



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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RELATIONS BETWEEN CANADA AND BRAZIL

A speech by Mr. Sidney E. Smith, Secretary of State for External Affairs, at the Foreign Office, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on November 18, 1958.

It is a great honour for me to be your guest in this stately palace of Itamaraty, in this House of Rio Branco, this shrine of Brazilian statesmanship, where the present walks with the past in such gracious dignity.

I deeply appreciate what you have said about my country and your kind references to myself, and I thank you most sincerely for the warmth and generosity of your welcome and your hospitality.

I bring you the most cordial and affectionate greetings of the people of Canada and their Government; and I transmit to you their ardent desire for the strengthening of those links of friendship, of mutual understanding and of mutual interest which today, as in the past, unite us in the bonds of shared ideals and a shared tradition.

As a Canadian I am proud to recall that, twice in this century, Canadians have marched with Brazilians in defence of freedom and that today Brazilians and Canadians stand shoulder to shoulder on guard for peace in the Middle East.

Our two countries, it seems to me, have much in common. We are both peoples of the Americas. We share the historical experience of having left our ancestral homes in Europe to pioneer on the frontiers of the New World. We share the experience of having won political independence. We share a deeply rooted respect for the rights of the individual man; a profound belief in the necessity of the rule of law; and an unswerving dedication to the democratic freedoms.

Being both immense countries of continental proportions, our concept of man's relation to space is similar. In the economic field--in agriculture, in industry, in transport, communications--as in the sphere of political organization, many

of the problems which confront us are of a similar kind and of the same order of magnitude. We are both developing at an extremely rapid rate. All of this makes me believe that Brazil and Canada have much to gain by intensive and systematic exchanges of views, of skills and of experiences.

In the past our collaboration has been not inconsiderable. As a Canadian it is a cause for gratification to know that Canadian engineers and Canadian enterprise have played a substantial role in generating the energy so vital to the development of the Rio and Sao Paulo areas. In the cultural field our interests run parallel. Our commercial relations are long standing and of mutual benefit. Our political relations are excellent.

This does not mean, however, that there is no room for fortifying our solidarity, for deepening mutual understanding. On the contrary, I believe that in the political, as well as in the economic and cultural fields, much can be done to intensify our collaboration; and you may be sure that, so far as it lies within my power, I shall do everything I can to further this end.

A moment ago I spoke of our experience as pioneers on the physical frontiers of the New World. Today, we, with all other peoples, stand awed and not a little frightened, at one of history's watersheds on the frontiers of a critical age in which the final human catastrophe has become possible. Ours is the supreme challenge. Either we learn how to shape a tolerable world order, or the forces released by man's mastery over his material environment and his lack of mastery over himself, will destroy us.

The difficulties are enormous. No one nation, no one group of nations, knows all the answers. None of us can discern a clear road to ultimate solution. Nevertheless, it may not be inappropriate if I were to consult with you on some considerations which seem important to us in Canada.

In the first place, we believe that the free world, while maintaining its strength to the utmost of its ability, must not weary in its endeavours to negotiate for peace. We must never sacrifice the principles basic to our civilization, but we believe we must maintain flexibility of policy rather than permit development of a frozen futility. Flexibility is not a spineless posture. Compromise is not an evil word: it does not involve a lack of moral standards. Open-mindedness does not necessarily mean an empty mind. Rather, it bespeaks a willingness to listen to opposing views and an attempt to take such views into account even if we do not accept them. The reconciliation of opposing viewpoints is, of course, never easy; it is a long and laborious task and more often than not frustrating. But in these days not of alternatives, but of the terrible alternative of universal disaster for mankind, it is an imperative course of action and one from which we can never back away in dismay or a sense of futility.

Secondly, we believe we must endeavour to strengthen the United Nations so that its influence will be accepted in the peaceful settlement of international differences. Whatever our aspirations for the future of the United Nations, in its present state of development we believe it is a mistake to conceive of it as anything in the nature of a world government. It is not a suprastate. It is rather an agency for reconciliation and negotiation, a forum where opponents can maintain communication and eventually reach solutions. It is not a substitute for diplomacy, but it is a place where in some situations diplomacy can be more effectively conducted. If it did not exist, mankind would find it necessary to invent a comparable substitute.

Furthermore, we with you believe that the role of the middle and smaller powers in the United Nations is important. The assumption of greater responsibility is perhaps good for the souls of the middle powers. It has been all too easy for us to belabour the great powers and find in their sins the causes of all our troubles. Nevertheless, our lack of capability for global aggression and our limited involvement in world affairs do give us an opportunity to play a peacemaking role which is denied to the great powers. This represents both a challenge and a responsibility which we feel we cannot ignore.

In the third place, we believe that all peoples should be able to share in some measure the benefits of technological progress. Canada has joined with other like-minded nations, including those of Latin America, in supporting the efforts made under the auspices of the United Nations and other international bodies to mobilize resources for this purpose. In these efforts we have been much aware of the relevance of your President's recent observation when he said: "History teaches us that there is no consciousness of civic liberties and of the fight for their preservation, when subsistence itself is threatened by the rigours of pauperism".

Finally, we believe that if our society is to survive it must be animated by a revived moral dynamic. We need a new mobilization of the basic concepts of brotherhood and the recognition of the dignity of the human person. Civilizations have fallen in the past not to superior forces, but to inner contradictions and spiritual decadence. An age of crisis is an age of challenge. Challenge can engender despair, but it can also instill in a person, in a nation, in a civilization a sense of expectation, of hope, even of exaltation at the possibilities of new achievements of the human spirit.

It is where civilization faces great challenges that men of vision play a vital role. It is such a vision which must have inspired His Excellency President Kubitschek when he launched "Operation Pan America" earlier this year which proposes, if I well understood his intentions, to undertake a "vigorous analysis" of the pressing problems of this hemisphere in order to permit the American nations to play a "dynamic part" in solving

the problems of the world. In launching this Operation, President Kubitschek has, I think, taken a significant step which could assure him a place among the great statesmen of his country and indeed of this hemisphere, if his status in this category of political leaders were not already well established. He has given us a new demonstration of this well-known Brazilian talent for adaptation to new and difficult circumstances and for suggesting bold and imaginative solutions to urgent problems.

Looking around this hall, I feel deeply grateful to Your Excellency for having had the gracious thought of inviting to this banquet the ambassadors from the nations of the Commonwealth, with which we have so much in common, and the ambassadors from the Latin American republics. I regret very much that time does not permit me on this trip to visit all of Latin America. But, after twenty-four hours in this magnificent city, among a people whose hospitality is so overwhelming, I have in my heart a genuine desire to come back to Latin America if the occasion arises, and visit some of the other countries so well represented here tonight.

Your Excellency, permit me to say once again how happy I am to be in Brazil and to be your guest here tonight. Although it is only a few hours since my wife and I and my associates landed at Galeao, already we feel at home in this country; and your kindness and the warmth of your welcome has made us feel that we are among true friends. In this spirit, may I then, as the first Canadian Foreign Minister to sit at this board, ask you, ladies and gentlemen, to raise your glasses and drink a toast to the welfare and prosperity of the Brazilian people and to the health and happiness of Your Excellency and your gracious consort.

S/C