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An address by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L. B. Pearson, delivered at the University of Maine, on June 20, 1954.

If in archaeological excavations going on in Egypt these days, with such exciting results for the extension of man's knowledge of his past, it were possible to find the records of the graduation ceremony of the class of '54 - that is 2954 B.C. - of the Egyptian University of Memphis, I am sure they would include, in hieroglyphics, a commencement address by Mr. Imhotep, LL.D., exhorting the young graduate to go out into the world with head high and heart steady, thanking the Sun God for the happy, carefree days he had been privileged to spend at dear old U. of M., where he had been trained so well to meet the challenge, now far greater than ever before, of the complex and difficult days ahead.

That sort of thing has been going on ever since. I have been subjected to it - and I have inflicted it on others.

Frankly, I can't think of anything new and stimulating, or worthwhile, to say about graduation and new graduates, an observation which, I have also discovered, is often the prelude to a long homily.

Such a commencement homily is usually full of good, if somewhat shop-worn advice, pointing out that the possession of your degree, which is supposed to label you as educated, imposes on you certain responsibilities and gives you certain advantages in facing the future.

You may well wonder about that future in which, according to some, our best chance of peace rests on the knowledge that each side can obliterate the other. At best this is a shaky and bleak basis for a decent existence; the peace that two scorpions in a bottle enjoy because each one knows that the other can sting it to death.

Of course, there never was a time in history when the future did not present its challenges; or when there were not men and women who were stimulated rather than daunted by them.

It is tempting, as we peer fearfully into the hydrogen abyss, to sigh for the old days when men killed each other individually with battle axes. But these were, in their small way, as destructive as bombs, and the casualties, military and civilian, in the days of tribal or class or religious wars of extermination, were about as high in proportion to population as they may be in the future.

As a matter of fact, stories of the "good old days" are often very insubstantial, even imaginary. Distant pastures, far enough behind, often look especially lush and green.

I have always thought, for instance, of the Elizabethan era as "the great age of the budding glory of England"; as a time of madrigals and Morris dances, Shakespeare's plays and archery on the green, interrupted by the singeing of the Spanish King's beard and voyages with Drake around the exciting new world.

Then I read a paper, a few months ago, by a learned historian of McGill University in Montreal, which characterized this period as one of insecurity, high prices, unstable foreign trade, political uncertainty, fear of invasion, religious unrest and persecution (very much like today). Then the crowning disillusionment. As for Queen Bess herself, he said, "One cannot help feeling that she was inclined to be rather an unethical, dictatorial and irascible old maid".

This is academic freedom gone mad. The professor should be investigated by a committee on un-historical activities!

The sense of historical perspective that comes from education is, however, a useful aid to the understanding and analysis of present troubles and dangers. It helps us to keep a sense of balance and of proportion.

Nevertheless, having taken myself - and offered to you - all the comfort I can out of this thought, I hasten to weaken my own argument by adding that nothing - history or philosophy, no quality of heart or mind - can reduce to any tolerable perspective, the shattering results that may now flow from man's release of the energy of the atom at a time when his social, moral and political progress lags so far behind his scientific leap forward.

Education, however - honest, sincere education, which is to be distinguished from mere knowledge - can help - indeed, nothing else can help so effectively - in reducing the gap between our material and moral development. Yet there have been few words in modern times, apart from "peace" and "democracy", so bandied about and abused as this word "education"; so glibly used, so little understood.

When Abe Martin said that it "takes a mighty smart feller to succeed with a good education", he was, of course, interpreting success in terms of cash value.

But that kind of success is not the aim, but merely a by-product - though a very useful one - of education. If I sometimes wonder, as I do, whether our school and college curricula are not now designed more for the by-product, success, than for the main result, a good education, I am cheered by the conclusion of the President of Columbia University, Dr. Grayson Kirk, that "there is virtually no known curricular device that can prevent an earnest and intelligent young man getting some kind of education". I am sure that has been your experience at Maine, because I know that you are both earnest and intelligent.

To return to Abe Martin: he was probably basing his pessimistic conclusion about education on the assumption that it provokes thought at the sacrifice of action, and stimulates the search for truth, regardless of consequence. This is not always a good recipe for the kind of success Abe was talking about. He would, however, have taken comfort from an observation attributed to J. S. Squire, the English literary critic, that "most men never think again after they begin to work". I suspect that there may be too much truth to this, in spite of the forty hour week!

Yet there never was a time when hard and honest thinking was more important than it is today; a time when ideas, ready-made and off the hook, are flung at us - on newsprint, on the screen, over the air and on the television, until we are in danger of being beaten into a dull and uncritical acceptance of the biggest headline and the loudest voice; because it is easier and safer and more profitable to acquiesce, to conform and not to ask too many questions.

There can, however, never be too many questions. Indeed, the quality and growth of an individual or of a society or of a nation are largely determined by the strength and vigour of the spirit of enquiry. Progress throughout the ages has depended largely on those rare men and women who have had the courage and intelligence to ask questions, and who have refused to be silenced by bad answers or no answers. Please don't stop asking questions.

One such question, indeed one of the fundamental questions of our time, is "Who is my neighbour?".

In the narrowest international meaning of that word, your neighbour in Maine, and indeed in the United States, is my country, Canada.

Neighbourhood is merely a fact. But where the response to that fact is good relations, good understanding, good feeling, that is an achievement. Our two countries can congratulate themselves on this result. Once achieved, however, good neighbourhood must be preserved and cultivated or it will weaken and might disappear: for neighbourliness, like marriage and friendship, cannot thrive on ignorance or neglect.

That is why, as an individual Canadian - and also as a member of the Canadian Government - I welcome this opportunity of expressing my appreciation for the outstanding work which this University, and your President, Dr. Hauck, have done over many years to improve the basis

for good neighbourly Canadian-American relations by increasing through education our mutual knowledge and understanding.

Canadians and Americans are learning more about each other, and that is good. That we have still some distance to go is shown from the answers given a few years ago to one of Dr. Hauck's research investigations, where certain questions were addressed to students in each country to test their knowledge of the other.

One American student, asked what he thought about Canadians, replied as follows:

"Due to the fact that my information and knowledge of Canada is limited, I feel that the class of people are intelligent, well-adjusted, and pleasant-going citizens. I think they have come a long way politically, domestically, and socially."

This man was charitable, though with commendable New England caution he recognized that his good opinion might be due to limited knowledge. His approach was probably intellectually sounder, and certainly more generous than that of the Canadian high school senior who, in the same test, generalized unabashedly from a single experience and replied:

"I think the dyed-in-the-wool Yanks have a feeling of superiority over Canadians which is wrong. Proof of this was a camper I had in my cabin. He thought he was the cat's meow".

In most parts of the world they call the boundary line between two countries a frontier. We in North America have changed that. Indeed, we have altered the very meaning of the word, so that to us a frontier is not a barrier, dividing two countries, but the advancing edge of man's development. To us, the word "frontier" means how far we have got to date. It means the points from which we are moving forward in furthering mankind's advance into the unknown.

During the last 150 years, you Americans and we Canadians had our frontiers in the west. They were the advancing line of settlement, constantly being pushed forward. In this geographic sense, we in Canada still have a frontier in our vast northland, stretching from the Islands of the Queen Elizabeth Archipelago right down to the North Pole. Along this frontier, which is of increasing strategic importance to you, remarkable developments are now taking place. They are a challenge to the adventurous and the pioneer spirit which still exists on this continent.

The most famous achievement of Canadian-American good neighbourliness is, I suppose, that famous 4,000 miles of unfortified boundary, without mention of which any remarks on Canadian-American relations would be considered inadequate, almost suspect. Of course, this boundary does not now run exactly where it should. In the last century, you remember, by some kind of diplomatic skulduggery, a line was agreed on which resulted in a wedge being driven far into our territory from Maine. It is amazing how Canadians

refuse to get excited over, or even to remember, this "gross injustice". (Every boundary arbitration that goes against you is, of course, a "gross injustice".) Why, one of our railways runs right across this "terra irredenta", just as if it were Canadian territory, and no Canadian politician has ever thought of using "Remember the Maine boundary" as an election slogan!

My statistical friends tell me that on the average some 140,000 persons cross the Canadian-American boundary every day. Most of these people, in whatever direction they move, are hardly aware that they have crossed an international line. Surely that is as it should be. But if we are not wise and understanding, it may not remain that way.

In recent years there has been a tendency, very marked in some parts of the world, for governments to increase the difficulties in the way of free movement between countries. We have iron curtains and bamboo curtains, and curtains of red-tape. This tendency is understandable enough, for the threat of subversion which aggressive communist totalitarianism poses to free societies, is a real one. Although their power and ubiquity is, I think, often exaggerated, there are spies and there are saboteurs. There are people who would destroy our institutions and betray our societies, if we allowed them to. The world remains a dangerous place for the weak, the weary and the unwary.

In these circumstances, it is natural enough that governments should take reasonable care to prevent, if possible, the entry of subversive agents; should be anxious about security. But the problem must be viewed in proportion. We must certainly make sacrifices for security. But governments should also be aware of the very real danger of whittling away in the name of security, our fundamental freedom of movement, as well as those of thought, and of speech.

Not only men and ideas, but also goods, cross the U.S.-Canadian border in unprecedented volume. Our mutual trade has reached a higher level than any two countries have ever enjoyed in the past. Canada is your best customer. Our 15 millions buy more from you than the whole of South America and more, unfortunately for us, than your 160 millions buy from Canada. In this field too, as one would expect, there are problems. And sometimes they seem to be increasing.

I have heard it said, for example, that Canadian fishermen compete with American fishermen; but so do American fishermen. Some people think that competition is good, that it stimulates enterprise. Other people think that competition is bad, and that government controls, tariff quotas etc. are better. This difference is sometimes one of principle and involves a clash of ideologies. But there are people who appear to believe that the test whether competition is healthy or harmful is merely a question of the nationality of the competitor. Personally, I believe that competition is usually good for all of us. I believe also that if the free world is to remain united for co-operation and strong for defence, we must increase rather than restrict the exchanges between us - in goods, in men, and in ideas.

Certainly such free world unity and strength is needed today - especially in the NATO coalition - as never before. And - in that coalition - there is a special reason, a special necessity for the closest possible Anglo-American-Canadian co-operation.

For Canada, with the United States as a neighbour and the United Kingdom as a mother country, it is a first requirement of policy to do everything it can to promote such co-operation on the closest and most friendly basis.

The English-speaking countries share common institutions, common traditions of freedom and law. We have also the bond of language. This last bond is, I fear, occasionally reduced to the ability to criticize, and argue, and bicker in words that cannot be softened by translation. It provides a convenience which we should not abuse. Otherwise we may reach the deplorable position described by Bernard Shaw when he said that Great Britain and the United States were two countries divided by a common language.

But I have gone on too long, far longer I'm sure than Dr. Imhotep did to his U. of M. commencement audience 5,000 years ago.

May I conclude by wishing you who have finished this stage of your education, good fortune, and the true satisfaction and happiness that comes from sincere effort and honest achievement.

S/C