

Hoops of steel bind almost literally St. John's, Newfoundland, to Victoria, British Columbia. So do the highways and airlines, the telephone and telegraph, the radio and the television. Gas from Alberta energizes factories in Quebec. The Seaway and the Maritime ports and railways ensured the prompt delivery of half a billion tons of Canadian wheat these past 12 months. Uranium from the Canadian Shield gave birth to the nuclear age, with all its hopes and all its terrors. Canadian machine tools helped re-establish European industry devastated in the late war. Canadian education and Canadian research provided leaders in many fields of human endeavour.

This is not even a sketch of the whole story, and the end is not yet. The experiment has provided a sense of satisfaction for Canadians that is considerable. The integrity of our people, the stability of our institutions have inspired confidence to investors both here and abroad. The image of Canada is good and it is distinctively Canadian. Within a few generations a national individuality and a national personality have emerged.

No one doubts the fact that in her domestic affairs Canada has achieved a complete jurisdictional autonomy. In her external relations the picture is almost as complete, and what is lacking is within the power of Canadians to remedy. But it was not so from the beginning.

In the earlier years situations arose abroad in which it became imperative for this new nation, regardless how loosely organized, regardless how small it was, to assert positions really not anticipated before Confederation. In retrospect, it is easy to say now that there was a long struggle ahead.

Professor Creighton describes the frustration experienced by Sir John Macdonald in 1871 over negotiations in Washington regarding the North Atlantic fisheries. This was only a few years after the union. Sir John was distressed, even disillusioned, by the authority claimed and asserted by British representatives of the British Parliament over matters which he conceived, quite properly, to be of vital and primary interest to Canada. The importance of this position, as he asserted it, would grow with the years. Macdonald may have lost that battle but he made a great beginning. The campaign would go on and it would succeed.

When Sir John Thompson was Prime Minister, he was successful in negotiating arrangements with Britain whereby Canada would have the final say in such matters as copyrights, patents, and trademarks. These were the days in which there was no Department of External Affairs, when the Minister of

Justice and the Prime Minister seem to have dealt with such problems themselves.

In Laurier's time some trade arrangements were made by Canada, which were ratified by reciprocal legislation. This, however, was exceptional. But it was a foot in the door. However, when the International Joint Commission was established in 1909, despite the considerable progress made to that time, the Imperial Government in fact appointed the Canadian representatives on Canadian advice. How far we have moved from that position today!

Many of the important milestones in our progress towards national autonomy were fashioned in imperial conferences. Countries of the Empire, other than Canada, like ourselves, realized the importance of an increasing measure of self-determination in external relations. These imperial conferences began to be held in 1887. They were designed to discuss such Empire problems as trade preferences, Empire federation, and Empire defence.

I hope it will not appear facetious, honourable senators, if I say that for many of the early conferences the discussions were as between the mother hen and the chicks. The burdens at that time for the mother country were very great indeed. But the chicks were growing fast. They were flexing muscles. They were realizing the potential of their own positions. In the perspective of history neither side can be criticized for asserting its own position as strongly as it did.

But the notion of greater independence was taking hold in the dominions. It developed gradually, and in some countries there was a lack of unanimity. For example, in Canada on the question of imperial defence, Sir Wilfrid Laurier insisted upon a general measure of Canadian autonomy. The Naval Services Act of 1910 crystallized this attitude. But this view, considering the immediate need, was not shared by Sir Robert Borden when he assumed office in 1911. I shall not discuss the debates which took place in this Parliament on that issue. But within a few years war was upon us, and when it arrived the conduct of Canadian foreign policy, the declaration of war, the making of peace—the authority to do these things was clearly in the hands of the Imperial Government.

Honourable senators might read with profit the Debates of the Senate of 1914 on the issue of Canada's position in respect of the outbreak of war, and, indeed, compare those speeches with the speeches made in this chamber in 1939 on a like issue. During the First War the Canadian forces were generally at the disposal of the British. The Minister of National Defence, Sir Sam Hughes, and indeed the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Borden,