

to achieve our nationhood as a member of the British Commonwealth only to become a mere satellite of Washington. This confusion of the mind would seem to come perhaps in part from groups like yours strung all along our mutual frontier; the Franco-Americans to the south of the Province of Quebec, Canadian-American concentrations of population in more important centres such as Windsor and Detroit, or Vancouver and Seattle, or new Canadian and new American groups in the western provinces. Our common boundary is overlaid with harmony instead of being dotted with fortresses. As far as our good people are concerned, there is no frontier. There is only what they call in their own realistic way "the line".

This conception comes partly from the fact that in our two countries we have more or less the same standard of living, the same methods of work and ways to relax which are not dissimilar. These are but the external aspects of more profound ties which unite us. We do indeed favor the same ideal, an ideal which is deeply rooted in Christian civilization and which conditions our attitude when faced with daily problems as well as the collective difficulties which both our nations must face. Notwithstanding these resemblances, each of our two countries has deep respect for the national sovereignty of the other.

Since your country and mine has nothing to hide from the other, our citizens can go in what ever direction they choose without encountering any difficulty. You continue to speak French today on American soil. You keep the traditions and the faith you have carried with you, because this language, these traditions and this faith are working and thinking instruments more in line with your own personality. It is realized that your life will be richer if you keep this heritage and that you will find in it temporal as well as a spiritual profit. The French language, which we speak here, is very ancient in this part of the world. Civilization was brought to the shores of the St. Lawrence as well as to the shores of the Mississippi by means of the French language. In the cultural sphere you belong to one of the most lively and fruitful traditions of all time.

In the Christian order, we are the heirs of the middle ages, of the cathedral builders, of the uneasiness of Pascal, and also of the great modern pilgrimages. We wish to maintain this rich heritage and to see it bear fruit. With this point in view, together with us you have a mission to fulfil on the American continent. Unless this heritage is utilized it will disappear. Up to the present time I would say, using an expression from the economists vocabulary, that we have been mainly consumers of French culture. Because of this we have been able to survive, but a passive culture lacks vitality; it can become stagnant. A culture which produces, a culture which illuminates has gone beyond the stage of survival. It convinces. The respect which is given to a minority is proportionate with the riches it gives to a nation. A minority which would live a marginal life within the society where it is established would not be fully effective; but a minority which adds its original spirit and its own culture to the life-blood of the society in which it lives, enriches the common heritage. I see that this is the view of your society because in your manifesto, published in 1949 one can read that "You fully accept the responsibilities and duties of American citizenship together with its advantages and its benefits."

This patriotism, together with your veneration of ancestral traditions is made easy on American soil where there is the same conception of human liberty, the same respect for human beings, where institutions are based on these concepts and where power is not considered by the state to be an end but only a means to protect the liberties of its citizens.