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We in Canada are deeply complimented by the expanding attention being paid to the study of our history and current affairs at this university. It is as good evidence as any I can think of that we have truly achieved our independence and established our own modest but unmistakable identity in the world.

To many of you in these ancient lands, where national identity has for centuries been so familiar that you seldom think about it, it must seem a little strange that establishing our own distinctive identity is so important to Canadians. It is hard to explain that wish, but it is there. It exists in much the same way as one elder finally realized the reason for church union in Scotland existed. During the debates in the presbyteries, he at last withdrew his opposition in these words: "I think the scheme of union is impractical, ill-considered, unjust, and indeed absolutely idiotic -- but there is no doubt it is God's will."

If a distinctive Canadian identity is not necessarily God's will, it is certainly the will of most of any Canadian politician's constituents today; and this is one of those occasions that suggest that perhaps we have established the Canadian identity abroad more clearly than we realize at home in Canada. In selecting as its first objective the support of a new chair and centre of Canadian studies here in one of Britain's most dynamic and honoured centres of learning, the Foundation for Canadian Studies in the United Kingdom has created a prominent focal point for the encouragement of Canadian studies in other British universities and in universities in other European countries.

It is difficult for any Canadian to discuss Canadian culture before an audience like this one facing me today. The difficulty begins in the problem of defining the meaning of culture. You British have had it so long that today you simply enjoy it, you know you have it, and the definition doesn't matter. We Canadians didn't have it, we think we're beginning to have it (though we're not sure we should enjoy it), and we're still trying to define it.

Your *Concise Oxford Dictionary* is not much help, either. Its definition of culture is as follows: "tillage; rearing, production (of bees, oysters, fish, silk, bacteria); set of bacteria thus produced; improvement by (mental or physical training); intellectual development". Perhaps improvement by mental or physical training and intellectual development come as close as possible to describing the new interests that seem to be occupying the attention of Canadians more today than in the past -- when tillage, rearing and production tended to be our main preoccupations.

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