

context is something quite different from bull-headed insistence on "my nation, right or wrong".

In either case, it is not safe to allow its presence to be determined, and the means of achieving it, if deemed absent, to be determined, by the judgment of a national élite whose main concern is to establish themselves in the same position in their national society as they think other national élites enjoy in theirs.

Canadian character

I firmly believe that there is a distinctive Canadian national character; and it is compounded of three elements, all deriving from Canada's position as the northern small neighbour of the United States. The first, and to me completely unattractive, side, is the inferiority complex in relation to the United States and the endemic anti-Americanism that permeate Canadian opinion at all levels. This is a legacy of the American Revolution (which they now call politely the War of Independence), the resulting influx into Ontario of United Empire Loyalists; and the fact that our British immigrants have long memories of that war and the contempt of an aristocratic society for a democratic one. This aspect is in contradiction to the second, and, I believe, very valuable, characteristic: that Canada has never had the "melting-pot" tradition, and it remains open to immigration on a relatively significant scale, whereas the United States does not. This means that Canada is a microcosm of what the world will have to become in due course — a place where people of different origins have to learn to live with each other in peace and mutual respect, and in which the function of government is to satisfy common needs that people cannot satisfy by themselves, not to marshal them into the service of grandiose military or international political or economic objectives that they do not want but that their political leaders do.

The third characteristic is that, precisely because it is a small country but one that understands the United States and the realities of international power politics, Canada has to believe in and defend the international rule of law as the only defence available to small countries against the derogations from that rule by large countries. The inferiority complex and anti-Americanism I deplore, as demeaning to what Canadians are or could become; I also suspect that, for many Canadians, they are an excuse for delivering less to Canadian society than their original talents justified. The "live-and-let-live" principle and the faith in the rule of inter-

national law put Canadians ahead of the rest of the world in global civilization; and it would be a tragedy indeed if the atavistic ambition of some Canadian minders of the glories of past European empires from which their forebears emigrated, and envious of the present position of the United States as a far more powerful heir to the European imperial conception should succeed in coercing Canada's citizens back into conformity with an obsolete conception of the nation state. Because Canada is a country mixed out of French colonialism, British imperialism and unbrainwashed *émigrés* from imperialistic European nation states, the idea of turning Canada into a European American type of nation state must obviously appeal emotionally to many Canadians; but it is not the way to preserve and foster Canadian distinctiveness in any genuinely significant sense.

Distinguishing the options

Mitchell Sharp's paper is couched in fashionable American terms of "options". They are not really options, in the sense of genuinely available alternatives for choice, at least as Mr. Sharp presents them; the whole argument leads up to the conclusion that Option Three, "the long-term strategy, etc.", is the only one available. I would myself distinguish between so-called options in quite different terms. Option Three is what Canada would do if it had a highly centralized and powerful national government that was attempting to reach an optimal compromise between the aspirations of certain members of the national élite for domination over the nation state of the conventional and obsolete kind, and the objective circumstances of the nature of the Canadian economy and the rules of the international competitive game. (These rules favour explicit protection of domestic industries but permit implicit protection *via* fiscal policy, science policy, and so forth.)

Option Two, deliberate closer integration with the United States, is what Canada should do in its own economic interests. Mitchell Sharp admits this, then introduces a number of plausible but completely unwarranted propositions the effect that a free-trade area must be turned into a customs union and then into a political union, which would be unacceptable to Canadians. It is both surprising and appalling that the excellence of members of the Canadian External Affairs Department — whose quality is admired by every other foreign affairs department I know — should be enlisted in the support of the travesty of the facts of

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