



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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THE NORTH AMERICAN PARTNERSHIP

Notes for an Address by the Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. L.B. Pearson, at the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana, June 9, 1963

... Notre Dame has many historic connections with Canada.

The Order of the Holy Cross is well-known and highly esteemed in my country, where it is engaged in the work of education to the great benefit of our people.

Canadians at Notre Dame

Notre Dame's founder, Father Sorin, as General of the Order, guided much of its early work in Canada. Your seventh President, Father Thomas Walsh, was born in Canada. For many years the enrollment at Notre Dame has included a significant number of Canadian students who have later contributed to the development of my country. ...

If you were to visit the largely French-speaking Province of Quebec, you would find the name "Notre Dame" attached to villages, hospitals, convents and churches.

In the early seventeenth century, as one of our poets put it:

"The winds of God were blowing over France,
Kindling the hearths and altars, changing
vows of rote into an alphabet of flame."

This began the French era of our history. The language and traditions and spirit of France became a part of Canada's religious, cultural and political heritage.

Many years later priests and lay brothers from France came with Father Sorin to this part of under-developed America. Here they found freedom. Like their compatriots who went to Canada, they also established a classical college. They trained young men in the arts, the humanities, the social sciences and religion. The cultivation and ennoblement of the

human spirit was their purpose. As a result of their work, better men have left these college halls, better citizens have gone out into many communities. ...

Canada and the U.S.

In our complex world, the leadership we need is of many kinds and must operate in many fields. In seeking it, I believe that your country and mine can work, must work, together. Of all the reasons for this, the most important is that together we can contribute more to the fundamental needs and hopes of free men that either of us can contribute alone.

We in Canada are your northern neighbour, and, in a sense, your closest neighbour. Our common border spans a continent and runs close to many of the biggest centres of population in both of our countries. Its importance to both of us was recognized in the communiqué issued by the President and myself after our recent meeting at Hyannis Port. I would like to quote two sentences from that communiqué:

"While it is essential that there should be respect for the common border which symbolizes the independence and national identity of two countries, it is also important that this border should not be a barrier to co-operation which could benefit both of them. Wise co-operation across the border can enhance rather than diminish the sovereignty of each country by making it stronger and more prosperous than before."

From this co-operation we both have much to gain for ourselves. Materially, our trade is the biggest between any two countries in the world. But there is a far wider point than that. It is of the utmost importance that the relations between our two countries should be an example to the world; an example of how two free and independent countries - of great disparity in power - can work together without fear on the part of the smaller, or force on the part of the larger.

Let me put it in a different way, and with the bluntness that we can use with each other. If United States co-operation with Canada were not close and happy, with whom could you co-operate closely and happily?

This point was forcibly put, six years ago, by a Canadian writing in that great American journal Foreign Affairs. He said:

"The ability of the United States to get on well with Canada is the first and most direct test of her ability to get on well with every other smaller power ... Canada is the world's hostage of American good intentions. Canada is of good repute in the free world. If Canadians

said that they were being browbeaten by the Americans, if they said that their interests were being seriously prejudiced by the United States, the world's sympathy would lie overwhelmingly with Canada. (That, I may insert, is the price you have to pay for being top dog; the sympathy we enjoy is that which attaches to and cheers us smaller dogs.)

"The world sees Canada as a country very like the United States ... if the Americans could not get on well with Canada, with whom could they get on well? ... good relations with Canada -- the good relations of discussion and co-operation, of some real give and take in policy - are a primary interest of the United States."

Having suggested that we are of some importance to you, let me hasten to say that you are of very obvious, and often of overwhelming, importance to us. Geography, history, economics, defence, combine to make your interests in world affairs very largely our interests. When your security is weakened, we have cause to worry. When freedom falters with you, ours is diminished.

The basis of our relations, in short, is that we are essential to each other.

It was not always so. For a long time, in the formative years of our two countries, we were by no means the best of friends, or even very good neighbours. Indeed, I should tell you that only yesterday I was taking part in celebrating the 150th anniversary of a battle in which we repelled American invaders; at least we did in our history books. Yours are less accurate. That was a long time ago. I think that both our countries are entitled to some sense of satisfaction about the way in which we have since worked out a peaceful relations.

Harmony Not Always Easy

It has not been altogether easy, and I don't expect it to become easy. There are and always will be difficulties and differences of interest between us. It would be folly to ignore them. A country is a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. But it has parts. And those parts have their own particular interests. Individual industries in Canada, particular areas of Canada, inevitably have interests which are competitive with the interests of individual industries and particular areas of your country. The very closeness, the acute and pervasive interdependence, of our relations means that there are bound to be a great many differences.

Those are the facts of life. It is evidence of the nature of our neighbourhood that we do not have to worry morbidly about them or allow them to poison our relations. Perhaps I

should say it ought to be the nature of our neighbourhood, and usually it has been. We should be able to take differences in stride, as good friends who know how to take the broad view, to make the general interest prevail, and therefore to accommodate the minor differences with reason and restraint.

Mutual Interests Predominate

We shall the better be able to do this if we remember that the things we have in common are much greater than the things that divide us. The political traditions of the United States and of Canada are from the same roots. Each of us has tried to build a society that gives first place to the individual man - his needs, his hopes, his rights, his responsibilities. Our methods are in some ways different, and our efforts on both sides less than perfect, but on balance we can both claim some success in our dedication to the free society. We stand together also in our common dedication to the ways of peace and in our common determination to co-operate and prevail in the cause of freedom and fair dealing between nations. We stand together in the Atlantic alliance, which has proved itself to be the shield of a free world, and in a United Nations, which is groping toward a world brotherhood which, in our nuclear, jet-propelled age has become an urgent necessity for survival itself.

Sources of Disagreement

I am sure that to you at this university, who are students of history and of ideas, these things that our countries have in common need no emphasis from me. Of our differences you may be less aware; the differences which make the good relations between our two countries not always an easy relation. I do not think so much of our differences in particular interests. Those are normal and can be dealt with. I think of another and central relation which I have already mentioned - the enormous disparity in power between the two countries. You are a gigantic, a super, power. Canada is far from that.

From this, two consequences follow. We are always watching big brother to see what trouble he might get us into - while at times protesting at the fact that big brother is not watching us. You are unaware. We are uneasy. This can cause misunderstandings that should be avoided.

A second consequence of your being a big power and our being a much smaller power is that you and we at times react differently to international problems. Despite all that we have in common as North Americans, we often look at things through very different telescopes. We share this difference of viewpoint with other smaller countries.

Our distinction, among those smaller powers, is that we are North American. We are very close to you in so many ways, closer to you than any other country.

There are bound to be these differences between us, arising primarily from the contrasts of size and power and responsibilities; but we do not have to allow those differences to divide us. On the contrary, the objective we can and should set for ourselves is to make the differences work for us, to the benefit of both our countries and of international relations generally.

Making Differences Work

By making the differences work for us, I mean that we can complement each other's policies and ideas. I mean that, on the foundation of our own close partnership, there are ways of some importance in which Canada can assist in the broader partnership of both our countries with others - with the North Atlantic Community, with the members of the Commonwealth, with the new and developing nations in the world. Our very lack of power makes possible for us a certain measure of ease and flexibility in international relations that is not possible for the giants. You cannot sneeze without other countries thinking they are getting a cold and feeling inclined to blame it on you. We can sneeze with impunity.

We have much in common with the smaller nations of Europe; and our own political and economic development is recent enough for us to have considerable sympathy with the problems of the newer nations.

I am bold enough to believe that these circumstances give to our partnership with you a special value. It is more than a partnership of direct mutual benefit. It is more than an example of a good relation between two nations. It is also a partnership in which, if we work wisely together, we can do a more constructive job in international relations than either you, as the big power, or we, as a smaller power, could do if there were no such partnership, for if history had created in the northern part of this continent one nation instead of two. Because there are two nations, I believe that we are creating more vigorous and more satisfying communities than could ever have been produced within one framework.

That is part of the challenge that faces my country. I hope that, in talking about it, I have said something of more general value to the people to whom I am primarily speaking - to the graduating class of 1963 at Notre Dame and to the members of the faculty who have worked with the class to make this great day possible. As a Canadian, I admire the great work your forefathers have done to shape this nation and make it a mighty force for freedom, progress and peace in the world. Your generation will soon be carrying on that work. It is a more difficult

and challenging task now. You will be called on to meet new tests and overcome new challenges. Whatever you may choose to do after you leave university, you will have to make your own contribution as citizens to the solution of problems that face your country, my country and the world.

In doing so, I hope you will continue to feel the value of your partnership with Canadians.

I feel myself a deep sense of the value and of the necessity of that partnership. I share that feeling with the vast majority of all Canadians. I shall do my own best to preserve and strengthen it, on the only foundation that can endure, friendship and co-operation based on mutual respect and good understanding between our two nations.

S/C