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In retrospect, one cannot help but observe that there is some historical peculiarity in the evolution of Canada's foreign policy. During those years, shortly after the Dominion Government, as it was then called, had claimed its external powers from the Westminster Parliament, Canada literally erupted upon the international scene. What is peculiar, in my opinion, is that Canada was one of the rare countries to develop a world view more or less *in abstracto*, on the basis of principle rather than interest -- that is, before it had fully developed its bilateral diplomacy and, indeed, before it had identified precisely its national interests in international affairs. No doubt the historical context explains to a large extent this somewhat unusual development:

the triangular relations with London and Washington, which structured our external involvements prior to the Second World War;

the depth of our commitment to the second generation of international organizations, nascent after the end of hostilities;

the Cold War, which further emphasized our multilateral commitments;

the temporary paling on the world scene of Europe and Japan, both absorbed by the tasks of postwar reconstruction;

the struggle for independence then beginning in Asia and Africa, which had to come to pass before a non-colonial power like Canada could develop bilateral relations with these emergent societies.

But I am convinced that Canada's multilateral diplomacy would not have developed so swiftly and ranged so far if it had not been for the vision of Lester B. Pearson.

"La vraie générosité envers l'avenir consiste à tout donner au présent" -- my illustrious predecessor was fond of these words by Albert Camus, also reproduced in the mural. Because circumstance as well as conviction lead him to stress, during his diplomatic career, the more universal dimensions of our foreign policy, Lester B. Pearson has been accused of having neglected some of Canada's national interests. Such accusations are unfair, for it was not so much Canadian nationalism as all nationalisms he sought to restrain, for reasons the recent history of humanity amply justify.

If he erred in this respect, it must be recognized that his error

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