

Representing the smaller partner in our association, I have been asked to talk to you about "Canada's international situation". The "personal columns" in our newspapers often speak of "situation wanted". Sometimes, in international affairs we find ourselves in situations which no one in their right mind could possibly want. The international situation in which Canadians find themselves, like that facing other people, is only partly the product of what we are and what we want. Much of it is ready-made for us by the hard and sometimes bitter facts of international life.

Canada is a North American nation in a British Commonwealth; made up of peoples as old - and as new - as any of this continent; with a varied and expanding economy; and with inherited traditions of political liberty and respect for the rule of law. All these elements are reflected in our attitudes towards other peoples, and in the policies we advocate and support in our relations with them.

There is something else, however, an awareness of the importance to us of the policies of other states. Our whole history tells us that events far from Canadian borders can transform overnight our lives and our destinies; can re-shape the whole pattern of our economy, our daily ways of life and work. We Canadians know from hard experience that we cannot dodge the impact of world events. Sentiment, derived from an unbroken political association with the United Kingdom and a continued contact with France, reinforces and underlines this knowledge.

...Our first interest is in peace. To seek and secure this is the primary obligation on any government of Canada. This is natural, for we have - apart from the Korean conflict - been at war for 10 years since 1914.

The realization of this desire for peace and security, we know depends on a recognition of its vital and equal importance by others. We accept the reality of inter-dependence in a shrinking world. Peace for us means that there must be peace in the international community.

A second national concern - closely tied to international developments - is the welfare and the prosperity of our people which is inseparable from the welfare and prosperity of others.

Canada is a country which, to an unparalleled extent, is dependent on world trade for the livelihood of our people. Our trade links with the United States, the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, with Western Europe and with the rest of the world, both for necessary imports and as markets for our exports, gives us a vital stake in a high and increasing level of world trade, second to no other country in the world, and in world prosperity which, like peace, is indivisible.

A third concern, less tangible than peace and economic well-being, but no less important, is our deep attachment to certain principles rooted in our history and in our experience as Canadians.

What then are these fundamental principles which so largely determine the conduct of foreign policy in Canada?

1. National unity:

No policy can be regarded as wise which divides the people whose effort and resources must put it into effect. This applies not only to the two main cultural groups in our country; it applies equally to sectionalism of any kind. For Canada disunity means impotence. Its possibility is always an immediate and intense pre-occupation with any Canadian Government conscious of the facts of our geography, history and of our racial and federal structure.