



Statements and Speeches

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CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF HAVING THE U.S. AS A NEIGHBOUR

An Address by the Honourable Mark MacGuigan, Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the Cincinnati Council on World Affairs, Cincinnati, Ohio, October 17, 1980

...I propose to speak to you today with considerable candour about a number of aspects of the relationship between our two countries and, more particularly, about how we in Canada view the prospects for that relationship in the period immediately ahead. I do so in the hope that we can thereby achieve greater sensitivity to national aspirations and to the mechanisms and structures we employ in seeking to achieve them.

Canada and the United States grew out of the freedom to choose a way of life. For hundreds of years, men and women have chosen to come to our two countries, and have worked hard to improve their lot once they reached these shores. Out of these recurring waves of humanity have grown two societies full of diversity, but having internal coherence through a set of shared ideals and common hopes. The hold on people's imaginations which the prospect of being part of this enterprise inspires has not slackened over the years. The thousands of refugees around the world who would do anything to settle in our countries are significant testimony to the power of the North American dream.

Our common heritage has bred similar values and a common ethical landscape. Democracy, human rights, individual freedoms — these are the bedrock of our common interest, the cement of our defence alliance.

Every day, in our relations with each other, we see a practical example of our commitment to civilized conduct among nations. From this perspective, it is natural that we should both be outraged at the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and that we should share your anguish and anger at the flagrant violation of the rules of international law which has occurred in Iran. We both believe that the community of nations simply must not be allowed to ignore developments such as these, because the fabric of international order is fragile, easily damaged, and once torn, almost impossible to repair.

The plain and uncomfortable fact is that we all face uncertain times — times when differences between countries tend to be magnified. And because Canada and the United States are energetic nations with a multitude of interests of their own in addition to their many links, hard times pose a special challenge. The 1980s look like a difficult period, but our two countries have faced harder tasks before and overcome them together.

It is partly because we have so much in common that our differences can be so jarring. Some are quite basic. In the United States, you lay heavy stress on the concepts of capitalism, free enterprise, the efficiency of market forces. These are im-
