

United States and British Empire Relations

(By D. A. McDonald, K.C.)

Note: We are confident that regular readers of the B.C.M. and others, including various exchanges, will welcome the publication of this article. Apart from the omission of a few personal words of introduction by Mr. McDonald, the insertion of sub-headings, and such changes as "Scotchmen" to "Scotsmen" and (occasionally) "England" to "Britain," the address is reproduced practically as delivered before the Vancouver Kiwanis club.—(Ed. B.C.M.)

In dealing with the relations between the United States and the British Empire in so far as such relations might be affected for the better by the Kiwanis Clubs of North America. I wish to be very candid in anything I may say. I realize that I am among my friends where no offence will be taken even if our views may differ. I am speaking to Kiwanians, who are actuated by a very earnest desire to exert every effort for the good of the world and their country, and who are willing to make personal sacrifices to attain that end.

Canada's Composite Citizenship.

Some of you are American born—and, as such, come what may, no matter where you may be, if you are real men, actuated by the same passions and feelings as other normal men, you love the land of your birth, and resent every unkind word that may be said of her. Many of you were born in the British Isles, and, you too love and honor your native land and will jealously guard her fair name. But, I take it, that most of you, like myself, were born in Canada, taught from the cradle to love the Empire and her noble Queen. Each of us has his own individual conception of what is required of us in loyalty and service; but we are one in this, that now as never before in the world's history, we realize that loyalty in a large measure is required of each and every one of us.

The Danger of Rupture Between the States and Britain.

Now it would be folly to bother our heads about what Kiwanians may do to cement the friendship of United States and Great Britain, if there were no possible need for such service. So we must ask ourselves in the first place if there is any appreciable danger of a rupture between these two great nations. You may think not. For my part, I often fear that there is. This much you must admit—that many very powerful influences are working untiringly, day in and day out to create that very condition. It is so easy for us to adopt the policy of taking for granted that all is well, that we never ask of the watchman, "What of the night?" The people of Britain smiled for years at the ravings of Lord Roberts and other thoughtful men as to the German menace, and blandly refused to believe in any such danger or to vote the necessary funds for making preparations. But history has written in blood the story of their folly. And if the thinking people of North America are content to sit quietly and do nothing, while sinister influences by day and night sow the seeds of discord, then I say, there is cause to fear that the unhappy day may come.

The Anti-British Element in the States.

There is, in the first place, in the United States, a very large proportion of people of German and Austrian birth and affiliations. Do these people love Britain more or less, than they did six years ago? Put yourselves in their places! How would you feel? Make no mistake my friends.

To the German American, the name of "Perfidious Albion" is anathema—a name to be loathed—and will continue to be so for years to come, if not for all time; and no stone will be left unturned by these German-Americans in their efforts to create an unfriendly feeling between these two nations.

Then we have that burning Irish question. Have you not-

iced in how many cities of the United States, the alleged "President of the Irish Republic" has been received with open arms? How many American dollars have been contributed to the cause of Irish Freedom (whatever that may mean?) Do these things contribute toward amity between the two nations? or do they but tend toward widening the rift in the lute if there be a rift?

And we have the Japanese question. Great Britain has recently renewed her alliance with Japan, and we know fairly well what is the feeling between Japan and the United States. Is there any danger of ill-feeling being engendered in this quarter? I feel that it is quite within the bounds of possibility.

Hearst Syndicate Periodicals Propagate Discord.

And then we have the newspapers. I think I am not making too broad a statement when I say that the one outstanding aim and object of all those newspapers and periodicals controlled by the Hearst syndicate is to propagate and cultivate dissension and discord between these two great English speaking races. I hope I am not painting too gloomy a picture. I do not wish to do so, I realize as you do, that the great body of the people of that Great Republic are honest and sincere, in their respect and admiration for Great Britain, and in their desire to eliminate every cause of discord. I have met scores of such men, as you have, but remember, that they too fear the same things that we fear. In any event, I am sure that most of you, when you reflect, will realize that there is a real danger and that there is an extensive and intensive evil propaganda, which must be reckoned with; and particularly when we remember that such things are not by any means confined to American journalists. Many of you have no doubt read the bitter and acrimonious attack made by Horatio Bottomley, a member of the British House of Commons, mark you, upon the United States, in connection with the disclosures made by Admiral Sims.

The Question and the Answer.

In the next place let us consider for a moment whether it is worth while to preserve these good relations which have existed for more than a century. Is it desirable that these two great English speaking nations, with a common tongue, a common heritage in literature and law and learning and art, and with common ideals and traditions, should press on shoulder to shoulder in the onward march of civilization? or is it preferable that they should forget everything but bitterness and hate and discord, fly at each other's throats and proceed to tear down that fabric of civilization which after centuries of building has so recently been shattered and torn to its very foundations? To put the question is to answer it. Surely no sane man can argue that discord between these two countries, rather than harmony, can aid the nations of the world in working out their salvation.

Canada's Unique Position in the Triangle.

Now if there is a real danger, and if it is desirable that that danger should be combatted, what is the position of Canada in this International triangle? Is it not unique? Here she is, an integral part of the British Empire, a nation within a