

The consultation between the President and Prime Minister has provided the stimulus and set the framework for consultations at many levels on many subjects since.

I am glad to have had the opportunity to consult with M. Couve de Murville on four occasions, since I have found these meetings of great significance for our two countries. We expect to have economic consultations at a senior level soon. Only a few days ago we had the pleasure of welcoming French members of Parliament to Ottawa before they commence their visit to many parts of Canada. They will create permanent connections with their Canadian colleagues.

I have always held strongly to the belief that Canada's foreign policy should reflect the bilingual and bicultural character of our country. I have already mentioned some of the ways in which I think we are making substantial progress in this direction. Canada, it seems to me, has a unique opportunity in relation to the developing countries of Africa and of Asia which in the past few years have become independent but have a heritage of British or French educational institutions. It is, therefore, incumbent upon us to take the opportunity that our history has given us at this stage in world affairs and to do all that we can to assist those developing countries in which English or French is the second language.

In addition, we must strengthen and develop our relations with the French-speaking countries of Europe, first of all with France itself but also with Belgium and Switzerland. For the past two years, the Government has been rapidly increasing resources devoted to promoting cultural and educational exchanges with the French-speaking countries of Europe. On the basis of the promising start made last year with the allocation of \$250,000, the Government has recently decided to spend during the current fiscal year \$1 million on these exchanges, most of it to bring students and some professors from the great French-speaking universities of Europe to our universities. In return, there will no doubt be increasing opportunities for French-speaking students from across Canada to study in European universities. At the same time, there will be an increasing flow of cultural visits and exchanges in both directions. Meantime we are negotiating general cultural agreements with both France and Belgium and hope to have mixed commissions of experts, representing both countries, who will plan the expanding programmes to take account of the principal interests and opportunities on both sides.

It has sometimes been suggested in this city and in this province that somehow the Federal Government has sought to limit or has not endeavoured to encourage cultural exchanges between Quebec and France. I should like to take this opportunity, here in the University of Montreal, to deny this categorically. In fact, the Federal Government in recent years has assisted the Province of Quebec in developing its exchanges with France, in addition to making preparations for a general cultural agreement between Canada and France.

Practical arrangements to give effect to the expansion of contacts and exchanges of all kinds between France and Canada at the federal, provincial or municipal levels have been facilitated and promoted by the Federal Government.