

Here, then, is an outstanding instance in which the relative positions of Canada and the United States are of importance to other countries as well as to ourselves. The aid we both can give is vital to European recovery. The assistance that may come to Canada -- as a by-product, as it were -- is of vital importance to us. And -- because we are far and away your best customer -- our solvency is of vital importance to you.

Now I want to leave economic considerations and turn to broader aspects of world affairs. The big question in all our minds, today, is whether we can achieve that lasting peace we have fought for in two world wars. To that end, both our countries are associated in a tremendous undertaking -- an experiment, if you like, in international cooperation on a global scale -- the United Nations. Both our countries are pledged to the ideals for which that organization stands, and both have made the Charter of the United Nations the cornerstone of their foreign policies.

Within the various branches of the United Nations, the fact that Canada and the United States speak the same language -- and I mean that figuratively as well as literally -- has been of considerable importance. Not that we always agree: that is not to be expected. But it is certainly true that if all members of the United Nations could resolve their differences as amicably as Canada and the United States do, that organization would quickly surpass the fondest hopes of its founders as an agency for the peaceful settlement of international disputes.

Once again, however, we must be realistic and admit that our example has not been emulated by all the members of the United Nations -- nor does it appear likely to be. It would be the gravest folly to write the United Nations off as a failure, for in many ways it has been a signal success. Perhaps the greatest tribute to its value -- if only a negative one -- is the fact that, in spite of the dangerous tensions which have existed in the postwar world, there has been no major outbreak of armed hostilities and minor outbreaks have been kept in check. We all know, however, that the United Nations has not yet reached the stage where it could hope to deal with a major breach of the peace, or even to prevent it if a strong nation were determined to resort to arms. And, unfortunately, we also know that there are forces loose in the world which could lead to a major breach of the peace. Under these circumstances, it is only common sense for us to think of our own defences, for no country which is itself dangerously vulnerable can hope to make much contribution to the security of the wider community of nations.

I do not intend to deal in any way with the defence measures which are being taken individually by either Canada or the United States -- that would be outside the scope of my topic today. And I shall only touch very briefly indeed on the measures we are taking jointly for the defence of the continent as a whole. The simple fact of the matter is that we have continued into peacetime the very close and beneficial collaboration on defence matters that we built up during the war. I might add that this is being done in the friendliest possible way, and that the most scrupulous respect is paid by each partner to the sovereign rights of the other. The last thing I would wish to do is to over-emphasize the magnitude or the importance of this joint effort. There has already been a great deal of exaggeration on the subject and I think we all know where it has originated. No one could, by any stretch of the imagination, believe our modest joint defence efforts to be aggressive or belligerent. No one could object to them who did not wish, for his own reasons, to see us open to attack. I have mentioned them here only as another instance in which the close relations of our two countries impinge upon the outside world.

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