

We have thrown off the yoke of the past and its fears. We are now prepared to approach the subject of international relations from the viewpoint of obtaining concrete results.

This is the type of attitude that has enabled us to view the visit of a French President to Canada as a normal, albeit very important event.

The Commonwealth is not new - but in a sense it is reborn. In recent years, Canada, and other nations, had let the Commonwealth slip towards the margins of our attentions. This Government was determined to renew the importance of the Commonwealth, in the same spirit that we were determined to find a formula for La Francophonie. We have done that, in particular regarding the fight against apartheid in South Africa.

To Canada, the apartheid system is wrong and must be changed. But words don't change systems. Concerted action does, and the Commonwealth was one of the best instruments available to bring pressure upon South Africa, and simultaneously maintain moderation and unity in the black populations of Southern Africa. Zimbabwe, Zambia and Botswana are neighbours of South Africa and members of the Commonwealth. Since Zimbabwe was created, Mr. Mulroney is the only leader of a Western Government who has personally visited the region. We have been able to play a constructive role in the fight against apartheid, because we have respected and renewed the common traditions which unite the Commonwealth families. Our leadership in the Commonwealth is both an eloquent expression of the character of Canada, and an effective instrument of our international action.

In the spirit of bilingualism I have to demonstrate a certain capacity to speak the other language.

I was speaking about leadership, and I think I might be permitted to quote from Sir John A. MacDonalld who, with Sir Georges Etienne Cartier, founded this country. One of the phrases that guided Sir John when he was asked about how he approached public policy was, I quote him: "Look a little ahead my friend." Not so far ahead - these are my words not Sir John's - that no one will follow you, but far enough ahead to change things.