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CANADA AND THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

An Interview given by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Paul Martin, to M. Jean-Pierre Tainturier of LE DEVOIR on December 23, 1964.

QUESTION (1):

What are the principles which govern Canadian diplomacy?

ANSWER:

Canada is a middle power endowed with an active diplomacy as befits it in an age of interdependence. Is there a contradiction between the emphasis we place on our efforts toward disarmament and our participation in a defence alliance, between our belonging to the American continent and our special ties with Europe, or between our attachment regarding the evolving Commonwealth and our dedicated support to the United Nations on the other hand? I do not think so. If there is a paradox, it is to be found in the age in which we live, which imposes upon us or permits us a balanced diplomacy.

Canada's might menaces no one. Thus, its action on the international stage does not arouse suspicion nor does it provoke fear of domination. But Canada no longer is so small or so weak economically that it is incapable of exercising a real influence in the world. Its high standard of living gives it the means to effect a balanced diplomacy. Our intense commercial activity gives us the chance to open wide many doors on the world. These opportunities provided by our trading spirit cause us to follow a policy of general interest stemming from our own special interests. This is the policy we follow at the United Nations. Canada, being free and capable of assuming international responsibilities, plays a role of first importance in endeavouring to strengthen the authority of this world-wide organization. There are many examples of our initiatives, our role in Cyprus, in Suez, in the Congo - in fact, wherever peace is in danger.

As other factors influencing our external policy, I might mention the close co-ordination that must exist between defence, on the one hand, and our external policy, on the other, according to the principles enumerated in the White Paper on Defence, and, of course, the increasing importance of our programmes of aid to developing countries. Our close ties, or those we are developing, with the United States, the Commonwealth, the community of French-speaking countries, the Latin American countries, occupy, each in its own way, an important place in the evolution of our diplomacy.

Perhaps I should end by reminding you that a democratic diplomacy must be an open one, and I mean by that intelligible to all. But an efficient diplomacy must also be discreet. Canadian diplomacy answers, I think, both needs.