



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

59/29

THE RULE OF LAW IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Notes for an address by the Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. John G. Diefenbaker, to the annual meeting of the Canadian Bar Association, Vancouver, B.C., on September 4, 1959.

Politics and law have been closely associated in the history of Canada, and I am one of those whose life has been divided between law and public life. That many lawyers take part in public affairs in all spheres -- national, provincial and municipal -- and have done so, needs no proof. However, it is of interest that of Canada's thirteen Prime Ministers since Confederation, nine have been lawyers. By way of comparison, in the United Kingdom during the same period of time only two of its Prime Ministers have been members of the legal profession.

"Politics and law" are in natural association, as are the words "law and order". If the sequence is reversed in "law and order" to "order and law", the true relationship that exists between politics and law is revealed. Politics is the science of organizing social energies for effective group life, and law represents the institutions and rules by which that organization is made formal and given permanence and regularity.

An important subject of discussion at this Convention has been the Rule of Law. While some of the issues were considered by a distinguished panel this morning, I intend to discuss some international problems connected with the Rule of Law which have challenging implications, and for which lawyers have a responsibility to provide the answers which are juridical as well as political.

International Problems

There are at least five main categories of international problems to which law and lawyers can address the best of their experience and resources, and for which sound legal and political answers are needed.