



CANADA

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 70/12

CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND THE THIRD WORLD

A Speech by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, at the University of Toronto, September 18, 1970.

In June I issued, on behalf of the Government, a series of papers called "Foreign Policy for Canadians". It is a simple title, yet in itself it states clearly the Government's purpose in instituting a basic, and broadly-based, review of Canada's international relations, policies and operations. This was to examine Canada's foreign policy in terms of our basic national interests, to reach conclusions as to its effectiveness in terms of Canada's position in the world in 1970, to identify areas where change was required and to indicate new directions for the future.

My subject this evening is "Canadian Foreign Policy and the Third World". I shall get to it, if you bear with me. First, I want to talk about Canadian foreign policy in the wider sense. I shall begin by discussing the foreign policy papers with you, telling you what they are and something of why and how they were written. To some extent they record and report decisions made by the Government. To some extent they give notice of actions the Government intends to take. In these two areas they are a statement of Government policy. To a much greater extent the papers, and particularly the general paper, represent the Government's views - its views about the world as it exists today, its views about Canada's place in that world, its views about Canada's national aims and goals and of how these aims and goals can best be fostered and pursued in their international dimension. When the Government expresses its views, it is seeking the widest possible public discussion, saying, in effect: "Here is how we see it, how do you see it?" If that frail and delicate plant called "participatory democracy" is to flourish and bear fruit, it will only be because the interested public learns how to engage the Government in dialogue about issues and the Government learns how to profit from such a dialogue.

This is not a simple matter. Institutions resist change, and when the institutions have as their declared aim to achieve and maintain political power the resistance is all the greater. I regard this evening as a part of the essential learning process in which we are all engaged.