

could have been a province of Canada from the beginning. In the same general way, about 160 years ago the thirteen original states joined together in the federal union which now includes 48 states. So far the parallel is close. The results in political terms were not dissimilar - the creation of two North American nations, each spanning the continent and in full control of its own affairs.

Canada, indeed, is independent in as full a sense as the other countries of this very interdependent world. Independence, however, was not attained by resort to arm against a former sovereign, nor by any sudden political action. One could say that its final stage - that of achieving international recognition as a fully sovereign state - was secured not by fighting against the British, but by fighting with them and other allies in the two greatest wars in history. In the development of the Canadian nation we have no national heroes comparable to George Washington. We have, however, figures comparable to the memorable group of statesmen who drafted the American Constitution; but in Canada they did their work, not around a single table at a single period, but over a succession of generations, and they did it in friendly collaboration with statesmen of the United Kingdom.

This little bit of potted history throws light on the modern British Commonwealth. The countries of the Commonwealth seek to work together by agreement; they share the same general principles of national and international conduct. Their statesmen discuss matters of common interest with the greatest frankness. At international conferences which I have attended the most outspoken - and at times even among the most acrimonious - discussions that I have heard have been at meetings of the Commonwealth countries. Throughout, however, there is a recognition of common ideals and interests which should be preserved, and, furthermore, a recognition that these interests and ideals are not exclusive but are shared with other countries and particularly with the United States.

Do not think, therefore, that because Canada is part of the British Commonwealth it is not also a friendly American country managing its own affairs.

The second frequent misconception about Canada is that it is a northwards extension of the United States, whose inhabitants somehow or other, through obstinacy, or sinister British influence, or plain stupidity, would not see the light and join the American union. Canadians are Canadians, not Americans living somewhere up north. Although there is no-one in Canada who does not desire the most cordial relations with the United States, few would approve political union between the two countries. There are also not many Americans today who would assert the old doctrine of "manifest destiny" and regard the absorption of Canada in the American union as a desirable aim of policy.

We still have controversies, but they are no longer serious controversies involving the possibility of fighting. There have been serious controversies in the past. It is not often remembered that American armies have twice invaded Canadian territory. One force even burned the public buildings of Toronto, then known as York, some little time before British troops took retaliatory action in Washington. These events took place long ago! It is 136 years since York was burned, and over 170 years since General Montgomery failed to capture Quebec in the Revolutionary War. In both cases one motive for the attack was the idea of conquering Canada for Canada's good - a mistaken manifestation of American idealism.

Of course it is perfectly true that there are many similarities between Canada and the United States, but tonight I want to emphasize the dissimilarities. To start with nearly one-third of the people of Canada speak French as their mother tongue. They are descended from the French colonists in the once-great French empire in North America. English and French are both official languages in federal affairs and in the Province of Quebec.

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