

North-South Relations

believe that it should have. The last one, 1975 to 1980, had 21 points. It is unfortunate that, as the North-South Institute said, 13 of the 21 points were given a failing or unsatisfactory grade. Nonetheless, it would be better to at least have a strategy by which we could then measure the government's progress.

Finally, the proof of the government's response to the North-South report will be in how successful Canada is in persuading our industrial partners, particularly the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany, in the forthcoming summit that new economic partnerships with the South must be established. The proof will be in what kind of instructions the government gives its negotiators for the round of economic global negotiations that must follow the North-South summit.

The proof will be in how well the government follows the admonition of Lester B. Pearson in his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech that economic and social progress is a political imperative in every quarter of the Globe. Mr. Pearson said:

If we ignore this, there will be no peace.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. It being six o'clock, I do now leave the chair until eight o'clock this evening.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

[*English*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: At six o'clock the hon. member for Edmonton South (Mr. Roche) had finished his remarks.

[*Translation*]

I recognize the hon. Minister of Economic and Regional Expansion.

Hon. Pierre De Bané (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to outline in this House the policy that the Canadian government has followed for many years to promote the progress and development in all its national and international elements of what I could describe as the community of fully or partially francophone countries and peoples. In short, I should like to assess the present situation and future direction of the francophone community.

Mr. Speaker, Canada has played a basic role and continues to be at the forefront of the creation, support and implementation of this cooperation and dialogue among the peoples and nations which make up the international francophone community. Canada has acted and continues to act jointly and simultaneously both multilaterally and bilaterally with all

these countries which share the French language as a means of communication.

This expression of closer ties, co-operation and mutual assistance required in a world of complex and interdependent relationships in all its human and technical aspects has led to the creation on the international level of many intergovernmental institutions, of which the most important is the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation, without forgetting the annual conference of ministers of education and that of the ministers of youth and sports, as well as to the creation of non-governmental organizations and associations which are also very active in the international francophone movement.

The Canadian government has been very active within the francophone community from its very beginnings. It has played a major role in the creation and development of its many institutions since the 1960s. The development of the French fact in Canada and its extension externally has been a profound motivation for Canadian involvement. The extension of Canadian bilingualism on an international level and the participation of Canada in the international French-speaking community are a fundamental and permanent element of its foreign policy. The existence and vitality of French language Canadians provide a means and an opportunity to develop relationships and bonds of solidarity and co-operation with many countries in Europe, Africa, the Near East, Oceania, North America and Asia, which for a diversity of historical reasons and to various degrees, use French as their language of communication. The same can be said about the opportunities for fruitful contacts and exchanges with a great many countries throughout these same continents which, like the English-speaking community of Canada, speak the language of Shakespeare. It seems to me that for a young and dynamic country, Canada is placed in an exceptional situation by having what could be described as natural bonds of understanding with more than half the countries of the world.

● (2010)

In this context, we have established a network of bilateral diplomatic representation with all French-speaking countries. We have developed with them an important program of co-operation for development purposes. We have initiated a political dialogue on major international issues and we have finally become members of all multilateral French-speaking organizations.

In fact, the central government is not solely responsible for this effort at creating closer ties. This concerns all Canadians and indeed benefits all Canadians, since the Commonwealth implies the Canadian population as a whole. While Quebec naturally became interested in the French-speaking community very early, the federal government on the other hand has tried to urge the governments of the other provinces with large French-speaking populations to also play an active role in this regard. For instance, representatives from the four provinces,