



Advance text of Speech to be made by the Honourable Paul Martin, P.C., M.P., Secretary of State for External Affairs, to External Aid Teachers, at Macdonald College
Montreal, Wednesday, August 28, 1963

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A 3 HEURES P.M. H.A.E.

I am happy and indeed honoured to have this opportunity of being with you here today as you embark upon your challenging tasks overseas. For me this is quite an inspiring occasion, to which I have looked forward for some weeks now. Those of you who, with your families, are going abroad under our government teaching programmes are participating in one of the truly great international adventures of our century - the spread of knowledge and learning throughout the globe.

Assistance to the developing countries in recent years has become one of the most important aspects of Canada's relations with the outside world. More than two-thirds of the countries that are now members of the United Nations are classified as under-developed. These countries look to us and to other more favoured nations for assistance in achieving their great aspirations. We in Canada are doing much to respond to the challenge because we realize that international peace and prosperity are not likely to remain a lasting state of affairs for Canadians, or for anyone else, so long as the vast majority of the people of the world are still struggling with the bonds of poverty and illiteracy.

Canada has played an active role in providing assistance to developing countries for over a decade. Much of our aid has taken, and will continue to take, the form of capital projects

such as power stations, transportation equipment, and other basic requirements for economic development.

Je voudrais saisir l'occasion qu'il m'est donnée ici pour rendre publique la donation à huit pays africains par le gouvernement canadien d'un équipement audio-visuel consistant en des projecteurs, de l'équipement de projection et des camions. Cette donation comporte un total de 17 véhicules au profit de sept pays de langue française de l'Afrique et du Tanganyika. Les véhicules destinés aux pays africains de langue française seront expédiés du port de Montréal demain. L'envoi au Tanganyika est parti durant le mois. En vertu de ce programme du gouvernement canadien dans le domaine d'éducation, les pays africains de langue française qui bénéficieront de notre aide sont le Cameroun, la République Centre Africaine, le Congo (Brazzaville), le Dahomey, le Maroc, le Niger et le Sénégal. L'équipement en question servira à compléter les dispositifs du système d'éducation dans les pays mentionnés. Lorsque j'aurai terminé mon discours, j'aurai le plaisir de remettre l'un de ces véhicules à M. Moustapha Alassane, ici présent, lequel étudie à l'Office National du Film à Montréal dans le domaine de la production. M. Moustapha Alassane nous vient du Niger et il est le premier récipiendaire d'une bourse d'étude sous l'égide de notre programme d'aide aux pays africains de langue française.

We have also given large quantities of foodstuffs. Recently in the House of Commons my colleague, the Minister of Trade and Commerce, announced the government's intention to make available large quantities of Canadian wheat in an amount which will eventually total forty million dollars annually. We have extended a great deal of technical assistance in the form of the services of Canadian experts and technicians.

In 1961 in response to some of the urgent requests from the developing countries, Canada embarked on a new programme of sending considerable numbers of qualified teachers overseas.

In 1961 we sent over forty teachers abroad.

In 1962 we sent out another eighty-five teachers to

serve in thirteen different countries - Africa, Asia and the Caribbean.

You are the third group and the largest contingent which Canada has sent. When you have assumed your positions abroad we will have something over one hundred and eighty Canadian teachers serving abroad. This, it seems to me, is a significant contribution and I am very hopeful that we can continue to enlarge our programme in the coming years.

I think that it is particularly appropriate that Canada should be taking an increasingly active interest in the field of education overseas. Canadians know something about the challenges of nation building. We know something about the problems of developing an educational system to meet the needs of a rapidly growing country. We have had experience in adapting our educational institutions to the complex and sometimes difficult requirements of a society made up of people with different cultural backgrounds. I hope that you as Canadian teachers will be able to make some of this knowledge and this experience available to the countries in which you are serving.

Many of you will find that you are playing a pioneering role in the country to which you are posted. In some cases you will be able to draw upon the experience of your predecessors. In many cases, however, you will find that you are not only the first Canadian teacher but perhaps the first Canadian who has worked in your particular area. In these circumstances you will have a great deal of responsibility and indeed many opportunities to give a good impression of Canada to the local people. You will also be privileged to learn an immense amount from them, and I have no doubt that all of you will find this experience both for yourselves and for your families one of the most enriching of your lives.

There may be times when you feel discouraged and depressed and that progress in your work is disappointingly slow. I hope you will remember at such times that the building and expanding

of an educational system cannot be achieved over night. You will require patience and tact and above all an ability to adapt in a good humoured and friendly fashion. We hope that you will contribute whatever you can towards the educational systems you will find yourself in. We hope that you will always remember that you are playing an important role in a very great and a very broad process and that you will neither exaggerate nor minimize the contributions which you will be making.

As experienced teachers you know the importance of education in the enrichment of the life of the individual and the importance of education in the life of society. You also know how important education is to the process of democracy. From both these points of view education plays an even more vital role in the developing countries than it does here at home. These countries realize the success of their efforts to create better societies and to catch up with the more advanced members of the family of nations greatly depends on providing their children with an adequate education to enable them to cope with the complex problems of the future.

Indeed the success of the whole programme of capital technical assistance of the United Nations and of the various donor countries including Canada depends directly on the level of education of the people. The provision of a dam or a hydro electric power station may sometimes appear to be a more dramatic manifestation of external aid than educational assistance. But I have no doubt that in the long run it will be you and the teachers who will follow you who will have the most decisive impact on the progress of the developing world. Not only will you help them by providing some of the keys to knowledge but you will be in a unique position to exemplify the ideals of freedom and democracy which we cherish and which we hope will be pursued in their countries.

You may find many things strange and different from that which you have known at home. One thing that you may find to be entirely different is the form and manner of government. It is important to remember that there are many ways in which both the

form and the spirit of democracy can develop. Democracy must adjust and adapt itself to the various forces and considerations in the particular society in which it exists. Simply because some of the forms of government in other countries diverge in substantial respects from our own is no reason to automatically suppose that there is no democracy and no self-criticism within this government. It is all too common these days to hear superficial judgments rendered about governments in various societies. I would urge you to avoid superficial judgments upon the evolving forms of government in the areas of the world in which you are serving.

What I have just said does not alter or limit in any way the basic purposes underlying your service abroad. They are, to spread and impart knowledge and as with the pupils you have had in Canada, to raise your new students to maturity. Maturity in the political sense cannot be equated with one form of democracy or another but few would deny that maturity and the outlook of a mature man or woman means understanding of the other fellow's point of view and a willingness to make concessions to it. This surely is the essence of democracy and this you will find in some measure in every country that you are going to.

All too often these days we hear remarks by people to the effect that go something like this: 'International affairs have become so complex today, the problems are so vast and the solutions seemingly so impossible that there is nothing much an individual can do so why should I bother to pay any attention?' Many of you will have heard this idea expressed in one form or another. In fact I am distressed by the number of times that I have heard it.

This gathering here today is a living refutation of this short-sighted view. As individual teachers you are going overseas to contribute to the education of individuals and small groups in many communities. From this you will gain a certain amount of satisfaction. You will know that you are playing your part in one of the great, perhaps the greatest, endeavour of history. There is

little that can be accomplished in the world which does not ultimately rest upon individuals. You are aware of this fact or you would not be here. We have an important task in making this simple truth much more widely appreciated and understood in our own societies.

You might be surprised at the number of times the work which our teachers as a group are doing and sometimes the success of individual teachers are brought to my attention and to the notice of Canadian High Commissioners and Ambassadors by representatives of the Governments of developing countries. Without exception, these references are phrased in the most laudatory and grateful terms. An indication of the effectiveness and happy relations with the local people that have been established by our teachers abroad is that requests for their services have steadily increased over the years. In September, I shall be attending the U.N. General Assembly where I will be meeting with the Foreign Ministers, Permanent Delegates of all the countries to which you are going. I expect to hear then from many of them reports of the progress and impressions you are making. I know that they will be favourable accounts.

You are about to embark on a great experience which will, I am sure, enrich you and your families all your lives. I know that you will find, as did Tennyson's Ulysses that:

"I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose
margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move."

I am confident that you will all do well. On behalf of the people of Canada I offer you our very best wishes and wish you Godspeed.