

December 22, 1941: "In a few minutes, I heard the President's voice saying: 'Hello Mackenzie' and then I replied: 'Hello Mr. President. I am glad to hear your voice again.' He said: 'I am glad indeed to hear yours.' "

An extract from the diary of WILLIAM LYON MACKENZIE KING.

The Twentieth Century: Canada & The United States

For the first four decades of its history Canada had no external affairs, though it did have interesting relations with two great powers.

In 1897, Lord Salisbury suggested over port that Canada was a "coquetish girl with two suitors." United States Ambassador John Hay demurred. Canada, he said, was "a married flirt, ready to betray John Bull but holding him responsible for all her follies."

It was, from a Canadian point of view, clearly time for women's suffrage, if not yet for women's lib.

The Alaska Award of 1903 bruised Canadian feelings, and Canada began edging toward diplomatic independence. In 1909, it established a modest Department of External Affairs over a barber shop on Bank Street in Ottawa, with an Under Secretary, two chief clerks, a messenger, two typists and an annual budget of \$13,350. In 1914, it moved its staff of fourteen to a proper suite in the East Block of Parliament.

At the close of World War I Canada, having contributed greatly to victory, was given a separate place at the Peace Conference. Sir Robert Borden signed

During World War II, the relations between the two countries became increasingly complex. In 1940, while the US was still neutral, Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King and President Franklin Delano Roosevelt met at Ogdensburg, New York, and established the Permanent Joint Board on Defence by simply issuing a press release.

The next year, Canada was short of dollars for wartime purchases. King and Roosevelt drafted a declaration of economic cooperation across which the President scrawled, "Done by Mackenzie and F. D. R. at Hyde Park on a grand Sunday, April 20, 1941." The countries were moving into an economic embrace. Mackenzie King felt the crush but resisted the marriage. "I personally would be strongly opposed to anything like political union," he wrote in his diary.

When he, Churchill and Roosevelt met at the Citadel in Quebec in 1943, the grandson of William Lyon Mackenzie, the jailed and exiled rebel, had a sense of fulfillment: "There comes to my mind the changes which are wrought by the whirligig of time."

The cooperation survived in peace. Both countries became committed members of the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. But they were coming down to earth. The St. Lawrence Seaway, planned in the thirties, was authorized by the US Senate in 1952, but only after President Truman told Congress that Canada would build it alone if necessary.

In 1957, Canada and the United States signed the North American Air Defence Agreement (NORAD). Under it Canada acquired Bomarc missiles, weapons designed to be equipped with nuclear warheads. The Canadian government accepted the weapons but John Diefenbaker, the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party which had campaigned against the "undue influence" of the United States, refused the warheads. After much discussion, the opposition leader, Lester Pearson, called for a fulfillment of the NORAD agreement. The Conservatives split, an election was held, and Pearson became Prime Minister of a minority government.

The question of the nuclear warheads faded away, but it was not the end of debate. It is natural that there is always some area of friction between Canada and the United States. Nations that rub elbows must also rub sensibilities. The foreign and domestic policies of one country can never be precisely the policies of the other, and when one believes strongly in the wisdom — or the futility — of a particular course, someone is sure to disagree.

Today the environment, trade and energy resources are under vigorous discussion. The remarkable thing about debates between the countries is not the variety of issues, but the ability to resolve them through consultation and discussion. That is what living distinct from but in harmony with each other is all about.

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The Siamese twins?

the Treaty of Versailles, and Canada joined the League of Nations.

It was time for Canada to go abroad unchaperoned. In 1920, Sir Robert got British and US approval for a separate Canadian diplomatic mission in Washington, but Canada did not get around to appointing a Minister Plenipotentiary until 1927. That February Vincent Massey (brother of the actor Raymond Massey) presented his credentials to President Coolidge.

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