



Statements and Speeches

No. 76/9

MEXICO-CANADA ASSOCIATION HARMONIOUS AND EFFECTIVE

Remarks by the Right Honourable Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, in Mexico City, January 23, 1976.

Mr. President, distinguished guests -- thank you very much for your warm welcome. Though we have been in Mexico only a few hours, your hospitality has made me feel very much at home. We remember well your visit to Canada in 1973, Mr. President, and have long looked forward to this opportunity to accept your invitation to return. You and I have had one occasion to meet since your trip to Ottawa, and I have had many occasions to view with admiration and some degree of envy the energetic program in which you have been engaged over the past two years. Your travel schedule, your legislative record, your international initiatives -- these have all set a very high standard for others to follow. I congratulate you, Sir, on your accomplishments.

Canada and Mexico occupy the same continent, but for far too long our history and our interests have pursued parallel courses -- never in conflict but not often enough in conscious co-operation. Happily, in recent years that has been changing. In terms of bilateral interests we have found much that is attractive in one another; on the broader issues that affect the entire international community we share, in most instances, the same ultimate goals.

Perhaps it has been natural for Canada and Mexico each to have pursued its own destiny, almost oblivious of the other. Certainly our histories have been quite distinctive. In the first centuries of Canadian history, our contacts with other lands were confined almost entirely to France and Britain; your own history was already ancient when it became linked to the Spanish tradition. In 1867, the year in which Canada adopted its own constitution, Mexico was ending a brief period of foreign intervention. Canada became fully autonomous only in 1931.

In the ways in which we have structured our institutions, in our methods of governmental activity, and in the patterns of external relations that we originally inherited, Canada and Mexico have differed. Now we are finding more in common. Different though our forms of government be, we are both democracies. Separated geographically as we are by the world's most advanced economy, we also share the experience of dealing at close quarters, and in many significant spheres of endeavour, with that economy.
