

it, and be away by the end of June. Consideration should be given to a plan of this kind without delay. I know, however, that we are all in agreement with this motion, and that we shall support it, because after seven months' absence, I want to find out if I still have a home, a family and grandchildren, and meet them all again.

Motion agreed to.

TRADE

STATEMENT ON DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENTS OF EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Hon. Howard C. Green (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a short statement concerning the visit of the presidents of the three European communities to Ottawa on June 22 and 23. On the invitation of the Canadian government the presidents of the executive bodies of the three European communities, Dr. Walter Hallstein of the European economic community better known as the common market, Mr. Etienne Hirsch of the European atomic energy community or EURATOM, and Mr. Paul Finet of the European coal and steel community visited Ottawa on Monday and Tuesday of this week and had discussions with the Prime Minister and ministers and officials dealing with trade and economic matters.

As hon. members know, these three communities bring together six western European countries, France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, and provide for the gradual establishment of a single economic area within which goods, persons and capital would move freely behind a common external tariff. EURATOM provides in addition for a pooling of the efforts of the six countries in the peaceful development of atomic energy and in the construction of the basic facilities required for the development of nuclear energy within the community.

It is not necessary to emphasize that the constitution in Europe of a large integrated economic area grouping six industrially advanced countries which count among the major trading countries of the world is bound to have a profound impact on the pattern and development of international trade generally, and more particularly on Canadian trade. We therefore welcomed this opportunity to meet these distinguished representatives, to learn from them at first hand of these European developments, and at the same time to explain Canadian interests in these trading arrangements.

I think the presidents' visit was most successful and useful in accomplishing these purposes. We were encouraged by many of the

European Communities Trade Discussions things they said to us and also by their own broad and sensible approach on these important trading matters.

For our part we were able, I think, to impress upon them the genuine and long-standing sympathy and interest that Canada has shown for the objectives of economic and political integration in Europe. At the same time we emphasized again our concern that the new European economic and trading arrangements should not be developed in such a way as to create new barriers and restrictions for the trade of outside countries such as Canada.

We discussed briefly the significance of the advent of external convertibility for the major European trading currencies, and assured our visitors that nothing could do more to remove the fears and misgivings of outside countries concerning the European economic community than the early removal of the apparatus of discriminatory import controls and restrictions in Europe. These controls had been established because of balance of payments difficulties which have now largely disappeared, and had impeded the normal development and the pattern of trade ever since the war. The strength and vitality of the European economies made such a move possible, and as a first step any discrimination which remained against dollar imports should be removed; we made it plain that in our view discrimination has lost its purpose and its justification.

Dr. Hallstein and Mr. Finet have now returned to Europe. The president of the European atomic energy community or EURATOM, Mr. Hirsch, remained to visit our Chalk River establishment as a guest of Atomic Energy of Canada and will be departing today. I should just like to add that I think these discussions were extremely helpful for both sides.

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we welcome the statement the minister has just made. I think a visit of this kind by representatives of these European agencies to Ottawa at this time is important and I am sure the discussions have been useful. All of us are very conscious of the importance of these developments, both political and economic, toward European integration, and I think they are to be welcomed. But in the economic field it is to be hoped, as the minister has pointed out, and indeed it is very important to Canada, that the removal of trade barriers within a European group should not mean the raising of trade barriers against those outside the group.

No country, Mr. Speaker, has a greater stake in this matter than Canada. The time