

Africa

Mr. MacEachen's first official visit overseas as Secretary of State for External Affairs was to West Africa, which is an indication of the importance Canada attaches to its relations with the African continent. During his 17-day trip in April, the object of which was to strengthen and diversify Canada's relations with countries in which the Canadian presence had not yet been sufficiently manifest, the Minister was received in Nigeria, Upper Volta, Ivory Coast, Cameroon and Ghana. The visit provided the opportunity to consolidate bilateral relations, to implement a policy of wider political and economic consultations—in particular concerning the "New Economic Order"—and to explain directions in Canadian policy on other important points. Thus it served to strengthen relations among both Commonwealth and *francophone* countries, and enabled Canada to discuss new policies of co-operation and to review trade prospects with some of its most important African partners.

Mr. MacEachen's visit to Africa was returned soon afterwards by the visit to Canada of President Lamizana of Upper Volta, who also serves as president of the multinational Committee to Combat Drought in the Sahel. During this visit, views were exchanged on problems arising from development plans, and Canada stressed its wish to increase co-operation with Upper Volta. Canada also agreed to pledge about \$20 million for the development of priority sectors indicated by the Government of Upper Volta, such as rural development, transport and mines.

Other official visits to Ottawa included those of the Minister of the Interior of Guinea, the Minister of Transport of the People's Republic of the Congo, the Minister of External Affairs of Chad and the Minister of Planning and Co-operation of Senegal. These visits were a good indication of the close relations between Canada and West Africa, and they enabled Canada to survey its program of co-operation with each country and to exchange views on issues of mutual concern.

In other respects, 1975 was marked in Africa by several changes of government, some brought about by violence. President Gowon of Nigeria was deposed while attending a meeting of the Organization for African Unity in Kampala. President Tombalbaye of Chad died in a *coup d'état*. Madagascar was shaken by a number of violent movements, which seem to have ceased since President Ratsiraka came to

power. The situation remained unstable in some parts of Ethiopia, and new outbreaks of violence swept Angola and the Western Sahara.

Decolonization continued

North Africa was disturbed by the question of the decolonization of the Spanish Sahara. This issue was considered in the highest international forums—the International Court of Justice and the thirtieth session of the UN General Assembly—and it gave rise to intensive diplomatic negotiation between Morocco, Mauritania, Spain and Algeria.

The withdrawal of Portugal from Africa as a colonial power was completed during 1975. To initiate the establishment of meaningful relations with the new countries that were emerging from the Portuguese colonial empire and to demonstrate Canada's interest, a special mission to Angola and Mozambique was arranged, composed of representatives of the Departments of External Affairs and Industry, Trade and Commerce, and of the Canadian International Development Agency. Unfortunately, owing to the outbreak of hostilities in Angola and to administrative difficulties in Mozambique, the special mission had to be cancelled at the last moment.

The independence of each of the former colonies—Cape Verde Islands, São Tomé and Príncipe, Mozambique and Angola—was welcomed as it was achieved, and agreement was reached with Mozambique on the establishment of non-resident diplomatic representation. On the other hand, the situation in Angola at the time of independence (November 11) was so confused and unstable that Canada was unable to recognize either of the rival groups that claimed to govern the country. At the United Nations, Canadian representatives condemned the foreign intervention that was exacerbating the differences and called upon all parties concerned to work to resolve the conflict through negotiation and conciliation. As evidence of its concern for the people of Angola, the Canadian Government contributed over \$250,000 to International Red Cross programs to help the victims of the fighting.

Southern Africa

In Rhodesia, movement towards a peaceful settlement was seriously interrupted when the fragile unity of the nationalist groups in the African Nationalist Council threatened to