

CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND INDIA

AN ADDRESS BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Ladies and Gentlemen:

This is my third visit to New Delhi as Canada's Foreign Minister. I have returned to New Delhi only 14 months after my last visit for three simple reasons: the growing importance of India in the world; the growing importance of India to Canada; and the growing importance of Canada to India.

Many of you are aware of the burgeoning of the Canada-India relationship in recent years. That relationship really began at the turn of the century, when immigrants from India first settled in the Canadian west. The official partnership had its origins in the earliest days of Indian independence and in the emergence of the modern, post-war Commonwealth. Since then, many thousands of people of Indian extraction have settled in Canada. Through their hard work and distinctive cultures, these Canadians-by-choice have made a major contribution to the diversity, the identity and the economic strength of our nation.

Our economic relations have expanded enormously. Our two-way trade reached \$660 million in 1985, and we are laying the base for greater growth. For example, Canada has opened a new trade office in Bombay; nearly 50 Canadian firms are exhibiting here this week as Canada is "partner country" in the Seventh Indian Engineering Trade Fair; we have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Industrial and Technological Collaboration; ratified a double taxation agreement; and convened yesterday the first annual ministerial consultations.

All of this took hard work on both sides. It was not a matter of course, and it has not taken place in a foreign policy vacuum. These developments occurred because they make sense in broader economic and political terms.

I want to set our relationship in a Canadian foreign policy context. That will reveal something of our common cause as diplomatically activist nations and give you a fuller appreciation of why India is particularly important in our global foreign policy.

The initial point to be made is that Canadian foreign policy is, indeed, global. We can understand its global character -- I should say rather its global imperative -- by examining its domestic foundations. Canada is a parliamentary democracy which holds together across its vast expanse a remarkably small population. That population is, culturally, highly diverse. We are a bilingual and multicultural people, and we live in regions whose economic structures are strikingly