

between governments, bilateral defence understandings, cultural and information programs, and, in some circumstances, even development assistance.

The government must be prepared at times to let longer-term general considerations affecting the relationship take precedence over shorter-term interests of a narrower character. The relationships must be subject to central policy management, bringing to bear on them the key considerations of credibility, coherence and planning. The facts that we have limited human and financial resources and that we are proceeding against a background of limitations to government spending, argue that our global approach to other countries must also be selected in line with our basic goals. We have to concentrate our energies and our resources to attain these goals. Priorities among relationships are therefore necessary, and the definition of these priorities must be systematized.

As a basic instrument of its global, differentiated foreign policy, the government has therefore decided to give concentrated attention to a select number of countries of concentration. The purpose is generally to strengthen long-term relationships with these countries because of their relevance to our long-term domestic development objectives. But the importance of the countries in question would also devolve from their relevance to our over-all objectives and interests. Such a list would include both long-established countries of concentration and relative newcomers.

U.S. importance
clear

The most obvious bilateral relationship of benefit to Canada is that with the United States. In many basic aspects, that relationship is central to our foreign policy considerations and vital to our development. But it is a relationship which we in Canada — both government and business — must manage coherently and productively, with a clear sense of our economic and other priorities. It's true, no doubt, that some Canadian economic imperatives differ from those of the United States. But this need not deter us in assisting each other in achieving our national objectives.

Other relationships are, of course, vital to us. Our fastest growing markets for capital goods are in Latin America, in the Middle East and with partners not presently among our traditional relationships. If you've watched the itineraries of my colleague, the Honourable Ed. Lumley, and myself, you will have noticed that we have been concentrating on certain areas of the world where we believe Canada's long-term interests will best be served. I recently returned from a series of meetings between a number of Canadian ministers — Mr. Lumley, Mr. Lalonde, Mr. Whelan and myself — and the corresponding Mexican ministers, and there is general agreement that the potential for a durable political and economic relationship between Canada and Mexico is very bright.

I believe, however, that we must be very clear about the nature of these bilateral relationships and the qualities they should have. I think that if they are to be consistent and enduring we must be prepared to pursue them on a long-term basis. Our approaches have to be planned. And the execution of our foreign bilateral policy must be coherent. In this, all the relevant instruments of governments, as I've said, should be called on to serve the relationship. To the extent possible, we shall have to avoid contradictions in our relationships. To achieve this our criteria for selecting key