



Statements and Speeches

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THE CONTRACTUAL LINK -- A CANADIAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE VOCABULARY OF CO-OPERATION

Remarks by Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau at the Mansion House, London, England, on March 13, 1975.

My Lord Mayor, Your Excellencies, My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is an eventful day for me, and one of great honour. An hour or so ago I was granted the freedom of the City of London. Now I am given the opportunity to speak to a distinguished audience in this historic chamber, a room that twice heard the voice of one of the great figures in Canadian history, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, shortly before and shortly after the turn of this century.

These are moving events, these appearances at the Guildhall and Mansion House, and of great significance. Not significant because they are happening to me. Nor even, in my view, because of their form or their antiquity. They are significant because they take place here, in Britain. In no other country in the world has the conception of "freedom" been so debated, its meaning so extended, its practice so protected.

To be a free man anywhere is a condition of great moment, but to be a free man in England -- to breathe Lord Mansfield's pure air -- is more; it is an exhilarating experience.

Through the centuries, man's quest for freedom has varied in its focus as tyranny has assumed new forms and threatened from new quarters. On one occasion the tyrant has been the Crown; on another, the Church. At one moment, the threat proceeded from a domestic source; at the next, it came from without the realm.

Throughout this tireless and changing pursuit of freedom, the attainments of the British people have become the standards against which men and women, world-wide, have measured their own accomplishments. The milestones of Magna Carta and Habeas Corpus, the Petition of Right and the Bill of Rights, have become models for societies everywhere; they turned the tide of battle in favour of the classical freedoms -- of speech, of conscience, of association, of assembly. Yet the result has not been permanent social tranquillity, in England or elsewhere. Nor should we be surprised. I doubt that any of those great observers of the English scene -- Bracton or Locke or Burke or Bagehot -- ever believed that
