

Release time 1.00 p.m.

CANADA'S RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT

Address by Hon. Douglas Abbott, Minister of Finance,
before the Canadian Club of Montreal, April 19, 1948.

When the Minister of Finance addresses a public gathering at this time of year he has an uncomfortable feeling. He suspects that what his audience really wants to hear is whether taxes are going up, staying where they are, or going down. But, as you well know, gentlemen, there is a tradition of budget secrecy for which I have learned to have great respect.

What I will say today therefore will have no connection whatever with the forthcoming budget, nor, in fact, will it deal with any of our current problems except in an incidental way. I am going to ask you today to look beyond the details of the many economic and political problems that beset us in this troubled and uncertain world of 1948. I am going to ask you to direct your attention to the record of Canada's growth as a nation during the past few years. I am going to ask you to look at that record in broad terms -- in the terms that, in my judgment, are of greatest significance for the Canadian people as a whole.

It seems to me that we Canadians have been thinking too much about our problems and too little about our achievement. We have been tending to get our sights out of focus. I feel we need something to restore our perspective.

In so shaping my address as to emphasize the broad achievements of the recent past, I hope I will not be accused of any Pollyanna optimism. No one is more conscious than I