



Statements and Speeches

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CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES IN THE 1980S: PARTNERSHIP, CONFLICT OR ...?

An Address by the Honourable Mark MacGuigan, Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the University of Southern California Colloquium on Canada, Los Angeles, January 28, 1982

...I was puzzled at first when I read the theme of this colloquium, "Canada and the United States in the 1980s: Partnership, Conflict or ...?". Partnership or conflict. Black or white. With us or against us. I am afraid that international life in the last years of the twentieth century promises to be much more complex, even among the closest of neighbours and allies, than the theme of this colloquium suggests. We are undoubtedly going to have partnership and conflict. Nevertheless, in these complex times, I do have a simple message.

Best friend

I want to make three points. First, we are the best friend the United States has. Second, we are the most important business partner you have. Third, Canada is not a replica of the United States and won't always do the same things in the same way as you do.

Some of you will hold all three of these propositions to be self-evident. Some others among you may doubt all three. Some will not have thought about Canada in these terms before. Nonetheless, this message is true and it bears repeating because these are dangerous times.

East and West are armed as never before.

Events in Poland confirm the lesson of Communism: it does not free man's spirit nor satisfy his daily needs but rather concentrates the power of the state and represses dissent.

In the West, some Europeans, mindful of their past and fearful of the future, are tempted to try to opt out of this nuclear age.

Everywhere, the fabric of morality is frayed — violence claims innocent victims in Tehran, El Salvador, Argentina, and in our own streets. Anwar Sadat is murdered, the Pope is attacked, President Reagan is the target of an assassin's bullet.

There is widespread dissatisfaction in the poor countries of the world — with their poverty, with their backwardness, with political and economic systems which preserve privilege, indignity and inhumanity.

Economic uncertainty matches political turbulence. Everywhere, protectionist tendencies abound; economic progress comes haltingly; the old solutions have become part of the problem. New solutions are as elusive as ever.
