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"OF THINGS TO COME"

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The New Relationship With Soviet Russia

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The New Relationship With Soviet Russia

One fact that has emerged from this war is the changed attitude towards Soviet Russia in many Canadian minds. Before the war, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was a far-off country where many strange experiments were taking place. To some, these experiments were obnoxious; to others, wonderful. To most of us they were simply unknown. With all the propaganda in the papers, it was difficult to know what to think. Since Hitler's invasion of the U.S.S.R. in June, 1941, most of us have changed our minds. We have seen the Nazi hordes receive their first resounding defeat by the Red Army. We have seen the unforgettable defence of Moscow, of Sevastopol and Stalingrad. Now, in the third year after the invasion of Russia, we see the German armies being pushed backward in dismal retreat. What this has meant to the Russian people in suffering and casualties, in the loss of their homes and in the destruction of their cities, is something we cannot forget. Most of us are now conscious that along with the courageous qualities of the people of such countries as Britain and China, the courage of the Soviet people is one of the main reasons why we in Canada are safe from the Axis today. They have accomplished great things and out of that accomplishment a new relationship with Soviet Russia is being born.

The importance of that relationship is well evidenced by the interest that Hitler has taken in it. He and his followers know that now the only way to escape defeat is to sow discord between the forces of the East and those of the West. Anthony Eden has described this, speaking on the 25th anniversary of the Red Army:

"Where Hitler's generalship has failed, the wiles of Goebbels are now in play; every effort has been made and will be made, to foster suspicion and encourage dissension between the Allies. A part of this puppet show is played by the bogey of bolshevism, but we do not find it hard to recognise this highly coloured figure. He is an old friend—a survival from the earliest days of the Nazi regime."

THE U.S.S.R. AND CANADA

Neighbours The first fact that must be noted is that Canada and Soviet Union are neighbours. Where once the Arctic was an impenetrable barrier and Russia was far away on the other side of Europe, we now face each other across the Pole. Steffanson, the great Arctic explorer, has shown how Soviet development in her northland and Canadian development in ours are bringing us constantly close together. Anybody who doubts this

should look at the world on a globe rather than on a flat map and they will see how close we are. The acroplane has made it possible to have direct connection between Ottawa and Moscow. As modern invention advances, this nearness will become increasingly important.

Peace and Prosperity But Canada is bound up with the U.S.S.R. in an even more important way. It is now clear to most Canadians that all nations must work together to prevent future wars and depressions. In the achievement of that world order, the Soviet Union obviously will play an important part. It covers a sixth of the world's surface. It has a population of approximately 170 millions. It is both a European and an Asiatic power. After the last two and a half years, its strength needs no illustration. A world order without the U.S.S.R. would hardly be a world order. All the United Nations leaders from Churchill and Roosevelt on have recognized this.

Quite apart from what we want or do not want, the U.S.S.R. is and will be a factor of powerful importance in the post-war world. To disregard it is impossible.

Common Goals But more than the mere necessities of world co-operation unites us with Russia. Travellers in the Soviet Union, such as Wendell Wilkie, Joseph Davies and most recently the Archbishop of York, have pointed out that, though many of our methods and many of our traditions may differ, the goals of our societies have much in common. They point out that the steps taken in the Soviet Union since 1917—the increased education, the rising standard of living, the care for the younger generation—are the same goals we ourselves are striving towards. As Wilkie and Davies have said, this is not to argue that our methods of achieving these goals should be the same. But they feel we both have the common objective of the four freedoms.

WHAT ARE OUR RELATIONS TODAY?

Many of us may remember the speech of Churchill the evening that Hitler invaded the Soviet Union. In that speech, he stated unequivocally that Great Britain stood at Russia's side. Since then a policy of co-operation has grown. In July, 1941, the U.S.A., not yet in the war, extended Lend-Lease aid to Russia. After the U.S.A. had entered the war, the U.S.S.R. joined with the other free nations in signing the Declaration of the United Nations, pledging themselves to the defeat of Hitlerism and subscribing to the Atlantic Charter. Finally, in June, 1942, Great

Britain and the U.S.S.R. signed a 20-year treaty of mutual assistance. As Foreign Commissar Molotov said about this treaty at the time:

"The present treaty also determines the common line of action of the Soviet Union and Great Britain after the war. The fact that this treaty operates for a period of twenty years and is based on mutual military and economic assistance against possible further aggression on the part of Germany and is intended to insure the security and well-being of the peoples of Europe, speaks for itself."

No such treaty was signed by Canada or by the U.S.A.

Despite this growing trust, however, elements of old suspicions were still there. In the Anglo-American world, there were still those who were afraid of bolshevism and looked for sinister motives in the Soviet Union. On the other hand, it was not easy for the U.S.S.R. to forget the wars of intervention against her by England, U.S., Canada and other countries at the conclusion of the last war. Also, as one writer put it: "With more than ten million dead and losses running into thousands every day, it is not inhuman that the Russians view everything from one angle; how to shorten the war and, therefore, the cost in human lives." (Harriet Moore). There were moments when the Soviet Union thought the Second Front was slow in coming. The central strategy of the United Nations seemed to exclude the Soviet Union. All the United Nations boards were strictly Anglo-American. All the conferences were between Churchill and Roosevelt.

MOSCOW AND TEHRAN CONFERENCES

During the autumn of 1943, much of this suspicion and distrust has been eliminated. Britain, the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. have come closer together than ever before. This partnership will naturally bring Canada into closer connection.

Moscow The first main conference was at Moscow between the foreign ministers of the three powers: Vyacheslav Molotov for the Soviet Union, Anthony Eden for Great Britain, and Cordell Hull for the U.S.A. A joint declaration was issued by these three powers, and by China, on November 1st, 1943.

1. That their united action, pledged for the prosecution of the war against their respective enemies, will be continued for the organization and maintenance of peace and security.

2. That those of them at war with a common enemy will act together in all matters relating to the surrender and disarmament of that enemy.

3. That they will take all measures deemed by them to be necessary to provide against any violation of the terms imposed upon the enemy.

4. That they recognize the necessity of establishing at the earliest practical date a general international organization, based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all peace-loving states, and open to membership by all such states, large and small, for the maintenance of international peace and security.

5. That for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security pending the re-establishment of law and order and the inauguration of a system of general security, they will consult one another and as occasion requires with other members of the United Nations with a view to joint action on behalf of the community of nations.

6. That after the termination of hostilities they will not employ their military forces within the territories of other states except for the purposes envisaged in this declaration and after joint consultation.

7. That they will confer and co-operate with one another and with other members of the United Nations to bring about a practicable general agreement with respect to the regulation of armaments in the postwar period.

This general declaration was followed by specific declarations laying down unified policy towards (1) Italy, (2) Austria, (3) German atrocities.

Teheran Conference The Moscow Conference was followed several weeks later by a Conference at Teheran, in which Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill took part. From this Conference a joint declaration was announced.

"We, the President of the United States of America, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, and the Premier of the Soviet Union, have met in these four days past in this the capital of our ally, Teheran, and have shaped and confirmed our common policy.

We express our determination that our nations shall work together in the war and in the peace that will follow.

As to the war, our military staffs have joined our round-table discussion and we have concerted our plans for the destruction of the German forces. We have reached complete agreement as to the scope and timing of operations which will be undertaken from the east, west and south. The common understanding which we have here reached guarantees that victory will be ours.

And as to the peace, we are sure that our concord will make it an enduring peace. We recognize fully the supreme responsibility resting upon us and all the nations to make a peace which will command good will from the overwhelming masses of the peoples of the world and banish the scourge and terror of war for many generations.

With our diplomatic advisers we have surveyed the problems of the future. We shall seek the cooperation and active participation of all nations, large and small, whose peoples in heart and in mind are dedicated, as are our own peoples, to the elimination of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance. We will welcome them as they may choose to come into the world family of democratic nations.

No power on earth can prevent our destroying the German armies by land, their U-boats by sea, and their war plants from the air. Our attacks will be relentless and increasing.

Emerging from these friendly conferences we look with confidence to the day when all the peoples of the world may live free lives untouched by tyranny and according to their varying desires and their own consciences.

We came here with hope and determination. We leave here friends in fact, in spirit, and in purpose.

Signed at Teheran, December 1, 1943.

ROOSEVELT, STALIN, CHURCHILL.

The declarations of these two conferences have been given in full, because they are worth reading carefully. More than any comment about them can say, they contain the possible shape of the world to come — a world where co-operation for peace will be attainable. There may be some who are cynical about general phrases. There may be some who look for hidden meanings behind those phrases. But even these people must admit that these declarations are an advance the world would not have thought

possible two or three years ago. It is easy to doubt, but it must be remembered that men like Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin do not state lightly: "We express our determination that our nations shall work together in the war and in the peace that will follow."

POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES

Obviously at two conferences of short duration it was not possible to clear up all phases of a relationship that has been uneasy for 25 years. For one thing, at both conferences a great percentage of the time must have been spent on the subject of primary importance—the military victory over Hitlerism. What was to happen after the victory could not seem as important to men who have the responsibility over millions of lives as the actual victory itself. There are, however, certain matters not specifically mentioned in either of the declarations that will have to be cleared up. To mention them is to remember we must find some way of co-operating about them.

Future of Germany The joint declaration at Moscow contains a clear statement that war criminals will be punished and that they will be pursued to the uttermost ends of the earth. Apart from this statement there is no specific agreement on the future of Germany. This is obviously important. As one leading American newspaper has said: "If the U.S.S.R. entered Germany from one end with one policy and the Anglo-American coalition entered from the other with a different one—the result would be disastrous." There does not seem to be complete agreement among the powers on this question. In July, 1943, the Soviet Union sponsored in Moscow a free German Committee which appealed to the Germans to throw off the Nazi yoke and take some kind of place in the family of nations. Stalin has affirmed this point of view when he said: "It would be ridiculous to identify Hitler's clique with the German people and the German state. History shows that Hitlers come and go, but the German people and the German state remain." So far, there has been no clear statement on the future of Germany by the British or American governments. Will the United Nations be able to work out a common policy towards the defeated Germany?

Future of the Small States Some people have affirmed that the U.S.S.R. may not respect the rights of small states in Europe.

They mention as reason the recent dispute between the Soviet government and the Polish government in exile. It must be remembered, however, that many times the U.S.S.R. has reiterated its desire for the survival of small nations. It has subscribed to the Atlantic Charter that affirmed this principle. Stalin personally voiced it in an outline of the goals of the United Nations. "Abolition of racial exclusiveness, equality of nations and integrity of their territories, liberation of enslaved nations and restoration of their sovereign rights, the right of every nation to arrange its affairs as it wishes" were some of the leading factors in his list. The recent Czechoslovakian-U.S.S.R. agreement shows the willingness of the Soviet Union to come to terms with a small country. Finally, we should not forget that the first and last letters of the U.S.S.R. stand for Union of Republics. Within the framework of that Union, the nationalism of the various parts have been carefully guarded. This year the U.S.S.R. has made its republics autonomous in foreign affairs.

The War in the East Some people have seen cause for friction between the Anglo-American powers and the Soviet Union because the latter are not belligerents in the Asiatic war against Japan. Such a sentiment can be questioned, however, in view of the part the Soviet Union has played in the European war. With the full might of Hitlerism turned against them, any action in the Orient could hardly be expected. As a recent American war department film has said: "Russia is engaging the main Nazi strength and a two-front war for Russia would diminish the pressure of the worried Nazis and endanger the plans of our own army." The interest of the Soviet Union in the East is shown by the fact that the declaration from Moscow Conference was signed by China along with the other three powers.

TOWARD THE FUTURE

The basis of co-operation has been set at Teheran and Moscow. In that co-operation, Canada plays its part. We have an ambassador in Moscow. We are fellow-members of the United Nations. Our war aid flows constantly to the Soviet Union. Previously we have seen the special part we play in the Anglo-American world. We are also neighbours across the Arctic with the Soviet Union. We can play our part in keeping the co-operation alive between those powers. Already in our small way we have shown our feeling towards the U.S.S.R. by our response to the Canadian Aid to Russia Fund (in one year \$3,000,000) and to the Canadian-Soviet friendship council.

As we go forward into the new world, let us remember, as Wendell Willkie put it, Russia is a vital element in that world.

"Obviously, it would be ridiculous for me to attempt to say what Russia is going to do. This much, however, I do know to be true: there are 200,000,000 subjects of the U.S.S.R.; they control the largest single land mass in the world under one government; they have almost inexhaustible supplies of timber, iron, coal, oil, which are, practically speaking, unexploited; . . . such a power, such a people cannot be ignored or disposed of with a high hat or a lifting of the skirt. We cannot act as if we were housewives going into an A & P store, picking and choosing among the groceries displayed; taking this, leaving that. The plain fact is: we have no choice in the matter. Russia will be reckoned with. That is the reason why I am constantly telling my fellow Americans: work in ever-closer co-operation with the Russians while we are joined together in the common purpose of defeating a common enemy. Learn all we can about them and let them learn about us."

MORE INFORMATION

- The Truth about Soviet Russia*: Sidney and Beatrice Webb. (Longmans Green 1942, \$2.00). By the greatest English speaking authorities on the Soviet Union, with an introduction by Bernard Shaw. Shorter than their long book, "Soviet Communism."
- One World*: Wendell Willkie. 1943. New York. Simon & Schuster. A great American leader writes of his trip around the world.
- Mission to Moscow*: Joseph E. Davies. Pocketbook edition 39c, 1943. One time American Ambassador reports on his experience in the Soviet Union.
- Russia*: Sir Bernard Pares. Penguin Books, 25c, 1940 and 1943. An English expert describes the Soviet Union.
- The Last Days of Sevastopol*: Boris Voyetckhov. New York, 1943. A novel about the war in Russia.
- The United Nations Today and Tomorrow*: ed. by Violet Anderson. Ryerson Press, 1944. An excellent speech on the U.S.S.R. by Harriet Moore.
- Moscow Conference*: H. McD. Clokie. Behind the Headlines Series. Available 198 College St., Toronto, 10c.

FILMS

- INSIDE FIGHTING RUSSIA.** The story of the new Russia that has been built up in recent years and how it has defended itself against Germany. (Running time—22 minutes.)
- VIA PERSIA.** How British, Canadian and American supplies are reaching Russia through Persia. (Running time—8 minutes.)

REPORT QUESTIONS

1. Should Canada have a twenty-year treaty of alliance with the Soviet Union as Great Britain has? If so, why? If not, why?
2. What difficulties have *in the past* stood in the way of cooperation between the English speaking world and the U.S.S.R.?
3. What steps do you think should be taken to implement the policy of cooperation laid down at the Moscow and Teheran Conferences?

SEND YOUR ANSWERS TO YOUR PROVINCIAL OFFICE

FURTHER QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What effect will the development of the Arctic have on Canadian-Soviet relations?
2. During 1943, the Communist International centred at Moscow was disbanded. What effect will that have on our relations with the Soviet Union?
3. In what practical ways have the Canadian people shown their friendship to the Russian people during this war? Has any member of your Citizens' Forum participated in any such activity?
4. What role has the U.S.S.R. played in Asia in the past. What do you think her role will be in the future?

Next Week: THE RISE OF ASIA

