

Canada Weekly

Volume 5, No. 20

May 18, 1977



Ottawa, Canada.

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Canada's relationship with the United States truly unique – Don Jamieson

"...the relationship between Canada and the United States is much broader and deeper than the stereotype," said Secretary of State for External Affairs Don Jamieson in an address to the Southern Council on International and Public Affairs and the Council on Foreign Relations, Atlanta, Georgia, U.S. on April 29. "We have a network of contacts and communications which exceeds that of any other two nations in the world. It is truly a unique relationship." he declared.

The minister described as follows some of "the images on both sides" that were not always accurate, and went on to discuss prospects for the two nations:

...Within that relationship, however, our knowledge of each other has not kept pace with the growth of goodwill between us. Many Canadians have perceptions of the United States, this region in particular, which are incomplete or out of date. Similarly, I know that there exist in the United States images of Canada which are partial and, on occasion, misleading. At times I sense that the Canadian and American publics are examining each other through opposite ends of a telescope. There is seldom a day when Canadians fail to see, hear or read about an event involving the United States. We are very conscious of all things American, some might say overly-conscious. Now Americans are becoming more aware of Canadian affairs. And yet, images on both sides are not always accurate.

...There have been some misunderstandings in the U.S.A. about our Foreign Investment Review Act and its implications for foreign investment.... Since 1973, under our Foreign Investment Review Act, certain foreign investment proposals have come under a review mechanism to ensure that they will bring significant benefit to Canada, but this is certainly not inconsistent with our encouragement to foreign capital. In a country with such a high level of foreign investment as Canada – over \$30 billion of U.S.A. capital alone – it makes good sense to ensure that the capital invested brings benefits to Canada, as well as to the investor. The record shows that the administration of the act has been even-handed and non-discriminatory as to the country of origin, and has worked out quite well for all concerned.

There are many other misconceptions.

One other is Canada's energy situation. We have been widely thought, even by Canadians, to have far greater reserves of fossil-fuels than indeed we have. Thus when our policy of reducing exports of oil to the United States was undertaken, it was frequently viewed here as a "cutting-off" of oil supplies. In fact, it was our effort, parallel to yours, to manage our remaining and diminishing supply. How to correct, and better, to avoid these misunderstandings is a matter of real concern to me.

I recognize too well, as a result of my experience, both in and outside government, that while the formal channels of communication between our two federal authorities have been consistently excellent, Canadians must pay more attention to the other important elements of influence and decision-making in your country. We should seek with more vigour to inform Congress and private groups, such as yours, about our policies and objectives if we are to fill in some of the gaps. This is one of my principal objectives as Secretary of State for External Affairs....

Of course our national objectives do not always coincide. Given the range of our associations, the intricacy of our economic partnership and the vibrancy of our political systems, the wonder is that the problems between us are so few. To me, what is particularly significant is the excellent record we have in dealing with problems that do arise.

Right now there are important matters before us needing satisfactory resolution. I would like to outline my approach to some of the key issues, and in so doing, give impetus to the spirit

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