

A Rhetoric of Queen and Country:
The Ironies of the Introduction to the 2013 Speech from the Throne
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Abstract

In my essay, "A Rhetoric of Queen and Country: The Ironies of the Introduction to the 2013 Speech from the Throne," I explore the paradoxical relationship between the content of the 2013 Speech from the Throne and its presenter, the Governor General. The Governor General, as representative of the Queen, serves as a distinct symbolic link between Canada's present status as an independent sovereign nation and its history as a British colony. However, the speech itself makes no mention of this aspect of Canada's history. Relying on theories of nations and nationalism from Benedict Anderson and Kwame Anthony Appiah, as well as theories of ideology and ideological State Apparatuses from Louis Althusser, I suggest a reason for the choice rhetoric of the 2013 speech. By close reading the introduction of the speech, and relying on a classical rhetorical analysis, I demonstrate the ways by which the Speech from the Throne presents a vision of Canada as a global leader, distinctly separate and independent of its colonial roots.

Keywords: Canada, nation, nationalism, imagined community, ideology, state apparatus, Speech from the Throne, Queen, Commonwealth, rhetoric.

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In Canada, each session of Parliament opens with the Speech from the Throne, which outlines the specific aims of the ruling party in the upcoming session. The speech is written by the current government, but presented by the Queen's representative, the Governor General. There is a certain irony in the distinction between the speech's author and its presenter, for it is the current government that represents Canada's status as an independent sovereign nation while the Governor General ties Canada to the British Commonwealth and a history of colonization and imperial rule. A close reading of the introduction to the 2013 throne speech demonstrates a distinct attempt on behalf of the government to separate Canada from its colonial roots, which only further emphasizes this irony. Theories of nations and nationalism, however, suggest the rationale for the specific post-colonial and nationalist rhetoric of the speech. A country is most successful when its citizens perceive it to be successful, a leader amongst nations. It is, therefore, highly important that Canada identify itself as independent, separate from the influence and control of Britain, another sovereign state. Further, a nation can only practically exist as a world leader when its citizens reside in a state of social cohesion. Social cohesion is, in turn, the result of a unified perception or imagining of the nation by its citizens. In order to promote the notion of Canada as an independent leader and foster a unified sense of nationalism, the 2013 Speech from the Throne relies on a heightened ceremonial rhetoric. The choice of language and specific historical references appeal to the pathos of listeners while simultaneously rooting Canada in a particular historical and contemporary context distinctly separate from Britain and the Crown.

The Formal Structure of Authority in the Canadian Government

The authority of the Canadian government operates through Canada's parliamentary system, which is the amalgamation of a series of interrelated, yet independent bodies: "the Queen, the Senate and the House of Commons (Q3 "Speech FAQ," n.d.). As the text *Inside Canada's Parliament* explains, under the Canadian Constitution, the Queen is the Sovereign of Canada and retains the highest level authority (Senate, the House of Commons and the Library of Parliament, 2002, p. 11). She is the Head of State, while the Prime Minister functions as Head of government. The implications of this structure are far-reaching, for despite the perceived ceremonial role of the Queen, "in Canada, as in Britain, governmental power is technically in the hands of the 'Crown'" since "Parliament's decisions do not have the force of law until they have received royal assent" (Malcomson and Myers, 2009, p.98). Despite the fact that by constitutional convention the Queen delegates her executive power to the democratically elected Prime Minister and Cabinet, on a technical level, she retains legislative and executive authority (Malcomson and Myers, 2009, p. 98). However, since the Queen of Canada is also the monarch of Britain (and other Commonwealth countries) and resides in England, her functions as Head of State are carried out by the Governor General, "who is appointed by the Queen as her personal representative" (Senate, the House of Commons and the Library of Parliament, 2002, p. 11).

The very structure of our Parliament paradoxically roots Canada, a supposedly democratic nation, in an imperial and colonial past and the Governor General, as representative of the Crown, serves as a living symbol of persisting

monarchical authority. However, the Governor General plays little or no role in the actual policy-making of government, and is often “referred to in colloquial terms as a mere ‘rubber stamp’” (Malcomson and Myers, 2009, p. 101). Despite the ceremonial perception of the Governor General, he or she is, in absence of the Queen, the sovereign of the nation, “guardian of responsible government and head of state” (Malcomson and Myers, 2009, p. 101). The Governor General’s powers extend well beyond the role as sole authority (besides the Queen herself) to provide royal assent to legislation; they also include the formal selection of the Prime Minister (based on the results of a democratic election) and the summoning and dissolving of Parliament (Senate, the House of Commons and the Library of Parliament, 2002, p. 11). Since “Parliament meets only at the ‘Royal summons’ of the Queen,” and “the Senate and House of Commons cannot open a session by their own authority,” it is the Governor General’s duty to officially open each session of Parliament (Q3 “Speech FAQ,” n.d.). The Speech from the Throne is the formal process by which each session is opened.

The Speech from the Throne as a Nationalist Construct

Until the speech is given, “no public business may be conducted by either the Senate or the House of Commons” (Q2 “Speech FAQ,” n.d.). The Speech from the Throne outlines the goals and direction of the current government and sets out the means by which these goals will be achieved (Q1 “Speech FAQ,” n.d.). While it is the current government that writes the Speech, it is the Queen’s Representative, the Governor General, who delivers it, “although it may be given by The Queen in-

person” (Q1 “Speech FAQ,” n.d.). The speech is addressed to the Members of the House of Commons and the Senate, although it indirectly appeals to the Canadian public; in addition to outlining the government’s intentions for the current session, it creates a vision of the nation and of its future for the vast and diverse Canadian public.

The Speech from the Throne is – as all speeches are – a carefully constructed rhetorical address. It targets a specific audience, contains a distinct argument, and inherently involves play, the notion that there is a looseness to the meaning and possible interpretations of the speech. Recognizing this, the material qualities of language are “consciously exploited by the sender” (Leith and Myerson, 1989, p. xii). In effect, the choice of language, the tone, and the references used all function to create a specific understanding of Canada as a nation.

The introduction of the 2013 Speech from the Throne especially functions as a rhetorical construction of nation in which the speaker relies on *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos* in order to create a particular understanding of Canada, which in turn justifies the aims presented in the body of the speech. Here, *ethos* refers to the reliability of the speaker as an authority on the Canadian national construct; *pathos* refers to the “appeal to the emotions of the audience” in the hope that they will affirm this particular construct; and *logos* refers to logic and reasoning used to outline the specific future of the nation (Crowley and Hawhee, 2004, p. 20). In close reading the introduction of the 2013 Speech from the Throne, written by the Harper government with input from the Governor General, David Johnston, it becomes apparent that the government’s aims in the next session of Parliament rely on a

certain, cohesive understanding of Canada as a nation. Furthermore, in a broader sense, the 2013 Speech from the Throne suggests that the success of the Canadian government, or of any democratic nation enacting policy, is absolutely and always dependent on the creation of a specific national identity.

Theories of Nation, State and Collective Identity

A brief exploration of the structure of the Canadian parliamentary system has, perhaps, already demonstrated the paradoxical conception of Canada as a nation. Functionally and geopolitically it operates as an independent, democratic, sovereign nation; however, technically Canada exists as a dependent of the British Crown, unable to act without the explicit royal assent of the Queen. The implications of this paradigm extend beyond the actual practice of government; they affect the cohesion of the national construct, the way we, as Canadian citizens, perceive ourselves and identify with each other.

In his revolutionary text on nationalism, *Imagined Communities*, theorist Benedict Anderson defines the nation as “an imagined political community” (2006, p. 6). He argues that the nation commands emotional legitimacy in the way it creates an idea of communion amongst a population who will “never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them” (Anderson, 2006, p. 6). His use of the word *community* is rooted in the belief that despite the reality of “inequality and exploitation” that may exist within a particular nation, we still imagine the nation “as a deep, horizontal comradeship” (Anderson, 2006, p. 7). It is this imagined communion that, during the current winter Olympics in Sochi, causes the fervent

patriotism that brings Canadians across the country out to pubs, bars and other establishments televising the games in a collective spirit of support and national pride. Most Canadians watching the games have no direct connection to the athletes themselves, and yet because they represent Canada, we feel inherently tied to them.

Furthering his initial definition, Anderson explains that the imagined community of the nation is “inherently limited,” since “no nation imagines itself as coterminous with man kind” (Anderson, 2006, pp. 6, 7). Each nation has specific boundaries, or borders, outside of which exist other nations. In effect, a nation is defined as much by what it is not, as by what it is.

The work of contemporary theorist Kwame Anthony Appiah further builds on the limited nature of nations. In his 2006 text, *Cosmopolitanism*, Appiah argues that nations and nationalism rely on, and simultaneously create and perpetuate difference, a sense of ‘us’ and ‘them.’ It creates, “the foreignness of foreigners, the strangeness of strangers” (Appiah, 2006, p. xxi). There is no limit to the impact, positive or negative, that national policy “carried out by governments in our name” may have (Appiah, 2006, p. xiii).

In today’s global economy, each nation strives, in competition with all others, to be a global leader. Success, however, like nationalism, is as much the result of perception and construction as it is of reality. Furthermore, national ‘success’ is directly linked to nationalism. No country in the midst of revolution functions effectively: its government is challenged, its economy undoubtedly suffers, and it lacks a sense of social cohesion, which often results in violent conflict. A nation without nationalism is a nation in turmoil. For a nation to be successful, let alone

function, it is necessary for governments to promote nationalism, or, in other words, to promote a particular imagined community.

Both Anderson and Appiah root nationalism in the construction of a particular national ideology. As Appiah states in his text, *The Ethics of Identity*, nations matter “because they make a difference to the people who compose them” (Appiah, 2005, p. ix). Anderson, however, is quick to define a nationalist ideology outside of particular political ideologies; it is an ideology of “kinship,” as opposed to an ideology like “liberalism” or “fascism” (Anderson, 2006, p. 5). All ideologies, however, function in a way that is highly conducive to the authority that establishes and maintains the political framework of independent nations.

In his essay, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation),” Louis Althusser argues that we each independently and unavoidably exist within ideology, and that ideology is both defined by us and simultaneously makes us subject to it. He defines ideology as, “an imaginary relation to real relations” (Althusser, 2006, p.82), our *perception* of our conditions of existence. Yet, paradoxically, our conditions of existence are defined by ideology as well; in the case of national discourse, they are defined by the dominant, or ruling ideology of the nation, or *state apparatus*.¹ In Canada, the ruling ideology is the particular ideological discourse of the presiding government. Therefore, in order for a particular government to maintain power, it must retain control of the national ideology: “no class can hold State power over a long period without at the same time

¹ While some theorists differentiate between the nation and the geopolitical state, this distinction is unnecessary to my argument. I rely primarily on the term *nation*, which I suggest incorporates the term state apparatus, or the complex political and sociological structure that defines Canada.

exercising its hegemony over and in the State Ideological Apparatuses” (Althusser, 2006, p. 81). The most relevant aspect of Althusser’s essay in relation to imagined communities, however, is his explanation of ideology and subjectivity.

Althusser argues that ideology functions in such a way that it makes all those who recognize it subject. He states: “all ideology hails or interpellates [*sic*] concrete individuals as concrete subjects” (Althusser, 2006, p. 84). He considers a police officer calling out to an individual on the street. He posits that the mere recognition by the individual that he has been hailed makes that individual subject (Althusser, 2006, p. 85). Referring to the very act of reading his essay, Althusser further states: “the writing I am currently executing and the reading you are currently performing are also in this respect rituals of ideological recognition, including ‘obviousness’ with which the ‘truth’ or ‘error’ of my reflections may impose itself on you” (Althusser, 2006, p. 84). Effectively, if an individual identifies in any way with a particular idea, text, statement or speech, that individual is already within the represented ideology.

In suggesting that the recognition of ideology always, inherently makes individuals subject, Althusser does not suggest that they must agree with the particular ideology. Every individual has a consciousness that defines the way he will act: “the ‘ideas’ of a human subject exist in his actions, or ought to exist in his actions” (Althusser, 2006, p. 82). An individual who exists within a particular ruling ideology, therefore, may not act according to it if his individual beliefs fall outside of it. As a result, it is highly important that the ruling ideology of a nation attempt to appeal to the widest possible audience in order to maintain hegemony.

In examining each of Althusser's examples of identifying subjects, the source of recognition is a rhetorical construct, either something spoken or something written. In effect, language is a primary means of creating subjectivity, and it is through language that the current government must attempt to construct and maintain a distinct ideology. Anderson makes a similar claim when he suggests that what distinguishes nations from one another is the difference between their national ideologies: it is not a matter of "falsity/genuineness, but the style in which they are imagined" (Anderson, 2006, p. 6). Style, here, is a key term; it suggests a distinct, intentional, and carefully thought out approach to imagining the nation. Within a democracy where the ruling party changes periodically, each new government must attempt to re-imagine the nation, or re-create the national ideology in a way that serves its particular aims while in power. Furthermore, it must, if it hopes to remain in power, convince the majority of the population of the legitimacy of its vision for the nation. The Speech from the Throne can be seen as one of the ways that the ruling party establishes and promotes a particular imagining of the nation.

A Rhetorically Constructed Nation: The 2013 Speech from the Throne

The 2013 Speech from the Throne opens, after a brief acknowledgement of those who had recently died at Lac-Mégantic, with the speaker introducing himself "as one proud Canadian among a vast nation of these" (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 1). His assertion of pride – the addition of a choice single word – is poignant, for it identifies him as not just a citizen, but a citizen who places great value in that

status; this act establishes ethos, boosting his credibility as a Canadian by making what would otherwise have been a simple identifier something infused with nationalistic sentiment. The second half of the phrase further functions to establish pathos, calling on and including the proud Canadian public; it brings the audience, the citizens of the nation, directly into the speech, tying them to the same proud sentiment, and in doing so plays on their own sense of nationalism.

Immediately following his identification as a proud Canadian, the Governor General covertly recognizes the duality of his position. He states: "I bear the happy wishes and deep affection of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada" (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 1). While the Governor General expressly acknowledged his status as a Canadian, it is only indirectly that he recognizes his role as representative of the Crown. He conveys her affection towards the Canadian people; he is simply the messenger. His choice rhetoric emphasizes his Canadian citizenship while simultaneously downplaying his ties to the throne, a trend that continues throughout the rest of the speech. In fact, his assertion in these opening lines that the Queen is Canada's head of state is the only reference to the Queen and the authority she bears in the entire speech. Despite the nature of the speech as being delivered "from the Throne," and the speaker being the representative of the Queen, no further acknowledgment of either the Queen or Canada's ties to Britain and the Commonwealth are mentioned. Instead, the remainder of the speech is filled with a heightened nationalist rhetoric and explicit references to Confederation and post-Confederation Canada.

The next paragraph of the speech addresses Members of Parliament specifically and uses *polyptoton*, the repetition of the same word in a varied form, to heighten the power of oral address. He states: “you gather today with the high confidence and higher expectation of Canadians” (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 1). He then reminds parliamentarians of “the unique set of indelible qualities” which must guide their work over the next session of Parliament (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 1). These qualities, which the Governor General proceeds to lay out as a series of clauses, function to define and imagine Canada as a nation, not only for Members of Parliament, but for any Canadian listening to or reading the address.

Relying on anaphora, the repetition of a word or words at the beginning of successive clauses in order to enhance both the aural and impact of each, the Governor General defines Canada as a nation (Crowley & Hawhee, 2004, p. 428). He begins each clause, “[c]onsider this: we are...” followed by an adjective and then an explanation as to why that adjective serves as an apt definition (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 1-2). The repeated use of “we are” again invokes pathos, pulling listeners and every Canadian citizen into this particular imagining of the nation. While it is the qualities of the nation as a political entity that the Governor General is invoking, he is also, on a literal level, stating that each and every Canadian is “inclusive,” “honourable,” “selfless,” “smart,” and “caring.” This is what Canada is, he reasserts; Canadians look to this Parliament to uphold these values: “as we contemplate our 150th anniversary, the eyes and ears and expectations of Canadians turn toward this Parliament” (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 2). This phrase

refers directly to Confederation, the beginning of Canada as an independent nation and our separation from colonial rule, a process that continued through the statute of Westminster in 1931 and on to the patriation of the constitution under Pierre Elliot Trudeau in 1982. The phrase, referring to values, is also rich with rhetorical devices.

The Governor General uses “eyes” and “ears” to indicate that Canadians are *looking* and *listening* to Parliament for strong leadership and protection of Canadian values, as well as to create alliteration and invoke a distinct rhythm that enhances the aural impact of the phrase. Relying again on anaphora, the Governor General concludes his initial imagining of Canada: “Let us not disappoint. And with that spirit and direction, let us turn now to the present” (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 2).

The specific use of the word “direction” is highly relevant in examining the way the Speech from the Throne perpetuates a particular imagined community. Saying that the previous clauses outlining the definition of nation set a particular ‘direction,’ the speech inherently implies that there is at least one other possible course. In effect, the Governor General explicitly acknowledges that what he has just done is rhetorically construct Canada in a particular way. Furthermore, because the Speech from the Throne repeatedly makes use of the pronoun ‘we,’ a distinct attempt to unify Canadians under this imagining is apparent. As Althusser’s discussion of ideological state apparatuses suggests, if the ideology of the individual citizens of a nation is in line with the ideology of the ruling class, then the individuals’ actions and behaviours will fall in line with that dominant ideology

(Althusser, 2006, p.82). Effectively, the establishment of ethos and the constant appeals to the pathos of the audience not only attempts to make Canadians *want* to be subject to the dominant ideology, but also attempts to make Canadians proud to be subject.

As the introduction continues, the Governor General moves into a more politically infused discussion of Canada. Relying again on anaphora to enhance the impact of his statements, he roots the priorities of the current government in economic growth and prosperity: our government has “a strong mandate: a mandate to protect jobs and our economy; a mandate to keep taxes low; a mandate to make our families and communities safe” (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 2). The Governor General then emphasizes the prowess of Canada in contrast to the “ongoing uncertainty and instability from beyond our shores” (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 2). The decision to compare Canada to the daunting world outside our borders distinctly attempts to establish Canada’s independence and sovereignty. He claims that in the last session of Parliament, our current government “made tough choices—the right choices” (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 2). Here, the use of *isocolon*, the Greek term for similarly structured or balanced phrases, to describe parliamentary decisions emphasizes the assertion that the decisions were correct (Crowley & Hawhee, 2004, p. 438). Then, the Governor General once again appeals to all Canadians to fall in line in support of the dominant national ideology: “This is Canada’s moment; together we will seize it” (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 2).

In concluding the introduction to the Speech from the Throne, the Governor General recalls Confederation one more time, relying on a distinctly epideictic rhetoric. Epideictic speech refers to a specific Aristotelian division of rhetorical oratory, which relies on inflated language in order to praise (Crowley & Hawhee, 2004, p. 431). “[O]ur founders,” the Governor General states, were “leaders of courage and audacity,” who “looked beyond narrow self-interest ... faced down incredible challenges ... were undaunted ... dared to seize the moment that history offered” (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 2). The final paragraphs of the introduction reassert, in even more epideictic phrasing than before, the values that define the people of Canada, and again claim that we are “on the cusp of a moment” that we must seize (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 3).

Immersed in the inflated rhetoric that concludes the introduction, however, are two highly specific choice phrases. The Governor General asserts that Canada’s founders “forged an independent country” and almost immediately after claims that the nation they founded is “a constitutional democracy” (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 3). *Independent* is, of course, a key word, distinctly severing any possible perceived subjectivity to another sovereign nation or individual, Britain or the Queen. It affirms, with absolute certainty, the notion that the technicality of requiring royal assent for all Canadian legislation is merely a symbolic rubber stamp. However, the claim that Canada is “a constitutional democracy” is highly specific, ironic given the context, possibly problematic, and arguably unexpected (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 3). It makes a bold statement, for generally the Canadian

regime, like the British regime, is identified as a constitutional monarchy (Malcomson and Myers, 2009, p. 98).

A constitutional monarchy is “a regime which is monarchial by law but democratic by convention” (Malcomson and Myers, 2009, p. 98). Effectively, it is a system that operates on a practical level as a democracy but, on a technical level, has a monarch who maintains executive and legislative authority. In any context, the mere decision to define Canada as a constitutional democracy as opposed to a constitutional monarchy suggests a distinct disavowal of even the symbolic authority possessed by the Queen; by switching a single word, she has been cut from the definition of the Canadian parliamentary system. The irony of using this definition of the Canadian regime in the Speech from the Throne seems, furthermore, to undermine the very position of the speaker as Governor General. He is the representative of the Queen, delivering a speech from the seat in the Senate Chamber reserved for the Head of State or her representative; in the opening lines of the speech, he refers to her as the “Queen of Canada” but he then defines the Canadian regime in terms that negate the very presence of the monarch (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 1). Returning to theories of nationalism, national discourse and ideology suggest some possible explanations for why the Harper government may have cut the Queen from Canada in the very speech she could be delivering.

Cutting the Queen from Canada’s Imagined Community

In viewing the Queen as a mere figurehead, and her authority solely as symbolic, suggests that the reason for retaining her place in the Canadian regime is in order to maintain an important part of our Canadian heritage. Looking closer though, it becomes important to ask what specific aspects of the Canadian heritage she represents. The Queen is indicative of a history of divine ordination, but more problematically, represents a history of imperialist and colonial conquest. In *Imagined Communities*, Anderson suggests that colonial ideologies were typically “anti-nationalist, and often violently so” (Anderson, 2006, p. 163). This is because the nation, as defined by Anderson, is sovereign, not based on religious or racial distinction, and encompassing some degree of diversity (Anderson, 2006, p. 7). The process of colonization, however, in pre-confederation Canada, as in most other colonies, is one fraught with division, oppression, racism and violent conflict.

The ideology presented in the Speech from the Throne is in stark opposition to the heritage that the Crown represents. The rhetoric of much of the introduction of the speech emphasizes democracy, diversity of race and origins, unity and *carpe diem* in preparation for the future: “we Canadians—Aboriginal, French, English, people from all corners of the globe—strive together for our families and a brighter future” (Canada & Governor General, 2013, p. 3). The introduction to the Speech from the Throne focuses on looking forward, and even when it does look back, it is to the founding of the nation, not to its colonial heritage.

The need to perpetuate a unified imagining of the Canadian nation is obvious. The Speech from the Throne serves as an explicit outline of the ruling ideology for the upcoming session of Parliament. One of its key functions is inherently to

promote the benefits of this ideology, since, as Althusser outlines, no government can maintain power without exercising some control over the ideologies of the people through state apparatuses (Althusser, 2006, p. 81). As an *imagined* community, the nation is an inherently fluid construct. The particular vision laid out in the Speech from the Throne is therefore also politically charged in its attempt to emphasize social cohesion and “horizontal comradeship” (Anderson, 2006, p. 7). It must promote national pride and make citizens want to be a part of the nation, a feat that is achieved by elevating the nation above all other nations in the eyes of the public.

In close reading the introduction of the 2013 Speech from the Throne, its exigence becomes apparent. By identifying Canada as a constitutional democracy rather than a constitutional monarchy, the current government ties Canada solely to its *national* heritage and intentionally distances it from its colonial past. In doing so, it attempts to avoid Canada’s history of conflict and ideological divisiveness, and instead presents an inclusive and unified post-colonial vision of the nation. In the 2013 Speech from the Throne, Canada is imagined as a progressive world leader in the face of a conflict-riddled international climate; it is our moment to secure prosperity for future generations. The reliance on epideictic rhetoric takes advantage of the oral delivery of the speech, using a combination of rhetorical tropes and figures in order to appeal to the audience of senators and parliamentarians, as well as the Canadian public. The choice of language and historical references aims to unite Canadians behind the ruling ideology of the current government. Despite the effective rhetorical distancing of Canada from its

colonial past, the irony still remains: the very tradition of the Speech from the Throne, as well as the speaker himself, distinctly link Canada to the Queen and the British Commonwealth. As a result, the 2013 Speech from the Throne exists paradoxically, simultaneously separating Canada from, and tying it to, a history of colonization. This process of distancing, while still bearing ties to Britain, is similar to the situation faced by many other member states of the Commonwealth, all of which construct new rhetoric to frame their post-colonial identities in light of their colonial pasts.

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