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CANADA: TIME FOR THE TRIUMPH
OF INTELLECT OVER FORCE

Address of Cyrus Eaton
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At the Eighteenth Convocation
For the Conferment of Degrees
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(For Biographical Data on Cyrus Eaton, See Last Two Pages)

Seventy years ago, before most of you were born, I paid my first visit to Waterloo. In the intervening decades, I have been fascinated to watch its progress and that of its sister cities, Guelph, Kitchener, London and Stratford. This rich area is blessed with an enviable combination of fertile farmland, ultra-modern industry and sound finance.

The growth of the universities, particularly in recent years, has been striking. Waterloo, for example, has developed swiftly to vast dimensions. Its recognized strength in mathematics and engineering has already placed it in the first rank among institutions of higher learning in Canada and the United States, and gives its graduates an edge in today's scientifically directed society.

I am proud to become an honorary alumnus of this University today. At the same time, I congratulate my younger new fellow alumni on the unprecedented opportunities for service to mankind that is theirs for the grasping if they and their contemporaries insist that Canada follow wise and constructive policies.

Consider the advantageous position of Canada in this troubled age, when nation upon nation is plagued with the problems of war, overpopulation and inability to produce sufficient food. This marvelous land is at peace. It possesses an immense geographical area, second in the world only to that of the Soviet Union. With a population of barely 30,000,000 -- the figure for the Soviet Union is 225,000,000, by contrast -- Canada happily finds herself in need of more, many more, rather than fewer people. Her wealth of land and natural resources opens the way to unlimited expansion in agriculture and industry.

Canada is now suffering from farm surpluses, you may object. The reply is that this is an insupportable paradox in a world whose population is increasing at the rate of a billion people every ten years. The soaring populations of Asia, Africa and Latin America will far outstrip any conceivable increases in available food supplies in those areas. Let Canada sell her surpluses to feed the hungry men, women and children of the developing nations.

True, this will require the extending of long-term credits to these countries, but such credits have historically been the very essence of expanding and profitable trade. And, from the humanitarian aspect, how preferable is such commerce to the mounting of insane military expeditions to far corners of the globe. Vietnam has demonstrated that the horrors of modern warfare are utterly ineffectual in suppressing opposing ideologies. The extension of credits, without reference to ideologies, offers a truly hopeful path to peace.

For the fullest realization of her mineral resources, Canada must turn increasingly to the north. Between Canada and the Soviet Union is shared most of the Arctic region and, here, the example of the Soviet Union is instructive, in boat navigation through ice, in the harnessing of northern rivers and in the establishment of towns. Within the Arctic Circle, there is at least one new city of 400,000 that has never been mentioned in the western press, some thousand miles north of previously known communities. For those of hardy constitution and healthy habits, the north is a fine place to find recreation as well as profit.

Perhaps you may hold me open to criticism for over-emphasis of the material. Let me draw your attention to Italy of the Renaissance. Those were the centuries when the merchants of Florence, Venice and Milan were trading with the whole known world, and the bankers of those prosperous cities were extending worldwide credit. Those were times of unequalled intellectual and artistic achievement.

Again I extend my felicitations to my fellow graduates of the rising generation. Theirs is the challenge to strive for worthy and attainable goals for the betterment of mankind, and to establish the triumph of intellect over force and the victory of reason over superstition in their accomplishment.