



## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 48/62

An address by Mr. Hume Wrong,  
Canadian Ambassador to the  
United States, at the Lions'  
Regional Conference Banquet at  
Statesville, N.C. on  
December 6, 1948.

It is one of the duties of an Ambassador from time to time to venture forth from his Embassy and make speeches. Speaking personally, this duty detracts from the pleasure, as one travels about the country, of making new friends and seeing new places. Furthermore, when Ambassadors speak they are expected to talk about their own country, to expound its merits, to conceal its shortcomings, and to do this without boasting and without giving offence to anybody. The results are often not stimulating to their audiences.

I am going to follow this pattern, in part at least, by saying some things about Canada. Most of the people whom I encounter in the United States think that they know a good deal about their closest and most friendly neighbour. I wonder how true that is. I hear a good many things which lead me to believe that more is known by the general public about more distant countries. Perhaps that is because Canada has never been a problem child in the family of nations, and it is the problem children who usually get the most attention.

Yet our populations have been mixed up for a good many years. I am constantly surprised at the number of Americans whom I meet who have at least one Canadian ancestor within the last three or four generations. North Carolina is a long way from the Canadian boundary, but I expect that if I were to ask those of you who had at least one Canadian grandparent to raise your hands I would receive a considerable response. The same thing is true about Canada. Several of my own ancestors reached Canada from the United States because, in view of the outcome, they backed the wrong horse at the time of the American Revolution.

Yet this intermixture over a number of generations does not necessarily lead to accurate and up to date knowledge about each other's affairs, even when one adds to it the constant and enormous flow of visitors who cross the boundary in both directions. It is safe to say that Canadians know a good deal more about the United States than Americans do about Canada. That is inevitable because there are about 13 million people in Canada and about 145 million in the United States. The destinies of the two countries are closely locked together, but it is obvious that what happens in the United States is much more important to Canadians than what happens in Canada is to Americans. Nearly everything important that happens in the United States is of direct interest and concern to Canada. Not a great deal that happens in Canada is of direct interest and concern to many Americans. Perhaps if Canadians made a nuisance of themselves and behaved more like the people of some countries I could name but won't, a good deal more would become known about what goes on in my native country. This is not a course which I would recommend.

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