

We have considered it particularly important, therefore, to develop diplomatic relations with states in Africa. At present we have seven diplomatic posts and one trade commissioner's office in Africa and we maintain relations with a number of other states through dual accreditations. It is, of course, very important, that we should have our representatives stationed in Africa both for the general political purposes indicated and to ensure the proper functioning of our aid programmes.

For these reasons, it gives me particular pleasure to announce for the first time today that we have decided to open now a new embassy in Dakar, the capital of Senegal, where a number of you will be spending the next year. The embassy in Dakar, when it is opened, will help greatly to strengthen ties with Africa generally and will provide a third mission in French-speaking Africa, the other two being our embassies in Cameroun and Leopoldville in the Congo.

The expansion in our relations with Africa will continue during the next two years. We expect to be able to announce very shortly the opening of another post in addition to Dakar and then to open four more posts in the next two years. The speed with which we can implement this programme will, of course, depend on the availability of administrative resources and on our ability to recruit suitable bilingual personnel who can both operate effectively in this area and reflect the bilingual and bicultural nature of our Canadian society. This is a particularly important aspect of our current planning, as I shall mention later.

When this expansion is completed, we expect to have 13 diplomatic missions and one trade commissioner's office in Africa. Five of these would be in French-language countries, five in independent Commonwealth countries and four in other countries. Furthermore, because of multiple accreditations to nearby states, we shall be able to use staff from these missions to attend to Canadian interests of all types in most parts of Africa.

We have made a considerable tour of the world in considering aid programmes and missions in Africa. The last point on the overseas horizon to which I would refer this morning is France and, with her, other nations where French is spoken. Our economic interest in African nations where French is spoken overlaps another very important part of our external policy, that of relations with the French-speaking world generally and with France. Our first interest, so far as aid programmes are concerned, lies in the needs of the developing countries concerned, but we are glad when economic co-operation can be parallel to and even reinforce political and cultural interests, whether expressed in French about former French colonies or in English about Commonwealth countries. France is, of course, carrying out a very comprehensive economic and cultural programme in Africa, and we are glad to consult with the French about the way in which our efforts can be related to theirs.

Shortly after the declaration on increased aid in November 1963 which I referred to earlier, the Government took important steps to develop closer relations with France in all fields. The visit which the Prime Minister and I made to President de Gaulle and his ministers at the beginning of 1964 inaugurated what I am sure will be considered a new era in such relations.