

to industrial prosperity; we can be said to be a different kind of American nation. We have sometimes won from other peoples a vague feeling of good will, or even admiration, which is not always hard-earned or fully-deserved.

I think you may well find in this country much that will puzzle and surprise you, or which may lead you to jump to false conclusions. There are things -- perhaps not particularly striking or sensational -- which are peculiarly Canadian. They require some effort to know. And they must be taken into account, if a misunderstanding of this country is to be avoided and hence in part a misunderstanding of the deeper problems with which we are all concerned at this Conference. So if those of you who know Canada well will bear with me, I shall try to point out what I think are certain essential and peculiar features of our Canadian society. I do so not by way of excuse -- in the sense that to understand all is to pardon all -- nor on the other hand shall I try to list our shortcomings by way of penance. I do so, rather, in order that you may see a little more objectively the community in which you will be living for the next few weeks.

In the first place, Canada is a northern country. It is the largest nation in the world whose economic and social rhythms are guided by a northern geography. This is such an obvious fact that it is often discounted. It cannot be ignored. The effect of temperatures below the freezing point, and often subzero, for many long months of the year has had a crucial effect on the sort of buildings and roads we must create, the kinds and amounts of food we must grow and consume, on our clothing and other necessities, and ultimately, on the sort of people we are. To give some rather trivial but perhaps telling examples, I doubt if there is any large metropolis in the world