

This is often obscured by a benevolent ignorance of our circumstances, our views, and our problems; a friendly unawareness of Canada, except when occasionally we take a different line from you at the United Nations; or in regard to the best way of dealing with the danger of communism in Asia, or of communist subversion at home.

Normally, I fear, Canada means to most people in this country merely a lot of geography, a rather unexciting history, from colony to nation without even a war of independence, symbolized, so far as its relations with the United States are concerned, by Peace bridges and an unfortified border.

True, we have a lot of geography. It is also true that, while the 140 years since our countries last fought each other are characterised by friction as well as by peace, there is a deep and sincere friendship between our two peoples. This ensures that we will approach our mutual problems with good will, with a desire to solve them fairly and in a way which will not leave resentment or bitterness.

Nevertheless, this good relationship cannot safely be left to itself. It is going to need careful and intelligent attention on both sides of the border; more, possibly, than has been given, since Canada, thirty or forty years ago, assumed complete responsibility for its side of the relationship.

Ours is a unique relationship in its closeness and intimacy. Every day more than 140,000 people cross our common boundary. The great mass of them do so without difficulty or much formality, but unfortunately, a small but by no means negligible number on our side find they are running into difficulties concerned, though, as we see it, often not very importantly concerned, with security. It would be a sad day, and not only for our after dinner speakers, if our boundary became a sticky one and difficult to cross.

Most Canadians, unless they speak French, are hardly distinguishable from Americans. Differences between a Georgian and a Minnesotan are often superficially greater than those between a Chicagotan and a Torontonian.

But this very intimacy has its dangers. It means that our disagreements, when we have them, take on a sort of family character; are, therefore, often disconcerting and perplexing, with 'et tu Brute' undertones.

May I give you a personal example. If some European journalist or lecturer said or wrote that Canada's External Affairs Minister was a 'Pink', I wouldn't hear much if anything about it, I suppose; and if I did I would put it down to the childish ignorance of some benighted foreigner. If a comparable American said the same thing, it wouldn't even have to be translated, and would get in the Canadian papers. My reaction, until my better self asserted itself, would be almost a domestic one. "He can't do that to me. Didn't I tell the Rotary Club at Washington's Corners only last week that I was heart and soul with the great United States in the struggle against communism?"