

domestic political interests are not ours. You have one official language, and we speak it too. But nearly a third of us speak, as our native tongue, a language that is foreign to you. Our history is very different from yours. You decisively severed your connections with the Old World a long time ago. We, on the other hand, have found a unique method of establishing our independent position in the world while still retaining certain ties. Our interests often differ greatly from yours. Indeed, at times in the past, your interests have been in serious conflict with ours.

These differences are elementary, perhaps, but at the same time they are fundamental. And they are differences that we may expect to remain.

Starting from the viewpoint of our differences, then, rather than that of our similarities, we come to an important fact about the relations between Canada and the United States. They are excellent, of course. We all know that. But they are not automatically excellent. Because we are different, it is a very real tribute to the will to cooperate on both sides of the line that our relations are so close and so cordial. It is not an accident; nor is it a situation which will continue automatically or by accident. The fact that over the years we have been able to resolve our differences -- to such an extent that we have almost lost sight of them -- is not only a matter for pride but also a challenge to both Canada and the United States for the future. So long as we do not take our good relations too much for granted, I think we can meet that challenge.

It is customary for speakers who are discussing the close relations between our two countries to say that they should serve as an example to the rest of the world. So they should. I do not think, however, that you and I are going to suppose that our example alone will have very much effect upon the countries that could most profit by it. Certainly we have been getting along famously with each other, for everyone to see, for a good many decades now. Yet, a glance at the world situation indicates that our example hasn't been very widely followed.

Are the relations between Canada and the United States, then, of very much practical importance to the world at large? I think that they are, and am going to mention one or two ways in which the interplay of our relations with other countries is affected by our relations with each other, to our mutual advantage and to that of those countries which share our ideals of world peace and cooperation.

The first instance that comes to my mind in this connection is that of European recovery. Everyone knows of the role your country is playing in this magnificent endeavour. It is also a matter of great importance to us in Canada. Of course, to neither of us is this interest in European recovery dictated solely by altruism -- and I say that without wishing to detract in any way from the fact that your Economic Cooperation Act is one of the most unselfish gestures that history can record. But we are trading countries and, quite apart from the human misery involved, Europe became as a result of the war, a dangerous unstable vacuum in the normal pattern of world trade. While, before the war, Western Europe, including the United Kingdom, was easily the most important trading area in the world, by the middle of 1947, Europe's share of world trade was only two-thirds of what it had been.

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