



Statements and Speeches

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CANADA AFTER ONE HUNDRED AND TEN YEARS

A Speech by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Don Jamieson, to the Canada Club, London, June 30, 1977.

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The ties between Britain and Canada are centuries old and abiding. Although our historic relationship manifests itself in many ways, I continue to feel that our most priceless inheritance from Britain is our parliamentary democracy and everything it represents.

I had some difficulty choosing a topic to discuss with you today. These are exciting days for Canada and I know your interests are wide-ranging. I decided, therefore, that, in view of my ministerial responsibilities, I should touch on a number of aspects of Canadian foreign policy against the background of certain recent domestic and international events, thus providing, I hope, some conception of Canada today and of our outlook on the world.

In a few hours my country — Canada — will begin the celebration of its one-hundred-and-tenth birthday. Appropriately, the festivities will start in my native province — Newfoundland. There the British Empire overseas began in 1583 and there, in 1949, the Canadian dream of "One Nation From Sea to Sea" was realized at last.

This blending of old and new is typical of Canada. It is as old as the most enduring cultures and traditions inherited from Britain and France and enriched over the years by offerings from many lands. And it is as new as the still fresh memories of Canadians who recall when the first plow broke the prairie sod and now-thriving cities were mere outposts on pioneer wagon-trails.

Tomorrow, as the sounds of celebration move westward from Newfoundland, the summer sun will illuminate a vast, rich, diverse and still challenging land. As we Canadians look back over 110 years, we can take satisfaction from our mastery of one of the world's largest land-masses and longest coastlines. We can be proud of our economic achievements, which have given us a high living standard, enabled us to contribute significantly to all fields of human endeavour and to play our part in the world's search for peace, security and freedom.

Thus, tomorrow, the vast majority of Canadians of all backgrounds and regions will conclude that it has all been very much worth while; but there will be no smugness or complacency in such a judgment. What we have been able to do in our first 110 years serves as a reminder that we can, and must, do better. In many respects, Canada remains an unfinished country and we are, as one of our writers has put it, "Canadians in the making". In our first century, we established a unique new society, not just a pale copy of something older and alien but distinctive and identifiably Canadian.

As time has widened the distances between us and our colonial beginnings, as we have added dimensions to our national purpose, as our confidence has grown, the discussions among us about the kind of Canada we want has become more intense and, not surprisingly, on occasion more divisive.

Canadians are almost self-consciously aware of their rare good fortune in a troubled world. Frequently we feel concern, even guilt, over the manner in which we are managing our rich resources. On our half of the North American continent, a wide range of circumstances has contrived to offer us more options than most; we are free to choose, and such choices are often difficult. What is the appropriate balance between a consuming and conserving society, between the thrust towards greater affluence and materialism and the search for a rational "life-style" more in harmony with our surroundings and more respectful of environmental and similar values? On which side should Canada come down in the intensifying debate between the advocates of ever more growth and those who maintain that "small is beautiful"?

For some countries — the majority perhaps — such questions are largely academic. Mistakes compounded over centuries or a sparseness of resources or seemingly intractable poverty virtually dictate the paths they must follow. Not so in Canada. We are increasingly aware that, if we so choose, our first 110 years can be a mere prelude to greatness of a special kind, not built solely on wealth and power but on the conception of a more generous, tolerant and well-balanced society, sensitive to the rights and aspirations of all its people and committed to an understanding and constructive role in the world community. Although Canadians continue to debate these issues, a broadly-based consensus is emerging.

In world affairs, it is one that rejects narrow nationalism while insisting on Canada's right to full economic and political self-determination. For example, the very qualities that we inherited from Britain made it mandatory that we achieve full independence; but, having done so, we are today among the strongest supporters of the Commonwealth and have worked hard to enhance its relevancy and effectiveness. The most recent meeting of Commonwealth leaders demonstrated our commitment once again. Similarly, because ours is a country owing much to our French as well as our British heritage, we are constantly strengthening our relations with the world's French-speaking peoples and particularly, as in the Commonwealth, with developing countries. Canadian aid programs overseas are carefully designed to answer the self-determined needs and aspirations of the most-deprived nations. They are devoid of ideologically self-serving overtones, on the grounds that we cannot impose on others restrictions that we could not accept ourselves. By example, however, Canada has gained considerable acceptance and respect in the Third World and is thus in a position to exert a reasonable and legitimate influence on how this potentially-powerful force will be employed in the shaping of events.

Just as imperialistic pretensions of any kind are wholly foreign to the Canadian character, we cannot accept either any enforced restriction of human rights or any doctrine that serves to perpetuate racial inequalities. The Canadian record at the United Nations and other organizations is one of consistent support for every effort to curb tyranny and oppression and to enhance individual freedoms. No Canadian

Government could do otherwise, because the Canadian people share a unanimous repugnance to all forms of subjugation. Furthermore, if we and like-minded countries are to be credible in our efforts in such areas as southern Africa and at the Belgrade Conference, our utterances and our actions must be consistent.

Our acceptance of our share of responsibility for the future of the developing world is an extension of our long-established outward-looking foreign policy. Canadians have always recognized the interdependence of the global community. At first we willingly supported the democratic struggles of Britain and other free-world countries, as our record in two World Wars clearly shows. Today Canada chooses quite independently to support alliances such as NATO out of a firm belief in the continuing need for mutual security. Also, the Canadian search for a distinctive identity has defined special roles, such as United Nations peace-keeping, which our position and capabilities enable us to perform effectively.

We have no delusions of grandeur about our role in world affairs; we are not a superpower and there are limits to what we can accomplish; but we are seeing with increasing clarity where Canada fits in the international scheme of things. We have defined priorities and evolved policies that, while sufficiently flexible to meet the demands of fast-changing events, give us, nevertheless, a clear sense of direction and allow us to make the best use of those strengths we possess.

Central to our policy formulation is the fact that the United States is our closest neighbour. Much has been written and said about Canada-U.S. relations and Canada has been depicted as everything from a satellite of the Americans to an excessively jingoistic country preoccupied with sterile efforts to pull the eagle's tail-feathers. Neither assessment, of course, bears any resemblance to reality.

On balance, Canada-U.S. relations have never been better than they are today, despite the unprecedented complexity of many transborder issues, such as energy and trade. This satisfactory condition is due in large part to the growing clarity with which Canadians are defining and articulating their national objectives and to an increasing American willingness to understand these goals, and to accommodate them where possible. And, of course, there is the inescapable reality that Canada and the United States need each other now more than ever.

We are each other's largest trading partner, with Canada sending between 60 and 70 per cent of its exports to the United States. President Carter's energy strategy would be easier to implement if there were Canadian co-operation, particularly in terms of bringing Alaskan natural gas by a cross-Canada pipeline to the United States. The difficult decisions on this issue must be made by Canada this summer. On this question, as on all others, we have no wish to be dog-in-the-manger in our response to American needs. We have emphasized repeatedly, however, that the first and principal test of Canadian decisions must be that they are in the Canadian interest. That is why, in recent years, we have moved to strengthen our cultural sovereignty and to assess all new foreign investment against the basic criterion of "significant benefit to Canada".

Foreign control of the Canadian economy is in many respects our most important

on-going problem and, while our concern extends equally to foreign investment from all countries, the pattern of our development has meant, inevitably, a very large infusion of American investment capital and thus the domination from outside of several key sectors of our economy. We have recognized the futility of attempting to buy back the past and we are equally conscious of our continuing need for large amounts of foreign capital. We are determined, therefore, to preserve Canada's reputation as an attractive country for investment and to administer our rules even-handedly to all interested parties abroad. By applying the sole test of benefit to Canada in our screening process, we are succeeding in increasing the degree of Canadian participation in various undertakings without slowing seriously the needed flow of foreign capital or making our requirements unreasonably burdensome.

I have stressed that Canada's foreign-investment policy treats all countries equally. I do so because, while our relations with the United States must be regarded as unique in many respects, and for obvious reasons, Canada is now committed to the expansion and strengthening of its economic and political ties with all countries and with those new groupings of nations, such as the European Economic Community, which are having such a profound effect on traditional patterns of international relations.

We fully understand Britain's motives in joining the Community, but the result has been a rapid acceleration of the rate of change in long-established Canadian-Britain trading relations. For this and other reasons, we have sought and obtained a "contractual link" with the Community as a whole in recognition of the practical need for a mutually-beneficial arrangement and of the Canadian wish for broadened international ties.

This new emphasis on the Community need not be at the expense of our long-standing friendship with its individual member countries; indeed, there is a new vitality in our relations with our two mother countries — Britain and France. Cultural and other exchanges between us are growing, reflecting a new spirit of maturity and equality. We are partners, along with others, in shared efforts to improve the human condition and create wider avenues of communication between East and West and between potential adversaries everywhere.

In Canada's view, no part of this effort to reduce world tensions is more urgent than the need to curb nuclear proliferation. We are a major supplier of uranium and nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. We have a responsibility, therefore, to make every effort to achieve a strong international safeguards régime. Canada has accepted that responsibility and over the years has developed an ever-more-comprehensive policy governing the sale and export of all nuclear materials and technology. Today we are in advance of all other countries in this regard, and we are encouraged by the steps others are taking towards a global consensus. It is a formidable task and there are still legitimate differences even among countries fully committed to the principle of non-proliferation. Canada shared in and supports fully the decision taken at the recent summit meeting here in London to study fully all of the implications of nuclear technology, and particularly such contentious issues as reprocessing and the emerging trend towards a so-called "plutonium economy". The current oil crisis and the shock waves it has created make it imperative that we explore all energy

alternatives. Canada believes, however, that the nuclear option, while an essential element in the world energy strategy, should only be exploited under the strictest possible international controls and by methods generally agreed upon as the safest that can be devised.

The Canadian role in the present international nuclear discussions is illustrative of how Canadian foreign policy is being shaped to reflect Canadian interests and to exert our influence in those fields where, quite clearly, we have a major role to play. Another example is the United Nations Law of the Sea Conference, where Canada is playing a pivotal part and where, very often, our national interests are on all fours with global objectives. Europeans tend very naturally to think of Canada primarily in terms of North Atlantic regional issues. But we are a Pacific power also, and increasingly we are emphasizing our economic and political association with "Pacific Rim" countries and our support for such organizations as the Association of South-east Asian Nations. We have moved also to strengthen Canadian ties with Latin America through aid to its poorer countries and trade with its emerging powers.

Canada's unshakable commitment to democratic principles needs no defence. We have long felt, however, that the cause of world peace and security is best served by keeping open and widening the channels of communication to those who espouse different political ideologies, specifically the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China and other Communist countries. Since, like all democracies, we must sometimes take issue with certain policies of these countries, far better that we do so fully, frankly and face to face. Canada, therefore, supports in appropriate ways all efforts to strengthen *détente* and is actively pursuing the liberalization of trade with the Soviet bloc and China.

It has been said that foreign policy is simply an extension abroad of a country's domestic objectives. While this is, in some respects, an oversimplification, Canada's foreign policy, in fact, is a true reflection of the interests and concerns of Canadians generally. Our growing involvement in international affairs is an indication of our increasing maturity, and our awareness that we can only develop and enjoy the Canadian potential in a world that is stable and secure. Thus there is a frankly-acknowledged element of self-preservation in much that we do.

But we have never been afraid of such frankness or of legitimate compromise, for without it there would be no Canada. Our 110-year history is made up of a series of concessions and accommodations that one group or region has been prepared to make to another. This flexibility, based on tolerance and understanding, has been the key to the survival and growth of our Canadian Confederation. Today, we are discovering as we have many times before, the need for a rededication to national unity. On this one-hundred-and-tenth birthday, Canadian pride in the unique arrangement we have forged between two founding peoples is tempered by a growing concern that, after more than a century of survival, our special brand of federalism is threatened by the re-emergence of long-smouldering divisive issues.

Fortunately, most Canadians, whatever their origins, are alert to the danger and share a common determination to take the steps necessary to preserve a united Canada. Our

confidence comes not only from this traditional willingness to adapt to changing circumstance or from practical necessity, as good and valid a reason as this can be. Canada will survive because of its people's innate sense of fairness and their willingness to recognize and correct matters when any group's basic rights are not being fully recognized. And over all, there is a deep-seated, though infrequently-articulated, sense of Canadian nationhood, embracing all Canadians in every region, which is stronger than the tensions, prejudices, and even physical distances, that have a natural tendency to divide.

No country has an inalienable right to exist if its people choose otherwise. History is strewn with the wrecks of nations falsely convinced of their immortality. But if a country as lavishly endowed as Canada cannot survive, then we must truly despair for the fate of less-fortunate lands. Such despair is not warranted. On this Canadian birthday, the traditional wish that there may be many more is coupled with my unshakable conviction and my determination that there shall be.

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