

about that subject tonight, about some of our difficulties. I know you have heard a lot about them this week but, if the Prime Minister of the country didn't refer to Canadian-American relations at a convention like this, we should certainly be criticized for not taking advantage of such a wonderful opportunity to expose to you how superior we are. I know you have been listening this week to many wise and unplatitudinous words on this subject, so I know you will not expect me to close your convention with a few rousing observations about the 150 years of peace, the unguarded boundary and our common devotion to Shakespeare, democracy and Casey Stengel.

Today there are two matters of special and anxious preoccupation to Canadians - and they have been mentioned already to you during the week:

One is the nature and direction of our own political society - in particular, our problems in a federation which must maintain unity in diversity.

And the other subject, of course, is our relationship with the United States and what that relationship means to our position, not only on this continent but in the world.

As to the first, there is more national soul-searching going on today in Canada than ever before in our history. But this is a research activity which we share with the people of every country in the world - or at least those countries where the people have freedom of thought and expression. After all, there is bound to be a universal ferment in this bewildering, swift-moving, nuclear period in human history - especially when young people contemplate what older people have done to the world in the last 50 years.

It is no easy task in our kind of world, on this kind of continent, blanketed as we are by the power, the wealth and the material appeal of 195 million good American neighbours, to maintain, let alone strengthen, a Canadian national identity - especially when we also are subjected to the regional strains that are bound to exist in a federation such as ours, with constitutional divisions that at times coincide with racial or language differences.

But I assure you we are going to achieve our national purpose and build and maintain a strong, distinctive North American confederation which has its own values, its own loyalties, its own destiny - and which, because about one-third of our population is French-speaking, will retain the French language, French traditions and French culture, which will be accepted by the other two-thirds of us as an important asset in our national development.

And then our second great preoccupation - our relations with our neighbours.

We are North Americans and we are not likely to forget that, but that does not mean that we are exclusively continentalists. We are closely tied to the North Atlantic European Community, but that does not make us Europeans. The fact is that we see no good