

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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THE CHALLENGE OF UNDER-DEVELOPMENT

Speech by the Secretary of State for External Affairs; the Honourable Paul Martin, to the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Plenary Meeting of the International Committee of YMCAs of Canada and the United States, Cleveland, September 26, 1964.

I am deeply honoured by your invitation to address you on this anniversary occasion. Three-quarters of a century ago, the Young Men's Christian Associations of North America set out, in a spirit of brotherhood and service, to share their resources and skills with those of other countries. Three-quarters of a century ago, a movement began which was destined to transcend colour, creed and culture. Three-quarters of a century ago devoted and farsighted men in the United States and Canada recognized the need for a policy of hands across the continents, for helping people to help themselves, for training good citizens and good men.

The tributes that have been paid to you on your seventy-fifth anniversary by world leaders and statesmen bear eloquent testimony to the measure of your accomplishment. With a membership today in excess of 5 million, spread over more than 80 countries and territories, you can justly claim to be "a unique and penetrating force in the cause of world peace and justice". For peace and justice, in the final analysis, are concepts that depend upon men of just and peaceful disposition to give them substance. And it is men of that calibre and disposition who have been the products of the YMCA world service over the years -- the products of teaching and example but, above all I believe, the products of that bond of universal brotherhood which permeates all your endeavours.

Looking back over the past 75 years, we are bound to recognize, I think, that the world is no longer the far flung entity it then was. Advances in transportation and communication, in the interchange of knowledge and ideas, and in international organization and co-operation have made us all neighbours of one another. One of the consequences of this process has been to bring home to each and every one of us a problem of which we were only marginally conscious in former days -- the problem of the under-developed world. I think it would be particularly appropriate for me to say something about that problem on this occasion and to a gathering such as this.