

the European Community.

"In this context, France has always held, and continues to hold a special position in our international relations. I feel confident that you understand both the reasons for the orientation of our foreign policy and notably for its focus on Western Europe, and the central place France occupies in it.

#### Strengthening la Francophonie

"As you know, Canada is also committed to the maintenance and strengthening of la Francophonie. We are building relations with the francophone countries of the world which more and more approach the kind of ties Canada enjoys in the framework of the Commonwealth. The existence of a major international setting for the educational, cultural and other activities of French-speaking Canadians is a matter of the highest importance for us and underlies our attachment to la Francophonie.

"In a different context, Canada is keenly interested in *détente* and in contacts with the countries of Eastern Europe. I have just had occasion to pay a visit to Moscow, which served to strengthen my determination to encourage the development of further ties, and the maintenance of exchanges of all kinds, with the Communist countries. France has played a pioneering and innovative role in creating conditions which have made it possible to make solid progress in this field.

"France has been equally active in working for a productive North-South dialogue and has played an important role in advancing the perception that relations between developed and developing countries must be placed upon a new and more equitable basis. In particular, France has made an invaluable contribution to the initiation of the Conference on International Economic Co-operation (CIEC), which for the past year has been one of the most important elements of the North-South dialogue and in which Canada has, with the support of France among others, been able to play an important and, I believe, constructive role. We share with you the hope that further progress can be made in CIEC in the very near future.

#### Common interests

"In many of these international endeavours, the interests of France and Can-

ada are similar or convergent, and we have been able to co-operate to good effect on a number of questions that are of common concern. Relations between our two countries, which historically and culturally have long been marked by a special character, have in recent years become increasingly substantial and diversified. There are important fields, such as the export (or sales) of nuclear-related technology and processes, in which our policies are drawing closer together. Concrete co-operation and increased contacts and exchanges between key sectors in our two countries have invigorated the old ties and give promise of an even brighter future. I am determined to contribute personally to this end.

"I should like to take this occasion, Monsieur de Guiringaud, to underline that our relations with France will remain an essential cornerstone of Canada's foreign policy, and that I am determined, in my new capacity as Secretary of State for External Affairs, to contribute personally to maintaining and enriching the close and friendly relations between France and Canada.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I should now like to propose a toast to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of France and to Madame Guiringaud, and to the friendship between Canada and France."

#### Air Canada to be Crown corporation

A bill to authorize the reorganization of Air Canada introduced in the House of Commons, October 28 by Transport Minister Otto Lang, would remove the national airline from the control of Canadian National Railways and set it up as a Crown corporation answerable directly to the Federal Government.

"The proposed arrangement would provide Air Canada with greater flexibility in planning its own development," Mr. Lang said. "It will be able to operate like any other commercial enterprise and undertake all the enterprises that are legitimately part of, or essentially subordinate to, an airline."

"The airline will have a better fighting chance of improving its financial position," Mr. Lang said. "It would no longer be constrained by provisions of the present Air Canada Act which inhibited normal development and

diversification of the airline's operations in the same way as privately owned companies. This had the effect of placing the airline in an unfair competitive position."

The airline would have an authorized capital of \$750 million with provision for a further \$750 million in guaranteed debt financing available from the Federal Government. The airline would be able to operate hotels, vacation package tours and computers to handle "teleprocessing systems".

The airline was formed in 1937 as Trans-Canada Air Lines with the name being changed in 1964 to Air Canada. It ranks among the top ten airlines in the world in the scope of its operations which includes a heavy volume of business in air cargo. It has about 20,000 employees.

#### Nigerian Foreign Minister visits

Brigadier Joseph N. Garba, Commissioner (Minister) for External Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, made an official visit to Canada from November 8 to 10.

Subjects of mutual interest which were raised during Commissioner Garba's visit included bilateral trade relations, technical co-operation in support of Nigeria's Third National Development Plan and international questions of mutual concern such as the Conference on International Economic Co-operation, of which Canada is co-chairman.

It is hoped that bilateral co-operation will be expanded in several fields, including the cultural one. A delegation of 50 black Canadians will be participating in the forthcoming Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture to be held in Lagos in January 1977. The National Black Coalition of Canada is co-ordinating this participation.

During Commissioner Garba's visit he had discussions with Secretary of State for External Affairs Don Jamieson and with Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce Jean Chrétien. He also met members of the Canadian business community.

Before leaving Canada, Brigadier Garba visited the Royal Military College in Kingston, Ontario, and the nuclear power station at Pickering, Ontario.