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## CANADA AND "LA FRANCOPHONIE"

Speech by the Secretary of State for External Affairs,  
the Honourable Paul Martin, Montreal, March 11, 1967.

...Among the various aspects of foreign policy with which the Canadian Government is currently concerned there is one to which it is particularly sympathetic -- "La Francophonie", the conception of a French-speaking community. I think that Montreal, the second-largest French-speaking city in the world, would be an appropriate place for me to talk about this subject tonight.

"La Francophonie" is, of course, a subject of particular interest to French-speaking Canadians. But its significance is not limited to French-Canadians alone. Because it adds a new dimension to the development of our relations with other countries, "La Francophonie" will benefit all Canadians.

The idea of "La Francophonie" is quite a new one and not too clearly defined, but it has nevertheless been talked about a great deal recently. A number of leaders of French-speaking states, particularly President Senghor of Senegal and President Bourguiba of Tunisia, have been discussing this subject with the governments of interested countries. When President Senghor was in Canada last September, the Prime Minister and I discussed it at length with him. I have also talked about it several times with the French Minister of Foreign Affairs. We intend to continue this discussion with all the countries interested in "La Francophonie".

But what does "La Francophonie" mean? Perhaps the best explanation has been given by President Senghor. He thinks of it as an intellectual or spiritual community of all the countries which have French as a national or official language or where it is currently spoken. The aim is to bring closer together those countries which, through the French language, share a cultural heritage and have certain ways of thought and action, of looking at problems and of solving them, in common.

The conception is cultural and linguistic. Above all, it is a recognition of the richness of the heritage which we have in common with nearly 150 million people living in more than 25 countries throughout the world. These countries, like us, are anxious not only to preserve this heritage but to develop it. They realize today that they can do this better if they do it together.

As a French-speaking country, thanks to one of its two great cultures and one of its two official languages, Canada ought to welcome this idea warmly. I spoke on this subject in the House of Commons on October 24 last year when I said:

"... the Canadian Government fully supports the idea of developing closer links and more exchanges, particularly in the cultural and related fields, with those countries which, like Canada, share the heritage of the French language and culture.

It is the policy of the Canadian Government to give full expression, in its international relations, to the bilingual and bicultural character of our country. The development of our ties with the 'Francophone' countries, which we have pursued vigorously over the last few years, represents a new and valuable dimension of Canadian diplomacy. We wish, more particularly, to participate actively in any effort to find an effective framework for further co-operation among 'Francophone' states."

It is only natural that our country should play an active role in the linguistic community of French-speaking states. The advantages will add to those we already draw from our Commonwealth membership. As you know, our country has established many close links with our Commonwealth partners. A very high proportion of our external aid is directed to developing countries of the Commonwealth. Thanks to a programme of co-operation in the field of education, a great many Commonwealth citizens come to study in Canada every year, while a significant number of English and French-speaking Canadians go to other countries of the Commonwealth. We participate in the activities of many co-ordinating or consultative bodies, such as the Commonwealth Foundation, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

This list will give you an idea of what we are achieving within the Commonwealth, for the benefit of all Canadians, including French-Canadians. In the same spirit, the Canadian Government has undertaken during the past few years to strengthen and develop our ties with the French-speaking countries of the world and particularly with France, one of our mother countries.

Canada did not wait for the recent suggestions about "La Francophonie" in order to develop bilateral relations with the French-speaking countries of Europe, Africa and Asia. Our efforts in that direction should make our participation in "La Francophonie" much easier. I should like to describe some of the initiatives we have taken. I hope these examples will illustrate our increasing activity and the intensified effort which Canada is making towards the French-speaking countries.

Our bilateral relations have developed particularly with France. The visit which the Prime Minister and I made to France in January 1964 was a turning-point. On this occasion, General de Gaulle and Mr. Pearson agreed on the principles of broad co-operation at all levels between the two countries.

Exchanges between the two countries were greatly stimulated as a result. There has been periodic consultation between the two governments since then concerning our bilateral interests and international affairs, just like the consultation we have with the United States or Britain. Two or three times a year, I meet with my good friend and colleague Mr. Couve de Murville. From time to time, other ministers of the two governments have exchanged visits to discuss problems of mutual interest. There have also been numerous meetings between officials. I should also mention the activities of the France-Canada Parliamentary Association, which, since its creation a year ago, has held meetings in both countries.

I cannot overstate the benefit which both countries have drawn from these repeated contacts. As a result, each country has a better understanding of the attitude of the other towards the great problems which confront the modern world. This has helped to maintain the friendly atmosphere which marks our relations and helps us to achieve our common objectives.

In our cultural relations, we have made great progress since we established our programme of cultural exchanges with French-speaking countries in 1964. When we started, we had \$250,000 at our disposal. Since 1965, we have raised this amount to \$1 million. In November 1965, the French Ambassador and I signed the first general cultural agreement between our two countries. This agreement, which aimed at a better organization and co-ordination of cultural exchanges between the two countries, has resulted in our welcoming to Canada at least 100 French scholarship winners every year, who have come to study at post-graduate and research levels in our universities. Under the same agreement, about 20 French university professors are invited to our universities every year. In return, France has granted nearly 80 scholarships to Canadians to study in France, and also welcomes several members of our academic community.

In addition, to underline the importance of La Maison Canadienne for students in Paris, the Federal Government has made a grant of half a million dollars to permit its expansion, raising its capacity from 70 to 125 students. (By the way - may I offer my most sincere thanks to Mr. Ostiguy, who is sitting at this table, for his initiative and co-operation?)

Thanks to the federal programme of exchanges with French-speaking countries, we have been able to help several Canadian groups go abroad during the past year. I might just mention a few of them: the Montreal Symphony Orchestra went to France, Switzerland and Belgium, with great success; le Théâtre de l'Egrégore played in France and Switzerland; les Feux-Follets took part in the international music-hall festival at the Olympia in Paris; a Canada Week was organized at Mulhouse. Lastly, book collections of more than 800 works, covering all phases of Canadian life, have been given to six large French libraries.

I should also mention our efforts in Belgium and Switzerland, where we have multiplied our cultural exchanges, particularly in the academic field. Every year, we receive about ten students from each of these two countries on Canadian Government scholarships, while five or six Canadians go there, thanks to their scholarships. Before long, we hope to sign an agreement with Belgium which would provide for the expansion of these exchanges.

I should like to point out that the policy of cultural exchanges is not limited to French-speaking countries. I believe that it is in the interests of all Canadians to develop our cultural exchanges, particularly with Europe. I was particularly happy to be able to announce in the course of my trip to Europe last November the opening of negotiations with Italy and the U.S.S.R., which we hope will lead to cultural agreements with them.

In the field of scientific co-operation with France, a group of leading Canadian figures directed by Mr. Gaudry, rector of the University of Montreal, recently went to Paris to agree on a sizable programme of scientific exchanges.

In the economic sphere, there has also been greater co-operation between France and Canada. A Canada-France commission will meet each year to discuss questions of mutual interest. An important Canadian economic mission visited France last year to discuss with the French authorities ways of improving exchanges between the two countries. The commission has just distributed an important report on this subject across Canada.

Many other projects are in progress. I might mention, for instance, an exchange of officers between the French and Canadian armed forces. More and more civil servants are being trained at the French National School of Administration, while in return we have been welcoming French civil servants on study tours. Both countries are studying the possibility of mutual co-operation in the field of defence production. We are also studying a proposed exchange of young people which Mr. Marchand has suggested. There is a constant movement back and forth of commissions and delegations who are doing pioneer work. Impressive results have been obtained since the Prime Minister visited Paris. When Mr. Couve de Murville came to Ottawa last September, we agreed that this was only a beginning.

While we have tried to intensify and diversify our traditional relations with France and to extend the scope of our exchanges with Belgium and Switzerland, we have also sought to establish close links with the many developing French-speaking countries which have gained independence since the last war. Canada has shown its interest in being represented in these countries in Africa by establishing embassies in Cameroun, Congo (Kinshasa), Tunisia and Senegal. Through multiple accreditation, we now have diplomatic relations with all of French-speaking Africa. Although we have no formal diplomatic missions in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, our participation in the work of the International Control Commission since 1954 has allowed us to have useful contacts with these countries. I hope that in the near future our financial and personnel resources will allow us to expand our network of diplomatic missions in French-speaking countries.

It would be impossible to exaggerate the importance of these missions. Without their administrative help and presence in the field, we could not achieve our objectives; they have enabled us to achieve mutual comprehension without which we could not lay the foundation for effective and long-lasting co-operation or work closely with the governments which are interested in "La Francophonie".

We have made our presence felt most tangibly in French-speaking Africa and Asia through external aid. It seems natural that our activity should have begun in a field where it would be in effect an extension of the admirable work already begun, particularly in Africa, by hundreds of Canadian missionaries in education, medical services, and other fields.

In French-speaking Africa, our external aid programme has developed remarkably in the last few years. From the \$300,000 a year which we spent between 1961 and 1964, our bilateral aid figures went up to \$4 million in 1964 and reached \$8 million during the present fiscal year. To this impressive sum we intend to add another \$4 million. I am pleased to announce that the Canadian Government has decided to increase its aid to French-speaking Africa during the next fiscal year to \$12 million. If you bear in mind that we shall be giving \$16 million to English-speaking African countries next year, it will be evident that we have gone a good way towards balancing the aid which we give to the two groups in Africa.

Launching a programme of this size in a few years has required a considerable effort in organization and co-operation from both Canada and the recipient countries. As I have said, we started slowly. We did this on purpose, because both we and the countries concerned agreed that our aid should go into well-conceived programmes which would have a real and lasting value. Considerable progress has been made. I am proud to say that we now have the means and the people in Canada and abroad to reach the goals which we have set for ourselves. Our diplomatic missions in Africa and Asia have done a wonderful job in difficult circumstances. Thanks to them we now have a better knowledge of the real needs of the countries concerned. These countries, in turn, now have a better idea of the human and material resources which we can make available to help them. Please do not forget, my dear friends, that, when we talk of peace and the risk of a world war, what I am saying tonight is the actual basis of a peace effort.

We have now reached what I should call the second stage in implementing our programme -- that of diversification and consolidation. At first our activity was directed mainly towards technical assistance, and particularly education. We already have nearly 250 teachers in French-speaking Africa, and we hope to bring this number up to nearly 300 during the coming year. Nearly 450 trainees from the developing French-speaking countries are now studying in Canada. We wish to do more, and to offer help in such different fields as agriculture, public health, transportation, communications and engineering. Last year we gave considerable food aid to Morocco, Algeria and Senegal.

I have just mentioned the human and technical resources which we shall increasingly need. I should like to express my satisfaction at the enthusiastic support which French-Canadians from Quebec and the other provinces have given to the preparation and carrying out of projects not only in French-speaking countries but almost everywhere in the world. As an example, I might mention that many doctors and members of other professions have offered their services spontaneously, in some cases without fee. Is there any better example of altruism and generosity? I should like to renew today the appeal I have often made to businessmen, industrialists, professional men, teachers and technicians. Help us to help others, because without your assistance we can not carry out the important and complex

task which Canada has undertaken in the developing French-speaking countries.

As you can see, our bilateral relations with the French-speaking countries are already varied and close. I should now like to tell you how the Canadian Government envisages the development within "La Francophonie" of the multilateral relations which all seem to want. Our views reflect the major themes which emerge from the statements made on this subject almost everywhere in the French-speaking world. It goes without saying that "La Francophonie", although it may have an economic aspect, will be essentially a great cultural undertaking. No one dreams of having it extend into the political field. To endure, it must be a joint effort; it will have to be developed through constant consultation between equal partners, with due regard for the domestic institutions of each country. It follows that "La Francophonie" will have to have a very flexible form. It will require the freely-given assistance of all those who wish it well, including participation by private organizations. It will also call for systematic international co-ordination, which presupposes the support of French-speaking governments.

This is the way in which "La Francophonie" seems to be developing, for it has already begun to exist, with Canada as a participant. May I mention the following organizations as examples:

L'Association des Universités partiellement ou entièrement de langue française - AUPELF - (The Association of Universities Partly or Entirely French-speaking), established in 1961 on the initiative of the University of Montreal;

L'Association internationale des Journalistes de langue française (The International Association of French-speaking Journalists);

L'Association internationale des Juristes de langue française (The International Association of French-speaking Jurists);

L'Association internationale des Médecins de langue française (The International Association of French-speaking Physicians);

L'Association interparlementaire des Pays de langue française (The Interparliamentary Association of French-speaking Countries), which is in process of being formed;

Le Comité de l'ONU pour la Défense de la langue française dans les Organisations internationales (The UNO Committee for the Defence of the French Language in International Organizations);

La Communauté radiophonique de langue française (The French-language Broadcasting Community);

La Fédération du Français universel (The International Federation for the French Language).

This is a most impressive beginning, and provides striking evidence of the spontaneous nature of the aspirations of the French-speaking people.

The Federal Government has followed the activities of these various groups very closely, and has shown its interest by providing financial assistance when needed, particularly to help Canadians attend the meetings organized by these organizations in different countries. Now the Government has decided to do more

As I mentioned a moment ago, we see our relations with "La Francophonie", the Commonwealth and other countries as different manifestations of a single foreign policy which is in the interests of all Canadians. As one aspect of this policy I am happy to announce this evening that the Canadian Government will provide an annual grant to AUPELF of \$50,000. In addition, at the request of AUPELF, it will contribute to the Fonds international de Coopération universitaire (the International Fund for University Co-operation), the principal aim of which is to promote the development of universities in the developing French-speaking countries. For this purpose, we envisage an annual contribution of \$100,000 for five years, to be used in consultation with AUPELF and the governments concerned. I should add that this aid the Government has decided to give to AUPELF is due to the encouragement and the efforts of my colleague, Mr. Sauvé. AUPELF, the association of universities which are partly or entirely French-speaking, is one of the most impressive manifestations of the French-speaking attitude. Following an appeal by the University of Montreal, 55 universities, located in 18 countries throughout the world, united in 1961 to form this international association, which has already proved its value. Canadians are proud that its secretariat is located in Montreal. This seems to me fortunate, and I can assure AUPELF of all our support.

Concerning the Interparliamentary Association of French-speaking Countries, the Speaker of the House of Commons has received an invitation from the President of the Luxembourg Parliament for a preparatory meeting to be held in Luxembourg in May. This proposal is now being studied, and has created a great deal of interest among Canadian Parliamentarians.

Up to now, these various initiatives have developed spontaneously. If we want to make sure that "La Francophonie" develops in an effective and coherent manner, it seems to me essential that such initiatives should be carried out in future in a more systematic way; they should be encouraged and co-ordinated. I think that the most suitable instrument for this purpose would be an international organization of an essentially private nature, based on national associations of the same character, which would be independent from one another and from their governments but would work closely with the latter and would enjoy their support. Such an international organization would permit co-operation in this field on the basis of complete equality among the various countries concerned and would supplement the activities of governments by mobilizing the resources and initiatives of individuals and private organizations. The Canadian Government is convinced of the value of this idea,

and has undertaken to submit it to French-speaking governments. If their opinion is favourable, we shall be ready to call a meeting of their representatives to discuss the question.

Ladies and gentlemen, there is something deeply moving about the idea of a fellowship, based on language, bringing together people, races and continents in the service of common cultural and human values. I am also moved by the idea of a French-speaking brotherhood on a world scale which will be enriched by the civilizations of Asia and Africa. How could "La Francophonie" fail to be the business of Canada -- particularly of French Canada but really of all of Canada?

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