

This is a thematic guide to historical documents, both textual and graphical (photography, art, images of artifacts), available on the Internet. These excerpts are intended to acquaint history and library staff with the types and location of documentary material for curricular use. Suggestions for related activities are also included.

The theme for this issue is ...

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

CONTENTS:

INTRODUCTION

THE RISE OF INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

[Oshawa Workers Win Strike \(1937\)](#)

[The Labor Movement's Big Push is Here \(1942\)](#)

Activity: This exhortation to support the union shows what the labor movement wanted to do with its power.

Pick one or two of the stated goals and ideals and present it/them in a chant (or rap or song). Use sound, rhythm and flash to get people excited about what the union is pursuing.

[Westinghouse Tight Rope Walker \(1945\)](#)

THE GROWTH OF POLITICAL AUTONOMY

[Imperial and External Relations, Laurier to League of Nations](#)

[Imperial Conferences, 1900-21](#)

Arthur Meighen

[A Group of Provinces to a Nation among Nations \(1926\)](#)

W.L.M. King

[Statute of Westminster \(1931\)](#)

FRENCH CANADIAN NATIONALISM

[The Nationalist Movement in French Canada \(1939\)](#)

F.R. Scott

[French Canada in the National Setting \(1940\)](#)

Senator L.M. Gouin

Activity: These writers point to quite dissimilar choices for French Canadians. Write a series of three or four polling questions to gauge how Quebecers of the late 1930s and early '40s see their role in their province, in Canada and the world.

CANADA IN THE AMERICAS AND THE WORLD

[Canada and U.S. Foreign Policy \(1935\)](#)

Secretary of State Cordell Hull

[The Americas Support Peace in a Dangerous World \(1936\)](#)

Franklin Roosevelt

[The Americas as a Citadel of Civilization \(1938\)](#)

Franklin Roosevelt (at Queen's University)

Activity: On the eve of World War II, Roosevelt had a strong sense of where in the hemisphere North Americans would have to place defensive forces. Make a world map showing North America's strategic position in 1939, marking your map with the important connections between North America and the world. Then list in point form the regions and places that the U.S. and Canada would have to protect in the event that war breaks out. Choose and separate out the defensive assignments that Canadian forces should get, being prepared to justify your choices.

INTRODUCTION

As Canadian society developed in resources, wealth and self-awareness after 1900, Canada moved beyond its colonial role to a place among nations. Substantial involvement in World War I, the League of Nations and World War II earned Canada its own status in the world. This evolution resulted from increasing strength and, even more, from choices made. As the people of Canada pushed toward their potential, they chose goals in their affairs which have had a lasting effect. These decisions shaped the country's role, changing it from British Empire dominion to Western ally, Commonwealth member and North American nation.

The widening of Canadian democracy was a major part of this maturing process. In the 1930s and '40s, industrial unionism brought power to large segments of working people (such as [autoworkers in Oshawa](#) in their victory over General Motors). The war years tested labor's willingness to balance its demands with the needs of the country; an [eloquent appeal for union support](#) shows the depth of commitment workers had reached. [Post-war issues](#) presented new problems for maintaining workers' gains as Canada entered the industrial boom period.

The country's own coming-of-age centred on World War I, but had beginnings in [early-century imperial relations](#). Two prime ministers, [Meighen](#) and [King](#), survey and celebrate the country's transition to respected player in Europe's political big league. The [Statute of Westminster](#) recognized the potency that Canada and the other Commonwealth nations had, by their dedication and deeds, attained.

An ethnic national consciousness in Quebec long predated Canada's awareness of itself as a distinct nation. However strong its cultural sense, though, Quebec's political constraints within Confederation, plus economic dependence on English Canada and the U.S., frustrated French Canadians looking to fulfill the potential they saw in themselves. [Scott's description](#) of this situation emphasizes the more inward-looking and negative aspects of the province in the '30s.

[Senator Gouin](#), a strong federalist, gives evidence of a pan-Canadian and internationalist viewpoint. The two essays cover a wide spectrum of thinking and purpose in the Quebec of this period.

Canada could hardly avoid an internationalist approach as World War II approached. U.S. president Roosevelt was aware not only of his country's strategic role, but also that of the Western Hemisphere. His foreign minister, Secretary Hull, acknowledges the U.S.A.'s good relations with Canada and friendly interest in Latin America in a 1935 [speech summarizing U.S. foreign policy](#). By the time of the Roosevelt speeches excerpted here, major conflict in Europe had begun. The president communicates the growing sense of foreboding and threat, to the Western Hemisphere and to civilization. His [speech to an inter-American peace conference](#) shows him to be aware of both the danger and the need to work together for hemispheric defence. His [speech at Queen's University](#) finds him even more concerned, and appreciative of the close relationship between Canada and the United States.

THE RISE OF INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

Oshawa Workers Win; Hamilton Next

Union Light, April 28, 1937

United Electrical and Radio Workers of America Local 504, Hamilton

"The United Automobile Workers of America, Local No. 222[...] have very definitely won their fight against General Motors. They did this in spite of the howlings, red bogey scares and provocations of [Ontario premier] Mr. Hepburn, the Globe and Mail and all their reactionary friends.

The united Action of the Oshawa workers forced the General Motors to sign a satisfactory agreement with the Union. [...] Can there be any doubt when one knows the true facts that [they have] defeated Hepburn and the General Motors? [They have] opened the door for all Canadian workers to organize and better their wages and conditions by collective bargaining.

Some of the gains at Oshawa:

- Recognition of the Union by the Company,

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

- A 5-day week of 44 hours,
- A 7-cent-per-hour increase for all workers getting 55 cents or less, 5 cents per hour for those getting more than 55 cents,
- Further negotiations to be carried on to decide on a suitable minimum wage,
- Seniority rights for all employees,
- Less speed-up on production lines,
- No discrimination for Union activities,
- A five-minute rest period for all workers, one in the morning and one in the afternoon,
- Time-and-one-half for all overtime.

LABOUR IS TRULY ON THE MARCH KEEP THE BALL ROLLING
MAKE HAMILTON A UNION CITY

Join Local 504 of the United Electrical and Radio Workers of America [...]"

http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~cradle/archive/html/archives_777.html

ALSO SEE:

Oshawa Strike song lyrics, April 13, 1937

“When this great strike is surely won,
We will have less hours and lots more fun.”

<http://www.canadianheritage.org/images/large/20040.jpg>

Steelworkers publication, Hamilton, 1935

Subjects: Cooperation among Canadian steel unions; rationale for having a union

http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~cradle/archive/html/archives_306.html

Mass protest leaflet, 1937

Protest announcement with explanation of how a worker was fired for union membership

http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~cradle/archive/html/archives_773.html

Some common labor complaints

Union Light (1937)

http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~cradle/archive/html/archives_775.html

The Labor Movement's Big Push is Here (1942)

United Electrical local, Canadian Westinghouse, Hamilton

“The labor movement in Canada has reached the point where it is now preparing for a mighty push forward. Yes, we can say that the time for the big push for organizing is here.

Premier Hepburn and Minister of Labour Heenan of Ontario have shown by their support for collective bargaining and freedom of association legislation that this historic moment is fully recognized by them. Hepburn has appeared on the public platform with our International Vice-President, C.S. Jackson, and other trade union leaders and factory workers. By this stand he has tacitly invited us to give his government support on this forthcoming legislation. No matter what our political beliefs may be, as workers we must be prepared to take full advantage of every situation that is favorable to the labor movement to press forward for increased influence in Canadian affairs. Such a situation exists today with this pending legislation.

We Westinghouse workers can best exercise this increased influence by building the U.E. [union] in the shop

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

where we work. By joining the U.E. today we can make our voices heard collectively in the framing of this legislation. We can be sure that it is what we want.

There is already opposition to this proposed legislation as evidenced by Mr. Heenan's address recently in Toronto when he said that there were many employers who refused to collaborate with the government. If this opposition is allowed to exert even weakly opposed pressure this legislation will not have as many teeth or as strong teeth as we workers would like it to have. But by exerting our united influence we can be sure that it will be more to our liking. We must build up our union and exert counter pressure and this can only be done by joining a union in which every member can voice his and her opinions and so democratically add strength to their union's policies.

Many companies affected by this legislation will attempt to create 'company unions' of their own to render valueless such legislation, and the Canadian Westinghouse management is no exception to this effort to beat back progress and history. Exposure of these artificial, sterile, incompetent farces called company unions is not enough. Ridiculing such ridiculous but nevertheless potentially dangerous and undemocratically run creations is also not enough. Workers must join and build their own democratic organization, and in the Westinghouse that organization is the U.E.

In building our U.E. union we must have principles and ideals worthy of attainment. [...] Even more must we value truth and justice; freedom and progress. If we learn to value these ideals then we will truly learn to hate that which stands in our way of attaining them. We must understand clearly how our individual fears and prejudices stand in the way of attaining our goal. [...]

There is much work for the U.E. to do in the Westinghouse. We must increase production to help win the war in the speediest possible time with the minimum loss of life. We must combat waste and inefficiency wherever we find it. We must press for wage stabilization, equal wages for equal work and a proper wage promotional system. This particularly applies to women and young workers starting on their first job. We must press the government for a re-examination of the ceilings on foodstuffs and wages with the view of making all ceilings more equitable than they are now. We must demand a fair military selective service system. We must play our part in the coming offensive against Hitlerism. We must stimulate discussion among workers regarding the positive steps we must take now for progress to a better society.

[W]e say to you that our future is in our own hands. We can make it what we want if we act in our own interests now.

[...] There is no blueprint for the future. It will be what we make it. [...] If we do not organize now we let our boys in uniform down, now and when they return to civilian life. [...] We can back them up better through joining the U.E. now and building the home front while our boys open up a second front.

[...]"

http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~cradle/archive/html/archives_778.html

ALSO SEE:

Steelworkers publication, Hamilton, 1935

Subject: Company unions (article and poem)

http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~cradle/archive/html/archives_305.html

Steel unions resolution (November 1939)

Resolution calling for cooperation in resolving labor-management disputes during war, and setting out labor standards

http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~cradle/archive/html/archives_861.html

Editorial on voting "yes" in the conscription plebiscite, to defeat fascism

Canadian Westinghouse *Unionist*, April 22, 1942

http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~cradle/archive/html/archives_784.html

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

Editorials (from Canadian, U.S. union publications, 1943) on UE accommodation to war effort (re: no strike)

http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~cradle/archive/html/archives_790.html

UE local leaflet linking an anticipated victory in 1944 with fighting for job security, present and future

http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~cradle/archive/html/archives_791.html

ACTIVITY

This exhortation to support the union shows what the labor movement wanted to do with its power. It sums up the choices industrial workers had made about goals, both as working people and as Canadians at war. It is full of things that workers “must” do:

- Workers must join and build their own democratic organization
- We must build up our union and exert counter pressure [against companies opposing labor legislation]
- We must press for wage stabilization, equal wages for equal work and a proper wage promotional system. This particularly applies to women and young workers starting on their first job
- We must stimulate discussion among workers regarding the positive steps we must take now for progress to a better society

- We must play our part in the coming offensive against Hitlerism
- We must increase production to help win the war
- We must combat waste and inefficiency wherever we find it
- We must press the government for a re-examination of the ceilings on foodstuffs and wages with the view of making all ceilings more equitable than they are now
- We must demand a fair military selective service system

- No matter what our political beliefs may be, as workers we must be prepared to take full advantage of every situation that is favorable to the labor movement
- In building our UE union we must have principles and ideals worthy of attainment. [...] Even more must we value truth and justice, freedom and progress
- We must understand clearly how our individual fears and prejudices stand in the way of attaining our goal

Sorting the musts into groups produces three themes:

- join the union and improve working conditions;
- work to win the war in ways that are effective and fair;
- set aside differences in order to achieve ideals.

These three groups can be categorized as: working for our needs, working for the country’s war-effort needs, and working for a more perfect world. Any one of these choices would by itself be a major goal for most organizations, but in a critical period (wartime) of great social change (the labor movement), the UE union was willing to make the big effort.

Catch the spirit and volunteer your talents to the union for a specific purpose: you will help inspire members in a creative, entertaining way. Pick one or two of the organization’s stated goals and ideals and present it/them in a chant (or rap or song). Focus on the need to pay women fairly, or to work smarter to win the war, or to put fear and prejudice aside. Use sound, rhythm and flash to get people excited about what the union is pursuing. (If that sounds a little too much like a performance, write and give a rousing speech.)

Avoid the usual slogans heard at your average rally or picket line. For inspiration, look to more passionate protesters and advocates. See if you can find .wav files of chanting at Seattle, Quebec City, Windsor and Ottawa. Search Web sites of groups as varied as the Raging Grannies, animal rights activists and anti-racism committees; you might also locate sites backing or opposing the current war on terrorism. Borrow some of the energy and commitment you find and put it into words that will convince every worker to go union.

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

Westinghouse Tight Rope Walker (1945)

Cartoon of worker on rope trying to balance “Reduced Wages” at one end of balancing pole and much heavier “Profits \$21,000,000 Westinghouse” at other end

http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~cradle/archive/html/archives_792.html

ALSO SEE:

UE local leaflet (1945) detailing Westinghouse profits during war and union demand for pay increase to offset shortened post-war work week

http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~cradle/archive/html/archives_797.html

UE local leaflet (1949) on winning 40-hr week in some sections of Westinghouse, and struggle to achieve that

http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~cradle/archive/html/archives_802.html

Labor statistics - Historical Statistics Series, Statistics Canada

Union membership in Canada as a percentage of non-agricultural paid workers, 1911-75

Series E175-177

http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/11-516-XIE/sectione/E175_177.csv

Average annual, weekly and hourly earnings, male and female wage-earners, manufacturing industries, 1934-69

Series E60-68

http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/11-516-XIE/sectione/E60_68.csv

Number of strikes and lockouts, employers and workers involved and time loss, Canada, 1901-75

Series E190-197

http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/11-516-XIE/sectione/E190_197.csv

THE GROWTH OF POLITICAL AUTONOMY

Imperial and External Relations

Alexander Brady, Canada (London, 1932), Chapter Ten

(at “How Others Have Viewed French Canadians and Quebec” Web site

Claude Bélanger, Marianopolis College)

“(…)

[Prime Minister] Laurier did not wish to be consulted on British policy in Europe because the consultation, never satisfactory in itself, would commit Canada in the future. [If the British] Government made a decision which resulted in war, ipso facto Canada was at war. But she was absolutely free to decide what part if any she should take in the actual hostilities. The position may have seemed illogical, but the motive behind it has substantially continued to influence Canadian policy in intra-imperial matters to the present day.

Canada as a North American community had special interests requiring the first consideration of her statesmen. The protection of these interests depended on a policy of limited liability[....] Sir Robert Borden on accession to office was expected to reverse the policy of his predecessor [Laurier], and in agreeing to closer consultation with the British Government he partially did so. But throughout his premiership as a whole he was no less a nationalist than Laurier, and voiced with equal emphasis a policy of limited liability. Illustrative of the fact is his insertion in the abortive Anglo-Franco-American security treaty of 1919 a clause authorizing any dominion to exempt itself from the alliance, and hence from a war in which the other parties might be involved. In truth, Borden like Laurier merely upheld a national creed to which most Canadian leaders have subscribed.

[...]

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

[Before 1914, Canadian governments] looked with suspicion upon any imperial centralization because such centralization might imply an encroachment upon the self-government so essential for internal development. A further factor of importance is the duality of the Canadian nation. While the English-speaking population may cherish with lively sentiment the Empire, the French Canadians look upon it in a more calculating temper. La Presse during the South African war stated an abiding reality too often forgotten both in Canada and Great Britain: 'We French-Canadians belong to one country, Canada; but the English-Canadians have two countries, one here and one across the sea.' No policy of a Federal Government can be permanently successful which does not rest on the compounded sentiment of the two peoples, and that sentiment will never be exuberant in its imperialism. [...]

The Great War brought far-reaching changes in the external relations of Canada, largely because it brought a change in Canadians themselves. [...] It has been said with some truth that the Second Battle of Ypres made the Canadians a new people. This and other events in which the Canadian troops won distinction created community pride, the mother of national sentiment. It made Canadians feel as never before that they deserved a place among the nations, and on the conclusion of the struggle the feeling found concrete expression. A community that buried 50,000 sons on the battlefields of France and Flanders had claims to make, especially a claim to that national status under the British Crown which Macdonald and Laurier had pictured as her destiny. The formal recognition of this status came with the Peace Settlement.

[M]ost important among the events of 1918 was Sir Robert Borden's vigorous contention that Canada required representation in the negotiations of peace separate from that of the British Empire Delegation. She could not be content with 'a status inferior to that accorded to nations less advanced in development, less amply endowed with wealth, resources and population, no more complete in sovereignty and far less conspicuous in their sacrifice.' [...] The treaties were separately ratified for Canada by the Crown on approval by the Canadian Parliament. In virtue of her independent signature, the Dominion became a member of the League of Nations, where her representatives might act, and have acted, independently of those representing the Empire. Canada insisted on this recognition under the national sentiment aroused by the War.
(...)"

<http://www2.marianopolis.edu/quebechistory/docs/views/brady10.htm>

Arthur Meighen on the Imperial Conference
House of Commons Debates, April 27, 1921

"Right Hon. Arthur Meighen (Prime Minister): [...] In the Imperial Conference in 1917[...] a resolution was adopted to this effect, that the subject of any necessary readjustment of the constitutional relations of the various Dominions to each other and to the Mother Land was a subject of such importance and complexity that its consideration should be deferred to some special conference to be held succeeding the war, and that whatever was done should be in full recognition of the autonomous powers of the Dominions, should in no way be any subtraction from any of those powers, and further should recognize the rights of the Dominions to an adequate voice in determining those features and principles of foreign policy in which the whole Empire is concerned. Perhaps before I go further I should endeavour to distinguish the various conferences that have been held, so that the House will not be in doubt as to what has constituted the one class and what the other.

The Imperial Conference is the first. That has been held periodically since before the commencement of this century. [...] That is a conference of representative ministers of the various parts of the Empire and of Great Britain. [...] The subject matter that has been discussed from time to time at the Imperial Conference has had to do with the concerns of the Empire as an empire, concerns in which each portion was interested, concerns which might possibly be referred to as domestic concerns of the British Empire. It had not to do with questions of foreign policy.

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

During the war there developed what was known as the Imperial War Cabinet, [which] was a meeting of the ministers of the British Government [and] the other governments of the Empire, and therefore as regards composition was virtually the same as the Imperial Conference itself. [T]he subject matter that was taken up and reviewed by the War Cabinet differed essentially from the subject matter that came before the Imperial Conferences. The War Cabinet had to do with matters of high policy, with matters affecting foreign affairs and particularly with matters related to the united prosecution of the war on the part of all branches of the Empire. [...]

At the Peace Conference at Paris the ministers from the various Dominions — I believe the prime ministers of all were there — considered that it would be necessary for them to meet in order to make certain arrangements and have certain discussions which, in their judgment, would be essential before the Constitutional Conference contemplated by the resolution of the Imperial Conference of 1917, to which I have alluded, should be held. [...]"

<http://www.nelson.com/nelson/school/discovery/cantext/speech/1921meni.htm>

Canada at the Celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of Confederation

William Lyon Mackenzie King

Parliament Hill, Ottawa, July 1, 1927

"[...]

If the period prior to Confederation marked the development of Canada from a group of huts to a group of provinces, it is equally true that the period succeeding Confederation has witnessed Canada's transition from a group of colonies to a nation within a group of nations, and her transition from a group of provinces to a nation among the nations of the world. A land of scattered huts and colonies no more. But a young nation with her life full beating in her breast, a noble future in her eyes — the Britain of the West.

As Canada has developed in settlement and government, so has the great Empire of which Canada is a part. From a parent State with colonial possessions, the British Empire has become a community of free nations 'in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs.' They are 'united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.' Such is the position and mutual relation of Great Britain and the Dominions, as defined at the Imperial Conference of 1926.

As one of the nations of the British Commonwealth of Nations, though of her own accord, Canada shared in the sacrifices of the world's war; as a nation, Canada participated in the terms of a world's peace. In the larger Councils of Empire her position has been increasingly acknowledged; it has been accorded the highest recognition in the League of Nations as well. At no period of her history has Canada's status as a nation been so clearly defined, and at no time in her history have relations, intra-imperial and international, been happier than they are today. Thus has been realized, far beyond their dreams, the vision of the Fathers of Confederation.

[...]

Coming then to our own day, how shall we who have the responsibilities of the present play our part? As nation-builders, as Empire-builders, our opportunities are even greater than those of our forefathers. To the problems of nationhood and Empire have been added world problems, problems intimately related to the world's progress and the world's peace. A nation, like an individual, to find itself must lose itself in the service of others. [...]"

<http://www.nelson.com/nelson/school/discovery/cantext/speech/1927mkdj.htm>

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

Statute of Westminster (1931)

“An Act to give effect to certain resolutions passed by Imperial Conferences held in the years 1926 and 1930

Whereas the delegates to His Majesty’s Governments in the United Kingdom, the Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, the Dominion of New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, the Irish Free State and Newfoundland, at Imperial Conferences holden at Westminster in the years of our Lord nineteen hundred and twenty-six and nineteen hundred and thirty did concur in making the declarations and resolutions set forth in the Reports of the said Conference;

And whereas it is meet and proper to set out by way of preamble to this Act that inasmuch as the Crown is the symbol to the free association of the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and as they are united by a common allegiance to the Crown, it would be in accord with the established constitutional position of all the members of the Commonwealth in relation to one another that any alteration in the law touching the Succession to the Throne or the Royal Style and Titles shall hereafter require the assent as well of the Parliaments of all the Dominions as of the Parliament of the United Kingdom;

And whereas it is in accord with the established constitutional position that no law hereafter made by the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall extend to any of the said Dominions as part of the law of that Dominion otherwise than at the request and with the consent of that Dominion;

[...]

And whereas the Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, the Dominion of New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, the Irish Free State and Newfoundland have severally requested and consented to the submission of a measure to the Parliament of the United Kingdom for making such provision with regard to the matters aforesaid as is hereafter in this Act contained;

Now, therefore, be it enacted by the King’s Most Excellent Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

[...]

No law and no provision of any law made after the commencement of this Act by the Parliament of a Dominion shall be void or inoperative on the ground that it is repugnant to the law of England, or to the provisions of any existing or future Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom, or to any order, rule, or regulation made under any such Act, and the powers of the Parliament of a Dominion shall include the power to repeal or amend any such Act, order, rule or regulation in so far as the same is part of the law of the Dominion.

It is hereby declared and enacted that the Parliament of a Dominion has full power to make laws having extra-territorial operation.

No Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom passed after the commencement of this Act shall extend or be deemed to extend to a Dominion as part of the law of that Dominion, unless it is expressly declared in that Act that that Dominion has requested and consented to the enactment thereof.

[...]

Nothing in this Act shall be deemed to apply to the repeal, amendment or alteration of the British North America Acts, 1867 to 1930, or any order, rule or regulation made thereunder.

[T]he expression ‘Colony’ shall not, in any Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom passed after the commencement of this Act, include a Dominion or any Province or State forming a part of a Dominion.”

<http://vtn1.victoria.tc.ca/history/etext/statute.westminster.1931.html> (sic: that really is .tc.ca)

FRENCH CANADIAN NATIONALISM

The Nationalist Movement in French Canada

Frank R. Scott, in Canada Today: A Study of her National Interests and National Policy (1939)

“The French Canadians in Canada now number about 3,300,000. They form the most homogeneous and united group in the country, for they are not divided by religion or racial origin, and their upper governing class is not in control of great wealth and hence far removed from the mass of the people. Moreover their sense of being ringed round by an alien civilization makes them subordinate their inner differences to the single racial purpose of self-preservation. Their home is the province of Quebec, where 78% of those in Canada live; but the spread into other provinces is proceeding steadily. [...]

The French Canadian in a real sense is the truest Canadian. He has lived close to the soil for three hundred years and the family ties with another world have long been broken. To Canada alone does he feel attached, for England conquered him and France first deserted him and then travelled a political and spiritual road his clergy have taught him to abhor. He sees no help coming from without; he knows he must build upon his own resources. And when he thinks of ‘Canada,’ he seldom, like the English Canadian, pictures a ‘dominion stretching from sea to sea;’ rather he looks to the province of Quebec and the valley of the St. Lawrence, the part of North America to which the word ‘Canada’ was first applied. To the English Canadian this is mere provincialism; to him it is nationalism and true patriotism. He builds outward from his securely held position and does not attempt to embrace the rest of a continent where now there are only a few outposts of his race.

Because of this basis to his politics, the French Canadian looks upon both the Commonwealth connection and Confederation in much the same way: they are both political ties with the English which are part of his historic destiny. He cannot avoid them; he does not at the moment wish to break them; but they do not command his warm allegiance. Both represent a *mariage de convenance*. The British connection is valuable to him in helping to fend off Americanization, and the monarchic tradition is naturally dear to a priesthood fearful of democracy. Confederation was the best bargain that he could make at the time with a Protestant majority; to him the BNA Act is as much a ‘treaty between races’ as a political constitution. In the historic evolution of his relationship with English Canada, which he views as a continuous development, the confederation arrangement is neither evocative of particular loyalty nor suggestive of great permanence. [...]

Such is the general character of French-Canadian nationalism, and it will be recognized as the natural aspiration of a people who believe in themselves and who are determined to survive with their language, their traditions and their religion. From time to time however, and more particularly of recent years, there has arisen an extremer form of nationalist fervour which resembles closely the movements which have swept over Ireland and other European countries where there is a racial group struggling for freedom. This spirit manifests itself in economic as well as political forms; it seeks immediate steps toward independence for the race, and it is intolerant of alien groups and alien rights. In Quebec such a movement is now evident.

It has been stimulated by:

- the world depression, which caused great unemployment amongst French Canadians;
- the growing awareness of the extent to which Quebec is dominated by English-Canadian and American ‘trusts’ and financiers;
- the fear of another imperialist war; and
- the decadence of the old Liberal party machine which had governed the province without a break from 1896 to 1936. To some degree also it was fostered by certain of the clerical authorities who saw in a revival of nationalism a means of fending off social unrest which might easily turn radical and anticlerical. The extreme wing of this movement has openly advocated separation from Canada and the setting up of a French Catholic state on the banks of the St. Lawrence.

Politically the nationalist movement has taken the form of the creation of a new provincial party, the Union Nationale, which has been in power since 1936 and which is pledged to give to the French Canadian the place in

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

Confederation which he feels has been denied him. Its leader is Maurice Duplessis, formerly leader of the provincial Conservative party, who was politically astute enough to ride to power on the new wave of feeling which has swept the province in the past few years. [...]

Out of the Union Nationale has come some needed reform in the social legislation of the province. Collective labour agreements are favoured, cooperative institutions are being promoted and collaboration with Ontario on minimum wage rates has been sought. The nationalist feeling has found expression in the attempts that have been made to give pre-eminence to the French language in the interpretation of laws, to frighten workers away from the international unions and to obstruct all efforts to amend the British North America Act. Behind the attack on international unionism, however, many people see something quite different from nationalism; a deeper motive seems to be the desire to prevent 'communistic' ideas from entering the province and disturbing the religious and political views of the population. The Padlock Act and the growing censorship of films and literature are other weapons in the same offensive.

In achieving its economic objectives French-Canadian nationalism is meeting great difficulties. It is only in recent years that the economic aspect of their position has engaged the attention of the nationalist leaders; the older generation, men like Bourassa and Lavergne, were concerned chiefly with political and religious affairs. The world depression shifted the emphasis to the economic.

In Quebec the natural resources in mines, forests and water power, the banks and financial houses, are largely owned and exploited by English-Canadian or American capital; the French-Canadian provides the cheap labour, usually lacking trade union protection. The nationalists of today are determined that this situation shall change and that in their own province they shall not be restricted to exercising a political power rendered helpless by the existence of concentrated economic power in other hands. With this determination many English Canadians, only too aware of the situation in Quebec in regard to living standards and social legislation, would warmly sympathize. The difficulty is to decide upon a practical policy for effecting a change, and here the nationalists are at the moment baffled.

[...]

[N]o matter which way the nationalists turn, they are led to the necessity of cooperation with English Canadians in the federal field if they intend to do a thorough job inside Confederation, for the BNA Act, as [Alberta premier] Mr. Aberhart's experiment has shown, simply does not permit of complete control of the economy of a province by a provincial legislature. Hence the nationalist movement is in an impasse; it hovers on the brink of more drastic state intervention in business, afraid to make the plunge, and flirts with separatism just enough to prevent it offering the cooperation with Ottawa which could cure many of its troubles.

So far it has contented itself with such measures as compelling foreign corporations developing natural resources to take out provincial charters, beginning a tentative programme of hydro-electric development under state control, supporting '*la petite industrie*' in the small towns in the province, and stimulating the '*achat chez nous*,' which is the French-Canadian equivalent of a 'buy British' campaign. It is impossible to predict how long these slender achievements will satisfy the demand for action. The drive against 'communism' in Quebec however, sponsored by the clergy, is a powerful deterrent to any proposals that the government should expropriate existing investments, for the accusation of 'communist' would at once be hurled at any daring advocate of such an idea.

The political and economic situation in Quebec is transitional. Much will change before a new equilibrium is found. The simple idea that the economic inferiority of French Canadians is mainly due to their old fashioned educational system is beginning to take root. The increasing urbanization and hence industrialization of the French-Canadian people, and the exploitation of their workers by corporations which they do not control, are producing fertile soil for a more radical movement among the masses than has yet appeared. For that reason the other parts of Canada are viewing with some alarm the growth of fascist tendencies in the province, and the denial by the authorities of long-established constitutional rights of freedom of the press, of speech and of public meeting.

The Padlock Act, aimed only at an undefined 'communism,' is being enforced though communism in Quebec is

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

in fact almost non-existent, while organized fascist parties, though small, have been drilling members and distributing extreme anti-semitic propaganda without interference. The mass of the people, there seems little doubt, do not support fascism, yet there are enough idle young men in the cities and enough approval by authorities in church and state of strong action against suspected 'reds' to provide an atmosphere in which such movements can flourish. Whatever may be the outcome, it will profoundly affect the whole Dominion, for the French exert an extremely powerful political influence at Ottawa. No national policy can long be followed which does not receive considerable support from Quebec."

<http://www2.marianopolis.edu/quebechistory/docs/views/scott.htm>

French Canada in the National Setting

Senator Léon Mercier Gouin, in French-Canadian Backgrounds (Toronto, 1940)

"[...] I need hardly explain that constitutionally French Canada forms part of this great British Dominion. The expression French-Canadian only serves to describe those who, like myself, descend from the first settlers of New France. We were here two-and-a-half centuries before Confederation. We have kept our traditions as transplanted from France; we have jealously preserved our language and our faith. French-Canadians thus remain a distinct ethnic group in our Canadian mosaic. In Quebec we represent the vast majority of the population, eighty percent. But in addition to that demographic factor, we possess our own political and legal institutions. The Legislature of my province is to all intents and purposes a French-Canadian Parliament. On the floor of our Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council, French is spoken practically all the time.

[...]

It is not necessary for me to insist very much upon the fundamental fact that French-Canadians form a distinct nationality. A few words will suffice. We are not a nation because the French-Canadian population is not a distinct political entity possessing complete independence and sovereignty. [O]ur constitution recognizes French-speaking Canadians as a separate group or nationality within the Canadian nation. [...] Not only in Quebec but in all the other provinces, French-Canadians are grouped together with a remarkable degree of cohesion. We have our own history and we[...]have developed here our own national traditions, inherited from France but evolved through three centuries of natural growth among these Canadian surroundings.

[...]

Our constitution was thus designed to achieve national unity and at the same time preserve two distinct ethnical groups. [...] National unity has never meant for us uniformity. Since 1760 we have successfully defeated all attempts to assimilate us. We are confident that nobody plans now to denationalize us by trying to build national unity upon unity of language, unity of race and unity of faith. [...]

[...]

[...] We believe that French-Canadians are entitled to have their full share in the exploitation of our mines and of all our natural assets. In fact we want French-Canadians to occupy a more conspicuous place in all our industries and also in trade and commerce. But to achieve this we must first struggle out of our present economic inferiority. [...]

Our economic inferiority is easy to explain. In 1760 our ancestors had little worldly riches. They were a conquered people, a mere handful of poor settlers, sixty thousand in all, men, women and children. Thus our country was developed after the conquest by British capital, and afterwards to an exceedingly large extent by American investments. Under such conditions it is in no way surprising that very few French-Canadians have made large fortunes. The exploitation of our own resources has not been directed by ourselves. We have supplied only the labour, and to much too great an extent, unskilled labour.

[Some work to convince] our people that in addition to our spiritual values we must acquire money and capital, that we must excel in intellectual matters, but that we must also train adequately our future captains of industry

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

and leaders in the business world. We must produce technicians of all kinds and skilled labour suited for any purpose. It is our ambition to see more French Canadians occupying the higher positions in the great industrial, commercial and financial organizations and also in the Dominion Civil Service. With this aim in view, we want to develop more and more competent men, including experts so well qualified that the great companies will be glad to ask for their services. [...] It is even our conviction that we can secure the maintenance and the progress of our culture only by arming our sons more efficiently to meet the material necessities of life. Without abandoning any of our essential traditions, we want French-Canadians to obtain their just share in the riches of this country, the land of unlimited possibilities.

[...]

We claim equal rights. But we know very well that equal rights entail as a necessary consequence equal duties. Unhesitatingly we acknowledge those duties towards our country as the primary and fundamental obligations of every Canadian citizen. Because we say we are at home in every part of the Confederation, we are also ready to make every sacrifice to protect Canada's essential interests everywhere, to give our life to defend every inch of our great national inheritance from coast to coast, *a mari usque ad mare*. We are willing to assume our full share in the conflict which is now raging in Europe and on the Seven Seas of the globe, because we consider that the future of our country is at stake.

But such sacrifices can only be sought from us in the name of our country. We Canadians of French origin believe today as we have believed for three centuries that a Canadian's first loyalty is to Canada. We believe that our country is a sovereign state and that as such it must fashion its own attitude to world problems from a purely Canadian point of view.

In our hearts Canada comes first, always and everywhere. It must be so in our exterior affairs. The first duty of Canadians is to Canada. We all want to serve our King and our country [—] we are willing to serve with complete loyalty His Gracious Majesty, King George VI, as Sovereign of Canada. [...] It is very clear that this doctrine of Canadian loyalty does not entail any undue relaxation of our Imperial connection. It does not tend to diminish our allegiance to the Crown. On the contrary, it means that we cooperate with the sister nations of the British Commonwealth whenever our national interests are identical with theirs, and broadly speaking they usually coincide. But I ask you, how could we be called upon to act otherwise and to sacrifice Canada for the sake of any other country? [...] There cannot be any conflict of loyalty between our duties to the Crown and our duties to our country.

For instance, our participation in the present war is fully justified as being necessary for the defence of our country and the protection of our own national interests. It is a policy of cooperation upon a voluntary basis with the other parts of the British Commonwealth. It is a truly national policy because Canada through its own Parliament and its own Government declared that a state of war existed, and decided to participate in a struggle which is for us a just war. Our Parliament, by this free decision, expressed the practically unanimous will of the Canadian people. The attitude of the Federal authorities was not dictated by any exterior influence. It was of our own free will that we chose to cooperate with Great Britain and with France. We made this choice because it was the duty of Canada to do so from its own national point of view.

[...]

Our country is a great country and we have before us a great future. Canada, a British Dominion with one-third of its population of French origin, has the role of interpreting to the New World the ideals of Great Britain and France. By its constitution Canada is a democracy and it is our logical destiny to have closer commercial and intellectual relations with the other democracies of the two Americas.

Geographically Canada belongs to the North American continent and it lives in perfect peace and intimate friendship with its great neighbour to the South. The majority of the populations of the two countries on each side of the line have the same origin. Economic conditions and industrial and commercial methods are practically identical. Many of our larger cities outside of Quebec are so much like American cities that we find very little difference between them. There is much in common, in many ways, between Canada and the United States.

[...]

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

In international affairs, Canada has a great part to play. First of all, our sincere desire to live at peace with the whole world is universally recognized. Thus Canada is welcome everywhere because we have no desire for conquest and because we believe in fair play and justice for everyone.

Moreover, Canada's complex character qualifies it to promote friendly relations among most countries.

Geographically we belong to North America. Economically we are also very distinctly a North American unit and one of the great industrial countries of the world; but agriculture is equally important. Politically we are a democracy, an American democracy which is at the same time one of the finest gems of the British Crown. In international law we are a British Dominion; but ethnically, one-third of our population are of French origin and use the civil law. Thus in the eyes of foreigners, we do not belong too exclusively to the Anglo-Saxon group. We represent Latin culture as well as Anglo-Saxon civilization.

If after the war the British Empire and the French Empire enter into some kind of a permanent union, as has already been authoritatively suggested, the mission of Canada will be exceedingly important. Then we would become more than ever a living link between Great Britain and France. Their ties to each other are their material interests, but our ties to each are of the spirit and of the flesh. A great future lies ahead of us; but to live up to our expectations, we Canadians must fulfil a single prerequisite condition: we must understand each other better. Between our different ideologies in intellectual matters there is however no conflict fatally preventing national unity. [...]

[...]

May I in conclusion try to answer in a few words the question which is so often asked: 'What do French-Canadians want?' We want to cooperate with you in maintaining and developing Canada as a free, self-governing Dominion, one sovereign nation with two distinct nationalities; a truly bilingual country where the offspring of the first settlers are able everywhere to learn and to speak French; a Canada possessing a true national unity, where Canadians of all creeds and of all origins realize that they are all the sons and daughters of the same mother Canada, their only country; a Canada united physically, yes, but above all possessing one national soul."

<http://www2.marianopolis.edu/quebechistory/docs/views/gouin.htm>

ACTIVITY

Scott and Gouin seem to agree on only two common characteristics of French Canadians. Both say that Francophones are dedicated to their cultural survival, and to attaining more power in the economic sphere, especially in the business world. For the most part, however, the writers point to quite dissimilar (though not necessarily exclusive) sets of choices for French Canadians.

Scott sees Quebeckers standing somewhat apart from other Canadians in managing provincial affairs, building "outward from [their] securely held position," and supporting a kind of politics that is very right-wing, even leaning toward fascism. In Gouin's eyes, Francophones offer their loyalty and sacrifice to Canada and the Empire, and choose them as the foundation for their place in the world. How could we investigate which view was generally held by French Canadians of the late 1930s and early '40s?

Write a series of three or four polling questions to gauge how Quebeckers see their role in their province, in Canada and the world. Solicit their opinions and thinking, but rather than abstract philosophy, find out what actions they would back, what choices they favor. For instance, to find out where Quebeckers locate their vital interests, you might ask which news they follow most closely in the media: the practices of the Union Nationale government, the federal government's program, or imperial affairs as controlled in London. To discover where they see the development of a Francophone business class beginning, you might ask where they would send their children for business school: Montreal, Toronto or New York City.

Of course you can't go back and get answers to these questions, but they can be a tool for analysing what you've read in Scott and Gouin. This activity should help you distinguish often vague nationalist feelings and dreams from describable intentions and ambitions. Use polling questions to help form in your mind a portrait of French Canadians of this time as

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

practical, persistent and proud people, picking options for advancing toward their goals. Your questions should focus on the mindset needed to foster action. Here are some other topics to investigate:

- how separate from other Canadians they consider themselves;
- which Canadian rights and British ideals they support;
- what a (French) Canadian can offer the world.

CANADA IN THE AMERICAS AND THE WORLD

Address to the Canadian Society of New York (1935)

Secretary of State Cordell Hull

“[...]”

The United States and Canada probably have as many and as strong ties and associations as any other two countries in the world. The reasons for this are clear. Geography, naturally, is the prime factor, but we cannot underestimate our common origin and traditions. Furthermore, commerce between the United States and Canada is greater than that between any other two nations in the world. In addition, our peoples are closely interrelated. For example, citizens of the Dominion have achieved distinction in almost every walk of life in the United States. Jacob Gould Schurman, Margaret Anglin, Franklin R. Lane, Edward Johnson, and Sir William Osler are some of the names in a list that could be extended almost indefinitely. It has in fact been said that one of the surest prospects of attaining success in the United States is the possession of a Canadian grandmother. We have sent to Canada a large number of sturdy pioneers who have contributed a great deal to the building of your institutions and the widening of your activities. This exchange of numberless individuals, each of whom can be a messenger of understanding, is a circumstance which has assisted greatly in the development of our friendship.

Even between the best of friends there can be misunderstanding. The United States and Canada have frequently found themselves in disagreement over particular cases. But our countries have nevertheless a record for the speedy and amicable settlement of any differences, of which both may be proud, and in the background of any particular disagreement there has always been a quiet, firm realization that nothing must be allowed to stand in the way of our enduring friendship. With reference to our economic relations, a few weeks ago announcement was made of forthcoming negotiations between our Governments looking to the conclusion of a trade agreement. It is my earnest hope that in these negotiations it will be possible to remove many of the obstacles, costly to both countries, which have interfered with their trade.

It is natural that on such an occasion as this I should think not only of our relations with Canada but of the nature of our general foreign policy. It is often assumed that a nation's foreign policy is or can be altogether determined by the Government of the moment. This is true in fact only within certain very definite limits which greatly restrict the field of choice. [These include] such external factors as size and resources, geographical location and technical developments which constitute the framework within which a nation's foreign policy must evolve and assume its formal characteristics.

[...]

Let us consider the effect of some of these elements on American foreign policy. All of them have conspired to force the United States out of its earlier preoccupation with domestic matters into an increasingly active participation in international affairs. The enormous speeding up of trade and communications under the influence of technical discovery and advancement condemns to futility any endeavor to induce this nation again to withdraw into ‘splendid isolation.’ Our policies must of necessity be those of a so-called ‘great power.’ We cannot, even if we would, fail profoundly to affect international relations; our choice is of the various ways of affecting them which are open to a nation situated as we are. It would be hard to deny that we are so placed that we could, if that were our intention, engage in a policy of imperialistic expansion and aggression to the detriment of others. The alternative course open to us is to make our influence felt through a policy of political,

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

economic and cultural cooperation to the advantage of all and in an atmosphere of trust and peace. The latter is our policy, a policy so accurately described by the President as that of the 'good neighbor.' [...]

While the present foreign policy of the United States represents in its fundamental principles a consistent whole, it operates differently in relation to different parts of the world, in line with basic geographic factors. Aside from the common bond created through community of language, traditions and cultural heritage, the nature of our northern frontier, as I have said, has made of Canada and the United States outstanding examples of good neighbors for over a century. Our two countries, including Alaska, have the longest common boundaries anywhere on the globe. We are inevitably the most neighborly of neighbors, and a foreign policy on the part of either country which attempted to fly in the face of this fact would be suicidal, not to say impossible. Thus out of a circumstance of geography has grown a sense of trust and mutual security which it would be hard to duplicate. Looking southward, we must not be misled by the boundary lines of the map. Mexico may at one time have been our only southern neighbor, but the growth of trade and communications has steadily enlarged the number of our neighbors in the south. If our immediate neighborhood a few years past might appropriately be considered as having included only the Central American and Caribbean republics, the airplane and the coming inter-American highway are making neighbors of all countries in the Western Hemisphere. [...] Undoubtedly some of the states to the south in the past viewed the growing proximity of the United States with misgiving, and I cannot but admit that there have been occasions when our words and actions gave some justification to their fears. Today these suspicions are happily vanishing, and I believe the time is at hand when the American republics will be convinced not only that the good-neighbor policy is being carried out in practice, but also that in strictly observing it the President, with magnificent foresight, has adopted a course which the future progress of our two continents makes imperative. [...]

Thus far I have not dealt with our relations east and west, or what might be called our transoceanic policies. [...] Seen from the distance of this hemisphere, the manifold boundary lines on the map of Europe become blurred and Europe emerges as an entity. We have no direct concern with the political and economic controversies of the European states. We have time and again expressly disassociated ourselves from these disputes. Nevertheless we are deeply interested in the peace and stability of Europe as a whole, and have therefore taken part in a number of multilateral efforts to achieve this purpose. The most outstanding instance is the Disarmament Conference[.... O]ur basic policy of not intervening in individual European disputes has not prevented us from encouraging, proposing and offering to participate in measures of a universal nature designed on the one hand to forward general political appeasement and on the other to facilitate general disarmament. [...]

[...]

In this brief survey I have endeavored to cover the four major divisions of American foreign policy — Canadian, Latin American, European, and Far Eastern — and have touched upon the varying phases of each. It would be generalizing too much to state that the fundamental object uniting them is the preservation of peace. No nation would ever admit its policy to be or to have been other than one of peace. It is more a question of the means. After all, the Roman Empire knew long periods of peace; but the essence of the Pax Romana was predominance over wide areas, a peace of inequality based on force. The kind of peace we envisage[...] is the peace of friends, who feel secure in their independence not through immense armaments, the balance of which must again and again be destroyed by uneven competition, but through the give and take of political and economic cooperation which benefits no one country to the detriment of others but is of equal advantage to all. For what I said in a speech shortly after I became Secretary of State is true fundamentally for all nations: 'It is a great satisfaction,' I then stated, 'to one who is confronted with the tasks devolving upon the Department of State to realize how, in meeting the problems that are our daily portion, the interests of our Government and our people seem so clearly to coincide with the interests of humanity.'"

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

Address to the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace

Franklin Roosevelt

Buenos Aires, Argentina, December 1, 1936

“[...] Events elsewhere have served only to strengthen our horror of war and all that war means. The men, women and children of the Americas know that warfare in this day and age means more than the mere clash of armies: they see the destruction of cities and of farms; they foresee that children and grandchildren, if they survive, will stagger for long years not only under the burden of poverty but also amid the threat of broken society and the destruction of constitutional government.

[...]

You who assemble today carry with you in your deliberations the hopes of millions of human beings in other less fortunate lands. Beyond the ocean we see continents rent asunder by old hatreds and new fanaticisms. We hear the demand that injustice and inequality be corrected by resorting to the sword and not by resorting to reason and peaceful justice. We hear the cry that new markets can be achieved only through conquest. We read that the sanctity of treaties between Nations is disregarded.

We know too that vast armaments are rising on every side and that the work of creating them employs men and women by the millions. It is natural, however, for us to conclude that such employment is false employment; that it builds no permanent structures and creates no consumers' goods for the maintenance of a lasting prosperity.

We know that Nations guilty of these follies inevitably face the day when either their weapons of destruction must be used against their neighbors or when an unsound economy, like a house of cards, will fall apart.

In either case, even though the Americas become involved in no war, we must suffer too. The madness of a great war in other parts of the world would affect us and threaten our good in a hundred ways. And the economic collapse of any Nation or Nations must of necessity harm our own prosperity.

[W]e stand shoulder to shoulder in our final determination that others who, driven by war madness or land hunger, might seek to commit acts of aggression against us will find a Hemisphere wholly prepared to consult together for our mutual safety and our mutual good. I repeat what I said in speaking before the Congress and the Supreme Court of Brazil: ‘Each one of us has learned the glories of independence. Let each one of us learn the glories of interdependence.’

[...]”

<http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/7-2-188/188-06.html>

Address at Queen's University

Franklin Roosevelt, August 18, 1938

“To the pleasure of being once more on Canadian soil where I have passed so many happy hours of my life, there is added today a very warm sense of gratitude for being admitted to the fellowship of this ancient and famous University. [...]

Civilization[...]is not national — it is international — even though that observation, trite as it is to most of us, seems to be challenged in some parts of the world today. Ideas are not limited by territorial borders; they are the common inheritance of all free people. Thought is not anchored in any land; and the profit of education redounds to the equal benefit of the whole world. That is one form of free trade to which the leaders of every opposing political party can subscribe.

In a large sense we in the Americas stand charged today with the maintaining of that tradition. When, speaking a little over a year ago in a similar vein in the Republic of Brazil, I included the Dominion of Canada in the fellowship of the Americas, our South American neighbors gave hearty acclaim. We in all the Americas know the sorrow and the wreckage which may follow if the ability of men to understand each other is rooted out from among the nations.

Many of us here today know from experience that of all the devastations of war none is more tragic than the

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

destruction which it brings to the processes of men's minds. Truth is denied because emotion pushes it aside.

Forbearance is succeeded by bitterness. In that atmosphere human thought cannot advance.

It is impossible not to remember that for years when Canadians and Americans have met they have lightheartedly saluted as North American friends with little thought of dangers from overseas. Yet we are awake to the knowledge that the casual assumption of our greetings in earlier times, today must become a matter for serious thought. A few days ago a whisper, fortunately untrue, raced 'round the world that armies standing over against each other in unhappy array were about to be set in motion. In a few short hours the effect of that whisper had been registered in Montreal and New York, in Ottawa and in Washington, in Toronto and in Chicago, in Vancouver and in San Francisco. Your businessmen and ours felt it alike; your farmers and ours heard it alike; your young men and ours wondered what effect this might have on their lives.

We in the Americas are no longer a far away continent to which the eddies of controversies beyond the seas could bring no interest or no harm. Instead we in the Americas have become a consideration to every propaganda office and to every general staff beyond the seas. The vast amount of our resources, the vigor of our commerce and the strength of our men have made us vital factors in world peace, whether we choose it or not.

Happily you and we, in friendship and in entire understanding, can look clear-eyed at these possibilities, resolving to leave no pathway unexplored, no technique undeveloped which may, if our hopes are realized, contribute to the peace of the world. Even if those hopes are disappointed, we can assure each other that this hemisphere at least shall remain a strong citadel wherein civilization can flourish unimpaired.

The Dominion of Canada is part of the sisterhood of the British Empire. I give to you assurance that the people of the United States will not stand idly by if domination of Canadian soil is threatened by any other Empire.

[...]"

<http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/7-2-188/188-09.html>

ACTIVITY

On the eve of World War II, Roosevelt had a strong sense of where the Americas, and especially North America, stood in the global picture. He not only saw the continent's strategic position, but more important, the policies North Americans would have to adopt to defend it. Canadians, he knew, would join in a continental and hemispheric strategy to make his vision of security a success.

Make a world map showing North America's strategic position in 1939. Note the continent's, and particularly Canada's, geographical relation to the countries (Germany, Italy, Japan) in which militarism posed a threat to the major democracies. Indicate not only those democracies but also the overseas possessions of the British and French empires, plus the Western Hemisphere countries that the U.S. under its Monroe Doctrine intended to defend from European aggression. Using shipping and air routes, point-to-point distance lines, or any other indicators, mark your map with the important connections between North America and the world.

Now list in point form the regions and places that the U.S. and Canada would have to protect in the event that war breaks out. (Don't confuse these areas with lands that the two countries might send offensive forces to, such as France or China.) Try to decide which places should get priority attention in case of emergency; use any knowledge you can gather on important resources, critical positions on global routes etc. (you might want to search other Roosevelt speeches containing this sort of information). Finally, choose and separate out the defensive assignments that Canadian forces should get, being prepared to justify your choices.

This compilation created by Russ Chamberlayne (russc@freespace.net). No credit, copyright or responsibility is assumed for the quoted text.

The compilation itself, INTRODUCTION text and the ACTIVITY texts are all copyright © Russ Chamberlayne, 2001. All rights reserved. This copyright-protected textual material may be used only by subscribing institutions and their staffs

POWER BRINGS CHOICES TO CANADIANS, 1918-45

and students for educational purposes only, and may not be resold or otherwise transferred. Please include this copyright notice in any storage of this compilation.

Your comments and questions are welcome. Please send along the name and e-mail address of anyone you think would be interested in subscribing to this publication.