



## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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No. 55/9 WORLD TRADE AT THE CROSSROADS

An address by the Minister of Trade and Commerce, Mr. C.D. Howe, to the Canadian Club, Montreal, March 21, 1955

As Minister of Trade and Commerce, I am always happy to speak here in Montreal. For this is Canada's greatest seaport, the nerve centre of our commercial relations with countries overseas.

You will not be surprised that I have chosen to speak to you today about world trade, and about Canadian trade policies. These are always important topics, and topics in which a Montreal audience has a lively and immediate interest. But I also have a special reason for speaking about world trade on this occasion. The reason is that the chief trading nations of the world have just concluded a meeting in Geneva to review and revise the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

That is why I have chosen as the subject of my address "World Trade at the Crossroads". Within the next few weeks and months, Governments and Parliaments the world over will be considering the outcome of the Geneva Conference, and deciding whether to accept the amendments that have been proposed to the GATT.

I, myself, expect to be making full explanation of these changes in the House of Commons in Ottawa within the next few days.

In a sense, this speech is a preview of my statement in Parliament, although I can assure you that I do not intend to anticipate the sort of detailed analysis that Members of Parliament will expect me to put before them. On this occasion, I shall paint with a broad brush, in wide sweeping strokes.

I do not know how much you know about the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, or the GATT as it is popularly called, nor do I know how many of you are for the GATT, or how many of you are against. What I suspect is that quite a large number of you have only a very superficial knowledge of the Agreement and have no strong views one way or the other. If so, you are in good company.