

It is a great advantage in examinations to be able to choose the questions to which one thinks he knows the answer. And that is why I have chosen to speak to you on a theme which is certainly not original and about which I realize I have nothing really new to say. Happily, like a lot of other old things, the older it gets the better it gets. I am sure you have already guessed that I am going to talk about our North American partnership.

For two centuries after the continent was settled by Europeans the St. Lawrence Valley was the scene of intermittent conflict. First there was conflict between the French and the British and later, after the British colonies achieved their independence, by a strange turn of the wheel of fortune, the conflict went on between the British and the Canadians on one side, and the French and the Americans on the other side. Now those two centuries of conflict finally came to an end in the year 1815. The conflict came to an end in North America, and what is just as important, it also came to an end in Europe.

Since 1815 English-speaking and French-speaking people all over the world have lived at peace with one another.

It is well for us to remember that the North Atlantic alliance we established only a year ago rests upon a foundation of a century and a third of confident co-operation both in the new world and the old between those who speak the English and French languages.

Though I am going to speak particularly of the development of peaceful co-operation on this side of the Atlantic, let us not forget that on the other side of the Atlantic, Great Britain and France have followed a parallel course. Now those parallel courses, in a happy defiance of both logic and geometry, have been joined together in our North Atlantic community.

The first great landmark in the development of genuine peace between your country and mine was the Rush-Bagot Agreement of 1817. The waters of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence were disarmed by common agreement, and that disarmament has never been disregarded by either party, and no one has ever seriously suggested that that particular step should be retraced.

Disarmament, despite its importance, is really a negative step. In 1909 our two countries took an important positive step in co-operation - in the case of Canada, it was taken for us by Great Britain - in the treaty between the United States and Great Britain relating to boundary waters.

The most important provision of the treaty of 1909 was one which established an International Joint Commission of the United States and Canada composed of six commissioners, three appointed by the President of the United States and three by the King on the recommendation of the Governor in Council of the Dominion of Canada.

Forty years ago Canada was in fact already a nation. But our international status was still that of a colony. The provision in that treaty empowering the government of Canada to appoint the Canadian members of this International Joint Commission marked an important advance in our national status.

The establishment of the Joint Commission was, therefore, not only an important stage in Canada's relations with the United States, it was also an important stage in the development of a