

for five years earlier. This is due not to imports, which have deviated only slightly from \$0.5 billion for several years, but to rapid growth in exports. In 1960, only a handful of Canadian companies had interests in Africa; now, the number stands at about a hundred. I have often met Canadian businessmen in Africa, and I have been struck by their dynamism and by their determination to enter the African market. It is thanks to such men and their sustained efforts that the various African countries have learned to appreciate the quality of our products and services.

Exports

How should our trade with Africa be characterized? Canada's export figures for Africa are as follows: 1980: Arabic Africa, \$660 million, almost \$400 million of which went to Algeria, by far our leading partner; black Africa, \$350 million; southern Africa, \$200 million. Figures for exports to French-speaking Africa illustrate the growth rate: in 1960, under \$10 million; in 1970, almost \$40 million; in 1980, \$627 million. To these figures must be added the value of services extended, not really computable but certainly representing several hundred million dollars, and the global value of Canadian investments in Africa, also reaching a figure of several hundred million dollars.

These figures, unavoidably abstract in nature, represent a very vivid reality. Canada exports to Africa agricultural products, transportation, electrical and electronic equipment, prefabricated houses, machinery, chemical products, asbestos, paper products; the emphasis is clearly on products and equipment which will contribute to Africa's development. Canada's chief imports from Africa are unrefined petroleum, ores, sugar, coffee, cocoa. It is self-evident that as African countries become more prosperous and their economy more diversified, trade in both directions will increase in volume and variety.

This growth in exports to Africa is the more remarkable since Africa is not an easy market for us. I might mention some of the problems we face. African companies often have close links with those of Europe, and the latter often control the markets. Calls for tenders are often formulated according to European rather than North American standards and criteria; the difference is important when tenders are being prepared and is disadvantageous to our companies. The question of financing transactions is also a major problem; the heavy debts and economic difficulties of many African countries are barriers to obtaining commercial credit and we do not enjoy the same flexibility as European countries when backing a commercial loan with aid votes. European companies are omnipresent in Africa, whereas we have hardly tapped that market or identified those sectors in which we are best qualified to compete. We are gaining ground rapidly, but are not being awarded contracts; we must win them through demonstrated competence and persistence.

Special measures have been taken to facilitate Canado-African commercial exchanges. Each week, a Canadian trade mission visits some part of Africa. We finance familiarization tours to Africa by Canadian businessmen. Imports from most African coun-