

# STATEMENT DISCOURS

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86/51

Speech in the House of  
Commons by the Secretary of  
State for External Affairs,  
the Right Honourable  
Joe Clark, on the  
Throne Speech

OTTAWA

October 6, 1986.

Mr. Speaker:

I am privileged to take part in the Throne Speech Debate, to discuss certain of the initiatives we have undertaken in international affairs, in the first two years of this new government, and some of the challenges that lie ahead.

One of the reforms of this government was, precisely, to open up debate on foreign policy in Canada. On nine separate occasions, in our two years, my colleagues and I have taken advantage of Ministerial statements to allow Parliament to discuss international questions. In the four years before, our predecessors did not make use of that instrument to involve Parliament and Canadians. We established, for the first time in history, a means for a joint committee of this House and the other place to invite individual Canadians to express their hopes and views about what we should do in the world. The rules of Parliament do not oblige me to respond formally to the report that ensued, but in the spirit of our parliamentary democracy, I intend to table a full response, within the next few weeks.

Because we believe that one of the great untapped resources of Canadian foreign policy is the interest and expertise and concern of individual Canadians who want to help build a better world. This is an international country. Just look at this House. Our Speaker was born in Yokahoma; one of his deputies was born just outside Cracow. One of seven of our citizens has family roots in Eastern Europe. Fully one-third of Canadians are of neither French nor Anglo-Saxon origin.

We come from everywhere, and are thereby connected by a strong and human bond to perspectives and opportunities that more limited nations can't enjoy.

The personal tradition of Canadians has been to reach out to the world -- you see it in our missionaries; our merchants; the small army of Canadian aid and development workers; our businesses, building schools and dams and highways and extending technology on every continent; our soldiers, fighting for freedom in war, serving peace now. Personally, I will never forget the extent and the generosity of the Canadian response to the crisis of the boat people, cast adrift to die in the China Seas. That direct involvement in the world is as much a part of the Canadian character as our cultural diversity, our bilingualism, our history of triumph over hard geography. That is a tradition on which this government is determined to build.

We began with the extraordinary Canadian response to famine in Africa. The government mobilized quickly and, I believe, effectively -- but the people of Canada led the

response. So it was, on a smaller scale, that Canadian individuals responded so quickly to natural and political crisis in Mexico and Haiti and The Philippines. As their Minister, I salute the public servants who go extra miles and after hours when crises break abroad, but in their name I want also to thank the thousands of individual Canadians who follow their generous international instincts when these crises occur.

We are taking other steps to mobilize this Canadian vocation for constructive internationalism. As one example, a group of six members of the Canadian Young Presidents Organization will depart for Manila on November 14 where they will work with officials of The Philippines, to devise and identify programmes and opportunities that will let the world's private sector help President Aquino consolidate the great reform she has begun. We are also helping The Philippines in all the traditional ways. But the real need now is the kind of economic performance which will win international investor confidence. Canadians can help reach that goal, so we are sending some of our best.

We are also breaking new ground in the use we make of officials trips. In Beijing, the Prime Minister opened the meeting of the Canada/China Trade Council adding immense authority to the idea of economic cooperation between our two countries.

Former Secretaries of State were not inclined to have Canadian investors travel with them. They are with me, everywhere -- and together, we have helped find new opportunities for sales, for investment, for joint ventures, for technology transfer -- in India and in Uruguay, and in Pakistan and in Cairo, in Thailand, in Tokyo, and in the Pampas of Argentina, and elsewhere around the world.

When I had the honour last month to lead the Canadian Delegation to the GATT Ministerial meeting, our numbers included not just our own excellent public servants, but also leaders in Canadian business and economics, and Ministers representing the provincial governments of every region of Canada.

We are in this world together, and this government intends to exercise our leadership in a way that makes the best use of the extraordinary private and public talents that are here to work for Canada.

I have not time to cover the world today. My colleague, The Minister for International Relations, will be speaking later in the debate. I intend also to seek an early occasion to report to Parliament, and seek the views of other parties, on the most important issue on the world's

agenda now, the control of arms and weapons. We are all encouraged that President Reagan and Secretary Gorbachev will hold a preliminary meeting in Reyjavik on the 11th and 12th of October and we hope that will lead to agreements later. The superpowers are at centre stage, and must be given every opportunity and encouragement to make progress, but they are also important areas which Canada must continue to show initiative and leadership -- in chemical weapons and verification technology, to name only two. I look forward to discussing these questions more fully in a statement, probably this month.

In the remainder of this debate, there are four particular matters to which I want to refer -- the reform of the United Nations; greater attention to the potential of the Commonwealth and La Francophonie; the fight against agricultural subsidy; and the question of human rights, particularly in South Africa.

Canada is a strong and consistent friend and supporter of the United Nations. Although our population is only the thirtieth largest in the world, we rank fourth in the size of our financial contributions to the UN system. We intend to continue that active and outspoken support.

It is precisely to strengthen the UN that we urge reform. The Secretary General has before him recommendations from a group of eighteen experts which can begin the administrative reform which, in our judgment, is essential to the survival of the United Nations system. That report is a package, carefully constructed. It should not be unravelled. It should be implemented both as proof that the UN is serious about reform, and as a big first step towards change. Ambassador Lewis, and others, are working to get agreement on the even more central challenge of establishing effective budgetary and planning mechanisms. They work and speak with the full support of this government, and I am sure, of this House.

The UN is the most important of our international institutions, because it can draw together the whole world. Other, more regional organizations, are playing an increasing and encouraging role in establishing cooperation among neighbours. Canada is particularly impressed by the success of ASEAN, in the Pacific, and of the increasingly effective work of SADCC in Southern Africa. SADCC's unity and purpose will be strongly tested in the months ahead. Canada is happy to provide approximately 100 million dollars this year to the SADCC countries to help them build the infrastructure which will enable them to assert their independence of South Africa. We are encouraged by the initiative, in Dhaka last year, to establish the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

But two of these groupings have particular significance for Canada. One is the Commonwealth, and the other La Francophonie.

Canada is both a western country and a developed economy. But among that company, we are virtually unique in our reputation. Our only association with colonialism is that we were once a colony. Our interest in development, and our respect for different systems, are known to be genuine. Those are considerable assets, which should be applied, not simply prized.

This government has acted deliberately to give more prominence to the Commonwealth, as an institution uniquely able to cut across the lines that have come to divide countries. At Nassau, and in their historic meetings this August, in London, the Prime Minister and his colleagues, were able to make of the Commonwealth the one institution able to act with credibility in seeking an agreed non-violent solution in South Africa. The Eminent Persons Group was rebuffed by Pretoria, but their conduct moved the very institution of the Commonwealth out of the shadows of nostalgia, and into relief as an agency of real potential in this post-colonial world.

That same possibility exists with La Francophonie. The organizations will be different, because the original colonial powers were different, and so are the other members states. In one sense, the existence of the Francophone Summit is a direct result of the policies of national reconciliation adopted by this government in Canada. I don't exaggerate when I say that it is thanks to the present government that the first summit took place. For years people had talked about it but have never been able to convene the meeting -- in large measure because Ottawa and Quebec were unable to agree on participation of the province.

We have changed that. The Prime Minister has announced that the next Francophone Summit will take place in Quebec next September. This will be a major event in Canada next year. More than thirty heads of state or government will meet in the old city to discuss issues ranging from politics and economy to development and cooperation. During these few days in September the whole francophone world will have its eyes on Quebec and Canada.

I want to mention agriculture, not just because it is important, but because our success in agricultural trade demonstrates that, even in this highly complex world, determined initiatives can pay off.

The largest single threat to Canadian farms is the

growth, in the United States and in Europe, of agricultural subsidies which we can't match. Once, the efficiency of farmers determined success in international agricultural trade; now, success is determined by the size of the subsidies. Canada has the most efficient farmers in the world. We don't have the biggest treasury. So we have to move the rule back towards a balance that gives our farmers a chance.

The Prime Minister began that process when he raised the issue of agricultural subsidy at the Tokyo Summit -- the first time agriculture had been discussed in that forum. We have followed that initiative vigorously, through meetings in Vancouver, Thailand, at Cairns in Australia, and finally in Uruguay, at the GATT. In Punta del Este, I said "The GATT has had the bad habit of putting agriculture to one side". That bad habit has now been changed. Subsidies in agriculture will be a priority consideration in the new GATT round, and for that, Canada can take a lot of credit.

Mr. Speaker, the promotion of human rights is fundamental to our polity. The Prime Minister was forthright in his statements on human rights during his Asian tour. I have spoken out repeatedly on human rights both here and abroad. We have also taken concrete actions to back up our words. Last month, we changed our export controls policy to ban the export of military equipment to countries whose governments have a persistent record of violating the human rights of their citizens.

On June 12th, I reported to the House on the government's reaction to the report of the Eminent Persons Group of the Commonwealth. In August, the Prime Minister and six other Commonwealth leaders met in London to examine the report and to recommend future actions. All agreed that the authorities in Pretoria had shown no inclination to end apartheid. Six of the countries, including Canada, agreed to put in place a series of eleven measures aimed at inducing the South African Government to reconsider its position. The U. K. agreed separately to implement two national measures, and another measure with its European Community partners.

The six of us recommended our list of measures to the rest of the Commonwealth and the wider international community, particularly those countries with significant economic relations with South Africa. We have been in touch with those countries and are pleased that the U. S. A., the European Community and Japan have all announced measures to increase pressure on Pretoria.

At home we are implementing the London programme. Some measures, such as the cancellation of the Double

Taxation Agreement and the removal of government assistance to trade and investment were already in place. In cooperation with the business community, we have invoked a ban on new investment and the cessation of bank loans. I have issued notices to importers under the Export and Import Permits Act to prohibit the importing of agricultural products, uranium, coal, iron and steel from South Africa. Implementation of the remaining measures is virtually complete and will be fully effective in the coming weeks. As the House will know, I have asked that the South African Tourist Office close its doors in Canada, and that is being done.

We are considering the other measures Canada will take. We hope profoundly that the growing weight of world opinion will cause the regime in South Africa to move out of isolation, away from violence, against apartheid.

We believe the process of consistent steady pressure offers the best prospect of ending an offensive system, while protecting the immense economic potential of Southern Africa. Canada intends to continue our leadership against apartheid.

Constructive internationalism is Canada's response to our interdependence. It recognizes the legitimate interests of other countries but never loses sight of the Canadian national interest. It is the projection abroad of our own national enterprise of compromise and consensus building. It expresses confidence in our ability to promote the best of what Canada has to offer. It wedds realism and idealism. We think it accurately reflects the wishes of ordinary Canadians right across the country.