

The motives and objectives of this policy of economic co-operation with developing countries are clear. We feel an obligation to assist the developing countries to deal with acute economic and social problems. We believe that more stable and peaceful international conditions will result from accelerated economic development. We believe that, in the long run, Canada, too, can benefit economically from the solution of these problems elsewhere.

In carrying out a programme on such a broad front, we must ask ourselves where and how we can make our contribution most effectively. As more nations became independent, as new requests were made to us, as fresh opportunities for effective action became apparent and as more Canadians became convinced of the need to act abroad, the scope of Canadian activities, whether governmental or private, expanded. I believe that our programmes are well-balanced and that, considering all factors of need, history or size on the side of the recipient country and of capacity for effective action on the side of the donor country, Canada, we are making an international contribution of steadily increasing value on a broad front. You who are about to leave for assignments in French-speaking Africa and Asia, your English-speaking colleagues who were at Macdonald College last week and all Canadians who are taking part in this great enterprise can feel a real satisfaction in what is being done.

I referred to our motives and objectives in entering into these co-operative ventures and stressed that the basic motive was the desire to help those most in need of economic development. Since this is the case, we do not impose conditions on our aid except the obvious one that it should really contribute to a permanent and significant improvement in economic conditions. We certainly do not lay down political conditions about internal affairs or the external policies of the country concerned.

There are, however, close connections between economic and political relations. Our interest in newly-independent African nations, their role in the United Nations and in the search for racial equality and peace, lead us in Canada to increasing contacts, which, in their turn, raise questions of economic assistance. In carrying out aid projects, we develop fresh interests and expand our relations in all fields. For this reason, in reviewing the subjects of most immediate interest to you in your assignment, I should like to say something about relations with Africa.

The importance of Africa in the contemporary world is clear. Thirty-two nations have achieved independence there since 1945 and their governments are playing a role of increasing significance both in the United Nations and in regional agencies such as the Organization of African Unity. Their desire to assert their own identity, coupled frequently with a desire to maintain a heritage of links with the older nations of the West, not least through the use of the French and English languages, is impressive.

It is the interest of all of us that African independence should be aided and strengthened and that African nations should be able to determine their own course, in accordance with their traditions and interests and to choose their associates freely. The energy and determination of African leaders in seeking better conditions and the cheerful courage, strength and ability of the African people all arouse the respect, interest and sympathy of Canadians.