



Statements and Speeches

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CHANGES IN CANADA

Notes for an Address by the Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the Canada/California Chamber of Commerce, Los Angeles, February 20, 1985.

...As you would expect, I want to talk today about Canada-United States relations. If you have been watching developments in Canada over the past several months, you will guess that I am going to talk about a new self-confidence in my country — a country that is changing our laws to welcome foreign investment, asserting our sovereignty to co-operate in modernizing northern warning systems against Soviet attack; reducing our government debt burden; and placing unprecedented emphasis on becoming more competitive in world markets. We are proud of Canada, and excited about what we can become.

But this topic involves two countries, I intend to make the point that improvements in the relations between our two countries are as much in your interest as in ours....

In 1979, I was the prime minister of Canada who authorized our ambassador, Ken Taylor, to offer sanctuary to six American embassy employees in Iran, and who later issued Canadian passports to help the six escape. Looking back on that incident, I believe the emotional American response to our help was almost more remarkable than the Canadian action itself. To Canada, it was an automatic act of friendship. To you it seemed a sharp surprise that someone else would take risks to help the United States. That dramatized for me the degree to which your great and generous country can come to believe you are alone in pursuing purposes which you think are significant. As the foreign minister of one of the world's respected middle powers, I think it is important that you should not feel isolated or alone, and important also that you should neither be surprised by Canada's friendship, nor take it for granted.

You have a lot to distract you — a buoyant dollar and all its consequences, and challenges abroad in every field, from arms control to famine. Yet in the face of all that competition, your Administration is giving deliberate priority to the United States' relations with Canada. The first major review of Canada-US relations in over ten years has been undertaken by your State Department.

In less than a month, on St. Patrick's Day, your president and my prime minister are meeting in the historic old capital of Quebec City, to advance and to symbolize the relations between our two countries — countries which, as well as being neighbours, are the best friend each other has. The last meeting of a president and a prime minister on that site was in 1944, and the British prime minister, Sir Winston Churchill, was also there. That was a meeting of the leaders of the three countries whose quite uncommon resolve assured victory against the axis powers. This new meeting in Quebec has its own significance, because it comes at a time when my country is expressing a new self-confidence, and when yours is showing that it knows that a superpower needs friends as well as allies.
