



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 50/12

PROTECTING THE CANADIAN CONSUMER

An address by Mr. Paul Martin, Minister of National Health and Welfare delivered in Ottawa on March 16, 1950 marking the 75th Anniversary of Food and Drug Control in Canada

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF CANADA'S FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

The consumer is too often forgotten. Tonight, however, we are celebrating the 75th Anniversary of a law that has helped the Canadian consumer to come into his own. Three-quarters of a century ago, on January 1, 1875, shortly after Canada became a nation, our Food and Drugs Act came into effect. This was the first such legislation on this Continent, preceding Indiana's pure food act by 25 years and the United States food and drug act by 31 years.

A government service such as the Food and Drugs Division of the Department of National Health and Welfare, to the extent that it is courteous and efficient and keeps abreast of progress, goes about its job quietly and with little public recognition or even awareness of the way in which, day after day, it is serving the public welfare. But tonight is an occasion to recognize meritorious service.

The success of this federal service owes much to the support given it by the press and by radio, as well as by Canadian business and, of course, by other departments of the Federal Government. It is appropriate that this 75th Anniversary Banquet should be attended by so many who have done so much to make possible the success of our food and drug administration. I am glad to welcome here tonight representatives of the press and of radio, and of national associations of Canadian industries, especially those that are directly affected by the regulations made under the Food and Drugs Act. In both Canada and the United States the development of food and drug regulations has kept pace with the steady increase in our level of living.

We are particularly glad to have with us the Surgeon-General of the United States, Dr. Leonard Scheele, who directs the renowned United States Public Health Service; with which we enjoy a most friendly and co-operative relationship, signalized recently by our collaboration on a film to promote cancer research. We are also honored to have with us a former Nova Scotian, Mr. Charles Wesley Dunn, Professor of Law at New York University and a world authority on food and drug legislation. Mr. Dunn, who is General Counsel for several national food and drug associations in the United States, two years ago voiced the wholehearted approval by business of federal action to protect the United States consumer, after ten years' experience with the amended legislation there: