

### *North-South Relations*

Ottawa in September of this year, or CIRTEF, the International Council of francophone radio and television stations, which was created in 1978 at the suggestion of the Canadian government. CIRTEF regroups most of the francophone radio and television stations in the world.

● (2020)

The government of Canada of course provides financial assistance to a large number of these organizations which are either Canada-inspired or include a major Canada participation. At a time when co-operation among the people and cultures of the world is ever increasing, the importance of non-government international organizations is also increasing, and our financial contributions are a tangible encouragement to various Canadian groups actively involved in international activities.

While this new form of multilateral co-operation was developing, Canada was therefore establishing diplomatic relations with all the francophone countries, and slowly but surely we have set in motion a program of co-operation which, I hope, will be in full swing very soon. So will it be with all exchanges at every level, whether commercial, economic, social or cultural, and to crown this effort at rapprochement based on a better knowledge of and co-operation with these various countries, it will surely be possible eventually to consider jointly with these countries means of bringing about a *rapprochement* in the world and ensure peace on earth.

What are in fact the goals we are pursuing in our bilateral relations with these countries, especially African countries to which I feel particularly attracted? Our first goal is obvious: Canada seeks to affirm and show its French personality as well as its sincere interest in the cultural development and enrichment which we are likely to get from contacts with others. Needless to say, Canada as a whole should be involved in this undertaking. Our second goal is also clear: to help these countries which are among the neediest in the world. It is both our duty and our responsibility within the world community.

The third objective is to promote Canada's interests in major areas tied up with political, social economic and commercial elements. Therefore we must establish with these countries relationships that will be as extensive and varied as possible. As advisor to the Prime Minister and to the Secretary of State for External Affairs for relations with French-speaking countries it is a pleasure for me to give you some detailed information regarding the state of our relations with these francophone countries and prospects for the future.

In behalf of the Secretary of State, I have already been on official business to France, Belgium and above all to a great many countries of Africa. Last January, for instance, I went on official business as Canada's representative to express our goodwill and intentions of co-operation to four countries in the Sahel, namely Mali, Upper-Volta, Niger and the Ivory Coast.

I just returned last week from an official visit to Guinea and Gabon.

I can tell you all the admiration and esteem that these countries feel for Canada and the Canadian people. Everywhere no matter in which countries I had the honour to represent my fellow citizens, there was a tremendous expression of sympathy for Canada because all these countries acknowledged that neither by tradition nor by inclination we were interested in a sphere of influence but simply to express in a concrete manner our feeling of solidarity towards mankind. Canadian aid which amounts presently to about \$150 million per year just for francophone Africa is appreciated because as I just stated it is given with no ulterior motives and it meets needs and priorities as defined by the governments with which we enjoy close relationships. Canadian aid, which is administered by highly capable Canadian representatives and experts, is considered to be very effective in all those countries. Besides this bilateral aid, Canada contributes substantially to multilateral and regional organizations operating in Africa. For instance, for a long time Canada was the greatest contributor to African development funding and I think that today we rank second or third with regard to our contributions to the entire African continent.

I must also add that our relations with those countries have been open and friendly. Everywhere I have been, like my predecessors, I have had open and constructive discussions with local officials. Canada's advice and support are sought and solicited everywhere. The meetings that I have had with each head of state of those friendly nations, and only last week I spoke with President Ahmed Sekou Touré of Guinea and President Albert-Bernard Bongo of Gabon, show that our relations are diversified and that we are aware of all the latest problems. Guinea is reaching out for Canada while at the same time Canada, through this African state, is widening its audience in Africa. My meeting with the President of Guinea marked the first official visit by a Canadian minister since the country became independent in 1958. I saw that the president of Guinea is considered, not only in his own country but also throughout the continent and the Islamic world as a great leader who was able to forge a nation in his country, where private Canadians interests have been represented for many years. He was kind enough to grant me four meetings with him and we discussed various current issues. I also met with the President of Gabon, and of course all the signs of friendship which were expressed were not directed to me personally but to the Canadian people as a whole.

There exists between Canada and the French speaking countries, both at the bilateral and the multilateral levels, common grounds for co-operation and understanding. In this world which is divided in rich and poor nations, industrialized and developing countries, along a North-South or an East-West axis, Canada is in a good position to effect a rapprochement between both sides, and to define, with those