

PULLING TOGETHER FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Notes for a speech by the Right Honorable Joe Clark
Secretary of State for External Affairs,
Toronto October 1, 1984

This is my first speech in Canada as Secretary of State for External Affairs.

And I am here to talk about trade.

Because we believe that trade must have a much higher priority in the External policy of Canada. That is one the major changes we were elected to achieve on September 4, and I am here to ask your help in building both new markets and new attitudes in trade.

For decades, much of our national debate has been about internal questions - our constitution, our languages, our identity, our federal/provincial reality. (No single Canadian topic causes more confusion internationally than our federal/provincial relations. They cause about as much confusion abroad as they do at home). But we have looked inward so long that we risk forgetting the basic Canadian reality that this nation survives by reaching outward.

At the same time, much of our internal economic debate has been about how we distribute wealth, rather than how we create it.

The people of Canada have indicated, overwhelmingly, that they want a new agenda in Ottawa, and our new government is at work on that new order of business. We are committed to creating wealth, and growth and jobs - and we know that exports are the key to Canadian prosperity and growth. But to export, we have to meet the competition. And to meet the competition that is now out there in the markets of the world, business, labour and governments are going to have to pull together as we have never done before.

We have to change some attitudes.

I want the Department of External Affairs to be known as a selling department, as well as a policy department, and a source of skilled diplomacy.

One of my neighbours at the Cabinet table is George Hees, who, with his gift for delicate language established an alphabet slogan for the Trade Commissioners of twenty-five years ago. He told them Y C D B S O Y A. You Can't Do Business Sitting On Your Ass. I'm not as subtle as George, but that is the spirit I want to establish.