

The instability and violent changes that are now being witnessed in Africa shed more light on the hard facts that are the basic realities of that continent.

Allow me to quote a few figures:

- Average income per capita in Africa is only about 33 cents daily.
- In some countries, this average income barely reaches 15 cents.
- Eighty per cent to 85 per cent of all Africans are illiterate, and only 40 per cent of school-age children attend school.
- The African farmer's productivity is only about 4 per cent of that of the North American farmer, with all that such a figure implies in the way of nutritional deficiencies.
- The infant mortality rate is about 260 in 1,000 births.
- There is only one doctor for 17,000 people, a proportion one twenty-fifth that of Canada.

If such figures have anything to tell, it is the immensity of the task to be accomplished and the obligation we have of helping the Africans to help themselves.

This challenge, posed by the accession to independence of the new nations and by Africa's development problems, has been met by Canada in several ways. In 1957, we opened in Accra our first diplomatic post in West Africa. This year, we have on the west coast two missions in French-speaking countries, at Yaoundé and Leopoldville, and two others in Commonwealth African countries, at Accra and Lagos. These missions are also accredited in a dozen French-speaking African states. On the east coast, Canada has a representative in Dar-Es-Salaam who is also accredited in two other countries. In addition, we have missions in Cairo, South Africa and Salisbury. Twelve French-speaking African states, in return, have accredited with the Canadian Government their representatives either in Washington or New York. Several days ago we had the pleasure to welcome in Ottawa a diplomat from Cameroun, the first French-speaking country to appoint a resident representative in our capital city.

Our diplomatic relations and, with the exception of missionary efforts, the relations of Canada as a whole with Africa are still at their initial stage. There is no need to say that we all realize there is much to be done yet. Our African posts, which constitute the primary instrument for friendly relations and the implementation of our aid programmes have already begun to provide us with diplomatic officers who possess the specialized knowledge we need in order to perfect our relations with that continent. This, however, offers no grounds for complacency, and in the diplomatic field we still hope to progress further. We consider opening in a near future three or four new missions in Africa, some of which will be in French-speaking countries. This will provide a Canadian presence where it is necessary and at the same time lighten the already too heavy burden of our representatives in Africa.