

External Affairs
Supplementary Paper

No. 54/16 THE JOINT UNITED STATES-CANADA DEFENCE
OF NORTH AMERICA

An address by the Associate Minister of National Defence, Mr. Ralph Campney, to the Business Paper Editors Association of Canada, the Society of Business Paper Editors of the United States, the National Conference of Business Paper Editors, at the Seignior Club, Montebello, Quebec, April 8, 1954.

I propose to speak to you briefly tonight on the joint effort being made by the United States and Canada to protect the North American continent against possible aggressive attack.

As late as twenty years ago this speech could not have been made. No such joint effort existed. None was even contemplated. There was no apparent need. And the state of mind in both countries was such that no suggestion to that end would have been entertained anyway. And yet today much of the joint thinking and planning of productive activity in both Canada and the United States and much of the material wealth of both countries is being directed to that end. We have come a long way down the road of defence co-operation in twenty years.

And this seems the more remarkable, at least to us in Canada, when we realize that eighty-odd years ago four of the United States was one of the most compelling factors leading to the confederation of our provinces into one Canadian Nation. The Alabama and the Trent affairs, the Fenian raids into Canada from across the United States border, the tense anti-British and hence anti-Canadian feelings engendered in the Northern states during the American Civil War exist today only as little shadows on our mutual history. They were potent sources of misunderstanding and distrust, bordering on hatred, less than eighty years ago.

Confederation of the provinces of Canada into one nation marked a turning point in Canada-United States relations. Never again would armed raids, threats of invasion or of annexation mar the steady progress of ever growing mutual understanding and respect of our respective countries for each other.

From 1867 down to this very moment there has never been an occasion when either Canada or the United States has had the remotest reason to consider the possibility of defending itself against its neighbour. We have always managed to settle all our differences - and we have had differences - without resort to arms or even the threat of arms. And today the rule of law as between us operates as a matter of course. We that not so, our present close co-operation in providing for our common defence, as well as in many other directions, could never have become the reality that it is today.