

Britain and the United States and Canada. Even if we had not the analogy of European states to judge by, where one nation is adding to its burdens through the suspicions raised by its neighbor's preparations for possible war, we know that if past Canadian governments had interpreted the occasional display of American passion to be the permanent attitude of the American people and had increased our military establishments on the plea of securing our defence, Canada could not possibly have been more secure if the United States had reciprocated such a policy in kind. The mutual good will of Canada and the United States is beyond all calculation in monetary value.

The most precious legacy left by these builders of Canada was therefore that first proclamation of defence policy which, in direct opposition to the Imperial theories then current, was based upon faith in the ultimate friendship of the United States; and if the greatest asset in British foreign policy to-day is the good will of the American nation, Great Britain has these Canadian statesmen to thank for it.

Now let the people of Canada and the leaders of the people make no mistake—this foundation is in danger of being destroyed. If the reader will again study the extracts from the great state paper before quoted he will see that the principles laid down by Sir John A. Macdonald and his contemporary statesmen were both simple and reasonable, namely, that Canada should not create a standing army, that her defence should be by her own citizen soldiers and that that service should be confined to our own soil. It was clearly a corollary that Canada should not interfere by force in affairs outside her own territory or be made responsible for Imperial policy over which the Dominion had no control.

It seems fairly clear that as far as Sir John himself was concerned his judgment was based on two considerations. One was a sympathetic regard for the temper of the French-Canadian people. They have been traditionally a people who, loving liberty and peace themselves, respect the liberty and peace of other people. The other was that the policy of non-interference was reasonable and wise in itself, and, to paraphrase his own expressions, the peopling of the land with an intelligent, contented and lightly taxed population was a better defence for Canada than to create those means of offence which under a heady or corrupt administration are as likely to make trouble for a country as to safeguard its holier interests. Whatever his reasons those were the principles upon which he and the other founders of this confederation agreed. It would have been well for Canada if the contents of this memorandum had been more generally known and its wisdom set forth with more zeal. For the statesmen who prepared it well knew that to force the