

"OF THINGS TO COME"

*A Citizens' Forum on Canada in the
Post-war World*

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The New World Order

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The New World Order

To many of us sitting in our comfortable homes in Canada, peace and the building of the new world order seem rather remote and distant. Many of us feel that where the problems of depression and unemployment hit us directly, the bitterness of war has not. On the other hand to Canadian prisoners at Hong Kong or in Germany, to Russian peasants caught behind the enemy lines, to British sailors torpedoed on the Arctic seas, this question of war and peace is less remote. Also to many families here in Canada as news comes through of the loss of their sons, thoughts of a peaceful world, where the nations of the world could live together in friendship and prosperity become increasingly important. They know what war means, they do not want it to happen again.

But how are we to prevent it? Last time, twenty-five years ago, we were full of phrases about the war to end war and thousands of men returned from the trenches determined that it would not happen again. The alternative that lay before the world was sharply seen. Woodrow Wilson, President of the U.S.A. said in 1919, "I can predict with absolute certainty that within another generation there will be another world war, if the nations of the world do not concert the method by which to prevent it". No prediction was ever more true. The nations of the world did not get together and inescapably war came. Some nations like the U.S.A. retired into isolation. Others like France and Great Britain thought first of their limited national interests. There was the deep-seated suspicion of cooperating with the Soviet Union or the newborn China. We in Canada believed our leaders when they told us, "We live in a fireproof house, far from inflammable materials."

The period between the wars marked the complete breakdown of the hopes for the new world that seemed possible at the end of the last war. How are we going to see that that does not happen again? Are we going to see that our victory to which Canada has contributed so much, will not have been bought in vain?

This time there does seem a reasonable hope that we may have learned the lesson. People in all the nations of the world seem more determined than last time that they will build an organization for our one world. From the reports that have come in from the Citizens' Forum for instance, the post-war objective put first is the building of a world organization to prevent war. There is the firm realization that without that, little else is possible.

It is all very well, however, to say we want an organization to prevent war, but what is more important is to be realistic and see

what signs there are of it emerging now. For if the foundations of it aren't laid by the end of the war we may be sure they won't suddenly be created out of nothing.

THE UNITED NATIONS

We need have only one war aim—to recognize what we have already created. (MICHAEL STRAIGHT)

This statement bears thinking about. It says we don't have to think about future large scale dreams or blueprints, rather we need to concentrate on what we have already created—the United Nations. The important thing is not what kind of new League of Nations or Federal Union we should try and devise to be put into effect at some uncertain date after the war. Rather it is how can we make sure that the United Nations fulfill their present tremendous potentialities and grow into the structure of world unity and world order, for which they are now the beginning? They are the basis for world organization we have already created. How can we expand them for the post-war world?

What Are They On January 1st, 1942, twenty-six nations (today there are thirty-three) pledged themselves to work together in the common struggle and subscribed to the common war aims as laid down in the Atlantic Charter.

Their Scope and Diversity The big four members are Great Britain, United States, the U.S.S.R. and China, with Canada as the next ranking power. The members of the British Commonwealth of Nations belong, along with Governments-in-exile (such as Norway, Poland, Czechoslovakia) and 11 Latin-American Republics, including Brazil and Mexico.

Never before in history has an alliance embraced such a wide variety of peoples. Just think the great capitalist nations—the British Commonwealth and the United States of America, fighting side by side with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a country of some 150 nationalities living under a socialist system. There are China—one of the areas of profitable imperialist exploitation; Latin American countries just barely emerging into modern industrial civilization; governments representing backward, poverty-stricken European countries; the Poles and the Czechs, enemies throughout the inter-war years. All of these nations are together in a fighting alliance, after dismal years of division, after appeasement on the part of the great nations which made it possible for Hitler to gobble up the small nations one by one.

How They Have Developed The United Nations alliance was formed in January 1942, but they have developed steadily since then. After the years of division and suspicion between the nations, it was not unnatural that it should have taken time for them to get together. It can be stated now, however, that in March, 1944, the United Nations are a growingly cooperative and united organization. Frictions have been smoothed out; disagreements eliminated. The common purpose of fighting the war has brought them together and now more and more that common purpose is being strengthened in the preparations for peace.

It was easy for the Anglo-American powers to cooperate. They had a common tradition of friendly relations, that had developed out of such things as Lend-Lease. Therefore, as soon as the U.S.A. entered the war, jointly cooperating boards were set up to insure a united war effort. A combined general staff was established to procure a unified strategy. In this growing cooperation Canada played a constant role of encouraging unity between the English speaking powers. Cooperation between the other great powers grew more slowly however. In June, 1942, a twenty year pact of mutual alliance was signed between Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. But frictions remained and it was not until the autumn of 1943 that the U.S.S.R., Great Britain and the U.S.A. finally came to close agreement at the conferences of Moscow and Teheran. At Teheran, Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin stated, "We express our determination that our nations shall work together in the war and in the peace that will follow." A pledge such as that gives promise for a new world order.

In the same way the strength of the United Nations in Asia has grown as China, the U.S.A. and Great Britain have come to firmer understanding. The relinquishment of extra-territorial rights on the part of the U.S. and Britain did much to convince China of the good intentions of the western powers. The establishment of a Pacific War Council with representation of all the United Nations Pacific powers (including Canada) helped to make cooperation for war strategy easier. Finally the conference between Chiang Kai-Shek, Roosevelt and Churchill at Cairo laid down a joint United Nations declaration on the war in the Pacific.

UNITED NATIONS POST-WAR PLANNING

The United Nations have not only come closer together by a more united prosecution of the war, they have begun to prepare for the peace that lies ahead. Having subscribed to the general principles of the Atlantic Charter they have begun to find practical solutions for these general ideals. Sensibly they have started with the most specific and immediate things.

Food Conference In May, 1943, a United Nations Food Conference was held. The purpose of the conference was to see what could be done to eliminate freedom from want all over the world—not only in the short-term period after the war but as a long term proposition as well. As one Canadian delegate said in explanation, "Peace sits uneasily on an empty stomach." From that Conference a temporary Food Commission was set up under the Chairmanship of a Canadian, L. B. Pearson. This Commission has now prepared specific plans to be presented to each of the governments involved. International planning for freedom from want all over the world has begun.

Relief and Rehabilitation The next main problem the United Nations tackled was the very practical one of the Relief and Rehabilitation of the war devastated areas all over the world. A Conference was held at Atlantic City in 1943 and from that a United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration was set up. The draft agreement of that organization lays down its purpose as follows:

"Immediately upon the liberation of any area by the armed forces of the United Nations the population thereof shall receive aid and relief from their sufferings, food, clothing and shelter, aid in the prevention of pestilence and in the recovery of the health of the people, and that preparation and arrangements shall be made for the return of prisoners and exiles to their homes, for the resumption of agricultural and industrial production and the restoration of essential services.

Another practical problem tackled by the United Nations.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

These plans are only first steps and they are recognized as such. To tackle the vast problems of world reorganization and all the readjustment that war has made necessary, a more permanent and complete structure is necessary. The Prime Minister of Canada put this recently when he said:—

"The strong bonds which have linked the United Nations into a working model of cooperation must be strengthened and developed for even greater use in the years of peace. It is perhaps an axiom of war that during actual hostilities methods must be improvised, secrecy must be observed, attention must be concentrated on victory. The time is approaching, however, when even before victory is won the concept of the United Nations will have to be embodied in some form of international organization."

This need has been put on the forefront of United Nations aims by the joint declaration from Moscow by the U.S.S.R., Great Britain, the U.S.A., and China. Part four of that declaration reads:—

"That they recognize the necessity of establishing at the earliest practicable 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."

This is the promise that some international organization will be set up to preserve the peace.

This then is how far the United Nations have progressed so far. To say that a whole New World Order has been created would be ridiculous. There are still problems of magnitude that must be settled. But the pattern has been and is being set for the New World Order in what has been and is being done. When one thinks of how divided and torn the world was from years ago, the accomplishment is astounding. Before the onslaught of Hitler and of the Japanese warlords, our new world order has begun to be born. That is the fact we must not forget.

POWER BLOCK POLITICS

The stage is set then for the emergence of a new world order. We can achieve what we all want. That is not to say, however, that we will achieve it. In the past a world order has too often been placed secondary to the attempt of one block to achieve advantage over another. Nations competed against each other in terms of power. National economies competed against each other, hoping to get privilege and prosperity for themselves at the expense of others. These power blocks were sometimes known more pleasantly as "the balance of power" in the world. There are signs in some quarters that that kind of thinking still exists, and that some still want to create a world where one group of nations will be in competition against another group. In the past this has been the road to depression and finally to war. The competing blocks of power driving against each other, eventually met in armed conflict. There seems little doubt that if we think and act in the same terms, we will reach the same place as we did in the past. Only if we realize that we live in one world and that we can all gain from each other's gain will we achieve a stable society. This is not idealism, it is plain common sense. We are living in one world. If we decide to split it up into conflicting and competing camps, we need have little hope of achieving unity, prosperity and peace in that world. Only if we recognize it as one world, will we achieve the new world order we want.

CANADA'S PLACE

But, many say, this new world order is fine, but what can we in Canada do about it. The decisions will be taken by the great powers like China, the U.S.S.R., Great Britain, and the U.S.A. The smaller nations will just do what they are told. This has an element of truth in it. Obviously the great powers will be the keystone of peace all over the world. Their voices will be of central significance in the making of world decisions. Luxembourg or Bolivia cannot have the same force in the making of policy as the U.S.S.R. or the U.S.A. But that will not mean that the smaller powers will not also have significance. Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill have shown that they desire the cooperation of the smaller powers. They declared after the Teheran Conference:—

"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 are seeing today that Canada as a small nation has representatives on the United Nations Boards that are being set up. A Canadian was made temporary head of the Food Commission. A Canadian is head of the committee of supply in the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation administration.

The Prime Minister of Canada has stated a practical solution to this problem of the smaller nations when he suggests that countries should have a vote in policy when their interests are directly involved. He said in July, 1943:—

"A number of new international institutions are likely to be set up as a result of the war. In the view of the government, effective representations on these bodies should neither be restricted to the largest states nor necessarily extended to all states. Representation should be determined on a functional basis which will admit to full membership those countries, large or small, which have the greatest contribution to make to the particular object in question."

Under this system Canada would presumably have a strong voice on such matters as air routes and the distribution of wheat, (i.e. questions in which she is directly involved). She would not have as large a voice in such questions as African affairs or eastern European boundaries. This sounds like a fair and just solution for the smaller nations.

IN OUR OWN INTEREST

Finally it must be repeated that the new world order is not other people's business. It is ours. It is fine to talk of the place of Great Britain or the U.S.S.R. in a new world order, but what is more important is to see what Canada can do and then to see that we do it. "The fireproof house" we were told about between the wars has proved inflammable. Today we are up to our necks in war. And if we let there be a next time, Canada will be even more deeply involved. We are at the air routes centre of the world. We are situated between two of the great powers, the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. We are closely linked with another, Great Britain. If we cannot build the new world order, the next war may not be in far away Poland or remote Manchuria, it may be here in our own backyard. The new world order is not something we are building out of the kindness of our hearts to help the Chinese or the Europeans, it is something which is in the interest of every Canadian. Let us see what we as members of our democracy can do to promote that interest.

MORE INFORMATION

The Conditions of Peace: E. H. Carr. Macmillan. 1942. On the necessity of building a world organization from what we have, with special emphasis on Europe.

Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time: H. Laski. Viking Press. 1943. An interpretation of the war as a revolution.

- Make This the Last War*: Michael Straight. Harcourt Brace & Co., N.Y. 1943. A plea for a policy of United Nations unity.
- Post-War Worlds*: 1942: P. E. Corbett. 1942. Oxford. An examination of the problems and defects of international collaboration in the past and an outline of various schemes for the future.
- A Greater Canada Among the Nations*: L. Gelber. Behind the Headlines. Available from 198 College St., Toronto, 10c. An interesting and well written account of Canada's increased stature through the war.

FILMS

- WORLD OF PLENTY.** An United Kingdom film part of which is devoted to the post-war plans for agriculture in the world. A Canadian revision of this film is also being made and will be available after March 1st, 1944. (Running time—45 minutes.)
- PRELUDE TO WAR**—An United States film showing world history in the period immediately preceding the rise of Hitler, with emphasis on the failure of international organization to keep the peace. (Running time—53 minutes.)
- EASTERN HEALTH BUREAU AT SINGAPORE**—The story of a vitally important job undertaken by the League of Nations, that is, world-wide control of the Bubonic Plague. (Running time—10 minutes.)
- MESSAGE FROM GENEVA**—The extent to which the work of the League of Nations depended on modern communications. (Running time—10 minutes.)
- MARCH OF TIME**—Showing the declining prestige of the League of Nations from 1932 1938. (Running time—15 minutes.)

REPORT QUESTIONS

1. What main tasks will the United Nations have to undertake when victory is won?
2. What particular contribution can Canada make to the United Nations?
3. What part can your Citizens' Forum play in seeking that Canada adopts a positive role in world affairs?

SEND YOUR ANSWERS TO YOUR PROVINCIAL OFFICE

THINGS TO DO

Find out what practical commitments Canada has undertaken as a member of the United Nations. Such information can be obtained from the War Information Board, Ottawa. Find out what the opinions of your local member of Parliament are on Canada post-war obligations. Such information could be used for special discussion in your group or for a public meeting in your community.

FURTHER QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Do you think Canadians as a whole know about the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration and Canada's part in that organization? How much did you know before tonight's discussion?
2. President Roosevelt has declared that "Freedom from want" is one of the aims of the United Nations. What steps will have to be taken to make this aim a practical reality?
3. What part will the smaller nations like Canada play in United Nations machinery?

NEXT WEEK - - THE SOLDIER COMES HOME

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