

And this unity at home in Canada is reflected in our relations with the rest of the world.

Twenty years ago the Canadian people were sharply divided about their external relations.

There were still many Canadians of British origin who were prepared to follow wherever Britain led; there was another group which believed in collective action, by force if need be, against warlike aggression anywhere; there were still others who believed Canada could isolate itself from world affairs and avoid participation in potential wars.

Today the last vestiges of the colonial mentality have disappeared.

Most Canadians have the friendliest feelings for the British people; many still cherish a deep affection for the United Kingdom, and all hope there will always be a close relationship and community of interest between Britain and Canada.

But no responsible Canadian today questions the view that the Canadian people must decide for themselves, in the light of their own national interests, what course our country is to take in world affairs.

And I think I can add that no responsible Canadian believes today that our country can isolate itself from world affairs and hope to escape the awful consequences of war, if another war should come.

That is why we have been ready to share with the United States, since the war, in active participation in world affairs on a scale and at a cost no one would have believed possible for North Americans before 1939.

Like the American people, the Canadian people have learned that the only hope of escaping the consequences of great wars is to prevent another great war.

And we in Canada have welcomed warmly the leadership of the United States in organizing the free world for peace.

We have done - and I believe our people are prepared to go on doing - our full share in building up the strength of the nations that really want peace and freedom in the world.

Of all our external relations, those with the United States have the greatest day-to-day impact on the average Canadian.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the main impulse which led to the Confederation of 1867 was fear of the United States; and for the first half century of our national life the preservation of Canada from American absorption was our first national pre-occupation.

The recollection of those fears lasted long after the cause for them departed.