

You can regard these extreme opinions as cancelling each other out. But there is a real problem here, and no-one should be satisfied with what is being done. One of the difficulties is that Canadian news does not stand up well in these days in the competition for space among the material reaching the desks of news editors. The sober journals have a flood of foreign news of a more spectacular kind than that which Canada produces, as well as huge demands for space for domestic news in an election year. For the sensational journals Canada does not provide very often that mixture of crime, sex and infamy which is their special fare. If we did things in Canada in a more dramatic way, and were less reliable, - in short made greater nuisances of ourselves - we would doubtless find a good deal more about Canada in the American papers. But would the game be worth the candle?

The most effective sort of friendly publicity which Canada, or any other country, can hope to secure in the United States is that which is written by Americans for Americans. We have a thin press in this respect, but it is good so far as it goes. Some of you may remember an article by Mr. Walter Lippmann three or four weeks ago in which he took to task what he called "uninformed and unneighbourly" criticism of Canada in an Arizona paper, and made this his text for setting people straight on Canadian aid in the reconstruction of Europe. More recently the most widely circulated periodical in the United States, Life Magazine, began its editorial as follows: "Canadians are the closest friends we have in the world and they are in serious economic trouble. From the United States they need and deserve considerably less apathy about their plight". The article concluded by advocating a customs union between Canada and the United States. We are all at liberty to dislike its conclusion, but there is no cause to quarrel with its understanding and sympathetic tone.

Of course Americans do not know as much as we should like about Canada, but do Canadians know enough about the United States? The average Canadian probably knows a good deal more about what goes on in the United States than the average American knows about what goes on in Canada. For one thing, there is a lot of news from the United States in his papers. He usually reads one or more American magazines, listens to American radio programs, sees American moving pictures. That is inevitable when 12½ million people live alongside 145 million people. It is like the case of Belgium: Belgians know a lot more about France than Frenchmen know about Belgium.

Yet I wonder whether people in Canada have as great an understanding of the United States as they should. This, for instance, is an election year. How many of you in this room could state accurately the procedure for electing a President of the United States, which is set down in the Constitution and has been followed for nearly 160 years. I suspect that if Dr. Gallup were to take one of his polls in Canada on how the President is chosen, he would find that a big majority think that next November all the voters will mark a ballot paper containing the names of the Democratic, Republican and other candidates, and that the candidate with the largest total will be elected. It is a much more complicated business than that. We might think of this when next we are irritated by some foolish utterance about Canadian political institutions. Can we agree that there is much room on both sides for a better appreciation and understanding of the other country?

Never has there been greater need for full and friendly comprehension. The drawing together of the democratic countries in order to check the stealthy march of communism must be based on the closest possible understanding between the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and the other countries of the British Commonwealth, for that is a broad and firm foundation. That such an understanding is now being strengthened from day to day is certainly something solid and comforting to contemplate amid the alarms and crises of 1948.