

completely the ties with the motherland. In fact the final factor in bringing about the Confederation of the original three colonies in 1867 was the victory of the North in the American Civil War. Both Britain and Canada had given moral and occasionally material support to the South, and the Canadians feared that the northerners would in the flush of victory turn their armies towards the final conquest of Canada. Therefore it seemed prudent at least to unite the scattered colonies in order to strengthen resistance to the United States.

The British leaders of those days, as in fact in the subsequent years of that century and our own times, were able and far-sighted. They realized in good time the signs of growing national feeling in Canada, nudged a little bit by the revolts in both French and English Canada in 1837. Together with the Canadian statesmen they worked out one of those typically British solutions - independent status within a commonwealth of nations. As a result, we Canadians never had to stage a war of independence, and the limitations which we recognized had by force of circumstances to be placed on nationalism meant that the tie with Britain was never completely broken.

Therefore, on July 1, 1867 a new state was born in the Western Hemisphere. The outlines of its future magnitude, wealth and political and economic status could hardly be foreseen in the weak and struggling country of those days. Gradually its confines spread to encompass the British colonies in the Pacific and on the great plains, and the frontiers were pushed north to the Pole. It seemed at the time like a waste of effort to extend dominion over those terrible and endless wildernesses. It was only generations later that we learned of the immense mineral wealth imprisoned in their fastnesses.

I do not think either the Canadian or British statesmen who worked out the terms of the agreement which federated the British colonies in North America into the Canadian state, and its relations with the mother country, had any real idea what this was going to lead to. Some possibly foresaw that eventually Australia, New Zealand and South Africa might follow the Canadian lead. None could have guessed that eventually the British Empire would be largely transformed into a loose association of 10 states, including five African and Asian countries, all independent, but all still recognizing their common political outlook by retaining a common tie.

This common tie is difficult to explain. It consists, in the case of Canada, constitutionally only in the recognition of the Queen of England as also the Queen of Canada, represented in Ottawa by a Governor-General, who is a Canadian, selected by the Canadian Government. This seems tenuous indeed, and yet curiously enough it works. We do retain a system of political and economic consultation, which has no written constitutional existence, but is based on practice and mutual benefit. This exists not only with the United Kingdom, but with the other