

Supply—External Affairs

mutual concern is especially valuable in a world in which race and colour have too often tended to be divisive forces.

A second important group of newly emerging states meriting special attention from Canada are the 20 French speaking states of Africa, most of which are members of the French community. It is only natural that Canada, a bicultural state, should wish to contribute to the advancement of this important group of French speaking African countries as it does to the African members of the commonwealth. There is a natural link here that also prompts French African states to turn to Canada. Like all the countries of that continent, these states are faced with the enormous problems of education and economic and cultural development. It is our intention to increase the level and quality of our assistance to them in terms that are represented by the announcement I made a few days ago, the details of which are now being formulated into a plan, which will, I hope, be of increasing value in manifesting Canada's concern for these countries.

There is one subject with which I wish to deal briefly now, Mr. Chairman. The house is aware that for many years as a private member of this house I demonstrated my interest in the question of Canadian membership in the organization of American states, a development to which most Latin American countries attach considerable importance and to which I am sure a great many Canadians familiar with developments in Latin America will likewise attach much importance. This government is fully aware of the role that the organization of American states plays in hemispheric affairs. We are aware, too, that there has been a noticeable growth of interest on the part of Canadians in connection with developments in Latin America, with which many of our citizens have a cultural, religious and social affinity.

This is not a question which can be settled summarily. There are a great many factors which the government must take into consideration and which are being carefully weighed. To this end I have had discussions with the president of the council of the organization of American states, and I have had discussions with the president of the inter-American bank. We are watching carefully the discussions now going on within the organization concerning terms of membership, a matter of considerable importance as well to the commonwealth countries of the Caribbean which are showing increasing interest in participation. All these aspects of the question are now being actively reviewed.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Would the hon. gentleman allow a question? He used very significant words—“discussions are taking place regarding the terms”. Does the Canadian government take the stand that the ordinary terms applicable to members of this organization should not apply to Canada?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): No, Mr. Chairman, I do not think I implied that. If I did, I had not intended to. At the present time there is a discussion as to the terms of membership of interested countries, and Canada is not one that has indicated an interest at the present time in joining the organization. If we reach that situation—I am not saying we will and I am not saying we will not—then will be the time to give consideration to the kind of question to which my right hon. friend has directed my attention.

There are many questions that I have not covered today but which undoubtedly will be discussed when the committee is set up: Membership in the Indo-China peace commissions; some of our current negotiations with the United States involving such questions as the law of the sea, on which negotiations will be resumed next Wednesday in Washington; discussions with regard to the Columbia river treaty project; our balance of payment problems. Indeed there are a whole series of questions concerning the two countries, as well as many questions concerning other countries and concerning our membership in various international bodies, but we will have an opportunity to deal with those at a later time.

A number of years ago a former secretary of state for external affairs, Right Hon. Louis St. Laurent, gave the following description of how Canada should pursue its international responsibilities:

In her participation in international affairs Canada will, I hope, act with resolution, with responsibility, and also with restraint. We should not evade our international duties; but in discharging them we should not be influenced unduly by national pride and prejudice. I hope that in our foreign relations we can reconcile our first duty to our own people with our ultimate obligations to the international community. In a frightened and suspicious world this is not always easy.

His prescription for Canadian conduct is as valid today as when it was first enunciated on April 29, 1948, and the world is only now beginning to be slightly less beset by fear and suspicion than it was then, when the expansionist and threatening behavior of international communism provided the impetus for the present western system of collective security, of which Canada is now an integral part.

The fundamental objective of Canadian policy was then, as it is now, to preserve peace and to seek a reduction in international tensions, whether those tensions arise from

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