

last few weeks. Canada has made an important contribution to the work of the International Red Cross in the development of humanitarian law, seeking international arrangements that would allow international relief agencies to operate in civil conflicts to aid the innocent bystanders, usually women and children, as they do in wars between nation states.

Interdependence in terms of the human condition takes in many more of the major concerns of the day. Social justice, race discrimination and the whole question of the dignity of man: the environmental problems that cannot be contained within national boundaries and the whole question of international law and the making of sensible arrangements between nations that occupies fruitfully so much of the time at the United Nations.

Against this complex of interdependence how does Canada use the essential independence it must retain? I have already suggested that it is used in the pursuit of Canadian interests in their international dimension and I make no apology for saying this. It assures to us control of the domestic economy and the right to run our own affairs. It enables us to take a Canadian view of the world.

To sum up, our cherished independence allows us to have our voice heard and our views expressed in world councils, to make a distinctively Canadian contribution to the affairs of all men everywhere. We work very hard at this. Our delegations to the United Nations and its agencies, to OECD, to NATO and to other international bodies are well-staffed by able professionals. We do our homework, we try to behave responsibly.

I believe it is a good thing for the world that we have a distinctively Canadian contribution to make. It is a good thing that there is an independent North American voice in world affairs. In a world that must learn how to resolve conflicts and to live in peace, despite the great differences between its peoples, the Canadian experience in building a nation with two great language groups and many cultures is relevant indeed. Perhaps our contribution is a modest one, since we must act within the limits of our capacity. We must at the same time act to the full extent of our capacity. I believe we do.