

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY⁽¹⁾

By the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L. B. Pearson.

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Canada's North Atlantic policy comes closer home, because that area includes the three countries that are nearest to us historically, politically, and even geographically: the United Kingdom, the United States and France. Our policy here is to help build up a cohesive group of states, closely co-operating in all fields of activity. That objective will not be achieved quickly or easily. It will never be achieved if we do not succeed in renewing and maintaining the vigour and progressive character of our common Western civilization and if we do not strengthen its unifying forces.

The restless intellectual energy of the West has created cathedrals, philosophic systems and turbo-jet engines. It has greatly extended the frontiers of knowledge and has spread Western science and trade throughout the world. The national states which have been formed during this process have sometimes through their own rivalries come close to destroying the civilization of which they were all a part. Yet, in spite of the wars in which they have been engaged, they have always recognized that they had much in common. They all acknowledge, for instance, their debt to Greek speculation, to Hebrew prophecy, to Roman law and to the Christian faith. The countries of the new world all share in these traditions and form a part of the same civilization. Canadians are never likely to forget the fact, since we have two mother countries in Europe. With one of them we have maintained, by our own deliberate choice, a political connection. With the other, we have kept close cultural relations. The bells in the steeples along the St. Lawrence round which the villages cluster still ring out to remind us that Paris and Chartres are as much a part of our heritage as Canterbury and London.

The wealth of this common civilization — material, intellectual and moral — carelessly dissipated though some of it has been, is, nevertheless, immense. To work toward the establishment of a North Atlantic community of nations, all sharing in this great legacy from the past, all with their own special contributions to make in the future, all pledged to be of mutual assistance to one another, is surely a task worthy of our finest effort and of our greatest zeal. The goal of such a society, strong, varied and secure but not self-centered or exclusive, and anxious to profit by contact with other civilizations, is an ideal, it seems to me, which can support and encourage us through all the difficulties of the present time.

No country has a greater stake in the success or failure of this great movement than Canada. For we are both North American and European. Before the last war, the spectre haunting Canadian policy-makers was that the United States would remain aloof from British and French efforts to protect the peace against Nazi and Fascist aggression. Today the spectre is that the United States may feel it necessary to pursue policies inside our coalition which the other members cannot wholeheartedly follow; or that inadequate co-operation from the other members may discourage American effort and leadership to the point where Washington may decide to "go it alone." Any Canadian government is bound to do what it can to exorcise these dangers; and this may mean at times expressing its own views forthrightly in London or Paris or, above all, in Washington, where the center of power now lies. This is the first principle of Canadian diplomacy. It is founded on the inescapable fact that no

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