

the form of import and travel restrictions with which all are familiar.

The matter of Canada's interest in the Agreements is dealt with in the White Paper on Employment and Income presented to Parliament by the Minister of Reconstruction in April of this year, in part as follows:

The Monetary Fund plan would assure comparative stability of exchange rates and, where change was desirable, would substitute for competitive depreciation of exchanges an orderly process of change following international consultation. It would outlaw the discriminatory currency practices which turned trade into economic warfare. When it was fully in operation, it would assure the convertibility of the proceeds of our sales abroad into whatever currencies we required for our current needs. It would give to each member country for the purposes of its current balance of payments an assured, though limited, line of credit to serve as a buttress to policies directed to the expansion of employment.

The regular transfer of capital from surplus to deficit countries for purposes of reconstruction and development is essential to the expansion and stability of international trade.

The Bank of Reconstruction and Development would provide, through an international institution, for a needed revival of international investment.

In the interest of Canadian and world prosperity and of peaceful collaboration among nations, the Government endorses these plans and hopes that Parliament will in due course approve the draft Agreements. In reaching this view, the Government is mindful of the possibility that Canada might, as a member of both institutions, occupy the position of a "creditor" nation.

It is generally recognized that the institutions agreed upon at Bretton Woods do not and could not aspire to provide all the elements necessary for the re-establishment of sustained trade and prosperity. In particular they could take the place neither of rational commercial policies in international trade nor of sound domestic policies. Much will have to be done both to rehabilitate devastated areas and to eliminate disruptive tendencies which were operative in the pre-war period. Nevertheless, the Bretton Woods Agreements if ratified will represent a worthwhile forward step in world co-operation.

Have We a Canadian Nation?

By GEORGE GRANT

I.

WHAT is it that makes a nation?

How is it formed? From what elements does it get its peculiar character? In any attempt at analysis, one inevitably finds that a nation is compounded out of so many parts, woven together in so many strands, existent because of so many interdependent factors, that it is impossible to determine exactly what gives it its cohesive strength. Race (if there is such a thing), language certainly, geographical area, long remembrance of life under a distinctive form of government (this is not always there), love of common traditions and beliefs, a solid core of common religious ideals and many other factors are

blended together. Some of these factors are basic, some merely incidental. And all these elements have, like a complicated chemical compound, ceased to be merely a mixture of separate differing substances, but have fused into a distinctive entity.

It is impossible to analyse its substance intellectually and so it becomes a mystery, and the nation a mystic symbol, deeply important in itself. We see this in French or Polish nationalism, in Russian (more powerful to-day than ever before) or Greek. We see it in that unpretentious variety that is so sure of itself that it need not be talked of—the English. And we see the nationalism of Germany—once in part fine, but now dominated by the half-farcical, half-tragic legend of the master race. Yes, nationalism is a great thing. When embodied in a

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glorification of the state it is capable of fantastic outrage and barbarity; when embodied in an individual culture it is capable of unique contributions to the world. The latter is what is meant by nationalism in this article.

Do we have this kind of nationalism in Canada? Have we something that is unique in itself and which will be our particular contribution to the world. The tentative answer must be that as a young nation we are only just beginning to develop it. But there is no doubt it is developing. One can see it in the open horizons of the prairies on Portage Avenue; in the stolid fertility of rural Ontario; in the grey mists of Halifax Harbour. One can feel it in the quiet villages of French Canada, in the comfortable towns of the Ottawa valley, in the clear lakes of Algonquin Park. We can hear it in the voice of Canadian war correspondents telling of Canadians overseas; one can hear it on Saturday night in a bright lit Ontario town; one can hear it at the exciting political meetings in the province of Quebec.

But that is not sufficient answer. What is this particular Canadian spirit? We must define it and find what it is. For we are not in the position of the French, the English or the Russians, whose nationalism is so deeply rooted in the past that it is almost impossible to uproot it. We are a new nation, established on this continent. Our foundation and development are recent. We have not time for the slow maturing of national feeling. It must be created around some principles. It must be consciously based on certain conscious ideas. Too often in the past certain Canadians have talked about the development of Canadian nationalism without knowing what it was they hoped would develop. They thought that nationalism would grow if we talked about it in abstract. But of course it will only grow if we make it. And to do that we must know what it is we are trying to produce.

This is particularly true of this country, where we live so intimately and closely with the mighty USA. For unless we

know why we exist, unless we know what we are trying to build here in Canada, unless we make a conscious effort to build it—we will inevitably be shaped by the REPUBLIC. There always has been and always will be an alternative to building a Canadian nation. And that is the submerging of our nation in the USA. This is a perpetual challenge to us who believe deeply in the importance of the Canadian nation. Have we within our nation enough depth, sufficient resources, to build something of our own?

II.

What then is Canadian nationalism and what created it? Is it a gigantic accident that across the northern half of this continent a nation has been built? I think not. For surely the basis of our nation is rooted in one historical fact. Where the USA broke away from its past and its connections with western Europe, we never did so. The original people of both English and French speaking Canada were those men and women on this continent who did not wish to be part of the new American experiment but wished to build a different society. The French Canadians did not want to become part of the new republic. The English Canadians were mainly made up of those who left the USA rather than accept the new society. Both were able to accomplish their desired ends by maintaining their connection with the British Empire and eventually by uniting together into a nation. It is on this basis that our nation was founded and maintained.

Yes it was this refusal to break, the fact that the people who made Canada were those (English- and French-speaking alike) who did not accept the American Revolution, that laid down the character of our country and gave us our individuality. This meant first of all that we were a conservative nation. In these days, that adjective has come to mean solely reaction and the defence of property rights. But it is not meant in that way here. What is meant is that we were

a nation who believed that the past could tell us something of the future. A nation that realized that true progress can only be made step by step—layer on layer—if it is going to stick. And that the progress that is made by dashes forward, will probably involve equally violent backward lurches. We were a country, in fact, careful to its very foundations.

Second, this origin of our country has meant that we are a society where social order is of prime importance. The very origin of the USA is in the concept of revolution and the rights of the individual to be free. The origin of Canada (both English- and French-speaking) is in the concept of holding the social fabric together and of the duty of the individual to preserve a decent order in society. The USA has produced a society where freedom of the individual is a fetish. For instance, during the race riots in Detroit the white Americans, when all too infrequently prevented by the police from beating up their black fellow citizens, yelled at these police "Gestapo." After all the intervention by the police was the infringement of their right as individuals to beat up the Negroes. At the same time this very individualism has produced in the USA some wonderful examples of what the free individual can do.

We, in Canada, however, have from our very background of conservatism put the emphasis on the necessity of social order. Our nation was founded after the American Revolution by those people who believed in order. Of course our citizens must be free. Equally with the Americans we share the belief in the individual's inalienable and indestructible rights, which is the chief pride of western civilization. Free, yes—but not so free that by his freedom he endangers the freedom of others and so disrupts the pattern of social order. Our inherent conservatism said order and self-discipline are a natural concomitant of freedom. In fact, if you don't have that order you will inevitably lose that freedom in anarchy. For out of anarchy the only natural reaction is tyrannous authority

and the end of freedom. So throughout our history the pattern of that belief in order has gained and expanded. When the chips were down, we did not accept the disorder of Papineau or Mackenzie. We accepted Baldwin and Lafontaine, men who represented freedom, but freedom within the institution. Later, in the opening of the west, order went first from the centre in the shape of the RCMP, where in the USA it was created on the spot by posses and vigilantes. To-day in our life we have strong movements in Canada—like the cooperatives, the CCF and Social Credit—that want to impose order on the undisciplined money changers. Our respect for the law and for authority has by and large been a deeper rooted part of our life than in the USA.

This essential conservatism and belief in order has been marked in most of the fields of our national life. In our education, for instance, up to the last few years, we have never gone in for those theories that learning was easy and soft and that the main quality to be sought in education was entertainment. We have produced, for the most part, an educational system rooted in the strict disciplines. The same has been true of our religious traditions. We have never (again, not until the last few years) been much for the lunatic fringe. We have accepted the sane and orthodox religions rooted in the past. The great majority of Canadians have been either Roman Catholic or Presbyterian, Anglican, Baptist or Methodist; all of these are orthodox religions stemming out of the great traditions of the past and none of them ever excited by the limitless possibilities of the human species; all of them conscious that mankind, if it is to live successfully and freely on this planet, must study self-discipline. We have never been so prone to, or so excited by those unorthodox, wonderful and fantastic religious beliefs of the sects as has been the USA.

III.

The character of our country has been stamped because at every stage of the

development of this country we have had at our disposal the mature wisdom of the older civilization. Western European civilization as embodied in France and Great Britain through the centuries has developed in experience a great and noble culture. And because we had never broken away, that experience was always open to us. Politically it meant that we developed in this country the framework of British parliamentary government, the most flexible and truly democratic in the world. It meant that in times of stress men like Durham or Elgin were on the spot with their traditions of political sagacity. It meant, in establishing our educational system, we could call on men from England and from France to bring us their vast experience. In religious matters, there has been a continual stream of men bringing the best of European theology to this continent.

Now it would be presumptuous to say which of these traditions—the Canadian or the American—was the finer. The individualism of the USA has meant that often they have had greater imagination, greater ability to progress. On the other hand, our conservatism has meant that in stormy days we have a sanity and stability that prevents us from losing our balance. But whichever is the worthier, they are different. And it is from that difference that Canada has been created. We both are North American. But we used our existence on this continent in different ways. We stuck more closely than the USA to the traditions of Western Europe. And from that difference Canadians exist to-day—not as imitation Englishmen or Frenchmen, but equally (and let us not forget it) not as imitation Americans. We are in fact something in ourselves. Something that is distinctively ourselves. We are the blend that has been produced by British North America. In the name of the statute in which our nation was founded lies the character of our country.

Of course against this view of our nationhood is raised the cry of colonialism. Some writers say that the maintenance of our bonds with western Europe

in general and the British Commonwealth in particular makes us a colony. They proclaim that we should have broken with our past. How foolish that is. First and foremost of course, we are today a sovereign nation. In no way are we a colony. As to breaking with the past, why is that such a glorious proceeding? To maintain connections with the past isn't colonialism, it is plain common sense. The analogy of the family is pertinent. The son or daughter grows up and achieves complete autonomy (as we have within the Commonwealth). But that does not mean that he necessarily breaks away from his parents. Much mutual help can be derived from remaining in close connection. The son or daughter learns judgment, maturity and balance from the longer life and maturity of his parents. The parents gain vitality and vision from the offspring. Clearly the same is true of our connection with Great Britain; both parties have gained much of mutual advantage.

The point is of course that now all danger of being a colony of Great Britain is past. It might have been true in 1870 or 1900. But this is 1945. And in 1945 the danger to our nationhood does not come from any colonial feelings to the British, but rather the danger of becoming a satellite of the USA. Our sovereign nationhood is menaced from that direction. And strangely enough, these Canadians who in the past affirmed our nationhood and said we must never be a colony of the British now seem quite ready to destroy that same nationhood by making us a colony of the Americans. But if the latter should take place, we will lose our nationhood as actually as if we were a colony of the British.

For it must be categorically stated that Canada will only continue to exist as long as we represent something individual and special in ourselves. Deep within ourselves we must continue to believe in the validity of those values on which our nation was founded. We must continue to put them into practice and into greater and richer fulfillment. We must cultivate our own individuality.

If we don't have that belief in our own way of life, if we don't continue to practice these values, we will soon cease to be a nation. If we cut ourselves off from our roots, we will die. We always have the alternative to being Canadians—we can become Americans. Unless we have our own national way, we will have the American way. If we bow prostrate before the culture of Hollywood; if in education we accept from the south the phoney precepts of so-called "progressive education;" if socially we welcome in our Granite Clubs the Babbitry of the middle west and the intolerance of the deep south; if economically we accept the uncontrolled individualism of American business and call it British freedom; if our entertainment criterion is Frank Sinatra and philosophically and religiously we accept the materialist claptrap from the USA—then we will in effect have given up those values that are essentially Canadian and we might as well become part of Leviathan. Morally and intellectually we will have become a colony of the republic and should therefore ask for admission to the union.

No, if Canada is to continue to exist as a nation—in every sphere in our national life—we must expound those values and traditions of decency, stability and order that have been the best basis of our national life. In education we must continue to recognize that self-discipline must be the central core of education. In economics we must recognize that individual freedom must be carefully balanced against social order. In entertainment we must build theatres and community centres to produce something of our own. In films we are already doing it in the National Film Board. As far as law and the enforcement of law goes, we must expound that tradition that nothing is more vital than the dignity of law and an uncorrupted police force. Only if we can maintain these standards of decency in ourselves, and so see that what we have in ourselves is right, will we maintain our nation. If we are too lazy or too weak to build up our own values then we will cease to exist. In-

evitably will we accept those from the south.

IV.

But of course the question must be answered: Is there any reason to maintain on this continent two separate and diverse forms of society—Canada and the USA? Or should this continent be united into one state centred at Chicago and Washington. To those who feel deeply and instinctively the importance of Canada, that is almost the question of the traitor. To most Canadians, the existence of our society is so right, so true, that it is unthinkable that it should be swallowed up or destroyed. But yet to-day, as never before, the question must be answered. For in this country many Canadians (and in places of high responsibility and power) consciously or unconsciously are leading this country in a direction that can only eventually mean one thing—union with the USA. Was, then, the philosophy of Macdonald, Laurier and Borden merely a foolish romanticism? Was the building of a Canadian nation an idle and useless dream? Is there any ultimate and valid reason for the continued existence of the Canadian nation? The answer comes back, "Yes"—emphatically yes, and now as never before.

The first and prime reason is diversity. For the colour and glory of life are not found in uniformity, but in diversity. The fact that in Europe there are French and English, Dutch and Italian, Spanish and many national cultures has enriched the contribution of that continent to the world. Would this continent make its greatest contribution if it was all bedecked in the same raiment? No surely the diversity and colour that an independent Canada could give to this continent is our main ambition.

Our diversity will be particularly important in the field of social organization. For in the world that is with us now the great problem is going to be to what extent man will be able to organize efficiently the industrial society he has created and yet maintain his freedom. Where the USA in meeting these problems

is going to emphasize individualism, we have already shown, in all the platforms of our three major parties that we are going to employ more ordered means. Like the other British nations—the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, we are going to embark on a series of social measures. We will be the compromise between the individualism of the USA and the extreme social order of the USSR. Also in a small country like Canada, it will be easier to work out the problems of democracy in the industrialized age than in the USA where the units of power are so enormous that only a Roosevelt can control them.

Of course the greatest reason for our independence is in the field of international affairs. Here we are, an American nation, and at the same time a member of an effective world organization, the British Commonwealth. An organization that, when all is said and done, held the free world together in 1940.

We have strong and vigorous connections with the rest of the world. If we stay in that position we can exert a continuous pressure to see that the USA takes its proper place in world order. If we throw our weight to the south, we can strengthen the USA in its continental isolationism. Here the choice is ours and it will be a choice that will affect the whole world.

If our national existence is so important, we in Canada must strengthen it. And of course first and foremost if it is to be strengthened, that strength can only come from within ourselves. It must be repeated again. Only if we can build up within ourselves a way of life that justifies our existence will we continue to exist. We must fortify and expand these values that have made Canada what it is and from which we have developed. Our nation has had a great past; only if we have stability and vitality in ourselves will we have a great future.