



Statements and Speeches

No. 76/12

WESTERN HEMISPHERE CO-OPERATION A MODEL FOR THE WORLD

Remarks by the Right Honourable Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, to the Fifth Conference of the Canadian Association for Latin America (CALA), Caracas, January 31, 1976.

...The presence here in Venezuela of such a representative group of Canadians is welcome evidence of the increasing, and widespread, serious interest within Canada about Latin America. I'm delighted with that interest and congratulate the organizers of CALA V on the important task they have undertaken.

When the Canadian Government stated in 1970, in its foreign policy review, that it intended to strengthen its links with Latin America in a systematic fashion, one of the objectives specifically noted was the promotion of business associations between the peoples of Canada and those of this continent. No organization is better designed to engage in that activity, and certainly none has proved more successful, than has CALA, the Canadian Association for Latin America. In the four previous conferences of the association, you have carefully examined the "parameters" of the commercial relations and the opportunities that exist for the development of mutually-beneficial relations. In this conference, you are examining "the implementation of the partnership", and I look forward in days to come to hear from your executive of the proposals that have been put forward and the plans formulated.

I put special emphasis on CALA in these respects. I do so not only because of what it does but because of what it is and what it represents. CALA is a singularly Canadian type of association. It reflects accurately the composition of the Canadian economic community. The history of Canada's economy is distinct from that of the United States or Britain or France. It is as distinct as is our political history. We are an independent country (and that requires no emphasis by me or anyone else); we are independent as well in our values, our attitudes, our means of governing ourselves and in our techniques of doing business. Those engaged with us in business or other activities, especially those who may not earlier have had an opportunity to learn about us, are able, through CALA, to learn a good deal about Canada and Canadians. I am confident that the outstanding Canadians who hold memberships in the association and who govern its activities are the best possible persons to acquaint their Latin American associates with a country and a society of which I am very proud.

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Canada is, by any definition, a trading nation. Twenty-five cents out of every dollar in circulation in Canada is derived from foreign trade. The viability of the Canadian economy depends upon a working, active world-trading system. The Canadian Government is active in its support for such a system -- it always has been. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, long before Canada had a diplomatic service, Canadian Government trade commissioners were posted abroad to a number of countries to encourage the local consumption of Canadian products and to assist in the marketing, in Canada, of locally-produced goods. Today, supplementing those bilateral efforts, which are still actively pursued, Canada participates in a variety of international forums that seek a more stable and more equitable international economic system. We are active in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; we have a large delegation in Geneva at the Tokyo Round of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations, we have the honour and the responsibility of being one of the two co-chairmen of the Paris Conference on International Economic Co-operation -- the other co-chairman being Venezuela; we provided, until recently, the chairman of the Interim Committee of the International Monetary Fund.

Canadians believe that they have some experience, and, they hope, some wisdom and some imagination, that can usefully be brought to bear upon the important issues at stake in these negotiations. We reflect, in a number of instances, conditions and concerns familiar to many nations, developed and developing. Canada is both a producer and consumer of commodities -- both in large volumes. We are a highly-industrialized country, possessing some of the world's most advanced technology (indeed, we are world leaders in a number of areas), yet, at the same time, we continue to be large importers of capital for investment. We have an economy that is in several sectors dominated by giant, foreign-controlled, multinational corporations, while we are, at the same time, the owners of similar enterprises active elsewhere. We are a rich country, yet we face problems of regional economic disparities that have forced us to design massive and sophisticated schemes of revenue-transfers and industrial incentives.

This combination of characteristics contributes to the distinctiveness of Canada that I mentioned a moment ago. But there is an additional characteristic as well, one that has served us well for more than a century. I refer to the blend of co-operation and "complementarity" between business and government -- the private and public sectors -- that has always been evident in Canada, and to a much greater degree than is found, for example, in the United States. This "intermix" of support and understanding has adjusted through

the years to new demands -- just as it is in the process of adjusting once again -- but it has always sought, and often found, the best of the entrepreneurial system and the best of state involvement. This "mix" is evident, not surprisingly, in the membership roles of CALA.

From time to time, the blend gives rise to some ideological hysteria but, by and large, we have produced some pragmatic, commonsense solutions to Canadian problems. And I understand from Canadian businessmen that their experience within Canada has made them much more able to adapt successfully to differing social, economic and political climates elsewhere.

This is important, for internationally and domestically we are in an era of change that demands the best of all segments of society. To borrow the phrase of the well-know American management expert, Peter Drucker, we live in an "age of discontinuity". We are faced simultaneously with a variety of challenges -- all of them of immense complexity and untold consequences should we fail. For the first time in history, the world is demonstrably an integrated unit with finite quantities of non-renewable resources, with absolute limits to its life-support systems, with a single biosphere subject to environmental infection and world-wide epidemic. We face this incontestable evidence at a moment when all too many nations remain unconvinced of the perils of a nuclear holocaust and choose to reject the imposition of international controls; when the inequities of the world's economic system cry out for a better balance between rich and poor -- in the interests of both; when the world's monetary system has illustrated its inability to cope with the new pressures now bearing upon it.

In circumstances such as this, all the skill, all the wisdom, and all the goodwill of both business and government are needed. I am confident that, in the world as in Canada, this co-operation and this focus of effort will take place. For this to happen, we require realism and dedication -- the ingredients of successful businessmen and, I hope you will agree, of successful politicians as well. We need to accept, within our societies and between our societies, the benefits that flow from a reduction of the gap between rich and poor; from a confident and resilient trading system featuring price and export earnings stability, and a lessening of tariff and non-tariff barriers; from continued, reasonable economic growth in all countries.

The traits of co-operation, understanding and partnership are no strangers to this continent. I welcome the evidence of increased regional and sub-regional co-ordinated activity throughout Latin

America and the Caribbean. The Andean Pact and the Central American Common Market are healthy examples. Canada has happily contributed funds to the Andean Pact *junta* for economic studies and technical assistance. This is one form of industrial co-operation, the idea to which my Government attaches considerable importance as a factor in industrial growth. We are confident that this form of co-operation will enhance the possibility of joint ventures and will lead to increased economic opportunity and benefit for all.

It was not many years ago, certainly well within the memory of most in this audience, that almost the only Canadian attention to Latin America came from the business community. That business attention continues and is enhanced. But it is joined by a much more active involvement on the part of the Canadian Government -- in the OAS and its special organizations, in the Inter-American Development Bank, in the Economic Community for Latin America. And it is joined as well by the involvement of several of the provincial governments, academic associations and individuals. In some measure, my own presence here spreads still more broadly Canadian interest, because the link between Canada and Latin America will be seen by millions in this hemisphere through the pens and cameras of the journalists accompanying me.

This process of getting to know one another, a process in which CALA and its Latin American affiliates are playing such an effective role, is a refreshing one. Increased economic and commercial contacts lead inevitably and happily to increased cultural awareness and exchanges. To anyone who loves, as do I, the dynamism and the adventurous spirit of this continent, that is an exciting prospect. A mutual enrichment is in store for us -- one that, naturally, will take into account the seasonal weather patterns of Canada when conferences and visits of the present sort are arranged!

While the factor of weather and inclement climate is not shared by us all, other factors -- vast spaces, great distances, comparatively small populations, and rich resource deposits -- are familiar. Part of the history of Canada has been written in the efforts of the Canadian people to overcome towering problems of transportation and communication. That we have done so, and with considerable success, is an achievement of which Canadians are very proud. More than pride is involved, however. Canadian technology and skills are among the foremost in the world in these fields. Not only do we operate the world's longest railroads, we are also partners in the St. Lawrence Seaway, one of the world's busiest and most important shipping-lanes. In Canada we have the world's first domestic communications satellite, which feeds into one of the most extensive, sophisticated and widespread communications networks in the world. In a variety of

mining operations, Canadian experience and Canadian accomplishments are at the forefront in all the world, as are they in the development and generation of energy from diverse sources -- hydrocarbon, hydroelectric, nuclear.

This is important to you on this continent, and it is important to us. It is important because of the "complementarity" of so much in our economies. The skills, the tools, the technology, the products required in so many instances by so many Latin American countries, are available from Canada in volume and in quantity. And they are available from a people who still regard themselves as engaged, as do you, in the task of nation-building. The frontier is not a distant notion to Canadians. It is nearby, in terms both of geography and of time. We have much to do in Canada, much to accomplish, and we regard the challenges with excitement. We sense in Latin America the same spirit of challenge and excitement, and this is creating a bond between us stronger and more flexible than is possible through any formal legal links.

It is this human spirit that will be predominant in the long run. It is the human spirit that is the essential feature of our societies. And it is the human spirit that draws us together in terms of shared goals and aspirations, of broadly identical values, of a desire for a happier, more satisfactory and more dignified life for all the peoples of the western hemisphere. We have the opportunity in this hemisphere to demonstrate to the world the advantages co-operation can bring in the enhancement of the quality of our lives, in the manifestation of social justice and in the increase of economic benefit. I am delighted to have an opportunity to participate in that process, and I salute those here for the important contribution they are making.

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