



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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THE PART TO BE PLAYED BY CANADA IN
THE MAINTENANCE OF WORLD PEACE.

An address by Right Hon. Louis S. St. Laurent, Secretary of State for External Affairs, at an exhibitors' dinner in connection with the Canadian International Trade Fair in Toronto, June 11, 1948.

It seems appropriate that my first words tonight should be words of congratulation and appreciation. This occasion represents the fruition of plans and preparations that have been a long time in the making. The preparatory period of an International Trade Fair - particularly one which is, as this is, an entirely new venture - is a matter not of months but of years. If my memory is correct, it is now well over two years since my colleague, who occupies the chair this evening, took the initiative in recommending that, for the first time in our history, an International Trade Fair should be held in this country, and in recommending, further, that the Government of Canada should shoulder the primary responsibility for planning the whole project and for carrying it through to completion.

When I say that this primary responsibility was to be assumed by the Government, I do not mean to suggest that, in accepting Mr. MacKinnon's recommendation, there was any expectation that the whole burden of the undertaking would fall upon the shoulders of the Government. We knew that we would need, and we were confident that we would receive, the unstinted support of the businessmen of Canada. In that respect we have not been disappointed.

In organizing this fair - starting with virtually no experience in this very specialized field - the Canadian Government Exhibition Commission has performed an enormous task with great credit to itself. Great as the Commission's labours have been, however, the measure of success that has been achieved could not have been attained without the constant support and the endless variety of aid given by businessmen and by business organizations throughout Canada.

Even if I had the time to do so - and in any event I hardly think that it would fall appropriately within my own assignment - I could not possibly mention by name the individuals, the business firms and the organizations of many different kinds whose voluntary efforts have contributed in a thousand and one essential ways to the result that has been accomplished. Nevertheless, I do wish to convey our appreciation, in the broadest and most unqualified terms, to all those who have helped to make this trade fair a really worthwhile effort on Canada's part towards bringing businessmen of many countries together, and in that manner giving a stimulus of the most practical kind to the recovery of international commerce. I should be guilty of a very serious oversight, indeed, if I failed to make clear that no small portion of our appreciation is due to the great number of businessmen from other countries, who, as exhibitors or as buyers, have travelled long distances in coming to Canada and whose attendance at the fair has entailed a substantial expenditure of both time and money.

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