

Therefore the Arctic which in the past had seemed an impenetrable barrier, now looms as a direct frontier with the citadel of Communism. And our new look at geography has also shown that the quickest way from central and Western Canada and the United States is across the northern wastes. Already Scandinavian Air Lines flies from Copenhagen to Winnipeg to Los Angeles; and Canadian Pacific Air Lines from Vancouver across the pole to Amsterdam. Thus, whether we like it or not, we must look to the north, and across the pole to Soviet Russia.

I think we can safely say that Canada, even more than the United States in many respects, has had to have relations well beyond the Western Hemisphere. We have had them for generations with Europe because of our political and economic ties with the old world; with Africa and South-East Asia because of the Commonwealth connection; with China and Japan because we are a Pacific power; and with the U.S.S.R. because of geography. The world-wide connections of the United States arise almost exclusively from the obligations she had to assume as the greatest power in the world.

That is why, perhaps, our relations with the other countries of Latin America have been relatively late in developing. We have had our hands full elsewhere. Our limited resources have been concentrated where we felt they had to be placed if our national existence was to be assured. But since the fifteen or twenty years since Canada began to emerge as an international power, those relations with the other countries of Latin America have developed with astonishing speed. We now have direct relations with eleven countries of Latin America and our trade and cultural contacts are increasing daily.

I have tried to explain why the position of Canada in the Western Hemisphere is quite different from that of the other countries of America. Perhaps I have not been sufficiently specific in showing why it is an American country in spite of these differences.

Geography is clearly not sufficient. It is not enough simply to say that Canada is an American state because it is situated physically in the Western Hemisphere. For the reasons I shall outline below I think Canada can be described as just as fully an American country as the United States or Argentina.

Let me consider first French Canada, about one-third of our total population. Even before the final defeat of the French régime in 1760, the French in Canada had begun to act and behave differently from their compatriots in France. The severe climate, the terribly difficult tasks of building farms and villages out of the wilderness, the constant threat of Indian and English attacks, developed a type of person unlike those who remained behind in the wealth and peace of the richest country in Europe.