

I am delighted that my first speech to an American audience as Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs should take place in Los Angeles, the fourth largest Canadian city in North America, after Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver.

As you would expect, I want to talk today about Canada-United States relations. If you have been watching developments in Canada over the last several months, you will guess that I am going to talk about a new self confidence in my country - a country that is changing our laws to welcome foreign investment, asserting our sovereignty to cooperate in modernizing northern warning systems against Soviet attack; reducing our government debt burden; and placing unprecedented emphasis on becoming more competitive in world markets. We are proud of Canada, and excited about what we can become.

But this topic involves two countries, I intend to make the point that improvements in the relations between our two countries are as much in your interest as in ours.

I bring some personal perspectives to this topic. My mother was born in a small California community called Black Diamond, which has since been swallowed up by Los Angeles. Her father worked for some years as a guard in an asylum for the mentally disturbed. I consider that to have been pre-natal preparation for my career in politics.

Then in 1979, I was the Prime Minister of Canada who authorized our Ambassador, Ken Taylor, to offer sanctuary to six American Embassy employees in Iran, and who later issued Canadian passports to help the six escape. Looking back on that incident, I believe the emotional American response to our help was almost more remarkable than the Canadian action itself. To Canada, it was an automatic act of friendship. To you it seemed a sharp surprise that someone else would take risks to help the United States. That dramatized for me the degree to which your great and generous country can come to believe you are alone in pursuing purposes which you think are significant. As the Foreign Minister of one of the world's respected middle powers, I think it is important that you should not feel isolated or alone, and important also that you should neither be surprised by Canada's friendship, nor take it for granted.

You have a lot to distract you - a buoyant dollar and all its consequences, and challenges abroad in every field, from arms control to famine. Yet in the face