

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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FULL EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC STABILITY

Speech made by Mr. Jean Lesage, M.P., Chairman,
Canadian Delegation to Fourteenth Session of the
Economic and Social Council - in Plenary Session
on July 1, 1952.

Once again the Economic and Social Council is called upon to consider problems of full employment and international economic stability. From its inception it was recognized that one of the principal functions of the Council in the economic field would be to facilitate the efforts of national governments to achieve and maintain high and stable levels of employment, income and trade, and in that way to encourage higher standards of living for all people. Each year the Council has devoted considerable energy and time to the fulfilment of its responsibilities in this important field. Indeed the Experts' Report on Measures for International Economic Stability has its origin in a comprehensive debate and resolution adopted at the eleventh session of the Council held in Geneva in 1950.

The report which we now have before us, and its relationship to the previous efforts of the Council to devise international measures to deal with the impact of economic fluctuations, is an impressive tribute to the determination of the United Nations and its member governments to avoid the occurrence of economic recessions in the future. Even though the post-war years have been generally prosperous, it is significant that this Council has, in the past few years, arranged for the preparation of no less than three major reports dealing with problems of international economic stability. In a sense this reflects the universal fear of economic depressions like that of the thirties, which left such deep scars on the thinking of most of us. In a more important sense, it holds the promise that countries are prepared to do everything in their power to avoid serious depressions in the future.

The Canadian economic policy since the end of the war has been directed to the maintenance of high levels of employment and economic stability both at home and abroad. In line with these basic objectives, the Canadian Government is prepared to cooperate with all countries in the pursuit of policies which make these objectives possible. We have approached the Experts' Report in this spirit.

To begin with, the Canadian Delegation would like to join with all the other delegations which have complimented the Experts for the realistic and able report which they have prepared for our consideration. Regardless of whether or not we can agree with all their recommendations, I think I can safely say that the vast majority of the countries represented here would agree that the Experts have made a worthwhile contribution to our understanding of problems of world economic stability.