

# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

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## CANADIAN TRANSPORTATION AND

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

An address by the Minister of Transport, Mr. Lionel Chevrier, to the American Association of Port Authorities, Toronto, September 25, 1953.

...The subject I have chosen to speak to you about is Canadian transportation and economic development. I know that you have a direct interest in transportation in all its forms, for ports are the meeting place of water, rail, road and pipeline transport, and, indeed, many of the port authorities represented here also operate air facilities. I know too that you all have a vital interest in economic developments, for every port prospers or stagnates along with the trades it serves. Conversely, many industries can be stimulated or throttled according to the efficiency displayed in the transport of their goods, including efficiency in port operations. It has occurred to me, therefore, that you might be interested to consider briefly the role of transportation in Canadian development.

First of all you must appreciate that Canada's very creation as a political entity, let alone its subsequent economic growth, was achieved in the face of tremendous obstacles imposed by geography. The four main regions of settlement are separated by vast stretches of mountain, rock, muskeg and bush. From the earliest days right up to the present, Canadians have made their living mainly by exporting a comparatively few primary products to other countries. In our history these products have been fish, furs, lumber, grain, minerals, pulp and paper, and now perhaps oil and gas. Most of these products must travel long distances within Canada as well as beyond to reach their markets. With transportation accounting for a large part of our costs, it will be apparent that it is efficient transportation that has made us what we are today. By the same token, inefficient transportation could break us tomorrow.

Trade-minded and transport-minded as we are in Canada, we have not overlooked the essential roles played by our ocean and inland ports. The facilities at those most important for our foreign trade have been nationalized and placed under the administration of a National Harbours Board, as many of you will know, for representatives of the Board are here tonight and some have held high office in your association. Other ports are administered by local commissions, as in our host city of Toronto. We are proud of their modern facilities and their record of efficient operation. Above all we rejoice in their freedom from the extortionist practices that can arise to plague a waterfront, to the detriment of port and trade alike.