

I would remind you that the universal craving for a personal symbol of justice and mercy is happily fulfilled in Canada without severity and without emotional extravagance. We see it, with splendour and with simplicity, in the institution of the Crown and in the person of the Sovereign. The combination in this symbol of law and authority with humanity is, I think, a not unworthy contribution which Canada makes to North American life.

But we have other contributions to make to North American affairs and to international business, and these are even more exclusively bound up with our own national life and history. Canada is no longer small and weak. We can no longer dissociate ourselves from great international decisions with the plea that we have neither the constitutional power, nor the material resources to implement them. Whether we like it or not, we are now on the international stage with a not unimportant role, and we must play it worthily, and in our own way.

Here, too, we have certain advantages and a special contribution to make. A well-known American historian who is still to all Canadians a Canadian, has written with much scholarly insight and sympathetic understanding of what he calls the North Atlantic triangle: Great Britain, the United States and Canada. As a part of this North Atlantic Triangle, Canada has been internationally minded from her earliest colonial infancy: from the days when the fortunes of Quebec and Boston alike depended on the good or ill success of the British navy on the high seas. Canada was internationally minded long before she became a nation.

It is true that Canadian interest in international affairs has, in the past, perhaps been too exclusively concerned with our immediate needs, our need for survival, for example, and our hope of increase of power and of control over our national life. Now, as I have just suggested, all that is behind us. Now, and for the future, we are asked to consider more seriously what we have to give to others.

And when I speak of giving, I do not mean giving in the material sense. I am thinking, of course, of the kind of contribution of which we have been speaking... In a recent pronouncement, yet another well-known Canadian historian suggests how useful Canadian experience may be, if placed at the disposal of other powers in our new and complex international system. Nations long proud of their great power and complete independence must now, in the interests of peace, accept limitations on their sovereignty. Canada's long experience as a colony, as rather more than a colony, as partly a dominion, as really a dominion and finally as more than a dominion, has taught us many things which our friends now must learn. We can now show others, says this writer, "how to lack sovereignty gracefully" and also how to be a reasonable partner.

I can think of no greater contribution by our nation in these difficult times than gracefulness and reasonableness combined naturally with firmness and consistency, in international dealings...