

In Communist countries, children are taught at an early age that foreigners, except of course, communist foreigners and fellow travellers, are their enemies, with whom no friendship or mutual understanding is possible - even on an intellectual plane. There is much evidence that this kind of education, which arouses in us feelings of discouragement and even despair, can be devilishly effective. The essential prelude today, to the establishment of a dictatorship, whether of left or right, is the false education of youth. The essential foundation of a free democracy must, in its turn, be the good and true education of youth. That is where the teacher comes in.

Particularly important, I think, is the teaching of history, a sound knowledge of which is an essential basis for international relations. An understanding of history gives one a sense of perspective and of balance. It prevents too much exuberance when things go well and too much despair when they go badly. One danger, however, is a comfortable belief that history always repeats itself. It doesn't, at least not always in the same way. Another danger is that first historical impressions are lasting. It is the knowledge you get of a foreign country from studying its history in your primary school book that often colours your attitude towards that country for the rest of your days. It is, for instance, difficult to escape a certain British prejudice when your kindergarten walls are covered with pictures of the "thin red line" and the "Charge of the Light Brigade". It is also hard to get away from the impression created by certain history books that foreigners are people that you have licked in war. There is, in fact, too much historical emphasis on conflict and not enough on co-operation: too much time is given to the glamorous exploits of the man with the sword in a red coat and not enough to the man with a pen in a frock coat; too much on the tank and not enough on the covered wagon. I realise, of course, the difficulty here. Conquest by battle is more dramatic and, therefore, more easily taught than conquest by peaceful conference. It is much easier to convey a lasting impression of a knight on horseback than a circuit rider on a pony. The mental image of the battle axe of Richard Coeur de Lion usually overshadows the ploughshare of the pioneer settler. History, of course, in its teaching should not ignore the virtues of patriotism and loyalty to one's own state. They should be exalted, not scorned. The difficulty here, however, is to reconcile loyalty to one's own country as the essential foundation for citizenship and good international relations, with loyalty to the wider community of people; to understand that loyalty to one's own country does not mean that our country is above criticism or change. Nationalism, of course, but not an arrogant or exclusive nationalism. The teaching of that kind of nationalism is folly, and worse, in any country. In a country like Canada, especially, the teacher should emphasize not only our own just pride in our own achievements, our confidence in our own destiny, our determination to build up a united people. He should also emphasize the inescapable inter-relationship between Canada and other countries. For no country in the world is this inter-relationship more important. Our experience in the past proves this. Developments in the future will drive it home, both in the economic and the political field. For Canada, therefore, as much as for any country in the world, a sound and understanding knowledge of other countries, of their history, their problems and their possibilities is essential. Only on such knowledge can peaceful and progressive international relations be based.

Take, for instance, the relations between Canada and the United States. They are rightly held up to the rest of the world as a model of what relations between neighbouring states should be. Yet, the two countries do not know nearly as much of each other as they should. In the case of the United States it is the lack of basic information about Canada. In the case of Canada, it is a lack of appreciation of the problems and the achievements of the United States.