

two "continental" dinners at which I had the honour recently to be guest, then host, before my departure--would have quickly dispelled them.

Such is the background of my African tour. But these five official visits revolved around general themes and focused upon common objectives which I shall describe in this introduction. Issues relating to individual countries will be dealt with in the third part of my report.

In the first place, I considered the time had come to give Canada's relations with West Africa a fresh impetus. The governments of that region had to be informed of the directions which we felt these relations might take; and we had to find out how they themselves envisaged the future. Moreover, various criticisms have been levelled recently in Canada against some of CIDA's development projects in Africa and certain aspects of our policy in southern Africa; and I was anxious to ascertain for myself the feelings of the African governments concerned. More important still, I felt it would be useful to consult with five African nations in quite different economic situations before finalizing new guidelines for the Canadian International Development Agency.

In the same vein, I wanted to assure West African governments of Canada's wish to intensify and diversify her bilateral relations with them as with other areas of the world. For historical reasons, the bonds between Canada and Africa