

tion by all members of the community, will adopt new policies—which it admits are long overdue—to ensure the equality of women in the Canadian society. This does not come as a surprise, since the Prime Minister's speech of March 1971 hinted that some measures had already been taken and that the government intended to improve the situation still further.

[Translation]

Every woman in Canada possesses skills, competence, energy, knowledge and abilities which are often under-utilized because they are all too often underestimated in their importance.

And the Prime Minister added:

Yet in Canada we have permitted ourselves to develop attitudes which are hostile to the reception of women into a number of professions and trades and into politics. In the result each one of us, men and women, are demeaned.

The Prime Minister also recognized that political parties share the responsibility for this promotion. He even stated that he would give unqualified support to women nominated in federal ridings and he invited county organizations to give serious consideration to potential female candidates. Events have since proved the sincerity of the government. It is up to the population to do the rest by changing traditional attitudes.

Speaking for the women of Canada, I thank the same government for the impetus it has given to the cause of equal opportunities for women and their fulfilment in keeping with their aptitudes. Women's organizations which yearly submit briefs containing many suggestions and remarks urge him not to slacken his efforts toward this worthy goal.

Nor should there be any question of isolation for Canada in the field of international relations. As a result of a review of external policy undertaken in 1968, Canada has considerably extended its horizons and has brought about a dramatic change of its trends.

Having, as a journalist, fought for recognition of mainland China and its entry into the UN, as well as for a keener sense of our interests on the other side of the Pacific, I could not but rejoice over such decisions. We now have an altogether different outlook on the position occupied by this country in the world today and some bold action will have been adequate to confer on Canada an enlarged stature. To state that the action taken by Canada was enough to influence the evolution of the foreign policy of our neighbours would no doubt be presumptuous. However, at the time of our first advances in 1968, few observers could foresee that the President of the United States and the President of Communist China would today engage in a dialogue in Peking.

So it is that after having almost exclusively considered Europe and the United States, with which we still keep the closest political, economic and cultural relations, we now consider our nation as part of America and not only North America, through our new status as a permanent observer in the Organization of American States and our full membership in several of its agencies. We also consider ourselves as a nation of the Arctic after the visit of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to the Soviet Union, the signing of

a protocol on consultations and the conclusion of agreements on scientific and technical exchanges with that country, not to mention the energetic laws that we have passed to protect our northern heritage. We also consider ourselves as a nation of the Pacific by virtue of our increasing exchanges with Japan and our diplomatic and trade relations with the People's Republic of China, to name only these two far eastern states. This new balance in our foreign contacts, this new place for Canada in the world furthermore includes the strengthening of political, cultural and economic ties, not only with African members of the Commonwealth but also with those of the francophone community, which is certainly more in keeping with our interests and our bi-ethnic reality.

Under the influence of events, laws and institutions tend to change. An American clergyman wrote that, like clocks, laws must sometimes be cleaned, wound up and set. Is not the supreme test for a government the capacity to concile continuity and change? This twin function of the law which, on the one hand, reflects and confirms the stable elements of a community and, on the other hand, can be a powerful and yet peaceful instrument of social change is the only one that can enable us to achieve a superior degree of order as well as justice.

From the moment of its election, this government has attempted this with foresight. After rationalizing some parliamentary procedures, it produced a host of new policies and impressive legislation, many of which are directed toward improving the condition of the working class. It was creative and inspiring; it fostered contacts with the people; it implemented its policy of participation by publishing white papers and by initiating bold and imaginative programs such as Opportunities for Youth and Local Initiatives. But above all, it met the anxious expectation of the Canadian people who had asked it in 1968 to hold a restless Canada together.

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Of this restless Canada, the most restive part is undoubtedly Quebec. Even though a minority has so far accepted the theory that its social development depends on the conquest of its sovereignty, the question of whether Quebec will find its identity inside or outside the Canadian federation has not been settled yet, and 1972 will probably be another year of confrontation that will hopefully remain verbal between federalist and separatist forces in that province where the events of the 70's still hover.

Of these two groups, the federalist bloc turns with concern to the central government. It expects some actions that, by their psychological impact, could help improve the climate. Of course, federal grants to sustain employment are welcome and the provincial government has no hesitation about signing agreements that bring millions from Ottawa to Quebec. Helpful as they are, these millions will not be sufficient to better Ottawa's image, nor, in our opinion, will the adoption of excellent measures such as legislation to improve the equalization system, to reduce the tax load of low-income earners or increase loans to students. What Quebecers value most is some compromises between the two levels of government on many specific issues, of which the welfare policy of that province is one of the most crucial.