

It is a great honour for me to be here today. When I went to Queen's — I was in the class of Arts '53 — I always sat where you're sitting now, and I don't think it ever occurred to me that one day I'd be up here, on the business end — instead of the receiving end — of a lecture.

But I confess I'm not entirely comfortable up here. You know, there's a difference between a scholar and a cabinet minister. A scholar, as I'm sure you've heard, learns more and more about less and less — to the point of knowing everything about nothing. A cabinet minister is probably just the reverse. I sometimes think I learn less and less about more and more, to the point of knowing nothing about everything.

So I ask you to bear with me.

What I would like to do today is to try to put my portfolio, International Trade, in the context of the world that you are going to have to live in. And when I say you, I mean the young men and women of your generation, the people who are going to be around for awhile — so that some of you will undoubtedly end up on this side of the podium.

Projecting trade into the future implies some conjecture, of course, for nobody knows what's coming down. But, on the basis of what's happening now — and barring unforetellable calamity or unexpected bonanza — it's possible to pick out some of the important trends and carry them to fairly reasonable conclusions.

Notice the qualifiers. "Some of the important trends." "Fairly reasonable conclusions." As every economist knows, you're never going to get all the trends. And as every motion picture producer knows, you're usually

in trouble the moment you start projecting.

I have one more caveat, and then we're off. These days, mankind is really living in two worlds, not one. The world that often seems most apparent is the world of newspaper headlines and 30-second TV clips. This is the world of slogans and clichés, of black and white, of good guys and bad guys, all plainly marked. I guess you could call it Walt Disney's view of life.

Which is fine, except that the problems it presents are simplified to the point of distortion, and the solutions it suggests are instantly attainable.

Would that the real world worked that way. Unfortunately, it does not. In the workaday world, problems are complex, solutions are slow — perhaps even painful and usually imperfect — and everything is always changing.

Politicians have to spend much of their lives in Disney World. We live or die on headlines and TV clips. Indeed, there is some danger that Mickey Mouse will one day blot out the real world, overwhelm it and take its place. But if the day ever comes that fundamental policy decisions are based on the collected wisdom of Elmer Fudd, the game will be over.

There's always a problem, of course, in defining the real world. It's the old existential problem: truth, like beauty, is in the eyes of the beholder, and no beholder has 20-20 vision. But if truth is illusory, at least there can be a recognition by those who seek it that it is illusory. And that is at least honest.

One of those seekers of truth was Marshall McLuhan, who saw that the