

Character of Canadian Nationhood

Tonight's ceremony symbolizes in a very real way the character of Canadian Nationhood. Those of our number who have received certificates of citizenship come from communities widely scattered throughout Canada. Over the years, these widely scattered communities have been welded into a single country. We here, like the people of Canada, ^{generally} are of many different origins. In the past, divergent racial origins have repeatedly been a source of division. Moreover, newcomers, while severing ties with their original homelands, have often felt no binding claim by the land of their adoption. Today, we have established a new conception of Canadian citizenship. The new conception of citizenship is designed to bridge the gaps created by geography and by racial descent. As a people, Canadians will be bound more closely together by the statutory recognition accorded our Canadian citizenship in this new year. Our unity and our strength will be increased by the deeper significance now given to our common citizenship.