

These are super-powers now in name only. The decline in self-confidence is most striking in the United States — for reasons that require no elaboration. (The most telling thing about "Watergate" is that it could not have happened in the Soviet Union.) "No nation can pretend to be a super-power," writes C.L. Sulzberger about his country's recent compound fractures, "when its foreign policy suffers such blows as that of the United States in Southeast and Southwest Asia, when its economy reels, its unemployment zooms, its currency staggers, and when its leadership, symbolized by a Chief Executive who chooses that moment to take time off for golf, faces its crises in paralyzed confusion."

For Canadians to exult in American misfortune for its own sake would be the grossest form of *Schadenfreude*. Not for a moment do I suggest that we should. I suggest only that we do so for our own sake.

It has not been good for Canada to have been obliged to exist for so long in the shadow of a luminous imperial America, whose achievements in whatever field, measured by whatever standard, have so consistently outclassed our own. On the contrary, this condition has been a prescription for crippling neurosis. America's descent from the dizzy heights of power and responsibility which under suc-

cessive administrations it has occupied since the era of the Marshall Plan offers Canada a chance to stand with more assurance in the light. Only a masochist could fail to welcome such an opportunity.

The opportunity is there, or waiting. "We live in a century," the Prime Minister of Canada remarked in the presence of the Premier of China, "where, increasingly, national greatness is measured not in terms of martial grandeur or even economic accomplishment but in terms of individual welfare and human dignity. No longer is military might or political hegemony the yardstick of achievement. The true test of a government is found in its ability to provide its people with a sense of worth, of accomplishment, of fulfilment." For the first time since 1945, it has become plausible to argue that Canada's chance of passing such a test is just as good as that of the United States — perhaps even better.

A recent attempt by Peter Dobell to re-rank Canada among the nations in accordance with these new realities promotes us from "middle power" to "minor great power". But such terms as "great power", whether minor or major, have, like "middle power" itself, lost all significance and meaning. I should be content with "foremost power" — if we produce a foreign policy to match.

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