

- T R A N S L A T I O N -

Quebec, February 27, 1970

The Right Honourable Pierre Elliott Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
Government of Canada
Ottawa

My dear Prime Minister,

I have received your letter of February 12 about the founding conference of the Agency for cultural and technical cooperation among Francophone countries.

After reviewing with my colleagues the new counter-proposals attached to your letter, I should like to let you have my comments and to suggest some changes.

You will certainly agree with me that Quebec has a very special interest in seeing the proposed agency set up and functioning properly. I had occasion to mention this to President Diori during his visit to Quebec last September. Indeed, he refers to this great interest in the letter which he has just sent me.

Quebec is interested in this agency because it believes it has something original and constructive to contribute to it. However, to ensure that this contribution will be effective and useful, we consider it essential that the terms of our participation in the agency reflect not only the position which Quebec occupies in Canada, but also the relative importance of its French-speaking population in comparison with/French-speaking population of the country as a whole. It is also essential that these terms take into account the fact that Quebec has large and numerous Francophone organizations and institutions which are not found in the other provinces and which can be of service to the Agency.

I do not feel that the arrangements you proposed in your letter of February 12 take these facts sufficiently into account. It is all the more important that these facts be reflected since we are dealing with the creation of an agency intended to promote la Francophonie. Historically, in Canada, it is Quebec which has played this role and which, as you are aware, has directly or indirectly prompted all the present reforms aimed at giving French-speaking Canadians and the French language their proper place in Canada. Likewise because of Quebec, the federal government has begun to place more emphasis on Canada's relations with Francophone countries and is attempting to correct the serious imbalance which exists between the cooperative link established with these countries some time ago and the traditionally broader cooperation it maintains with countries of the British Commonwealth. It would therefore appear both logical and in keeping