



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 58/43 THE MAINTENANCE OF GOOD RELATIONS.

An address by the Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. John G. Diefenbaker, to the Pilgrims Society, New York, on October 28, 1958

I am honoured to be invited to be with you tonight at this distinguished gathering as I stop over for a few hours on the first stage of a tour around the world.

For over half a century the meeting of the Pilgrims Society of the United States has been an important forum for discussion of mutual relationships and international responsibilities for those who inherit the Pilgrim tradition -- for those who came from the Old World to remove forever the mystery of the New.

Historical Connection

We Canadians share your Pilgrim tradition in many ways. One part of our cultural background is the story of those who crossed the ocean from Old France to seek opportunity in New France about the same time the forerunners of the Pilgrim Fathers came to North America; your Jamestown was founded in 1607 -- our Quebec a year later.

Another part of our cultural background, which we call United Empire Loyalist, carried the Pilgrim tradition into the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Ontario. In that epic migration the Thirteen Colonies lost and we gained descendants of the Pilgrims.

It is one of the ironies of our common history that on the Plains of Abraham in 1759, a decision was made that North America was to be British rather than French, but that a few years later within this English-speaking family the debate was reopened and the question was whether or not North America was to be British; the American Colonies settled that question with finality.