



Statements and Speeches

No. 77/13

CANADA AFTER ONE HUNDRED AND TEN YEARS

A Speech by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Don Jamieson, to the Canada Club, London, June 30, 1977.

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The ties between Britain and Canada are centuries old and abiding. Although our historic relationship manifests itself in many ways, I continue to feel that our most priceless inheritance from Britain is our parliamentary democracy and everything it represents.

I had some difficulty choosing a topic to discuss with you today. These are exciting days for Canada and I know your interests are wide-ranging. I decided, therefore, that, in view of my ministerial responsibilities, I should touch on a number of aspects of Canadian foreign policy against the background of certain recent domestic and international events, thus providing, I hope, some conception of Canada today and of our outlook on the world.

In a few hours my country — Canada — will begin the celebration of its one-hundred-and-tenth birthday. Appropriately, the festivities will start in my native province — Newfoundland. There the British Empire overseas began in 1583 and there, in 1949, the Canadian dream of "One Nation From Sea to Sea" was realized at last.

This blending of old and new is typical of Canada. It is as old as the most enduring cultures and traditions inherited from Britain and France and enriched over the years by offerings from many lands. And it is as new as the still fresh memories of Canadians who recall when the first plow broke the prairie sod and now-thriving cities were mere outposts on pioneer wagon-trails.

Tomorrow, as the sounds of celebration move westward from Newfoundland, the summer sun will illuminate a vast, rich, diverse and still challenging land. As we Canadians look back over 110 years, we can take satisfaction from our mastery of one of the world's largest land-masses and longest coastlines. We can be proud of our economic achievements, which have given us a high living standard, enabled us to contribute significantly to all fields of human endeavour and to play our part in the world's search for peace, security and freedom.

Thus, tomorrow, the vast majority of Canadians of all backgrounds and regions will conclude that it has all been very much worth while; but there will be no smugness or complacency in such a judgment. What we have been able to do in our first 110 years serves as a reminder that we can, and must, do better. In many respects, Canada remains an unfinished country and we are, as one of our writers has put it, "Canadians in the making". In our first century, we established a unique new society, not just a pale copy of something older and alien but distinctive and identifiably Canadian.