

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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CANADA, THE POUND AND THE DOLLAR

An address by Mr. L.B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, before the Canada Club, London, England, on May 16, 1950.

No Canadian, certainly no Canadian whose life has been as closely connected with that of this great city as mine has been during the past thirty years, could be otherwise than deeply moved upon returning to London in the Spring of 1950. Canada, when I left it last week, was in the grip of great winds and tragic floods, and there was still little sign of the warm weather which we count on to fill out the heads on the wheat stalks and to speed up the proceedings on our Parliament Hill. In England I was greeted with a stretch of warm and sunny weather, that put the city in its best light. But my good opinion of London is, of course, induced by something even more substantial than a feeling of well-being on a sunny May day.

I am very deeply impressed with the ever-increasing pace of London's restoration; a restoration which is more than physical. May we who dwell in newer places cherish our inheritance of the traditions and the qualities of this Imperial city and of this land of glory and of hope.

Amongst the new attractions, I think that I detect a cap set somewhat more self-consciously than usual to beguile the tourist, and perhaps a greater sensibility to the foibles and prejudices of the stranger, especially if his travellers cheques are in dollars. These are good changes, even though we may regret the economic circumstances which underlie their importance.

There are other and even more impressive signs that the people of this new "old country" are addressing themselves with energy and resourcefulness to the solution of those persistent economic problems which cling to, as indeed, for the most part, they arise out of the debris of war.

In the long and hard march back to economic stability and prosperity, important results are being achieved. Among them is the impressive increase in recent months of United Kingdom exports to Canada; an increase which, during the month of March, produced for the first time in years a trade balance in favour of sterling. To put it a reverse way, in March Canada had an unfavourable trade balance with both the United States and the United Kingdom. It is not often that a foreign minister would dare express satisfaction over a reverse in the balance of trade which puts his country on the lighter side of the scale. But I think that in this case all Canadians will join me in hoping that these figures will prove to be the harbinger of greater stability in our trade relations; and of that whole-hearted