

Because then of our geography, of our limited population, and of our very great resources, we cannot be unconcerned with, because we could not remain aloof from, any important disturbance of the peace anywhere in the world. This sobering realization has created in Canada a new and, in a sense, revolutionary attitude towards the world at large and to our daily process of living. It may, indeed, be that there is no country in the world so conscious as Canada of the close connection between international organization and security and our own national interests, whether in commercial affairs or in the immediate problem of security.

With our population, with our problems of distance and with our concern in hastening the economic development of half an enormous continent, we find it difficult to accept seriously any accusation that we are a war-mongering people. At the present time we are indeed spending about 40 per cent of our national annual budget on defence measures. This we accept as a necessity, and in view of the times in which we live we do this ungrudgingly; but we would be enormously relieved, as would all peaceful peoples, if we could devote a much larger proportion of our productivity and of our savings to our great problems of transportation, communications, housing, health, social welfare and national development.

A further word about our people.. We have in Canada a medley of peoples from most of the countries of western Europe. It is sometimes forgotten in the United States that less than one-half of the total population of Canada has any ethnic connection with the British Isles. More than 30 per cent of our population is of French origin and we have important minorities of German, Dutch, Polish, Russian, Ukranian, Italian and other origins. Since the end of the Second World War we have received into Canada more than 1,100,000 immigrants from western Europe so that at the present time about one-twelfth of our total population is composed of persons who have come to Canada since 1946, and we are prepared to receive more.

We are in Canada not particularly skilled in the art of propoganda but it seems clear to me that the direction in which refugees from terror and despair and injustice have turned, over these last few years, is important. They turn towards us in the west and I do not recall that we have -- any more than you have -- many refugees who flee towards the security of the Iron Curtain countries, although they are at complete liberty to go, and to take their possessions with them.

These three points are perhaps the principal internal factors which Canada must consider in framing and in implementing its foreign policy. There are, of course, other influences -- external influences -- which most profoundly shape our policies and our actions. Among these are our relations with other members of the United Nations, our somewhat closer partnership with our allies and friends of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and with our friends and associates in the Commonwealth, and finally, of course, the very special relationship which we enjoy with our good neighbour the United States which has now assumed, with ever-growing confidence, the leadership of the free world.