

field -- subject, of course, to the resource constraints. In this respect, I should certainly expect a substantive contribution from Canada's Africanists - particularly on the more fundamental forces that will orient Africa's growing participation in world affairs. It is no secret that ominous gaps are developing in certain areas between the developing nations and the developed world. Within the Third World itself, the world energy crisis has made the relatively wealthy states better off and the poorer peoples even poorer.

You have heard complaints that the Third World is becoming monolithic, that it is "ganging up" on the West, that it is developing a blind automatic majority in international agencies. Africa is often singled out in these criticisms, as the numerous African countries are an essential component of any such majority. Well, this trend is quite understandable when we remember the history and background of the African countries. Perhaps we should not be surprised that they are using the most compelling argument they have, which is their voting strength in the United Nations and other bodies. Africa must be heard.

But international organizations, in their present set-up, are not parliamentary bodies; they are rather a forum for discussing various world issues and reaching decisions on a consensus basis. Confrontation between rigid blocs will lead nowhere. Canada does not wish to be automatically assigned to some theoretical bloc. We regard this approach as simplistic and even harmful. It is a precarious world we live in and to such common enemies as disease, poverty and ignorance we run the risk of adding bristling suspicion and distrust.

If we are to progress through this difficult period in world history, we shall require good will, common sense and much greater knowledge of each other. Ignorance is highly dangerous in this volatile international environment. It is certainly true that knowledge does not always bring wisdom, but we should strive to create a climate in which that essential quality can be nurtured.

There is some urgency, in my view, to expose and discuss more formally with African leaders the Canadian Government's views on these matters; even more urgent, perhaps, is that I, as Secretary of State for External Affairs, be briefed at the highest level on the approach of African governments to the second special session on development of the United Nations' General Assembly next fall. As you know, our Government found itself in a minority situation in the last Parliament; and the necessities of survival forced us to curtail drastically consultations with other governments. This situation has now been remedied, at least for a few years. Conse-