

EMBARGOED UNTIL 09:00 HOURS,  
MAY 14, 1983

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# STATEMENT DISCOURS

NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY THE  
HONOURABLE CHARLES LAPOINTE,  
MINISTER OF STATE  
(EXTERNAL RELATIONS),  
AT THE FRANCE-CANADA CONVENTION  
CAEN, FRANCE,  
MAY 14, 1983

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(TRANSLATION)

Mr. President, Mr. Ambassador, Delegates:

Let me first tell you how pleased I am to be here today. In your midst I feel very much at home and among friends. How pleased I am also to be able to perpetuate and to solidify the privileged relationship that has always existed between our countries.

For your thirty-third Congress you have chosen to meet in Caen, this city that is the subject of a page in the history of both our countries. And yet the trying but glorious hours of the Second World War are not the only witnesses of this relationship that I spoke about.

The relationship between Canada and France is very much a present reality. You all know that Prime Minister Trudeau paid an official visit to France last November. Having accompanied him on that occasion, I can tell you that he was very moved by the warm, personal welcome that he received. This visit, motivated by friendship, was a time not only to review everything that has united us in the distant and recent past, but also, and perhaps most significantly, to prepare for the future, because although the friendship between our countries is an established fact, effective cooperation must be the subject of perpetual reflection and renewal. In political and economic terms, France is first and foremost a European country, and Canada a North American one. For some years now our common desire for rapprochement has enabled us to carry out many important projects. French companies have expanded to Canada and have prospered. For example, the Montreal subway was built by Canadians and French working together. Over the years, thousands of young Canadians have studied in France, and vice-versa.

Today our projects of economic cooperation are equal to the challenges of the times. I am thinking especially of the Airbus project and the Arctic pilot project. I could also refer to joint projects in the fields of space and oceanography, or to our major projects in the new and promising area of communications. Three Canada-France cooperation agreements in

the audio-visual area will be signed in the coming days. Two have to do with joint cinema productions, and the other with joint television program productions. In regard to television, let us not forget that Canada and France are the only two countries in the world in which French is spoken with the capacity to produce the quantity of hours of French-language programming required by the new technology.

I would like to draw your attention to an initiative that might seem modest, but to which I attach great value. I am referring to the decision to form a committee of businessmen, made at the time of Prime Minister Trudeau's visit. Like the Canada-France model, the committee would consist of a Canadian group and a French one, and its aims would be to promote a fuller awareness on both sides of our economies and our trade practices, to help to bring about commercial exchanges and industrial cooperation, to encourage the formation of joint enterprises and to advise the Canadian and French governments on matters that might affect bilateral economic relations between us. The Canadian group is expected to visit France in June, and I think we can rightly place high hopes in this committee of businessmen and what it can accomplish in the way of achieving fuller understanding and cooperation between the economic agents of our two countries.

Let me take this opportunity to touch on a subject of common interest that we cannot disregard: la Francophonie. We are faced mutually with many world problems, to name only the difficulties being experienced by the developing countries, for which we are trying to procure as much aid as possible, or the precarious military situation in the world. The future of la Francophonie is something that Canada and France are directly involved in. The French language is the common heritage of millions of men and women living on every continent under conditions that are often radically different. By way of the Francophone community, Canada would like to see established a free dialogue, direct exchanges between the non-aligned and members of various alliances, and between developing and industrialized countries. In spite of the great distance yet to be covered, the Francophone community already provides a unique link that is eminently suited to bring about the rapprochement we all desire to see and the cooperation required for harmony between nations. Cooperation between Francophone countries must go beyond culture and technology into the political realm. Otherwise, there can be no genuine and complete Francophonie internationale.

Next year you will assemble in Saint-Malo, where in 1534 Jacques Cartier left on his first voyage for the country that was to be called Canada. We plan to celebrate in an impressive way the 450th anniversary of this historical event of national importance to both Canada and France. Thus our countries have decided to commemorate this anniversary together. When Mr. Trudeau and Mr. Mauroy exchanged visits last

year, they agreed that joint celebrations would be an appropriate way of marking the importance attached by Canada and France to the voyage of Jacques Cartier.

Among the various activities that will highlight the year 1984 are the voyage of the Tall Ships from St-Malo to Bermuda, then from Bermuda to Halifax. These superb ships will sail up the Saint-Lawrence to Québec City, by way of Gaspé. In August, the great Québec-Saint-Malo race will bring together the world's most renowned class A ships and their crews. There will also be an interprovincial sailboat race from Toronto to Prince Edward Island, along with the national and international championships for sailing dinghies and windsurfers on the Saint-Lawrence.

In Canada there will be colourful celebrations of all kinds at the local level: entertainment and other activities in Halifax, Charlottetown, Kingston and all along the Saint-Lawrence River and the Gulf.

In France, as well as the assembling of your own Congress for 1984, the Association française des Études canadiennes will dedicate its annual symposium to Jacques Cartier, and several activities of a cultural nature are already planned: these include exhibitions on historical, artistic and scientific themes, entertainment and concerts - one of them by the Montréal Symphony Orchestra in Paris in April 1984. A special postage stamp will even be issued for this 450th anniversary. It will have the distinctive characteristic of bearing the same illustration in France and in Canada.

Keeping in mind that this anniversary is also a celebration, we will send you teams of young musicians to play on public squares, streets and beaches, while you will send teams of athletes to participate in summer games.

The coming year will be a time to celebrate together a great moment in the history of our two countries.

Your associations play an essential part in maintaining and developing the privileged relations that exist between us. I have often had this brought to my attention personally. I would not want to leave without expressing my thanks and those of the Canadian government, and above all without assuring you of our heartfelt desire to see the successful completion of the tasks that you have taken on and the fulfilment of your objectives.