

I am glad to see so many Canadian students here this evening. I hope you are enjoying your years here as much as I enjoyed mine, at Oxford and Gray's Inn, in the 1930's. I also hope that some of you, afterwards, may decide to go into domestic political life in Canada, and some into my own profession of world politics, or the Foreign Service. There is a lot to be done in these fields - enormous scope and challenge. And I can promise that you will not find it boring.

Until recently many Canadians tended to think that their politics were somehow duller than those of many other countries. I doubt if this was ever true, but Canadians have sometimes thought that colourlessness was a national characteristic, or even a virtue. Mackenzie King even developed a conscious political technique of trying to avoid saying anything memorable, lest it be recalled later and in changed circumstances quoted damagingly against him. It was not until long afterwards that most Canadians realized how astonishingly colourful, under his protective coating of grey, that incredible Canadian was. I often think of an observation he once made to a few civil servants on his staff:

"In a democracy the ship of state is a sailing ship:

It has no steam. It is subject to all the winds of

opinion. You have to tack a lot, but if you know how

to navigate, you can get where you wish."

Mackenzie King was very far from being superficial or ordinary, though he sometimes liked to seem so. Personally I prefer the Churchill style. But King's technique of seeking the protective colouration of the common man is a refreshing contrast to the more common modern technique of little politicians in so many