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NOTES FOR A SPEECH BY THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE JOE CLARK,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, TO THE
ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE
ALBERTA MACKENZIE COUNCIL
OF THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S
LEAGUE OF CANADA

EDMONTON
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Most Canadians who think about it are proud of Canada's contribution to international affairs. As a country we helped create and we continue to actively support the United Nations and the GATT and other international institutions which bring the elements of order to the world. Howard Green - along with millions of mothers in Canada and the United States - struggled to achieve a partial test ban treaty prohibiting nuclear testing in the atmosphere. Lester Pearson inspired the concept of U.N. peacekeeping forces. Paul Martin helped break the logjam which prevented the admission of new member states into the United Nations. A Canadian was the first Secretary General of the Commonwealth. Other distinguished Canadian diplomats have helped the world make progress on international questions ranging from third world development through the treatment of, and response to, refugees to the Law of the Sea and a myriad of other questions.

In the forty years since the end of the second world war, the international community has come to count on Canada as a moderating influence in a world beset by extremes. That is the Canadian tradition this government intends to build upon consistently and pragmatically. I made that point in my first speech in this office, a speech to the General Assembly of the United Nations last October.

Tonight I am honored to come to Edmonton to speak to the Annual Convention of the Alberta Mackenzie Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada to make the point that international policy is as important in the cities, towns and villages of Canada as it is in world capitals and among the traditional foreign policy community. It is important in two senses. It affects the price of beef and it is important because the tradition of Canadian citizen involvement in the world is, in its way, as impressive as the international accomplishments of our governments. I take it as part of my responsibility to connect the individual instincts with the national policy.

That is one of the major reasons why, on May 14th, I tabled in the House of Commons a discussion paper entitled, "Competitiveness and Security: Directions for Canada's International Relations" which will allow the first public parliamentary review of Canadian international policy in Canada's history.

Naturally, I think the contents of that paper are important, but so is the process important. It is designed to be both a recognition and an instrument of grass roots participation in judging and in forming Canadian international policy.

Part of the purpose is education. We sometimes speak of the global village as though someone else lived there, yet we Canadians are at the heart of affairs that once could be called foreign. The land, the territory between the two super-powers, is ours. That is the territory that would be traversed by weapons in the unthinkable event of world conflict. Subsidies in Denmark affect the market of ranchers in High River, Alberta. A debt crisis in Mexico costs Canada customers, costs Canadians jobs. Sulphur emissions in Ohio help kill our lakes.

International policy is everybody's business. And I hope that our public hearings will help Canadians understand just how inter-connected our economic and political future is with that of every other continent and country.

But I confess to two other reasons why I have pressed for this kind of review. One has to do with Parliament which will conduct the inquiry and make the report and in the process help assert the authority of our most important public institution. The second reason is to tap and renew the tradition of individual Canadian involvement and to bring interested citizens directly into forming Canadian public policy.

Naturally, the committee will welcome representations from the formal interest groups that have grown up in international affairs, but I hope that we might also move beyond interest groups and beyond their programs and draw upon those personal instincts which have led so many private Canadians to become involved in the wider world. I hope that you will not leave your representations to the Bishops or various national Committees, but that local Councils, drawing on local experiences, will also be heard.

This country is so big and so rich, in most senses so new, that most of our history has happened at home. But there has always been a knowledge that we had interests and obligations beyond our border. For one thing, Canadians come from everywhere - unlike almost any other people in the world, Canadians have family connections in literally every corner of the globe. Our soldiers were the first from this continent to debark for two world wars and there has been a steady stream of missionaries, traders, teachers and travellers who have come from Canada to work abroad. The local historian of every town, every village, every settled community can name people, people from home, people from the communities around Edmonton who went to China or to Africa or to South America. That happens so regularly that it has become a characteristic of our country.

For more than a century Canadians have been assisting people in developing countries to make better lives for themselves, well before the beginning of official government assistance. That effort was undertaken almost entirely by voluntary groups and churches. If you look at some other countries, and at their traditions, you will often find that much of their commitment, much of their development assistance is ideological in nature. It was accomplished and offered with some very specific ends in mind. Furthermore, other countries often focused on one particular area or region. But in Canada, our involvement and commitment has been refreshingly free of ideology and it has literally spanned the earth. Its foundation, rather than being based on the sale of products, or the sale of purposes, is rooted in humanity, good will and a sense of service.

I believe that it does not detract from the strictly religious work of the missionaries to argue that their health, education and development work is very much in that tradition as well.

Not only Catholic missionaries but female Catholic missionaries have been in the forefront of Canadian service abroad. Just over one-half of the Canadian Catholic missionaries operating throughout the world today are women. The first Canadian missionary society was both Catholic and female (the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, founded in Montreal in 1902). Its members were involved in hospitals, schools and social work in missions in China, Manchuria, Japan, the Phillipines, Italy, the Antilles, Africa and Madagascar.

And to the work of the churches must be added that of the legion of Canadian service clubs and non-governmental organizations like OXFAM, the Canadian Save the Children Fund, Inter-Pares, the Mennonite Central Committee, Rotary, CUSO, and many more. I am told that more than 10,000 Canadians have served overseas with CUSO since it was founded in the early 1960s. There is literally no way of knowing the total number of Canadians in various organizations, churches and others who have undertaken similar ventures.

Some years ago the American Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, developed a reputation for being involved in personal diplomacy. That was to say that he would fly around to meet directly people who were involved in problems that the United States wanted to help solve. Well that is one use of the term, personal diplomacy, but the individuals who went out

with CUSO or with the Mennonites or with the Catholic Church or with other churches, from this country, to Africa, to Asia, to South America, those people were also involved deeply and directly in personal diplomacy. And that has left two kinds of legacy for this country. One is a sense of familiarity and good will toward Canada that is marked wherever you go.

The second is the immense experience of the world within our own population. For example, in China - Canada was well ahead of the rest of the world in accepting the new China and in responding to it. There is a very direct link between that initiative and the hundreds of Canadian missionaries who served in China over a span of years. We are all familiar with the story of Norman Bethune. But there were also the missionary sisters from Montreal, and hundreds of others - some missionaries, some traders - who acquired and conveyed an intimate knowledge of that country. The relation between their experience and Canadian policy was direct. When China began to move out of its isolationist stage, Canada was one of the first to start trade and to establish relations. In a sense you could say that it was the missionaries who laid the ground to help us sell the grain, that began this phase of Canada's relations with China.

It is the same story in Africa. Canada is considered to be an important influence in Africa today and if you examine that relationship, you see that it is not based largely on commercial or colonial ties. The commonwealth, of course, is very important. But so were the Oblate Fathers who established programs in Lesotho in education, in development, in health care. So was Father Levesque of Montreal who founded the University of Rwanda. President Mugabe of Zimbabwe was educated at mission schools and at Silveria House, which was founded and run by Canadian Jesuits.

When I was in Ethiopia last fall discussing the Canadian response to their famine, I discovered that their Development Minister is an Engineering graduate from the University of British Columbia. A United Church Minister named Lee Holland has founded a project in Zambia called Family Farms which permits groups of Africans to buy portions of the old colonial plantations and run these new family farms on an improved basis. There are Canadian connections throughout Africa and naturally Canadian connections

throughout the Carribean and throughout Latin America as well.

That tradition is more than history, it is more than the private property of a church or a service club or an individual. It has created deep within the Canadian community, a desire and a capacity to respond to international crises. We have demonstrated that twice, dramatically, in the last six years. First in the response to the boat people, and then with the famine in Africa.

The challenge for leadership is to draw more regularly upon those Canadian instincts to act in the world. The opportunity this review process offers is to open a more permanent relation between government policy and citizen interest. The Canadian citizen response to crisis has been magnificent. But that partnership between government and citizen should surely not be confined to time of crisis.

In 1979, the world confronted the tragedy of the boat people - people who were spurned by their homelands and set quite literally adrift. There was an instant reaction of alarm and concern among Canadians, so my government sought to harness that public concern rather than simply administer it in a bureaucratic way. We announced a partnership program between people and government - a program whereby the government would sponsor one new Canadian among the boat people for every person brought into the country by church groups, individuals, town councils, clubs, neighbourhoods. The response was overwhelming, as the response was overwhelming last fall when Canadians responded to the crisis of famine in Africa.

Again we acted in partnership. We appointed The Honourable David MacDonald to coordinate our response with the non-governmental organizations, many of which were already established in Ethiopia. There was no need for the government to go in and set up something new, because Canadian organizations or international organizations with which Canada was connected were already there. So we set up that partnership. We established a system of matching grants to match dollar for dollar what Canadians were giving.

Donations flooded in and they rose beyond 35 million dollars. More than 500,000 individual Canadians contributed at a time of quite difficult economic conditions here at home. And the average donation was twice the normal amount that had been

given by people in previous history. It was not just a financial contribution. We were flooded with offers to send food, blankets, health supplies, even a ship. Not all the offers were appropriate, but what was important was that Canadian people were giving the government a clear signal that this tragedy was a priority and that they were prepared to act. You were prepared to act, as individuals.

That commitment continues. The most recent example comes from an industry and perhaps from a generation that is not normally thought of when talking about foreign policy. It started in Britain with the recording of a song written especially for the African famine, with all proceeds donated to it. Since then the same thing has happened in the United States and here in Canada. Several of our most talented musicians got together in a studio in Toronto to record the hit, "Tears are Not Enough". All the money from the sale of that record is going to African famine relief.

In cities and towns across Canada, rock radio stations then organized telethons around the playing of the record. Over 200,000 copies of that record have been sold in Canada already and worldwide the record and related spinoffs (videos, tee-shirts - all the paraphanelia of rock superstardom) are expected to yield 15 million dollars for African famine relief.

That kind of response is rooted in the work done by missionaries and teachers and doctors, and nurses and other Canadian many years ago, well before the famine, well before the generation listening to that song was thought of.

Canadians have proven time and time again that we want to participate in the world, that we see ourselves, not just governments, but individuals, as being part of that world. The form of participation changes as times change but the basic motivation is the same. In 1970, there were twice as many Canadians working as missionaries abroad, as there are today, but there are today more Canadian men and women than ever working abroad. Now they are often working directly for foreign governments as teachers and nurses, economists, agricultural advisors. We know more about agriculture than most of the people of the world. And we put that knowledge to work, knowledge which is not confined to people with academic training or initials after their names.

I remember visiting an aid project on the high plains of Tanzania. I met agronomists, economists

and nutritionists, and they took me to meet a man who had farmed near Bluffton, west of Bentley. When I asked him what he was expert in, he replied that he was the most important guy there because he fixed things with baling wire.

We have now more than ever before, a larger number of people with PhDs and people with that innate skill in fixing things with baling wire, Canadians who are working abroad, expressing that same instinct that was expressed earlier by the missionaries and others. We have businessmen working on contracts building roads, dams and irrigation systems.

The development work of Canadian missionaries has received new impetus through the matching grant program of CIDA, the Canadian International Development Agency. The Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace has become the development arm of the Catholic Church. CCODP raised 7 million dollars last year from churches across Canada and this amount was matched by CIDA, permitting the funding of some 575 developments projects in the Third World.

These projects range from a one thousand dollar water pump project in Ghana to a multi-million dollar integrated rural development program in Sénégal.

Father Murray Abraham, a Canadian Jesuit who has been working in West Bengal, India for 35 years, has collected pledges from thousands of Canadian families who promised to give up their Friday night desserts to help him support a very innovative training institute. Students from St. Adolphus School are able to pursue study-work programs in agriculture, pig and poultry raising. In addition, a group of destitute women, children and refugees are able to live, work and study together within the concept of the Indian large family circle. CIDA has approved a grant of 500,000 dollars to match private contributions to this project over the next four years.

That tradition of public involvement has been very much on my mind in preparing the Green Paper on foreign policy and in facing the question: how can government share foreign policy so as to most effectively take account of the aspirations of ordinary Canadians and indeed of the aspirations of those not so ordinary Canadians who are making remarkable contributions through their dedicated service abroad or through their support for people serving abroad?

The review is intended to situate questions of international development, of helping the Third

World in a context as realistic as it is reflective of a broad range of policy concerns. In this country we are still just emerging from extremely difficult economic times into a very tough international environment—an environment where a high degree of competition and of national self-preoccupation are bound to continue for a long time. Even considering the good will of Canadians, even considering the generosity that expressed itself in the African famine, there is some danger that the simple impulse of altruism might be lost in our collective concern over how strong Canada is, over how well we can compete with this country or with that.

What I hope the review will do is to reinforce for us all the reality that the developing world interests are in fact our interests. The paper makes it a point of emphasizing the complex linkages among issues such as Third World debt, that Mexican debt which costs jobs in Canada, to issues like interest rates, like budgetary deficits and general economic and trade performance in the industrialized nations. Making the international system work better for the Third World is not just a moral imperative, it is a practical necessity for all nations, bound together through that system into a web of mutual dependancy. I think that members of the Catholic Women's League, concerned as you will be at this convention with the theme of world peace and aware as you are of the vital relationship between development and peace, will appreciate the point I want to make.

I think the review will bring out the specific point that our collective capacity to do better in development programs depends critically on doing better ourselves in the market place. To be able to afford any expanding programs in our quality of life, in our projection of our assistance abroad for overseas development, we simply have to perform better economically here at home. We have to become competitive.

We have to earn the resources that we would apply to our altruistic ends. We have to concentrate on those economic sectors where we have the greatest potential for success in rapidly changing, highly competitive international circumstances. That can mean, among other things, structural adjustment out of sectors where developing nations have a greater advantage. It also means, of course, resisting the protectionism that increasingly threatens our own capacity to sell to the people of the world.

Many of the Catholic Women's League are involved, individually and through local groups, in significant, helpful, important activities overseas. What I hope the international relations review will achieve through the system of public hearings, through the opportunity for individuals to be heard, is a collective, not just an individual engagement of Canadians, in issues like development assistance, in issues like trade and international finance and in issues like international security and peace - your theme I understand for the 1984-85 year. The Catholic Church, the United Church and Anglican Churches and others and the many voluntary organizations have done work of immeasurable value to Canada in opening the way and establishing the tradition of individual service abroad. There was a time when that activity could be regarded as simply the expression of personal ethics, or perhaps humanitarianism. Now our activity in the Third World is very much a matter of nationalism, very much a matter of national survival.

I happen to have, as their Minister, quite a high regard for the people who work as public servants in the Department of External Affairs. I think they are very able people but I do not propose to leave the foreign policy of the country to them alone or to political parties alone, or to non-governmental organizations alone or to the Bishops alone. I think that if we are going to make the changes that Canadians eight months ago showed they wanted to have made in this country, that it has to be a collective effort by all Canadians. And if we are going to do that, we have to go out and take advantage of the traditions that have been established, of the start that has been made by individual Canadians. I want Canadians now to think of the tradition that individuals have established of Canadians acting effectively in the world and to recognize that in these times what might have once seemed a charity to others is now a necessity for ourselves.

As I said earlier, as the Secretary of State for External Affairs I can publish the paper and start the process, but its success will not be determined by what a Minister does or by what a government does. Its success will be determined by how true Canadians are to the individual tradition of service abroad, the individual tradition of looking beyond our borders and making connections with conditions in other parts of the world - a tradition which is deep at the heart of the Catholic Church as it is, in my view, deep at the heart of the country.

Thank you.