

VERNMENT



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CANADA'S WORLD TRADE

An address by Mr. L.B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, before the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, on April 24, 1950.

Any minister in any government today who is responsible for the conduct of external relations is bound to be particularly interested in and concerned with trade and economic matters, because they loom so large - for good or evil - in determining the relations between nations.

It has been said that if goods do not cross frontiers, arms must. I'm not so sure of that. Certainly the corollary is not true that if goods do cross frontiers, arms won't. Trade has, in fact, often in the past brought conflict, rather than co-operation, and gentlemen adventurers trading into outer areas have often requested and received support from the armed services of their governments in their commercial ventures.

Men trade with other countries, in fact, because it adds to their wealth. That is no ignoble motive. Governments support them - when they do - because this trade and this wealth add to the national welfare. Trade which does that deserves government support. The opposite is true also.

In Canada, more than in most countries, international trade is vital to our prosperity. The fact that we now export to 112 countries and import from 110 shows that we recognize this. We recognize also the fact that today our trade faces special problems which arise, for the most part, out of the complications and perplexities of the international situation; problems which can only be solved by international action, but will certainly never be solved by sitting back and hoping that something will turn up; by assuming that we are merely passing through a temporarily difficult period which will soon be over.

One of the most imaginative and compelling phrases that emerged during the war was coined by a great American who unhappily was not spared to fulfil the promise of his early career. Wendell Wilkie talked and wrote about "one world" - the "one world" of peace and of commercial intercourse. The idea - indeed the hope - expressed by this phrase was then in everyone's mind and heart, a beacon leading us through the darkest days of the war, giving us the promise of a result worthy of our efforts. There is no more depressing aspect of the post-war period than our inability to realize this ideal. There are, in fact, moments when we seem to be dropping further away from the goal of an orderly and united world rather than advancing upon it. For those of us to whom foreign policy is a matter of daily concern, nothing is more urgent or vital than the need to keep on