

a state. It would be an association of sovereign powers.

The Federal Government has exclusive responsibility for the conduct of external affairs as a matter of national policy affecting all Canadians. The policy of the Federal Government in discharging this responsibility is to seek to promote the interest of the entire country and of all Canadians of the various provinces within the overall framework of our national policy.

In respect of matters of specific concern to the provinces of Canada, it is the policy of the Canadian Government, in a spirit of cooperative federalism, to do its utmost to assist the provinces in achieving the particular aspirations and goals which they wish to attain. This was done, for example, in the case of the negotiations relating to the Columbia River.

It is clear that Quebec is the custodian of special cultural values and that this unique heritage cannot be developed in isolation from the French community. The Canadian Government recognizes that it is in the interest of Canada as a whole that this should be done. The pursuit of this objective is not in question. On the contrary, the Federal Government, for its part, is prepared to do all it can to assist Quebec in this regard. It recognizes that Quebec will play a major role in the achievement of these fundamental objectives.

The Canadian Government is ready and anxious to use its powers in the foreign affairs field, within the framework of our national foreign policy, to assist Quebec and all the other provinces in furthering matters of special concern to them.