

In the first place, and I apologize at having to mention it, for it shouldn't be necessary, we are no longer a dependent colony belonging to the British - or indeed to anybody else. We are an independent state inside a group of states, the Commonwealth of British Nations, all of which are as free as any other states to run their own affairs. This development, however, has been accomplished without drum beats or drama. You see, we got our independence without fighting the British, so possibly you may think there is something "phony" about it! The founders of our nation were staid Victorian gentlemen in frock-coats sitting around the conference table. We can't contribute a single general with flashing sword and prancing steed to our Fathers of Confederation. All very dull; but very effective.

Having achieved this independence recently - the last stage was the passing of the Statute of Westminster in 1931 - we have the sensitiveness of the debutante about our national appearance, and are inclined to get somewhat annoyed, if we are told that our colonial slip is showing!

We are not only sensitive, but proud of our Canadian nation. The motto "we ourselves" is out of place in this atomic age, but we hope that Canada will be able to stand on its own feet, without treading on other people's toes; leaning neither too much on Uncle Sam or John Bull, but marching with both, if they will only go in the same direction. However, I don't want to overdo this emphasis on our own independence. Partly because modern science and modern politics both make a mock of national boundaries and necessitate a complete re-examination of the doctrine of national sovereignty; partly because I don't wish to give too much support to the criticism of one of my fellow-countrymen who said that Canadians spent so much time trying to prove that they were neither British nor Americans that they had no time to be Canadians.

I will merely say, then, that you should consider us as a friendly but separate state, one whose people are close to you, in every way, but satisfied that it would be in no one's interest to confuse co-operation with absorption. Surely you don't want another 18 Senators!

I would like to mention something else; that we are a country with whom, I think, it is worth while to co-operate. We can offer you something that is not merely material or economic. We have our roots, you know, deep in Europe and have never severed those roots, though our branches swing wide in the North American air. We can, then, both in war and peace, be a useful northern bridge across the Atlantic between the new world and the old.

In war, we have shown that we can make an important contribution to the victory of free men over tyrants. One hundred thousand Canadians who lie in foreign fields are the tragic evidence that we have been ready to back our faith in a just cause even, when necessary, by the blood of our best. We have been at war for 10 years out of the last 34; something that makes us think hard about international problems. We have suffered, as you have, in the defence of ideals which have meant more to us than immediate comfort and ease.

In the second world war, we mobilised over a million men and us, a huge industrial machine which was able to make everything required for modern war - from a trigger to a tank; from atomic energy to jet propulsion. Compared with your own gigantic war effort, ours was relatively small, but there is no other state in this hemisphere which has made as great a wartime contribution to collective security as Canada. We will again play our part the forces of fighting democracy, if the stupidity of statesmen and the aggressive designs of totalitarian despots, make this necessary. But we have no illusions: we know that the next war may well be the last one; but in the wrong sense!