

(*March 14th, 1938*)

Industry and the Nation

By W. J. CAMERON

CHAIRMAN, T. D'ARCY LEONARD: — Your Honour Gentlemen: Today we welcome in person one whose voice is already so well known to us on the air: Mr. W. J. Cameron of the Ford Motor Car Company.

This great gathering of the Canadian Club is a tribute to his distinguished career as an Editor, and to those fitting and powerful addresses to which we listen on Sunday Evenings. Today he is back on his native soil and has chosen as his subject one that means much to all of us. "Industry and the Nation. Gentlemen, I have the honor to introduce "the voice of Ford"—W. J. Cameron.

MR. CAMERON:—Your Honor, Mr. President, Gentlemen. It is a pleasure to be in Toronto. I may be a stranger to you, but your city is no stranger to me. I have been coming here for forty years, and always securely, because till today I have never had to make a speech.

I like to walk your streets and sense the substantial character of your life; to roam around your university and colleges because I know something of what your scholars and Scientists have done. I never fail to visit Hart House, which I first saw in 1917 when it was incomplete, the lone rooms being used for the education and treatment of shell-shocked soldiers.

I wonder if you know how widely famous is the name of your city and its institutions, not only internationally on this continent but abroad. You are known as a city of Churches, Schools, and Bankers, and you are widely known to all classes in the United States because of your Canadian National Exhibition. Where, once in a while, some of our cities seem to be able to stage a World's Fair, you seem

to be able to do it every year. On our side of the border there are many who never miss one of your Exhibitions. Not the least of its attractions is the inspiring expression of incidents in your history, to be seen in the *pageants* at the close of each Exhibition day. I don't know how you regard these *pageants* here, but we, from the outside, are impressed very deeply.

We feel now that we have another bond with Toronto, through the Sunday evening hour since we have had the good fortune to have your distinguished fellow-citizen, Sir Ernest MacMillan, to conduct a series of concerts for us, and we are hoping that a series, conducted by Sir Ernest, will, in future, become an annual feature of the Ford Sunday-Evening hour.

Now I hope, that in what I have to say, I shall not do anything to disturb international relations, and I shall have to be doubly careful because I am in the habit of speaking of Canada and the United States together.

I have the feeling that on the other side of the line we are more interested in the views of Canadians, than you are in our views. And the reason, I think, that we listen with much respect and interest, is, that so many of your views are like ours, with perhaps a more solid background of order and discipline in looking deeper into things and somewhat less precipitancy in committing yourselves to every mirage that rises.

On our side of the line we always credit Canadians with having an admirable mental balance wheel, though we have had some moments of alarm when that wheel has seemed to have a tendency to wobble.

In referring to these two countries one is handicapped by certain habits of speech. For instance, naming people on our side of the line as Americans, as if you with a large area of the American continent could possibly escape being Americans too. I don't know if it irritates you—it does me—but if it does you must blame yourselves, for it is a habit you taught the people on the other side of the line.

I remember in my young days in Hamilton there were people who made a very adventurous journey to the United States and then came back and lectured about it in the church or school-house. And their subject was always "Our

American Cousins". Still I think it a very bad habit to speak of ourselves as Americans as if you were not Americans too.

Your foundation stock has been here as long as ours, and both came from the same source. Both countries began as colonies—Canada became the fourteenth colony. The United States not only began as a colony but was such for a hundred and fifty years longer than was Canada. It was a British Colony for a longer time than it has been a constitutional republic.

For twelve years of that period Canada and the United States were joint members of the British Colonies.

In the United States we bear the marks of the colonial period everywhere. Go to New York, Boston or Philadelphia and you will find sections of these cities more English than any sections of your modern Canadian cities. You will have to go to Vancouver to get the same touch. You won't find it in Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa or London. And throughout the Eastern States you can trace the influence in the names of towns and countries. We can even trace the times people came, from the names they gave their settlements.

The great institutions of learning over there retain much of their colonial character. Our most celebrated universities are of English origin. Harvard — at Cambridge — Cambridge, the site of a great university in England, Princeton — Prince town. William and Mary College. I only know one instance of change. King's College had become Columbia.

In Boston you will still find the Lion and the Unicorn still fighting for the crown on the front of the old Courthouse, and King's Chapel can still be entered from the street as in Colonial times. The Honorable Artillery Company still holds its drills in the old Armories and in the church the Union Jack hangs side-by-side with the Stars and Stripes. Our highest—some might say snobbiest—society comprises the descendants of Britishers who came to America in a British ship—the Mayflower.

Of course there was what was called a revolution but we would like to change the name, since we have seen what now are called revolutions.

Ours had nothing in common with the convulsions in France and Russia. It was not a revolt against the British way of life but a revolt for it. British men wanted British rights, of which incompetent ministers of the Crown had deprived them, and like British men they got their rights, as they will always do under similar circumstances.

Sixty years later you found yourselves in somewhat the same state of mind, but you had only to make one gesture and you got what you wanted. Someone had learnt a lesson during that time.

Apparently you don't think very badly of revolutionaries for one of them you made into a prime minister. I have often thought that both the United States and Canada benefited as the result of the American revolution. It sent to Canada some of the best of the Colonial families who had helped to build the American Colonies, and those cities and universities of which I have spoken. Those families that had the patience to wait for a return to Sanity on the part of the home government, and who could not bring themselves to revolt against the Crown, were no less liberty-loving than the others, and they endured sufferings and hardships which were equal to those of war, when they came to Canada.

During a recent summer I took my youngest daughter on a History tour by way of Concord Bridge and Lexington and home through Hamilton. In Hamilton I took her to that great monument to the United Empire Loyalists. No country ever had such founders, no country in the world. I said to Jean: This is the other end of Concord Bridge.

Instead of one centre of Anglo-Saxon principles the world now has three centres. The homeland, in Europe, and two in the western hemisphere: the United States and Canada.

As you look across the border it probably seems to you that a vast mixture of peoples and races goes to make up our population. But really the mixture is not so vast as you might think. The dominant strain is Anglo-Saxon. They resemble Elizabethan Englishmen much more than the English do, and we are repeating the experience of the British Isles which themselves were a melting pot. Many of the strains now coming into America are the same strains that

started to enter the British Isles a thousand years ago. It is something similar to what you have in Canada now with your great French population, because the French are the direct descendents of the Normans, who came to make one of the strongest elements of the Anglo-Saxon Character, and they will have the same great effect in the future. That is occurring in the United States now. New strains are coming in that will build up a strong race.

We are apt to ascribe undue importance to national names and forget racial character. After all what do national names amount to? It is racial character that determines their relation to us. The United States has a million and a half Canadians. I don't know how many Americans you have, but I hope they are as good as the Canadians we have. We like to have Canadians in our banks—most of our cashiers are Canadians. If we had promoted some of them faster and made them presidents, we probably would not have had the banking trouble we did.

One important factor in the growth of the United States is the fact that Canada has been populated by people of like language, laws and ideals. A great part of our growth has been, because we have been able to go about our affairs with no fears or uncertainties originating across the border. I wonder if we really appreciate our blessings in not being trained to look across the border with suspicion, hate and fear of war. Where else in the world can such a situation be found? Nowhere, not even in the British Isles, unless you leave out Ireland.

George Washington foresaw that, and when Lafayette came to ask help in reconquering Canada by the French, he begged Congress to remember that it was better to have as a neighbor a country occupied by people of like descent and ideals than to have it occupied, by what he called foreigners.

So on either side of the line we have no fear. Each country, of course, has its scaremongers and trouble makers, but it is the attitude of the people in general that counts. I wish you could have sat in that morning at my house when we followed a sad procession across London. The funeral of the King. You notice that I speak of him as the King.

We all do that. We do not need to identify him further. To us there is only one King.

And again on that May morning at the Coronation. We had a group of young Americans at my house and naturally some of them looked askance at so much ceremony. But as it proceeded to the point where the King's voice came through in the words of his oath, I wish you could have seen what came into the faces of those listeners. There is something between us that is not manifested in words, but which comes to the surface only on such great occasions of the manifestation of the great Anglo-Saxon unities.

An industrial future is definitely forecast by the abundance and variety of your natural resources and the creative genius of your people. There is only one way for you to prosper and profit to the full from your resources. You cannot avoid becoming an industrial nation. Not only is it essential to your national economy, but to your place in the world. It is not possible for a great people just to be a market for the products of others, while selling only raw materials to others. No nation grows great by what it sells, but by what its people produce and use. Merely selling off your natural wealth will get you nowhere. It is economically wasteful, and it retards the development of a national spirit. There is no growth in the mere selling of raw materials. Selling is neither producing nor using, while industry has socializing effects in creating a diversified market and a self-sustaining people. The best basis of prosperity is production, mere trade, however big, is not enough. Spent money will never lift us. We can only be raised by producing more of the things of life. It is not the selling or the trading that is good for us, but the making and using by the people.

The United States would rejoice to see you become an industrial country, because you are not in danger of overbalancing your agricultural interests. And, since you are a good neighbor, we should like to see you become a strong neighbor.

Your industries are young, and, like anything else that is young they need protection, but protection, unfortunately is oftener discussed in political than in economic terms.

The result is irritation in the differences of opinion in the conflict between present advantage and future benefit.

Protective barriers are as necessary to a young industry as are the bars that protect a baby in its crib. They do not prevent the growth of the baby, but they do keep it from falling out and coming to harm. The result must be judged not by immediate happenings, but by the long range effect.

If a country has no industrial future, it can let down the tariff bars and lower the prices to the consumer; but where a country has industries, the immediate benefit of lower prices is offset by retarded national development. In any event it seems a doubtful question, if things would really be much cheaper. You would have less money to buy them with, and no defence against the seller's tendency to charge all that the traffic will bear.

Look at the motor-car industry in Canada. You have taxed yourselves on automobiles but for every dollar you have put on the tariff you have created three dollars and sixty-five cents worth of trade and employment. And at the same time, while you were doing this, you have brought to your country lower prices than anywhere else in the world, except the United States. Germany pays 177 per cent more, France 92 per cent, and England 39 per cent. The more closely you examine it, the wider the benefits of protection seem to be. In 1936 you paid eighteen and a half million dollars more for your cars than you would have paid at United States prices, but by so doing you created for yourselves sixty-eight million, eight hundred thousand dollars in Canadian factories, machinery, jobs and business.

Without the tariff you might have had the cars cheaper, but the money would have left Canada. With the tariff you have the cars, and the money and fifty million dollars worth of plants as well. That is the way to go.

The profit system is essential to industry, it is instinct in all human activities, and in properly run industry, they mostly go back to nurture that industry. It is only a matter of time till prices will be equalized between Canada and the United States. It is only volume in production that breaks down costs and prices. Volume is the only explanation of United States prices. We have no better management

or technique, and our workmanship is in no way superior to yours. In fact for twenty years I have heard Mr. Ford contend that there is no workmanship equal to Canadian—he prefers a Canadian car to any other.

And Mr. Campbell tells me that it will require less volume in proportion to bring the production to a point where prices can be reduced in this country than was necessary in the United States. You seem to be on the way, and in the meantime you will have become a thriving industrial nation, with a wide variety of activities to use your natural resources to the full.

I feel quite at ease in discussing industry here in Canada. In the United States it is rather different. Perhaps you read American newspapers. If you do you will realize the difference. It is very obvious to me. In England the president and general manager of the Ford Motor Company is made a lord. In the United States he is called a malefactor and an economic royalist. Our Government calls industrialists names, your Government gives them titles.

You have entered the industrial field late enough to profit by the mistakes of others. Don't copy the United States. You are well equipped technically and in every way, to be able to expand along your own lines.

Industry plays an important part in the life of a nation, and has always played a generous part in the home, the church and the school. Consider the passing of the English Factory Acts. Industry had to fight hard for those. At first, when publicly-minded owners asked for such things, Parliament refused to consider any reforms, but they pegged away and fought and kept on fighting till finally they cleared from industry the abuses that were a hang-over from the old home work system.

That has been industry from the beginning, driving out evils, and bringing in better things. Legislation has never created a single social benefit in industry yet. No labor leader has ever got a single social benefit for industry.

Reform has come from within industry itself, from the intelligent managerial mind, that realizes that high standards of living are essential to growing industry.

We have never had to face an occasion when a righteous society has had to be roused to demand of industry that it be decent. On the contrary the pressure of industry has been brought to bear on society to attain better conditions. In my own lifetime wages have been increased four-fold and work has been cut in half. And not one single thing came by legislation or by compulsion. They have all come from the inside.

Mass production, contrary to all that you may hear, requires a very high degree of intelligence, and, this is reflected in education. Thousands of the sons of workmen are learning engineering, chemistry, metallurgy, and such professions, showing that industry requires an ever higher and higher type of mind to compete.

Every section of society has been raised in intelligence by the growth of industry, and that will apply even more strongly in your country, because you are going to escape most of the mistakes made by industry in other countries.

Industries now seem to be in a bad way. If you can discover why they must be helped by government; if you can throw any light on the causes of depressions; if you can find somebody, who will be able to tell you the reasons for financial strangulation, and the cure, as your Dr. Banting did for diabetes, you are the people the world is waiting for. You have principles, and when you apply those principles to your structure of industrialism, we are going to see some good marks in the world.

We have had moments of alarm, when we saw some of the wilder experiments having a great run in Canada, as if they were new economic discoveries; but I am glad to see, you have checked that.

Our countries have the same aims and aspirations, so we may face each other as neighboring laboratories, working on the same problem, having the same objective, which is to make more easily available to the human race all those things it needs for comfort and happiness, and in doing this, we shall at the same time strengthen all the elements, that go to increase social stability.