

STATEMENT DISCOURS

SECRETARY
OF STATE
FOR EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS.

SECRÉTAIRE
D'ÉTAT AUX
AFFAIRES
EXTÉRIEURES.



87/44

Speech by the
Right Honourable Joe Clark,
Secretary of State for
External Affairs, at
Technical University
of Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, August 23, 1987

OTTAWA

August 26, 1987.

It is going on three years since this Government came to power. During that time I have had the great honour to represent our country as Secretary of State for External Affairs. I have talked to thousands of people - real people, not just officials and Ministers - in Africa and Asia, Europe and Latin America, the United States and the Soviet Union; and I have sought out the views of hundreds of individual Canadians - exporters, missionaries, investors, aid workers, MPs, diplomats, students, professors and artists who make Canada work in the world.

One lesson I have learned is that international policy, far from being foreign, lies at the heart of the every day interests of Canadians. In this world of instant communication and nuclear weapons, in this modern trading country, foreign policy is domestic policy. Isolation is not an option for Canada. We could not draw back from the world, even if we wanted to. And Canadians don't want to.

Nova Scotians know how world affairs affect our daily lives. Seventy years ago, Halifax harbour exploded. This summer, 174 people came ashore near Yarmouth, claiming to be refugees from troubles continents away. From the port of Halifax, in two world wars, Canadian soldiers left for European fields, some never to return. To and from this port, every day, commodities come in and commodities go out. Dramatizing the reality that this country depends more on foreign trade than Britain does, or France, or the United States, or Japan. The International Centre for Ocean Development is involved intimately in the solution of problems around the world. So is the Bedford Institute. So is the Coady Institute, whose representatives were with me last week in Mozambique. So is this University, and its academic junior partners like Dalhousie. So are the thousands of Nova Scotians and other Canadians who contribute to UNICEF, or to Save the Children, or our churches or our service clubs or our peace movements or our export seminars, or who sign the register against apartheid, or help fight famine.

We Canadians have a proud tradition internationally, and this Government was elected to do more than respect that reputation. We were elected to renew it - to modernize our foreign policy in the same way that we challenged and changed conventional thinking about deficits, and defence, and relations with the provinces, and the development of our regions. We have made real progress in all these reforms and, under the Prime Minister's leadership, no where more than in foreign policy.

In quick summary, we have helped shape the mandate of the new round of multilateral trade negotiations, particularly respecting agriculture; we have initiated historic trade negotiations with our largest trading partner, the United States; we have begun the first major review of defence policy in nearly two decades; we have led the internal reform of the United Nations, including persuading that cautious body to take the plunge and appoint Therese Paquette-Sevigny, a Canadian, as the first female Under Secretary General in the United Nations forty year history; the Prime Minister has regularly raised, at international economic summits, the inequity of third world debt and, beginning last year, we put our own aid program entirely on an all-grant basis; we sent experts to Central America to help the Contadora countries devise an effective control and verification mechanism - and last week, after the dramatic agreement by the five Central American presidents, sent Canadian experts back again so that Canada's support of that initiative will be practical help as well as words; we have hosted a major international conference on the seismic verification of a nuclear test ban, and have been active in every international and alliance forum where arms control and disarmament are discussed; and we have opened up the process of foreign policy to all Canadians, whether by establishing David MacDonald's special role to coordinate Canada's extraordinary response to the famine in Ethiopia and the Sahel, or by launching major public parliamentary reviews of foreign policy and aid policy, and then acting on most of the recommendations.

Naturally, some of these initiatives are controversial. You don't often make progress without controversy. Sometimes the debate is limited and largely internal. For example, former Governments spoke more eloquently than they acted regarding the equality of women. When Brian Mulroney's Government took office, only two of our posts abroad were headed by women. Today women are heads of post for Canada in major missions like Argentina, Spain, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Copenhagen, Hong Kong and six other posts, and two of the five Deputy Ministers who report to me are Sylvia Ostry and Maggie Catley-Carlson. In fact, in a portfolio where the two other Ministers are Pat Carney and Monique Landry, I understand clearly how the universe will unfold - with a little help from determined leaders.

Some of the other controversies were more public. When Britain and the United States pulled out of UNESCO, Canada stayed, to reform from within. When Washington announced an embargo on Nicaragua, we immediately stated our own different policy. Former Canadian governments had worried about asserting Canada's sovereignty in our North; that territory is ours, and we have claimed it, and we are developing a means to assert our sovereignty in our North. Knowing the risks, we have brought Soviet POWs out of Afganistan; the Prime Minister has raised human rights questions directly with leaders of Korea, Zimbabwe, the Soviet Union; Mr. Mulroney and I will meet this Friday with Oliver Tambo of the African National Congress, knowing that some call them Communists but knowing also that the ANC will be part of any solution in southern Africa, and Canada must do everything we can to make the end to apartheid as peaceful as possible.

The world is too large to review country by country, issue by issue, and this nation is active almost everywhere. We have extended our peace keeping activities to the Sinai, and are in regular contact with Jewish and Arab leaders to see if there are ways we can help them move forward toward peace. We have established an active trading and diplomatic presence in Asia, opening new trade offices in Osaka, Shanghai, Bombay, and New Zealand, and Cabinet has just approved new initiatives in our relations with Europe. In the last

three years, it has been my privilege, on behalf of Canada, to meet Anatoly Scharansky in Jerusalem, and receive his thanks for the unrelenting support of the Canadians who sought his freedom; to host in Ottawa some of the mothers of "the disappeared" of Argentina, who had come to discuss human rights institutions with us, because they trust Canada more than other countries; to visit remote Asian villages where Canadians are overcoming tradition and despair so children can live and countries develop. There is a lot to say about Canada's role in the world.

Not meaning to be exclusive, let me single out four areas where our role may be particularly important.

One, of course, is Africa, a continent of immense potential and terrible problems. My first visit abroad, as Foreign Minister, was to Ethiopia on the way back from the tragic funeral of Indira Gandhi, because our Prime Minister wanted to see what more Canada could do to respond to the shocking famine wracking that country. Canada, Canadians, responded magnificently then, and our reach into Africa has deepened and grown. Canada is one of the principle aid donors on the continent, giving approximately 900 million dollars last fiscal year. Monique Landry was the only Minister from the western world to be invited to attend the recent continental conference in Nigeria on Africa economic recovery. Brian Mulroney is the only head of government of an economic summit country to have visited southern Africa since the independence of Zimbabwe. Last year, Canada played a leading role at the UN Special Assembly on Africa. Ambassador Stephen Lewis has been named the Secretary General's "Special Adviser" on African economic recovery.

Sharing roots in the Commonwealth and La Francophonie, respected as a bridge between developed and developing countries, we are uniquely placed to contribute to development and stability in Africa. Other Western countries have more power; few have our influence, and our challenge is to use that influence constructively, whether the question is dealing with the IMF, or modernizing agriculture, or seeking a peaceful end to apartheid.

Whatever the other tensions in Africa, the apartheid system is at the root of the violence which could tear southern Africa apart. If there was one cause for encouragement in my conversations in Africa last week, it was that everyone I met understood that violence would devastate the whole region, white and black, rich and poor, marxist and capitalist. The parties are divided not just by colour and experience, but by suspicion and fear, but at the end of the day there may be a common instinct, that violent confrontation is the worst of all alternatives. Attempts at pressure and at dialogue must both continue, and we believe that Canada has both the opportunity and the obligation to use our unusual influence constructively.

That brings me to the second area I want to emphasize. Canada is among the most active supporters of multilateral institutions - like the UN, the GATT, other organizations which bring different countries together. But there are two organizations which are more than multilateral - they are family - the families of the Commonwealth and La Francophonie. We are the only developed country to belong to both - and that gives us bonds of language, tradition, often institutions, which reach across the economics and the geography which often divide the world.

Moreover, in each of the French and British empires, we were a colony too, so carry no imperialist baggage. For some time, the Commonwealth had slipped to the margins of Canadian foreign policy, and the Mulroney Government has brought it back to centre stage. La Francophonie had been stillborn, because of differences with Quebec which the Trudeau Government could not resolve, and Brian Mulroney did. Both those organizations meet in Canada this fall, la Francophonie in Quebec in two weeks, the Commonwealth in Vancouver in mid-October. They are different families, but with a common reach around the world, and Canada's membership in both together is unique and valuable.

Let me turn now to our relations with the two superpowers. We are the next-door neighbour of both, and the strong ally of the United States. When I met Mr. Gromyko in Moscow in 1985 - where he reminded me that he had worked with every Canadian Foreign Minister since Louis St. Laurent - I began my conversations by saying the Soviets should have no illusion about the depth of Canada's commitment to personal freedom and genuine democracy. In the contest over freedom, Canada is not neutral. Nor do we isolate ourselves on this continent. We have defended democratic values before, and we defend them now, in close and formal partnership with our allies in the United States, and our allies on the first line of defence, in western Europe.

There is a sentimental notion that Canada could advance the cause of peace and freedom by pulling out of Europe. That is naive and foolish. Our commitment to Europe, including through NATO, contributes significantly to stability on that continent, and is one of the factors which has led the Soviet Union to conclude that it must negotiate because it cannot divide the west. For Canada to pull out of NATO would among other things, jeopardize whatever prospect exists for agreement on arms control. For most of the last decade, Soviet policy sought to create disunity in Europe. That policy failed, and was replaced by a willingness to negotiate. This Government of Canada does not propose to make the world more dangerous by breaking the unity of the west, and thus tempting the Soviet Union to easier options than negotiation. Indeed, as Perrin Beatty's White Paper makes clear, we intend to modernize our capacity to meet our Alliance and Atlantic commitments.

At the same time, we will continue to encourage the Soviet Union towards the reforms which Mr. Gorbachev espouses. There has been some real movement within the Soviet Union, on questions like family reunification, and it is important for countries like Canada to encourage real reforms. I was the first Canadian Foreign Minister in twelve years to visit Moscow. The Prime Minister maintains a regular contact with General Secretary Gorbachev. Our countries are working together on northern projects, and in other areas where we have common interests, and we encourage joint economic ventures between Soviets and Canadians. Our active alliance with the United States may help us improve the contact between the superpowers, in the same way as it has given us access to positions the Americans take to the Geneva negotiations. As a neighbour to both, as a society committed to freedom, and serious about peace, we will take every practical step to increase understanding and cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Finally, I want to refer to human rights. Canada, of course, cannot impose our standards on the world, but we can act to seek respect for the standards the United Nations has established, and the obligations freely entered into in the Helsinki Accord. The Special Parliamentary Joint Committee urged the Government to continue our commitment to an active human rights policy. We are doing that, and will soon establish an International Institute for Human Rights and Institutional Development, in response to the Committee's recommendation. We are increasingly factoring human rights consideration into our aid and development policies, while taking care not to penalize the very people whose human rights are being abused. In June, I had the honour to welcome to Ottawa Mr. Danylo Shumuk, a Ukrainian prisoner of conscience who had finally been released after years of imprisonment in the Soviet Union and pressure from Canada, to join his relatives in freedom in Canada. I took him to the floor of the House of Commons, our free Parliament, and showed him the seats of some of the Members. When I pointed out the Prime Minister's seat, Mr. Shumuk said: "I know where he sits. He sits next to Mr. Mazankowski." His family had told him of the progress in Canada of the Mazankowski's and the Hnatysyn's and others, and the contrast between systems was clear. To be an outspoken Ukrainian in the Soviet Union was to spend years in prison. To be a proud eastern European in Canada was to become the Deputy Prime Minister. It is that quality of freedom which defines our country, and informs the position this Government will continue to take regarding prisoners of conscience, regarding apartheid, regarding other abuses of human rights.

I am proud of what we have been able to do, in less than three years, in foreign policy - but even more enthusiastic about what we can do, particularly if more Canadians become more active in taking the practical, often personal, steps that have won Canada our standing in the world. We should not exaggerate our influence, nor should we ignore it, nor decline to exercise it. We are a vast country who only immediate neighbours are three oceans and two superpowers - a diverse society whose people came from every corner, every culture, every colour of the world, and whose interests reach

everywhere. We need a foreign policy that reflects the whole Canada - a trading nation, a northern nation, a free nation of people who treasure human rights because close relatives are denied them, a developed economy, a former colony, an international people. Our teachers and traders and missionaries roamed far continents before there was a CIDA, or a CUSO, or a Department of Trade. Our soldiers went away to fight oppression when other countries hunkered down in isolation. Our diplomats and leaders created NATO, invented the peace keeping role of the United Nations, concluded the trade agreement which inspired the GATT, and now, in Brian Mulroney's administration, have found the way to launch la Francophonie, and the will to revitalize the Commonwealth of Nations.

There is no prouder flag to fly than Canada's, no better passport. Yet that reputation was not won by force of arms or power, nor by the purity of our soul, nor by the brilliance of a skilled elite. That unique Canadian reputation reflects the nature and history of this unusual country - it comes from acting abroad as we try to act at home. And we came to office to seize that reality, to extend it, to expand the degree to which our foreign policy reflects our Canadian nature.