



CANADA

# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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No. 67/18 SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING  
CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Speech by the Honourable Paul Martin, Secretary  
of State for External Affairs, at Waterloo  
Lutheran University Convocation, May 22, 1967.

...The process of growth and change which has been so evident in higher education in Canada in the last few years has also been very evident in the field for which I am responsible -- namely, foreign policy. While the principles which have traditionally governed the conduct of our relations with other countries remain valid, the way in which they are expressed in policy must reflect the changing circumstances of our times. It is on this theme that I should like to say a few words today.

Although we are this year celebrating the one-hundredth anniversary of Confederation, the development of a distinctive and independent Canadian foreign policy is more recent. It was not until 1907 that we had a separate Department of External Affairs, and for many years after that our foreign policy was limited to ensuring that Canada's particular interests were taken into account in the conduct of British imperial foreign policy. Canada became a member of the League of Nations when it was established in 1920, but never assumed an especially active role in that ill-fated organization. Pre-occupied with our own problems and by the needs of our own development, we did not feel any great need to concern ourselves with events outside our borders.

With the benefit of historical perspective, it is clear that the Second World War marked a major turning-point in the evolution of Canadian foreign policy. Canada came out of the war more fully aware not only of its vital interest in preserving peace throughout the world but also of its ability to bring its influence to bear in the councils of the nations more positively and effectively than before. And, of course, the postwar world, which had seen the dawn of the atomic age, was a much more dangerous place, in which no nation, and, indeed, no responsible citizen, could afford to ignore the issues which threatened to divide the world's peoples.

Early in 1947, shortly after he had been appointed Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Louis St. Laurent gave a lecture at the University of Toronto in which he set out to define the principles underlying Canadian foreign policy. As Mr. St. Laurent pointed out in his lecture, a policy in world affairs, to be truly effective, must have its foundations