

North-South Relations

Latin America offers another region of potential partnerships. Geopolitically, Canada has been screened from Latin America by the bulk of the United States. Our relationships with Latin American nations have tended to be one-dimensional, based largely on trade. We intend to broaden our relationships, in particular, with Mexico, Brazil and Venezuela, with an accent on a mutually beneficial relationship of the widest possible scope.

Canada has two regional relationships which are integrally linked to our interests in both the Commonwealth and *la francophonie*. If I had more time, I would speak about both the commonwealth Caribbean and francophone West Africa.

Canada's growing economic links with developing countries are not Canada's only interests in seeking the economic prosperity of the Third World. This would be a betrayal of how Canadians see our responsibilities towards the developing world. Promoting social justice is an important domestic objective of this government. It has a clear international dimension which finds its reflection in Canada's foreign policy. It is central to our approach to the North-South dialogue, to Canadian development assistance, to human rights issues and to humanitarian questions. It is a major theme of emphasis in Canada's foreign policy. The government is, indeed, pleased to endorse the broad thrust of the report of the parliamentary task force on North-South relations.

A few moments ago, I heard what I can only call the politically motivated attack of the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald) on the Prime Minister's (Mr. Trudeau) leadership on North-South issues over the years. I think the world would find such criticisms laughable. At Commonwealth meetings and in his Mansion House address, which is considered a classic throughout the world in the statement of the responsibilities of northern countries, in the development and implementation of policies which are among the most favourable in the world to Third World countries, the world has recognized the leadership which the Prime Minister has brought to this field.

Because of time limitations, I shall leave the full range of my comments on North-South issues and the Breau report for tomorrow's debate. At the moment I would note only that the theme of social justice in Canada's foreign policy is clearly apparent in questions touching the rights of the individual. The rights of the individual are at the basis of our political system. It is therefore essential that the promotion of human rights be part of the framework of Canadian foreign policy.

In general, our approach to the Third World is to insulate it as much as possible from East-West confrontations; in other words, to treat Third World countries on their own merits. Of course, when a developing country applies a foreign policy approach which actively aims at subverting the independence of other countries, our policy has been to terminate aid relations and to restrict economic relations to non-strategic commodities. However, for countries like Angola, our policy is to maintain open relations and to avoid punitive measures.

May I say in conclusion that I think it is important for Canadians to realize that foreign policy is not something secret

or esoteric. It represents, internationally, what Canadians are and what they value. If fairly presented, it can be understood by all Canadians. I must say it is one of my personal goals to so open our foreign policy to the public as to make it generally understood. If the public can be persuaded to participate in the formation or carrying out of our foreign policy, so much the better. The businessman who fosters our commerce abroad and the aid administrator or field worker who spends part of his or her life helping the poor in developing countries are participating in our foreign policy, just as are the overworked and underpraised veterans of our foreign service.

Foreign policy is shaped by the value judgments of the government, based on the values generally shared by Canadians. In this way, Canadian foreign policy not only promotes democracy but also expresses the democracy that constitutes our national life.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Douglas Roche (Edmonton South): This debate on Canada's foreign policy in the international community is held at a momentous time in history, for mankind is in trouble. There has been a ceaseless buildup of nuclear arsenals and conventional weapons. We are experiencing chaotic imbalances of food and population, violations of human rights, depletion of resources, economic disorders and an upsurge in violence and terrorism. All these problems make the 1980s the most dangerous decade that the human community has ever faced.

No indicator more graphically shows the incredible destructive power that is loose in the world than the existence of 50,000 nuclear weapons and the ever-rising flood of arms trade through the developing world.

The whole world is painfully off balance, opulently rich in arms, poor in providing for the needs of human lives. Behind the statistical shadows of income disparities, inflation and retarded growth, are millions and millions of individuals trapped by shocking neglect. They suffer from hunger, the darkness of illiteracy, illness and desperate poverty.

This social deficit is itself a threat to world security because the festering problems of today, neglected in favour of armed might, promise rising public anger and social upheaval, against which no national military fortress can be made impregnable for long.

The U.S. presidential commission on the year 2000 predicted that if present trends continue, the world of 2000 will be far more crowded, more polluted, less stable ecologically and more vulnerable to economic, social and environmental disruption than the world we live in at present.

But this future chaos is not inevitable. Although the balance sheet of the human condition today is heavily weighted on the negative side, there is also a powerful positive theme characterizing modern civilization. The fantastic advances in science and technology could, if we had the political will, ensure a life of human dignity for everyone, and not just the privileged few. We are entering a totally new period in our planet's history.