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STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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SOME THOUGHTS ON POSTWAR CANADA

An address by Mr. Vincent Massey, C.H., P.C., Chancellor of the University of Toronto, and Former Canadian Minister to the United States and Canadian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, to the Canadian Society of New York on January 28, 1949.

It is a great pleasure to me to meet the Members of the Canadian Society of New York again. I say again because I was your guest twenty-one years ago, so long ago that a boy could have been born, could have grown up and cast his first vote since we last met.

Many of you gentlemen are of course Canadians, or former Canadians, or honorary Canadians. I expect there are few of you who have not some contact with Canada, but perhaps you do not know all that has been happening in the last few years. The pace of our national development has been greatly quickened. There has been a tremendous growth in stature. The war has been largely responsible for this. I think it is correct to say that in the first world war we won our maturity as a country and that in the second war this maturity was expressed. The last thing I want to do is to bore you by giving you statistics, but there are one or two points which might be of interest. 21 years ago only one foreign state was represented in Ottawa. Now some 30 countries exchange representatives with Canada. So much for international contacts. It is a matter of some significance that in the late conflict we were fourth among the Allies in the production of munitions, fourth in air power, and third in sea power. To apply some yardsticks in the post-war years, we were the third largest contributor in money to UNRRA and now our annual contribution to the U.N. budget is next to those of the five major powers.

But material growth is only part of the picture. When a boy has become an adult his height and weight are less important than his individual personality. We ask not how big he has grown but what sort of a chap he has become. With nations as with men the important thing is the question of character and individuality. Now it would be a very dull world if persons or communities were too much the same. It is customary to underline similarities between communities. It is also important to recognize differences. I think that too is an important aid to understanding. It is therefore interesting to ask what makes us different in Canada from other countries, gives us our distinguishing marks? One important thing of course is our racial pattern. As the world of course knows we have two cultures in Canada, English and French. About one third of our people speak French as their mother tongue. Their contribution greatly enriches our national life.

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