

In recent years, the settlement of the Algerian conflict, the impressive advances shown by the French economy and the achievement of greater political stability, with the great energy and patriotism of President De Gaulle, have led France to take a particularly active role internationally. It has extended and deepened its relations with other parts of the world, contributed greatly to the economic development of its former African and other colonies and, in seeking to develop more normal relations with East European states, has paid particular attention to the problem of how to end fundamental tensions threatening world peace.

Relations Between Canada and France

Canada has made a particular effort since the beginning of 1964 to strengthen and extend its traditionally friendly relation with France. We have done so for a number of reasons, and I should like to emphasize the range of our initiatives to avoid giving any impression that I am speaking only of cultural or linguistic matters or the naturally close connection between French-Canadians and France.

Our efforts to develop the relation more fully in a number of fields began with the visit which the Prime Minister and I made to France in January 1964. I can testify not only to the cordiality with which we were received but also that our desire to co-operate and build new bridges between Canada and France was sincerely and warmly reciprocated by President de Gaulle and by authorities at all levels. That this desire remains strong is regularly manifested to us in our daily contacts with French officials.

It is, of course, a fact of Canadian history that French-speaking Canadians have always had a particularly close relation with France, arising from traditions, language and culture. In recent years we have realized the need to have Government policies reflect more adequately than in the past the bilingual and bicultural nature of our country. The impulse given by what we have come to call the "quiet revolution" in Quebec has played its part in this process. In addition, English-speaking Canadians have, I believe, come to understand the value to Canada as a whole of developing and maintaining permanently a broad association with France as an integral part of our national heritage, comparable to the special ties with Britain, the Commonwealth and the United States, from which we have drawn benefits for so many years.

I should like to mention some specific manifestations of this deepening relation. Last year we entered into the first general cultural agreement with France. The agreement is intended to develop cultural, scientific and artistic exchanges between our two countries and to promote the teaching and use of French. Under this agreement, several important projects have already been undertaken. The Toronto Symphony has visited France, and the Théâtre de l'Egrégore of Montreal has gone to France and Switzerland. One hundred scholarships have been given to French students to study in Canadian universities and about a similar number have been given by France to Canadian students. French teachers in increasing numbers have come to Canada at the invitation of our universities.

In the economic field you will have noted the reports in the press in recent days about the Canadian economic mission in France. This mission, led by the Minister of Industry and Defence Production, Mr. Drury, and comprising a number