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THE HONOURABLE MITCHELL SHARP,  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,  
YEAR-END INTERVIEW WITH BOB ABRA FOR THE CBC-IS

ENTREVUE DE FIN D'ANNÉE  
ACCORDÉE À M. BOB ABRA  
DU SERVICE INTERNATIONAL DE RADIO-CANADA  
PAR L'HONORABLE MITCHELL SHARP,  
SECRÉTAIRE D'ÉTAT AUX AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

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DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

- Q. Mr. Sharp, it's been a fairly eventful year in international affairs. From the Canadian standpoint, what would you regard the most outstanding event?
- A. Well, from our point of view, the most important event was the United States' balance of payment crisis and the events that followed from that. That is, if you look at it from the point of view of the immediate effects upon Canada. If you look at the world as a whole, I suppose that the most important event was the India-Pakistan War because it revealed the conflict between the Soviet Union and China in a new light.
- Q. Now, in the United Nations a year ago you were critical of procedures there. Do you feel there's been any improvement in the past year?
- A. Yes, following our initiative a committee was established and has brought in a report with a number of quite practical things that can be done. Naturally, we're not satisfied. I said at the time, you may recall, that the United Nations was drowning in a sea of words. Well, I see no stemming of the flood. It goes on as usual. However the changes that are being proposed, and many of which will be accepted I think, may help to reduce the paper -- the quantity of paper -- that is being distributed; will eliminate some of the overlap in discussion and so on. So, I think it was worth while doing, but we're by no means satisfied that the United Nations is operating as it should.
- Q. There's been some severe strains including the India-Pakistan War and some various other things -- strains within the United Nations themselves. Do you think the Organization can overcome this sort of problem that tends to take these strains outside the body?
- A. I don't know whether it can or not because the United Nations is simply a reflection of the world. There has been a very big change as a result of the entry of Peking as the representative of China. This has made a profound difference both to the United Nations itself and to the debates. This came out particularly during the debates on the India-Pakistan War. You no longer had a confrontation between the principal representative of the capitalist world, so-called -- United States, and the principal socialist country -- the Soviet Union. You have a three-cornered situation with the United States, the Soviet Union and China all contributing very largely to the debate and giving to the debate more of an air of reality. It seems to me that before Peking took the China seat there was a distortion in the United Nations debates. Now that distortion has been removed. The situation is much more complex, of course, but that is the way the world is, and I'm very much more satisfied that the United Nations is a proper reflection of the world today than it was before Peking entered. And this is one of the reasons why we took the initiative that we did: first of all, in recognizing Peking as the Government of China, and secondly in taking such a forthright position on the seating of Peking in the China seat.

- Q. Now, in another sphere, these events have had great strains on the Commonwealth, too. Do you feel that the Commonwealth can survive this sort of thing? I'm thinking of India-Pakistan, the Rhodesia settlement, all these things that seem to be tearing away at the membership.
- A. It depends on what you expect from the Commonwealth. For a long time Canada has not regarded this as economic grouping. We were a member of the dollar group rather than the sterling group, so we didn't have the same sort of interests as other members of the Commonwealth. So for us the economic side of the Commonwealth was not too important. Nor did we think that there could ever be common policies in the Commonwealth towards the rest of the world. You may recall that it was Canada that objected many, many years ago to any attempt to have a common foreign policy in the Commonwealth, and that has now become the accepted doctrine. Our view of the Commonwealth is that it is an excellent place to have discussions about world problems amongst a group of countries that are representative of the various elements in the world today: various colours, various approaches; we have aligned countries; we have non-aligned countries; we have black; we have yellow; we have white-faced people. In other words, the Commonwealth to us is a microcosm of the world. The advantage of the Commonwealth is that the representatives can sit down together and talk informally on the basis of having one common language, which is English, and having a set of institutions that enables us to meet together and to understand what the other was saying without elaborate explanations. And if our Prime Minister, Mr. Trudeau, has his way there will be much greater informality in the proceedings -- fewer set pieces, more exchange of views than we have seen in the recent past. And I do hope that this is the way that the Commonwealth operates in the future, but any idea that the Commonwealth has common policies or even common interests is really an idea of the past. The Commonwealth is now representative of the world and that is its great advantage: that we can have these informal meetings not in the setting of the United Nations but amongst a group of old friends.
- Q. There seems to have been some progress towards détente in Europe, between East and West Germany and so on. Do you see much hope for actual settlement of some of these problems?
- A. Yes, I really have been quite optimistic for some time and I think this optimism is being justified. We, in Canada, have been working for détente over a long period of years and our cause was, of course, greatly strengthened by the accession to office of Willy Brandt, as Chancellor of the Federal German Republic. He, too, has been interested in détente, and more progress has been made under his administration than for many years. We're now on the verge of a settlement of the Berlin question. This will be accompanied by, I hope,

a ratification of the treaties between the Soviet Union, and Poland and Germany. In due course, I hope that the two Germanies will be able to work out a modus vivendi so that both of them can enter the United Nations. This would be a tremendous step forward and these are matters that are in prospect. They're not just dreams, they are possibilities, and very real ones that everyone is working towards. So I think that in Europe we are moving to a situation when there will be a good deal less tension. Indeed, I don't think that Europe is going to be the centre of our concern in the future. I think it's going to be the apparent conflict between the Soviet Union and China.

- Q. Now, you've mentioned some of the economic problems that have come up during the year and among those, for Canada anyway, has been the enlargement of the European Economic Community and British entry there. Have our fears been as well grounded -- our fears of this loss of trading?
- A. Well this Government, the Liberal Government, has never had great fears about this. Indeed, you may recall that unlike the predecessor government, the Diefenbaker Government, we did not oppose British entry into the Common Market. We had assumed that this was in the interests of Britain and therefore we took the view that Britain should make up her own mind. We recognized there would be some resulting problems for us in particular industries, and in particular commodities. It was our view that in the long term, however, a stronger Europe, which would follow from its unification, would provide alternative markets at least as big as and as important. Indeed, if you look at the record of trade over the period since the formation of the Common Market, our trade with Europe has gone ahead by leaps and bounds so that in so far as the unification of Europe had proceeded so far, it has been positively beneficial to us. We're going to have some problems arising out of the admission of Britain in particular, but our view is that Britain will be more prosperous inside Europe than outside. For example, we've had very little increase in our trade with Britain compared with our trade with the Common Market. Which gives some support to this point of view. Moreover, we've now had a number of very good contacts with the Common Market itself, and we have established our point of view which is friendly, but we have taken the occasion to point out to the Europeans how stupid it would be to bring about the admission of Britain in such a way as to do damage to us. So various things have been done to ease the transition period so that we don't suffer too much harm during the period of enlargement. So for these reasons, we don't take a pessimistic view. We think that it's better to have Europe unified than to have it divided.
- Q. The economic problems themselves have been plaguing the world as a whole. Do you see any hope of a better international monetary and trading system emerging from all this?

A. I don't know whether it will be better. That remains to be seen. So much depends upon the future policy of the United States. Our fear has been that the United States was not only faced with immediate problems which required them to take some undesirable and rather drastic steps to redress their balance of payments, but we were concerned, and still are, about the possibility that the United States may be turning inward -- that a protectionist trend may be developing in that country. And if it does, then we would have to adjust ourselves to it and out of this would emerge a situation less desirable than what has prevailed in the post-war period. However, the President of the United States has said that that is not the way his administration intends to take the United States, that after this crisis -- out of which they hope they will emerge with a better alignment of currencies and the reduction of what they consider unfair barriers to United States' exports -- the United States will then revert to its policy of promoting freer trade on a multilateral basis; and if that happens, we would be the first to benefit because we are one of the most important trading nations, and certainly the most important trading partner, of the United States. So I can't really answer your question yet. So much depends, as I say, upon the direction that public opinion takes in the United States.

Q. Now, much of our thrust, or Canadian thrust, in foreign policy latterly seems to have been tied up with trade policy, even to the extent of more or less integration of the trade and diplomatic foreign services. Do you see this policy as working out as well as it was hoped?

A. I think it's inevitable that for a country like Canada which has no great military power but which has some advantages or disadvantages of location -- depending upon which way you look at it -- but has enormous economic resources, that the emphasis in our foreign policy should be upon economic matters. In the first place, we can play a larger role in economic affairs than we can in military affairs. We are in a better position to help the underdeveloped countries of the world economically than we are militarily. We don't interfere in their internal quarrels. For example, the Soviet Union takes side in the India-Pakistan war. We don't take any sides. Our concern is with the humanitarian side, with helping the people of India and Pakistan to develop. So this is our role. It's an economic role, or a humanitarian role very closely linked with economic questions. So it's natural for a country like Canada to emphasize the economic side, and it's not particularly a selfish point of view. It is as important in the promotion of the development of the free world and the increase in the standard of living of the poorer parts of the world as it is in the interests of promoting our own welfare.

- Q. That brings up our relations with the developing countries, and trying to close the gap between rich and poor. Do you see any possible new initiatives that might help that out?
- A. We have, of course, taken one initiative that is worth recalling. And that is the establishment of our International Development Research Centre which is just getting under way now. And Mr. Pearson, our former Prime Minister, as you know, is the Chairman of the Board; and we have David Hopper who has had extensive experience throughout the world as the Executive Head of this agency. It's a rather interesting organization because about half of the directors are non-Canadians. What we have in effect established is an International Development Research Centre which is controlled almost as much by foreigners as it is by Canadians themselves. This is the organization that will be looking at the problems of development. It won't be promoting development. It will be studying how best to promote development and giving guidance to international agencies and to, we hope, national agencies such as our own. This I consider one of the more important developments that we in Canada have been promoting, and it may have results of very far-reaching importance. Other than that we have been increasing our aid. We've made an enormous improvement in our relative standing amongst the countries -- the donor countries -- of the world. We're now about the middle and our...I think last year our aid was .71 per cent whereas a few years ago it was down to less than half of one per cent. In terms of official aid, we're one of the largest of the donor countries. So we're beginning to play the sort of part in these activities that I think we should as one of the more fortunate countries of the world.
- Q. Isn't there another problem developing there, though -- with the developing countries going farther and farther into debt? Their international exchange position doesn't seem very good. Do you think there's a way around this?
- A. The only way around it is to avoid piling more debt up. At least that's one way of dealing with the question. This is why we have been concentrating on either grants or very long-term loans at very low rates of interest or with no interest at all. Many of our loans have been fifty years, without interest, with a ten-year period of grace before the capital has to be begun to be repaid. This is one of the reasons for that sort of arrangement -- it's to avoid placing on the shoulders of these developing countries further debts that they will never be able to pay. I don't know any other answer. The needs of these countries are enormous. Many of the things that they need will take a very long time for them to be able to repay. They need the infra-structure. I'm not talking about new factories which might be able to pay for themselves, I'm talking about roads and schools and universities and health services -- all these things that are necessary for

development that we take for granted because we were one of the more fortunate countries that got started a long time ago, and had a small population.

Q. Now, a lot of our development assistance is concentrated in Africa, both French- and English-speaking Africa. And there, too, there have been some difficulties between the nations. How do you see the future of the African organizations and the Canadian goal with them?

A. We have one advantage as Canadians and that is we speak the two languages of Africa, that is, the two languages apart from their own native languages. If you'll go over the countries of black Africa at least you'll find that they're either Francophone or Anglophone. So that we can work in both parts of black Africa, which is a tremendous advantage. We can also in that way promote the unity of our own country because it gives Canadians of both English- and French-speaking origins an opportunity of working abroad in their own language. However, there are very, very serious problems in Africa itself. You have the ordinary problems of development, and Africa has yet to put in place the sort of infrastructure that is necessary to economic development. And then you have the confrontation which is to be found in Africa between the races, between the blacks and the whites, and there you have the remnants of the old colonial régimes -- particularly the Portuguese. So Africa is distracted from its development by these political questions. And this is to be seen everywhere you go in Africa, and it's most unfortunate, but there it is. And we'll have to...as far as Canada is concerned we agree with the black Africans, we want to see the end of the colonial régimes in Africa. And we want to see the black people in Africa having equal political rights with the whites. But this is not accepted in South Africa or Rhodesia as yet, and the Portuguese still insist on maintaining these areas in Africa as part of Portugal. So I can only say that Africa is going to be faced with that particular problem until there's some political settlement found, and it is going to be a distraction from development just as the India-Pakistan War is a distraction from the great problems of development that ought to be engaging the interests of their people. But instead of that they're diverting their resources to the wasteful uses of war.

Q. Now, we've also had long association in the Caribbean and Latin America, but there don't seem to have been many startling developments during the past year. What has gone on with Canadian policy in that area?

A. Well, there has been one rather startling development, and that is the movement towards establishing a permanent observer in the Organization of American States for Canada. This decision was made by Canada some two or three years ago, and we have pursued it, and we have every reason to believe that

during 1972 we will become a permanent observer to the Organization of American States with a diplomatic mission accredited to that organization. This is a big step, so recognized by the Latins who...some of whom would, of course, have preferred if we'd become full members, but who are delighted that we are associating ourselves in this way. We've also joined a number of organizations associated with the Organization of American States. Pan-American Organization on Health is an example. We have applied for membership in the Inter-American Bank for Development which hitherto had been limited to members of the O.A.S., but we are being accepted as a member of the bank. Now this is quite a change and quite a development in relations between Canada and the Latin American countries. We've also been moving to increase our aid programme in South America. We have a very big aid programme, of course, in the Caribbean, but we've been stepping up our programme in Latin America both bilaterally and through the Inter-American Bank.

Q. Finally, one of the larger thrusts of the last year or two have been the moves in the Pacific, and with the Soviet Union as far as that goes. Do you see closer...any more close relations developing in that area?

A. Yes, I think our relations, in the Pacific of course, are going to grow very quickly. I don't think most Canadians living in Eastern Canada are quite aware of how close those relations have already become. People living west of the Great Lakes are much more conscious of it because of the very big wheat sales that have been made to China and Japan, and also the big investments that the Japanese have been making on the West Coast, and the big sales of metals and other primary products to Japan. Japan has now become our third trading partner, following the United States and Britain and very shortly it is likely to become the second. So that our relations with Japan have developed apace and are continuing to develop. Japan is one of two countries with which we have regular ministerial meetings -- every year we meet with the Japanese as ministers, three or four ministers from each country in either Canada or Japan, to discuss our developing interests. This is a mark of how close our relations have become there. We were one of the first in recent years to move towards the recognition of Peking as the Government of China. We are credited with having started the movement going that has resulted in Peking now occupying the China seat in the United Nations. I think that's right. I think we found the formula. We found the means by which we could recognize Peking without having to pass judgement upon the status of Taiwan. Our relations with Indonesia are beginning to develop. Indonesia is probably one of the potentially



most important countries of Southeast Asia. It's got a population about as big as Japan; it's got enormous resources; so we've gradually been developing our relations in that direction. We have been doing something more in Malaysia. As far as India-Pakistan is concerned, unfortunately everything has been given a setback by the war. But it hasn't been because we have not tried to be helpful. So our relations in that part of the world are just bound to grow, even with Australia and New Zealand where our relationships used to be rather indirectly through the Commonwealth. Now we are making visits directly, not just while the Australians are on their way to Washington, but primarily to visit Canada; and in the other direction, we're going out of our way to visit and to exchange views with the Australians and the New Zealanders, which is something rather new for Canadian-Antipodes relations.

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- Q. Quelles ont été les initiatives canadiennes au sein des organismes internationaux comme l'ONU, l'OTAN?
- R. La session de l'Assemblée générale qui se termine a été marquée davantage par des changements et par une crise que par des initiatives. Le changement le plus remarquable a été la décision d'accueillir les représentants du gouvernement de la République populaire de Chine. La reconnaissance de ce pays par le Canada en octobre 1970 et notre appui ultérieur en faveur de l'entrée de la délégation de la République populaire de Chine à l'ONU ont indubitablement contribué à cet aboutissement.

La crise à laquelle j'ai fait allusion touche, comme vous le savez, l'Inde et le Pakistan. Il est particulièrement regrettable que les nations du monde n'aient pu s'entendre, ni par l'entremise des Nations Unies, ni par aucun autre moyen, sur les mesures constructives à prendre pour éviter que la friction ne dégénère en conflit armé. Le Canada a envoyé des secours considérables aux réfugiés avant le début des hostilités.

Le Canada a démontré son intérêt soutenu et sa confiance inébranlable dans le Programme des Nations Unies pour le développement en y portant son apport à 18 millions de dollars cette année, soit 12.5 p. 100 de plus que l'an dernier. Nous avons également versé 3 millions de dollars au Fonds des Nations Unies pour les activités en matière de population au cours des deux dernières années et augmenté notre apport au Fonds des Nations Unies pour la lutte contre l'abus des drogues.

Dans un discours prononcé à l'Assemblée générale en 1969, j'ai soulevé le besoin d'améliorer les procédures de l'Assemblée générale. Je suis heureux de dire qu'on a donné suite à certaines des recommandations faites.

Tant qu'à l'OTAN, le Canada a proposé, à la réunion ministérielle tenue en juin, que l'Alliance nomme un négociateur chargé d'explorer, de concert avec les Russes, les modalités d'une éventuelle réduction mutuelle et équilibrée des forces en Europe. M. Manlio Brosio, l'ancien Secrétaire général, a été choisi comme négociateur. Les Russes n'ont pas encore fait savoir s'ils recevraient l'émissaire de l'OTAN.

- Q. Ou en sommes-nous avec les Etats-Unis? Nos relations sont-elles encore bonnes?
- R. Nos relations avec les Etats-Unis sont excellentes. Lorsque le Gouvernement des Etats-Unis a introduit ses mesures économiques, et notamment la surtaxe, le 15 août dernier, nous souhaitons évidemment de tout coeur voir ces barrières commerciales disparaître et en apprendre plus long sur les intentions de l'administration américaine. Après tout, nous sommes le

meilleur client l'un de l'autre. Je me suis moi-même, ainsi que d'autres ministres canadiens, rendu à Washington à plusieurs reprises à cet égard. Le Premier Ministre s'est également entretenu avec le Président Nixon à la Maison blanche à ce sujet le 6 décembre.

La situation semble présentement plus claire. Nous avons refusé de marchander en vue d'être exemptés de la surtaxe sur les importations, qui est dirigée contre d'autres pays et non contre le Canada. Nous sommes toutefois disposés à aider les Etats-Unis à résoudre leur problème de balance des paiements en examinant avec eux la possibilité de supprimer certaines barrières commerciales des deux côtés de la frontière.

Bref, nos relations économiques et politiques bilatérales avec les Etats-Unis ont été clarifiées. Dans l'ensemble, je demeure optimiste; je crois que nous parviendrons à éviter une guerre commerciale entre les grands systèmes économiques et à créer une situation favorable à l'expansion du commerce mondial, dont le Canada pourra tirer profit.

- Q. Quelles ont été les initiatives du Canada en Afrique francophone et anglophone? -- Visite du Secrétaire d'Etat aux Affaires extérieures.
- R. Pendant cette année, le Canada a poursuivi l'intensification et la diversification de ses relations avec l'Afrique, tant anglophone que francophone.

Mon voyage en Afrique noire, le premier par un ministre des Affaires étrangères canadien, avait pour but de souligner auprès des divers gouvernements la profondeur et la permanence de l'engagement du Canada envers ce Continent.

Notre programme d'aide y a continué d'augmenter et sera cette année de l'ordre d'environ cent millions de dollars (\$100,000,000); notre politique en ce domaine entend refléter le plus fidèlement possible le caractère bilingue du Canada.

L'appartenance du Canada à l'Agence de Coopération technique et culturelle souligne cet attachement du Canada à la francophonie; et les villes d'Ottawa et de Québec ont eu l'honneur d'accueillir l'Agence cette année pour sa deuxième Conférence générale.

J'ai aussi pu constater, lors de mon séjour en Afrique, que les dirigeants africains se félicitent de la politique canadienne vis-à-vis les problèmes de l'Afrique australe. Ils m'ont affirmé comprendre et accepter notre attitude sur ces questions. D'ailleurs, une mission spéciale de l'Organisation de l'Unité Africaine envoyée à Ottawa nous a réitéré, à M. Trudeau et à moi-même, leur satisfaction et leur gratitude à cet égard.

En guise de conclusion, il nous est permis de dire que le

Continent africain a occupé, en '71, une place plus importante que jamais dans les activités internationales du Canada. Et tout me porte à croire qu'il continuera d'en être ainsi à l'avenir.

Q. Quelles ont été les initiatives du Canada en Amérique latine?  
-- Début de missions de l'ACDI.

R. Au cours de 1971, le gouvernement canadien a pris toute une gamme de mesures destinées à élargir et à raffermir ses rapports avec les pays d'Amérique latine. Nous avons mis en train, par le truchement de l'ACDI, un programme spécial d'assistance technique affectant quatre zones de concentration: le Brésil, le Pérou, la Colombie et l'Amérique centrale. On a renforcé également les dispositions de programmes sélectifs s'appliquant à d'autres pays, tel le Chili. En outre, le gouvernement s'est appliqué à encourager, par l'entremise de la Société pour l'expansion des exportations, l'activité commerciale, industrielle et financière du secteur privé. Notons également dans le domaine de la collaboration bilatérale le Comité ministériel Mexico-Canada, lequel s'est réuni à Ottawa au mois d'octobre pour l'examen fructueux d'un ensemble de problèmes affectant nos deux pays.

Dans le domaine de la collaboration multilatérale, le Canada a signifié à l'Organisation des Etats américains son désir d'adhésion en qualité d'Observateur Permanent. Cette demande a été approuvée par l'Assemblée générale de l'OEA, et nous aurons d'ici peu une mission diplomatique accréditée auprès de cet organisme. Nous sommes aussi en train de négocier avec les autorités de la Banque Interaméricaine pour le Développement l'entrée du Canada comme membre à part entière. De plus, le Canada vient adhérer en septembre à l'Organisation Panaméricaine de la Santé, et notre adhésion à l'Institut des Sciences agricoles se réalisera d'ici quelques semaines.

Q. Quelles ont été les initiatives du Canada en Europe de l'Ouest et de l'Est? Visite de Trudeau.

R. La coopération avec l'Europe de l'Ouest possède pour nous une valeur en soi. Elle s'offre aussi comme un moyen de diversifier nos échanges avec l'extérieur. Au cours de l'année écoulée, nous avons largement fait connaître ce point de vue dans nos contacts multiples avec les pays de l'Europe de l'Ouest. Nous avons, dans cet esprit, discuté à plusieurs reprises des implications pour les intérêts canadiens de l'élargissement du marché commun. Nous nous sommes employés, en particulier, à promouvoir l'établissement d'un système de consultations régulières avec le Marché commun. Dans un cadre encore plus large, nous avons attiré l'attention sur les dangers d'un conflit économique pour la cohésion du monde occidental.

J'ai été très heureux d'accueillir mon homologue français, M. Maurice Schumann, qui est venu en septembre pour une brève visite. Cette visite fût la première d'une Ministre des Affaires étrangères de France au Canada.

Nos relations avec l'Union soviétique et les Etats européens de l'Est ont été extrêmement actives au cours de l'année qui s'achève. En janvier, le Canada a conclu avec l'Union soviétique un important accord de coopération dans l'application industrielle de la science et de la technologie. En mai, le Premier ministre s'est rendu en Union soviétique et a signé un protocole qui institue des consultations régulières sur une grande diversité de questions se rattachant aux relations bilatérales et sur des problèmes internationaux d'intérêt commun. M. Kossyguine a rendu la visite de M. Trudeau en venant à Ottawa en octobre. C'est le premier échange de visites à avoir eu lieu entre les chefs de gouvernement du Canada et de l'Union soviétique. Pendant le séjour de M. Kossyguine, on a signé un accord d'échanges généraux qui prévoit le développement des échanges et autres formes de coopération entre le Canada et l'Union soviétique dans les domaines de la science, de la technique, de l'éducation, de la culture et dans d'autres domaines, sur une base de réciprocité et d'avantages mutuels.

Un autre événement marquant dans nos relations avec l'Europe de l'Est a été la visite d'Etat faite en novembre au Canada par le président Tito de Yougoslavie. A la suite de cette visite, diverses consultations sont en cours en matière de commerce, d'affaires consulaires, d'immigration, de contacts dans les domaines culturel, scientifique et technologique. Le ministre des Affaires étrangères de Roumanie, M. Manescu, a également fait une visite officielle à Ottawa en juin.