

GOVERNMENT  
OF CANADA

# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
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No 55/40      THE PAST TWENTY YEARS IN CANADA.

Speech by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Mr. J.W. Pickersgill, to the Society of New York, November 7, 1955.

Every Canadian who is invited to make a speech in the United States is tempted to tell the Americans how to run their country or how to treat the rest of the world.

That is a temptation I have had no difficulty in resisting.

But a member of the Canadian Government has a more difficult temptation to resist, and that is the temptation to tell the Americans how to treat Canada and Canadians.

I am not going to try that either: because I do not flatter myself such a lecture would be heeded, even if it found any listeners, and, in any case, I am sure the Canadian Society of New York wants a Canadian to talk to them about Canada.

The usual practice, in these times, is to talk about the future of Canada and to forecast the growth and development of our country.

But that theme does not even tempt me, because I have always felt it was wiser for public men to avoid the role of prophet and any forecast of the future of Canada would inevitably involve forecasts of future population.

Now I happen to be the Minister of Immigration and I have, therefore, double reason to be cautious in making forecasts about population which are quite certain not to turn out according to our anticipations.

For me it is far safer to talk about the past and, as one who spent eight years of his life as a professional historian, I have more qualifications to talk about what has happened than what is going to happen.

What I thought I would do was to remind you of some of the ways Canada has changed in the past twenty years.

I say remind you - because I have no sensational revelations to make.

We all know the face of Canada has changed since the days before the Second World War; but we don't always stop to measure the rate or the character of the change.