

of State for External Affairs. It was my first visit to the heart of the black continent, and it has done much to broaden my imagination and understanding. In two weeks, after crossing the Atlantic and the Sahara, we covered more than five thousand miles without ever straying very far away from the Gulf of Guinea: in this rather exhausting way we came to realize the vastness of the African continent. From the bustling metropolis of Lagos to the plains of Kano which, despite their blood-red earth and flamboyant trees, strangely resemble our own Prairies; from the high Mossi plateau surrounding Ouagadougou to the lush wooded vales of Yamoussoukro and the refinement of Abidjan; from the comfortable heights of Yaoundé to the sunny streets of Accra, Africa flaunted before us the vast diversity of her climates, habitats, peoples, languages and cultures.

During these two weeks, we were received by four heads of state, held talks with five foreign affairs ministers and met numerous ministers, government officials and other African personalities. We became acquainted with the Canadian ambassadors, diplomats and CIDA representatives stationed in the countries visited, and we gained an appreciation of the way in which the Canadian presence is being maintained in this part of the world. We also met a large number of Canadians whom various private missions brought to West Africa; were able to meet and talk with groups of Canadian experts working under often difficult conditions; visited development projects supported by Canada and realized at first hand the value placed