



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

OTTAWA - CANADA

CANADA

No. 47/1

CANADIAN DIPLOMACY

An address by Mr. L. B. Pearson, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the Ottawa Branch of the Alumni Federation of the University of Toronto, January 11, 1947.

I have but recently returned from Washington, where I was Canadian Ambassador. It is, of course, a great sacrifice to give up the ease and luxury of diplomatic and Embassy life for the decent obscurity of the East Block. The exchange of the Ambassadorial limousine for the Rideau street car is also an unequal one, though the substitution of Mister for Excellency is, I must say, an improvement. One of the compensations held out to me in my new job was that, whereas an Ambassador has a lot of representational and oratorical work to do, a Civil Servant is supposed to remain, not only anonymous, but silent. Even this compensation, however, seems to be denied me tonight. That, of course, is my own fault as I could not resist the invitation to talk to fellow graduates of my own University, especially when that invitation was extended by my old friend, Wray Patterson.

The fact that we are all graduates of Canada's greatest University, and that many of you are old friends of mine, makes the ordeal by oratory easier and less fearful than it might otherwise be. That is a great comfort. A Varsity occasion is always one at which I feel at home. I think that my connection with the University of Toronto has been somewhat closer than that of most of its graduates. I have been both a student and a teacher at Toronto and acquired there a B.A., a "T", and a wife -- three distinctions which I prize most highly. As a matter of fact I taught my wife at the University for one year, and have been taught by her now for some nineteen; the balance is rapidly becoming even.

Those of us who are graduates of the University, especially those who live outside Toronto, should not weaken in its support, especially in these confused and disturbing days. I do not wish to exaggerate the value or the beauty of the old school tie. It is, however, true that a university cannot achieve its maximum usefulness in the community if it has not a body of loyal alumni behind it. Loyalty, however, means far more than a determination on the part of old grads to "fire" the football coach when the team has lost four games in a row. It is taking an active interest in the affairs of the university and giving it your help, financial and otherwise. In your case it lies also in persuading the best young brains in the community in which you live to enroll