



Hon. James A. Richardson

Hon. James Richardson, PC was a Canadian Cabinet minister under Pierre Trudeau, and a Winnipeg businessman.

After attending Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, Richardson enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force. He served as an anti-submarine pilot based in Iceland and Labrador during World War II. Following the war, Richardson joined the family owned grain company, James Richardson and Sons, and became Chief Executive Officer and chairman in 1966.

He left the company to enter politics, winning a seat in the Canadian House of Commons in the 1968 election as the Liberal Member of Parliament for Winnipeg South.

Richardson was appointed to the cabinet of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau as a Minister without portfolio on June 6, 1968. He also served as acting Minister of Transport for five days in early 1969, and was promoted to Minister of Supply and Services on June 5 of the same year. From November 27, 1972, until October 12, 1976, he was Minister of National Defense.

Richardson resigned from Cabinet in 1976 to protest the government's implementation of official bilingualism. In 1978, he left the Liberal caucus entirely and crossed the floor (by actually physically crossing it) to sit as an Independent MP for the remainder of his term.

After leaving elected politics, Richardson served on a number of corporate boards. He also created James Richardson International, the successor company to James Richardson & Sons.

He was a supporter of the Commonwealth Games, acting as Honourary President of the Commonwealth Games Association of Canada. He was also National Chairman of the Commonwealth Games Fund Raising Campaign to assist the Canadian athletes participating the 1982 Games in Brisbane, Australia.

Mr. Richardson was also a sailor and enjoyed his time at the Lake of the Woods Yacht Club. Having once participated in Canada's Olympic sailing trials in 1948, he oversaw fundraising efforts for Canada's America's Cup yachting team in the early 1980s.

He was awarded the B'Nai Brith Humanitarian Award in 1975.