What other nation would not envy our position as a country possessed of great resources alongside of the most highly developed industrial nation? Even in respect to foodstuffs North America no longer has some of the surpluses that once played an important part in international trade. We have seen that, in recent years of full employment, the meat supply of North America has been barely sufficient for continental needs.

This change in the complexity of the world economy is having one unfortunate result for Canada. A much larger proportion of our exports is now composed of raw materials and foodstuffs. This does not mean, however, that we have become hewers of wood and drawers of water, because in a period of dynamic growth the terms of trade favour those in possession of the raw materials and foodstuffs which are growing relatively scarcer. Moreover, we have a highly developed manufacturing industry of our own which obviates the need for us to import from other countries a large share of the consumer and capital goods we require. I have often compared our position to that of Sweden, a country whose exports are similar in kind to those of Canada and a country which also has a highly developed manufacturing industry. Yet the Swedish standard of living is the highest of any country in Europe.

Nevertheless, we would all feel happier if manufactured goods, such as those which are produced in abundance in your great city, were contributing a larger proportion to our export trade. We would also feel happier if so large a proportion of our total exports were not going to the United States. Therefore, we have a vital interest in co-operating with the United Kingdom, the United States and the other leading countries in bringing about more satisfactory arrangements for the exchange of goods between nations. This is something to which I am confident international attention will be directed in the very near future.

In our relations with the United States we have had the good fortune to develop day-to-day working arrangements which are quite remarkable in smoothing out the difficulties which inevitably arise between neighbours. These arrangements are represented by the International Joint Commission, which settles boundary questions, and the Permanent Joint Board on Defence, which is concerned with matters arising out of our common responsibility for continental defence. The records of achievement of these two bodies are unique in the history of international relations.

Of course, when we compliment ourselves on our close ties with the United States we should not think that our relations are completely unruffled. We occasionally have our neighbourly spats but, like all people who genuinely want to get along together and who see alike on the fundamental issues, we manage by talking

things over to straighten out our differences. Sometimes, however, when a situation in one country prevents us from working together towards the desired solution, it is mutually agreed that we should proceed independently. This is the solution that has been found necessary in connection with the development of the St. Lawrence waterway, where up to now action by the United States has been blocked in Congress.

Now the existence of the two powerful influences to which I have referred, the one from the United Kingdom and the other from the United States, is bound to give rise to situations calling for skillful reconciliation. One of these is in the field of defence where, unfortunately, our dreams of peaceful association with the Russians in the United Nations were shattered, when through the misuse of the veto, they began to show that they were not prepared to be our peacetime friends. How then would Canada, with a limited military potential and with heavy obligations to develop the natural resources, on which the buoyancy and vitality of our economy depend, reconcile the claims arising from this dual orientation? On the one hand, the United Kingdom looked to Canada as the next largest member of the Commonwealth, for material military support. On the other hand, there was our first obligation to make reasonable provision for the defence of our own territory and, consistent with our size and strength and sovereignty, so to play an honourable role in partnership with the United States in the achievement of continental security. The latter is the obvious prerequisite of any more extended United States military commitments to other areas - and some of these areas are important also to our own defence.

Canada happily found the answer to this vital problem in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, with whose early genesis I am sure you are familiar. In 1947, Mr. St. Laurent, who was then Secretary of State for External Affairs, was one of the first to speak out in favour of an agreement for collective security by those like-minded peace-loving nations who realized that because the aim of the Soviet Union was for the world domination of Communism directed from Moscow, our hopes in the United Nations as the bulwark of our security could not be fulfilled. Thus, in 1949 twelve countries signed the North Atlantic Treaty to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples. The aims of the Treaty are to promote stability and well-being in the area and to unite for collective defence and for the preservation of peace and security. You will see from these words taken from the Treaty that we banded together for two purposes; the first, the important and urgent purpose of providing for our own security without which we could not work toward the second, which is the stability and well-being of the members.

Good progress is being made towards the realization of the first of these goals. We are gradually building up our collective military strength. It seems inevitable in the case of rearmament that we should experience set-backs here and there. However, I remember very vividly that a little over two years ago, when I was appointed Canadian representative on the North Atlantic Council Deputies, we had only isolated national units and an insufficiency of them. Now we have a steadily increasing integrated force under a Supreme Commander. We have already gone a long way towards the achievement of real security.

Naturally this effort at rearmament entails sacrifices and imposes strains on the economies of the participating countries. After having descended too rapidly into the vale of unilateral disarmament, we are now climbing back slowly and painfully to that plateau of rearmament on which alone we can find security.

Once we reach the plateau we should be able to relax to the extent of requiring only the maintenance of our renewed military strength.

However, all those in NATO - the politicians and soldiers alike - are well aware that the provision of effective defensive strength is a costly matter. For this reason we cannot proceed unmindful of the economic effects of concentrating efforts on the building up of armies, air forces and navies. The last ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council, held last February in Lisbon under the chairmanship of Mr. Pearson, approved a definite arms programme. At the same time it was recognized that the impact of an undertaking of this magnitude was bound to have results on the economies of the member countries that could not then be foreseen. For this reason it was decided that there should be an annual review, such as the one which was carried out before the Lisbon meeting, in order to reconcile military requirements with the political and economic capabilities. This annual review is now under way in Paris. Some newspapers are already speculating that the results will reveal a failure on the part of NATO to reach its objectives. This may be so in absolute terms, but I am confident that any deficiency will be relatively small and should be assessed against the magnitude of our collective efforts.

Because we agreed to a programme last year and may modify it this year, this does not mean that we are failing to do our best to provide the maximum military strength we can achieve. On the contrary, while we must have plans, they should be flexible. We must constantly examine our progress to see whether the plans are fulfilling the aims of providing the best forces we can produce without crippling the economies of the NATO countries. This is the central problem of NATO - how to achieve at once both security and solvency. To solve this problem we must have an up-to-date appraisal of both the military and the economic positions.

Thus, in the complex business of gearing fourteen nations to the maximum effort of producing as quickly as possible the most powerful military forces they can afford, we should not be surprised if some modifications are necessary and, if so, we should not too readily attribute them to a lessening of determination or to a change of heart. The great problem is to maintain that spirit of strong determination which has driven the fourteen members of NATO to build up in peacetime a unified force under unified command as a safeguard against war. In the last resort it is the peoples of the North Atlantic countries who will decide whether the danger which faces them warrants the expenditure of a large proportion of their resources for the provision of military forces. Those responsible for formulating the policies of NATO are not unmindful of the dangers inherent in overburdening the economies of the member countries. The annual review that is in progress now must reconcile the claims of defence and the changing political and economic factors which weigh heavily on each country. Political and economic stability must co-exist or else the strongest army in the world is but an illusion of security consuming the very substance of the society it was created to protect.

While concentrating on the goal of achieving security we have not been able to devote as much attention as we should wish to the non-military objectives of the North Atlantic Treaty which are enshrined in Article 2 of that instrument. We have, however, never lost sight of these objectives. They were inserted into the treaty on Canadian initiative. The experience we are acquiring by co-operating together in building up military strength and in consulting with one another upon important political questions will stand us in good stead when we are able to devote more attention to co-operation in the social, economic and other fields. When we

reach that plateau of rearmament on which real security is found, we will be able to broaden out our efforts to embrace all of the objectives incorporated in the North Atlantic Treaty.

You will see from all this that the North Atlantic Treaty has become the main base of Canadian foreign policy. This does not mean that we have lost interest in the United Nations. The very fact that the foreign minister of Canada is now President of the General Assembly is indicative of our great interest in that organization. The North Atlantic Treaty is not in conflict with the United Nations Charter. Article 51 of the Charter recognizes the right of a country to take collective measures in self-defence if satisfactory arrangements cannot be secured through the machinery of the United Nations. The North Atlantic Treaty is nothing less than the exercise of this right to collective self-defence in the face of a very real threat of aggression. It was an effort to permit the aims of San Francisco to be realized by demonstrating to a potential aggressor that any attempt to take advantage of the power vacuum in Europe would be resisted by a group of nations acting collectively.

Because we have had to resort to another instrument to obtain real security, we should not fall into the easy habit of thinking of the United Nations as a useless burden and an exercise of sham and propaganda. The organization remains of very great importance. It represents the only forum where East and West can meet. It is also the only forum of universal international co-operation and if we were to try to recreate it today we would not be able to do so. We must therefore resist the temptation to throw away the good because we cannot have the best. We must remember that the problem of the United Nations is not the veto or any other of its complex rules and regulations. It is the lack of a desire for peace on a basis of freedom that divides us from the East and prevents the co-operative accomplishment of our aims. In this situation we had no alternative but to rely on joint efforts with our fellow members of NATO wherein, happily for Canada, those who influence most of our international relations are co-operating with the others to build up a position of security without which our cause is lost.

Three main cleavages have become apparent in the United Nations. There is first of all that fundamental cleavage between East and West to which I have already referred. It has been the lack of co-operation on the part of the Soviet Union that is chiefly responsible for the failure of the United Nations to fulfil the high hopes that were held of it at the time the Charter was signed. The second cleavage is that between developed and under-developed countries, or rather between the "haves" and the "have-nots". The third cleavage is that between the anti-colonial countries and those with dependent territories. In each of these three cleavages the line-up of nations is different, but whereas in the cleavage between East and West the Soviet Union and its satellites are very much in the minority, they are usually able to align themselves with the majority when issues relating to the other two cleavages come before the General Assembly. This is because the principle of the sovereign equality of all members is respected as one of the basic provisions of the Charter. This principle, however, implies a responsibility on all members, particularly so long as the fundamental cleavage between East and West continues. Those states which have not got responsibility for the exercise of power should always bear in mind that some of their aspirations cannot be realized owing to the fact that we lack the peaceful co-operation of a bloc of states led by the Soviet Union. The principal obstacle to the kind of life these countries would like to lead is the threat from Eastern Europe - a threat to them no less than to any one of us. The danger of unconsciously seconding the efforts of the Soviet Union to bring about disunity in the

Western world is something these countries should always bear in mind.

Canada cannot be indifferent to the aims and aspirations of those seeking either the economic development of their territories or the self-government of dependent territories. We ourselves have progressed rapidly along the road of economic development. We also progressed steadily along the path of self-government, commencing as a colony of one race conquered by men of another race and ending as a nation in which the two races are welded together in complete mastery of their own destiny. In our history therefore, we have learned that progress on sound lines has to be gradual and that the conditions have to be right before one step can be followed by another. We know how difficult it is for free nations to achieve all that they would like to when so much of their time and effort must be directed to the accomplishment of the primary aim of security.

The main prerequisite of the foreign policy of any country is that it should reflect the aims and aspirations of the citizens of that country. That this is the case for the foreign policy of Canada is demonstrated by the unanimity with which there is agreement in Parliament on the objectives of our external relations. There may be disagreements on some of the methods of achieving these aims, but not on the aims themselves. This unanimity on the aims of our foreign policy proves that we have achieved an internal reconciliation of what may once have been conflicting views. It also indicates that the aims of our foreign policy are recognized by Canadians to be in the long-range interests of the country. A fairly depressing catalogue could be compiled of foreign policy decisions taken by various governments which, because of the strength of a particular group or of a particular region, ran contrary to the long-range interests of the country concerned. The most important single factor in the foreign policy of any country is the need to maintain national unity. Those responsible for giving effect to that foreign policy must be careful, on the one hand, not to make a minority group feel that the majority is riding rough-shod over its interests and, at the same time, must avoid making the majority feel that their deference to the feelings of a minority has been an undue restraint. No doubt it is because of adherence to these basic principles that Canada today stands so high in the councils of the world. This, I am sure, must be a satisfaction to an institution which is fully representative of things Canadian - and that, Gentlemen, can be said of the Canadian Club of Toronto.

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