



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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An address by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L.B. Pearson, made at the Conference of State Governors, Houston, Texas, June 30, 1952.

...I want to talk to you about Canada and our relations with you, our great and good neighbour. Those relations are as close and friendly as those between any two countries in the world. The foundations of our friendship are, in fact, so deep, and are based so securely on mutual interest and mutual respect that we can talk to each other, when we have our disagreements, in a frank and open way which, in other countries, might provoke bitterness and ill will. In our two, it provokes only editorials! These differences, which on both sides we must strive to keep to a minimum, are, when they do occur, the more noticeable, just as a stone thrown into a calm and placid pool makes a more discernible impact than one thrown into a rough and turbulent current.

When our two countries had disputes in Canada's colonial past, they usually arose over relations between Great Britain and the United States and have been argued on that basis. Canadians were occasionally the beneficiaries, but, as we think, more often the victims of those arguments. In any event, we in Canada did not in those days decide what the solutions should be. But we are independent now, or at least as independent as any country has a right to be in an interdependent world. I should add that it still seems difficult for everybody over here to understand this, due, I suppose, to the fact that we won our independence fighting with, rather than against the British; and that the fathers of our country were not eighteenth century generals in uniform, with flashing swords, storming breastworks, but nineteenth century politicians in frock coats with quill pens signing resolutions.

The situation has also changed for us in another respect. The exciting growth and development of Canada in recent years has made the people of this country more conscious of us than before; or should I say conscious of us in a different way. Previously Canada was a land of fishing and hunting, "Mounties" and old Quebec, where you got 10¢ more for your dollar. Now it is the St. Lawrence waterway, iron ore, oil, and industries, budgetary surpluses, and soldiers in Korea and Europe, and a place, this is hardly to be believed, where generous shopkeepers put cards in the windows saying "U.S. money accepted here without discount".

These changes in our status and our stature have added to the importance and complexity of our relationships with you, but have not interfered with their good neighbourly character.