



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
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No. 51/15 CANADIAN-AMERICAN ARBITRATION

An address by Mr. Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence, delivered at the Metropolitan Club, New York, on March 30, 1951, on the occasion of the presentation to Mr. Claxton of an award by the American Arbitration Association for his services in promoting friendship between Canada and the United States.

I am very grateful indeed for the honour conferred by this award; it really recognizes the close and friendly relations between American and Canadian business.

It was this relationship which led the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and the American Arbitration Association to create the Canadian-American Commercial Arbitration Commission. This arrangement was brought about by an agreement signed by me here in New York on May 20, 1943. Our distinguished host, Mr. Thomas J. Watson, made a large contribution to this result. A step necessary to set up the arbitration arrangement was to ascertain what the law was in the nine provinces of Canada. As counsel for the Canadian Chamber of Commerce the job fell to me of making an examination which showed that these arbitration arrangements could be effectively made under the existing laws.

The signing of the agreement was marked by the first western hemisphere conference and dinner, held at the Hotel Astor, and our host of this evening was the recipient that night of an award. He had earned that award. That evening I referred to the fact that this was the tenth anniversary of the Inter-American Arbitration Commission and in signing the agreement we were "filling the gap".

The extent to which arbitration machinery is used is not the only measure of its success.

One of the greatest advantages of an arbitration arrangement is that its existence leads people to arrive at an amicable settlement without even having resort to arbitration, still less to the courts. Moreover, the mere fact that an arbitration arrangement has been negotiated induces as well as exhibits the spirit of the good neighbour.

This has been particularly true of the relations between Canada and the United States.