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How The Marshall Plan Has Woven Its Way Into Modern Society

The significance of the Allied and Italian civilian efforts to re-establish peace, security and prosperity pertain to modern society. In 1943, the Battle for Sicily— also known as Operation Husky—laid the foundation for the pillars of peace that have influenced many attempts for sustainable peace over the years. The United States’ Marshall Plan was incredibly successful in regards to helping European countries recover post World War II. The implementation of the plan was instrumental in Sicily’s successful and lasting recovery since “Italy was the third largest recipient of Marshall Plan aid. It received \$12 billion between 1948 and 1952, on average, 2.3 percent of its GDP for five years” (Infrastructure, development and the Marshall plan). Italian provinces with large amounts of destruction caused by the war were able to benefit from the financial aid provided by the Marshall plan. Even though the Marshall Plan no longer exists, the core aspects of this financial aid plan are still significant today, especially in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. Canada’s prime minister, Justin Trudeau, has financed foreign aid to countries with low COVID-19 resources, along with various vaccine shipments and humanitarian assistance. Venezuela was one such recipient of Canada’s aid. The events in Sicily highlighted that sustainable peace was crucial to obtaining a well functioning and prosperous society. The lessons learned in Sicily, and the implementation of the Marshall Plan provide a clear outline of how positive peace can be achieved elsewhere.

COVID-19 has gravely impacted the economy and caused a significant humanitarian crisis. Global leaders have been coming up with their own ways of coping with this pandemic;

however, Canada's prime minister, Justin Trudeau, has taken a few pages from George C. Marshall's plan, and has aided foreign countries with low COVID-19 resources. To date, Canada has generated more than \$2.6 billion in international assistance. To break down the distribution of this money: over \$1.3 billion has been used to purchase COVID-19 tools, such as tests and treatment equipment, furthering accessibility to these resources to foreign countries. Over \$740 million has been used to fund humanitarian and development assistance in response to urgency stemming from the pandemic. Lastly, \$541 million has been contributed to insure that developing countries are funded and are able to have their needs met throughout the pandemic (Government of Canada, COVID-19). Some may believe that these positive aspects of the Marshall plan that Trudeau has implemented in our modern society do not contribute to sustainable peace. Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, however to reiterate one of the most important pillars of positive peace: good relations with neighbours is crucial. By mobilizing a large sum of money to distribute to various countries in need during the pandemic, Trudeau is keeping Canada in good relations with its neighbours, like the United States did with the European countries post World War II.

Trudeau has also donated numerous COVID-19 vaccine doses on Canada's behalf. Over 13.8 million surplus vaccine doses have been delivered through the COVAX Facility as of February 16, 2022.(Canada's international vaccine donations). The COVAX facility being, a worldwide initiative taken to grant more access to COVID-19 vaccines, which is led by GAVI vaccine alliance, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, and the World Health Organization. The countries that have benefited most from Canada's vaccine donations are: Bangladesh with 2,203,100 doses donated, Uganda with 1,904,140 doses and Mozambique with 1,168,800 doses. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has been provided \$50 million

by the Canadian government to support efforts and introduce COVID-19 vaccines to those living in vulnerable situations across the Caribbean and Latin America. This also includes at-risk Venezuelan migrants, and disadvantaged populations”(Canada’s international vaccine donations). The PAHO focuses on improving the health and overall quality of life for their population in the Americas.

In relation to Venezuela, the Venezuela crisis has been an issue of concern for many. When former president, Hugo Chávez passed away in 2013, his right-hand man, Nicolás Maduro became Venezuela’s president. However, Maduro has since led the country to economic ruin; “shortages of basic supplies became widespread, prompting more than 5.6 million people to leave” (Venezuela crisis in 300 words). In 2018, Maduro’s re-election was said to have been rigged and “National Assembly leader, Juan Guaidó labelled Mr Maduro a "usurper" and declared himself interim president in January 2019” (Venezuela crisis in 300 words). Since then, many countries have taken sides, Maduro v.s Guaidó; including Canada, who have sided with Guaidó. To respond to the impacts of the Venezuela crisis in Venezuela itself and in host countries of the Caribbean region and Latin America, Canada has committed over \$86 million in international assistance. In order to aid those who’ve been affected by this crisis, over \$38 million in gender-responsive humanitarian assistance funding to meet their immediate needs. (Canada and the Venezuela crisis).

To conclude, in order to obtain sustainable peace, the pillars for positive peace should be followed. Good relations with neighbours is one of the most important pillars as demonstrated in World War II with the Marshall plan, as well as Canada’s COVID-19 and humanitarian assistance response. This includes foreign aid to countries with low COVID-19 tests and equipment, vaccine doses delivered through the COVAX facility, and financial assistance to

Venezuela throughout the crisis. Moreover, with all of these structures put into place, it is very easy to follow the pillars of positive peace, and we no longer have to resort to violence. Ultimately, it is the leader that decides how it wants to lead its country, and if they choose peace or violence. Thinking of Russia's president, Vladimir Putin and his decision to wage war on Ukraine. President Putin was not keeping the ideation of sustainable peace in mind when he chose violence against Ukraine.

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