

There are times, I must add, when we are able to take advantage of the confusion which still exists in some quarters over our exact national position and status. It makes it somewhat easier on certain occasions to emphasize our North American ties; on others our Commonwealth connection. If that sounds cynical, it is not meant to be so. It merely reflects the fact that Canada cannot escape its dual destiny as a North American nation and as a member of a world-wide Commonwealth. We must, therefore, make certain that these two roles, our North American and our Commonwealth, do not conflict. If the effort raises some doubt here and there in other countries as to what Canada actually is, we must do what we can to remove it, by our actions and our policies.

I remember in this connection that when I was at an international meeting not long ago and made an informal suggestion to a foreign delegate on some matter, he asked me whether I had secured permission from the British Foreign Office to put it forward! A short time previously when I was mounting the rostrum at the U.N. Assembly to make a speech, a friend in the gallery told me that he heard a whisper behind him, in broken English, "There goes Acheson's mouthpiece"!

What chance has a Canadian Foreign Minister to be Canadian?

The fact is that we in Canada have now a greater confidence in ourselves, in our growth, in our destiny, than we ever had before. We know, of course, that if an atomic war breaks out, no country will have much of a future, but subject to that ultimate catastrophe, Canada is very definitely on the march. And all the evidence, economic, demographic, financial, shows that we are going somewhere. Why, it won't be long now before some Canadian storekeeper will be refusing to take an American dollar bill as below Canadian par! If, however, we are inclined to become too inflated over this proud position of our currency, we might recover by examining a recent Canadian cartoon which depicted the Canadian and United States dollars as two hobos walking along a railway track. The Canadian dollar-hobo had rather breathlessly run up alongside the American, who remarked, "O.K., O.K., so we're both equal, but neither of us is worth very much."!

I would like to think, however, that more than our dollar is sound in Canada - because, after all, a currency is merely one reflection, and not necessarily the most important, of the health and stability of a nation.

We have laid the foundations - political, economic and social - for the building of a strong and vigorous nation in the North and the superstructure is now going up apace. Of course, it may not become any Empire State Building, but it will be large enough, and I hope strong enough, for the increasing number of people who will live in it and for the increasing activity which will take place under its roof.

I am not here tonight to tell you about this increasing activity (though it is an exciting story) but rather to say a few words about one aspect of it with which I am more particularly concerned - namely, our relations with other countries and more particularly, the United States of America.