

It is the undoubted responsibility of the government in a democratic society to provide leadership in the conception and implementation of foreign policy. This responsibility is an extension of the role played by the government in all areas of public policy.

But in a democracy, foreign policy cannot be the sole prerogative of government. The public - or to be more specific, the private citizen - has an integral part to play. As Mackenzie King once wrote "where there is little or no public opinion, there is likely to be bad government, which sooner or later becomes autocratic government."

Tonight I would like to discuss the role of the individual citizen in relation to government in the development and execution of Canadian foreign policy.

The Canadian public - both individually and collectively - is becoming increasingly knowledgeable and articulate. It was not always so. Even in the recent past, the interest of Canadians was limited, and where it did exist, was concentrated on one or two traditional issues which affected our citizens directly. In the period before World War II, for example, André Siegfried, the French observer of Canadian society could comment that "in so far as the Canadians are concerned, collective security (a major issue in the League of Nations) is only a conviction de luxe". There were opportunities for discussion but debate was desultory and detached. Canadians thought that they could afford to look at their country as a "fireproof house"; that they could call Europe disdainfully a "continent which could