



CANADA

CANADIAN WEEKLY BULLETIN

INFORMATION DIVISION • DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS • OTTAWA, CANADA

Vol. 21 No. 22

June 1, 1966

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CANADA'S IDENTITY IN NORTH AMERICA

Prime Minister L.B. Pearson recently addressed the American Society of Newspaper Editors in Montreal. The following is a partial text of his remarks:

...It is hard to convince you that we are determined to maintain our own separate society and our own Canadian identity when we seem to you — and often to ourselves — to be so much like you; and even to insist, in so many ways, on becoming more like you so far as material standards of living are concerned.

However, any misconceptions about Canada that might have been confirmed by meeting in this country should have been removed by your decision to come to Montreal. For no one is likely to mistake Montreal for just another North American city. Among other things, it is the largest French-speaking city in the world — except Paris. I have often said that, if a Canadian wants to prove to an American neighbour that he is not merely a species of American, though a superior species, no doubt, but that he has an identity of his own, he need only speak to him in French, Canada's other official language....

...Today there are two matters which are of special and anxious preoccupation to Canadians: (1) the nature and direction of our own political society in particular, our problems in a federation which must maintain unity in diversity; (2) our relation with the U.S.A., and what that relation means to our position, not only on this continent, but in the world.

SEARCHING THE NATIONAL SOUL

As to the first, there is more national soul-searching going on today in Canada than ever before in our

history. But this is a research activity where we share with the people of every country in the world — or at least those who have freedom of thought and expression. After all, there is bound to be a general ferment in this bewildering, swift-moving, nuclear period in human history, especially when young people contemplate what older people have done to the world in the last 50 years.

It is no easy task in our kind of world, on this kind of continent, blanketed as we are by the power, wealth and material appeal of 195 million good American neighbours, to maintain, let alone strengthen, a Canadian national identity, especially when we also are subjected to the regional strains that are bound to exist in a federation, with constitutional divisions that at times coincide with racial or language differences.

But we are going to achieve our national purpose, I assure you, build and maintain a strong, distinctive North American confederation which has its own values, its own loyalties, its own destiny; and which, because about a third of our population is French-speaking, will retain the French language, French traditions, and French culture, which will be accepted by the other two-thirds of us as an important asset in our national development.

CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS

Now, for our second great preoccupation — our relations with the U.S.A.

We are North Americans, but that does not mean that we are exclusively continentalists. We are closely tied to the North Atlantic European community, but that does not make us Europeans. The fact