

Whatever the case, it is comforting to think that Canada's foreign policy is becoming more vigorous and freeing itself from some of the constraints of former years. If only Canadians can achieve a stronger identity, one can hope that they will find the best means of maintaining their independence.

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## The advantages of integration...

by Harry G. Johnson

Mitchell Sharp's carefully modulated and handsomely reasonable essay entitled *Canada-S. Relations: Options For The Future* embodies one of the characteristics I have come to consider most distinctively Canadian. This is the unquestioning assumption that, if enough eminent Canadians express enough "concern" about something, and keep up the clamour long enough to get their "concern" widely publicized, there must be a real problem requiring government policy action, regardless of whether the concern is backed up by solid evidence and analysis, or merely reflects an inferiority complex or an inability to obtain under free competition the amount of property, academic or literary repute, or whatever, that the "concerned" citizen considers his due as an eminent Canadian.

On the economic side, the argument for policies to establish Canadian control over the Canadian economy was launched by the Gordon report, *Canada's Economic Prospects*, whose recommendations were clearly oriented toward the financial interests of Toronto, and carried on by the Watkins report. On the cultural side, apart from the long-standing pressure from Canadian broadcasters and magazine-writers for protection for the sale of inferior Canadian imitations of American products, there has recently been a cam-

paign by Canadian academics (largely located in Ontario) to insist that Canadian students should be educated by Canadians no more accomplished than themselves. It takes a great deal of literary skill to merge these self-interested pleas into a national desire for national distinctiveness. It also takes a great deal of optimism to believe that the distinctiveness acquirable by the policies recommended by such interest groups, however rationalized by reference to Canadian concerns, will be something that Canadians will be able to take pride in rather than apologize for to foreigners.

The trouble with the concept of "national distinctiveness" is that, individually, you only know whether you have it or not when you get involved in serious discussion of important general problems with nationals of other countries, and discover that you either can or cannot see angles to a problem that the others do not see, or judge the issues and arrive at answers more fairly than they. Collectively, you only know you have it when either privately or by government policy you have arrived at solutions to common human problems better than those other nations have arrived at. (Of course, one can arrive at far worse decisions, and so be distinctively backward in civilization, but this is not the theme of Mitchell Sharp's paper.) Distinctiveness in either