

As this is my first opportunity to appear before an audience in the United States since my appointment as Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, I want to thank the Cincinnati Council on World Affairs for providing this opportunity to discuss with you a number of issues which should be of mutual interest.

I would also point out that this luncheon today marks your annual observance of the establishment of the United Nations Organization. Both Canada and the United States were members of that body when it came into existence in 1945, and we have both experienced its trials and successes over the years, as well as its evolution to an organization that now includes many times the number of sovereign states it did 35 years ago. I am sure you join with me in the hope that the United Nations will continue as our best hope for peace and stability in the world.

I propose to speak to you today with considerable candour about a number of aspects of the relationship between our two countries and, more particularly, about how we in Canada view the prospects for that relationship in the period immediately ahead. I do so in the hope that we can thereby achieve greater sensitivity to national aspirations and to the mechanisms and structures we employ in seeking to achieve them.

Canada and the United States grew out of the freedom to choose a way of life. For hundreds of years, men and women have chosen to come to our two countries, and have worked hard to improve their lot once they reached these shores. Out of these recurring waves of humanity have grown two societies full of diversity, but having internal coherence through a set of shared ideals and common hopes. The hold on people's imaginations which the prospect of being part of this enterprise inspires has not slackened over the years. The thousands of refugees around the world who would do anything to settle in our countries are significant testimony to the power of the North American dream.

Our common heritage has bred similar values and a common ethical landscape. Democracy, human rights, individual freedoms - these are the bedrock of our common interest, the cement of our defence alliance.

Every day, in our relations with each other, we see a practical example of our commitment to civilized conduct among nations. From this perspective, it is natural that we should both be outraged at the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and that we should share your anguish and anger at the flagrant violation of the rules of international law which has occurred in Iran. We both believe that the community of nations simply must not be allowed to ignore developments such as these, because the fabric of international order is fragile, easily damaged, and once torn, almost impossible to repair.