

I say all this not so much to give you a sort of primer of the facts of modern Canada as to suggest that in Canada, in microcosm, we are working day by day with the same problems that the world faces on a global basis. I believe that the experience of federal countries such as Canada is vitally important in working out solutions to the problems of world order.

This is not to suggest that in Canada all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds. We are still constantly searching, experimenting and learning. We are learning how two great cultures can live together in equality, freedom and harmony while preserving the cultural heritage of those belonging to neither. We are learning how our indigenous peoples, the Indians and the Eskimo, can enjoy the benefits of modern society while retaining their own integrity. We are learning how to overcome the pockets of chronic under-employment that result from our geographical and climatic disparities. And all the time we are striving to improve our constitutional system so that governments can share jurisdiction, not in the narrow interests of political groups but in the wider interests of all our people.

Speaking in Washington last year, the Prime Minister said that for Canada, living next door to the United States was like sleeping with an elephant -- however good-natured the beast may be, every twist and grunt affects you. The central problem Canada faces is how to live distinct from but in harmony with an immensely powerful neighbour. It seems to me that here too there are lessons to be learned from Canada's experience. In your work it must surely be your aim to find the set of circumstances that will yield a maximum of world order and security while protecting and preserving the essential spirit and culture of all the world's peoples. Cultural homogeneity, even if it were possible to contemplate, suggests no more than cultural stultification, cultural stagnation and cultural sterility.

In the course of a lecture in Montreal some years ago, Barbara Ward put forward a rather startling suggestion. She said that Canada had the opportunity to become "the first international nation". The phrase is paradoxical, of course, but a paradox can contain a truth or, as in this case, offer a challenge. Perhaps Lady Jackson wanted to suggest that in a world made up of nation states, and likely to remain so in the foreseeable future, it was still entirely possible for a nation state to see itself not as an island entire in itself, but as a part of the main, to adopt John Donne's words.

It is this viewpoint that the Canadian Government adopted in a recent basic and exhaustive review of our foreign policy. The process of review has taught us many things about ourselves, and about the world we live in. In particular, it has brought home to us how interdependent the world has become, in terms of power and politics, in terms of the economy and in the very terms of man's life on earth. Independence, on an individual basis or as a political entity, is dear to man's heart. Millions have fought and died to achieve it and some are still doing so. Perhaps it always was a relative term; certainly it is today. Nations can and do enjoy a measure of independence, but it can only be enjoyed with a much greater interdependence. Not even the super-powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, enjoy full independence today. We have, therefore, sought to base our foreign policy on the national aims of the Canadian people, shaped by the constraints and opportunities of the prevailing international situation.