

Canadians keep themselves informed about the United States in great detail. We use a great many of your products. We read your newspapers...see your films...listen to your music...follow the fortunes of your major league teams. When headlines move up or down an inch on Park Avenue, it is known the next day in Saskatchewan: I suggest that it is in your direct interest to cultivate more awareness on your part of the Canadian scene. I know you will find a study of facts about Canada a stimulating and rewarding experience.

As my contribution tonight I intend to direct your attention toward some of the facts about the "unknown customer" Canada...and I hope you will not expect me to let modesty handicap me in my effort to show you some of the more significant features of my country. I intend to lean on the familiar pattern of the questionnaire, as used by research organizations to discover the facts about potential customers. I will take the role of respondent to four broad but meaningful questions.

The first question is: What features of Canada's past have a bearing on her potential value as a customer? How did Canada get where she is today?

Our country is now one of the world's great industrial powers. This is a far cry from the primitive frontier regime of a hundred years ago...indeed from the comparatively simple Canadian economy of the early nineteenth century.

The first ten years of the century were for us years of almost fabulous growth...years in which the population increased by one third. In 1914 the First Great War brought a great challenge to this active but simple way of life. What little industrial capacity we did have was not easily turned to the needs of war. Despite this, by the end of that war, a major transformation had taken place. Not only was industrial production expanded considerably, but a marked diversification of production was achieved at the same time.

In the thirties, however, a pessimistic viewpoint began to be heard. It was said about Canada...as it was also said about the United States...that we had just about reached the limit of our growth. The market for agricultural products melted away in front of our eyes... exports of our manufactured goods were cut to a trickle by tariff restrictions and counter restrictions.

Nevertheless we survived the "hungry thirties" in better shape and with less economic distress than most countries. Indeed it would be fair to say that a characteristic of the Canadian economy has been that it does not swing to extremes...even in the booms and depressions that have overtaken the world from time to time.

By September 1939 when markets had strengthened, employment had risen and production had gained momentum, there were indications that we were back on the road to reasonable prosperity. And, September 1939 again brought the challenge of war to western civilization.

Under the drive of this challenge, Canadian activity speeded up tremendously. Existing plant capacity expanded by leaps and bounds... new industries mushroomed everywhere.

In some of these industries, aluminum, for example, Canada became almost overnight a top world producer. The aircraft industry... which was almost non-existent in Canada before the war...eventually produced 16,000 planes including trainers, fighters and some of the heaviest types of bombers. Canadian plants assembled several thousand other planes and in addition supplied millions of dollars worth of components for the famous B29 and so on. The mobility of Montgomery's