



Statements and Speeches

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JAPAN AND CANADA -- WINDOWS INTO DIFFERENT WORLDS

Remarks by Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau to the Japan National Press Club, Tokyo, October 26, 1976.

The decade of the Seventies is little more than half over, yet already it has produced such tumult, such shock, such malaise, that it is difficult to think back to the optimism of 1970. Was it only six years ago that the Seventies burst upon us with an excitement and a sense of expectation as intense as any period of our lifetime? Six years ago, I had the honour of sharing with you the pride of your achievement at Osaka. Was there any limit to the inventive genius of the industrialized world? Was there any barrier that could not be hurdled by the spirit of a free people? Canadians at Expo 67 and Japanese at Expo 70 had demonstrated their imagination, their discipline and their willingness to experiment and be drawn into the future.

In 1970 the key word, the mood, of the industrialized democracies was "confidence" -- confidence in our technology, confidence in our institutions of government. In six years, in country after country, that mood has been questioned and in some instances shattered. In Europe, in North America, in Japan, confidence in government has decreased sharply. Associated with that drop in confidence, but qualitatively distinct, is another phenomenon -- a cry for greater access to government information, greater participation in decision-making processes, greater accountability of governments to their constituents. No Japanese, no Canadian, is unacquainted with this phenomenon. Few question its essential wholesomeness.

Yet how many Japanese, and how many Canadians, are familiar with yet another dimension of equally wholesome pressure for governmental abandonment of authority and jurisdiction? This pressure is not from within, it is from without. It proceeds not out of idealism or theory but out of necessity and circumstance. Its impact on governments and on peoples will probably be every bit as momentous and far-reaching as were those long-ago events of 1215, of 1776, and 1853. This process demands of us increasing international co-operation in many instances, and the application -- through supranational authorities -- of universal solutions in others.

Only six years have passed since the beginning of this decade, yet we are all much more knowledgeable and somewhat more wise. Few statemen now would deny that there are some problems -- increasing
