

expression of defeatism, or at least of a complacent attitude." In fact, through the military support and other solidarity it had provided the US since 11 September, Canada had shown itself to be ahead of the other Allies. There were, said the Ambassador, many explanations in addition to altruism that accounted for Canada's rapid rallying to America's side, and notwithstanding ongoing difficulties in certain sectors (e.g., softwood lumber) it was undeniable that Canada's standing with the US had been elevated, leaving it placed better than most if not all the others in the "competition among Allies [over] who reacted in the most appropriate way to the distress of the US."

As for the Canada-Netherlands bilateral relationship, it sometimes appeared as if the two kindred countries were saddled with "the problem that they have no problem standing in the way of their friendship." As a result, it was too easy, since there was nothing fundamental for the two to solve, for them to succumb to the temptation of not doing anything together. So to think would be wrong. More than ever after the events of 11 September was it incumbent upon the two to "make good use of the benefit we derive from our international orientation and ... act in a complementary manner on the world stage."

Amb. van Hellenberg Hubar concluded by sketching the outlines of a few items that could figure on a productive agenda for bilateral diplomacy. Foremost on his list was enhanced military cooperation between the two countries, including providing some role for Canada in decisionmaking within an evolving ESDP; this latter would also have the merit of contributing to Dutch efforts to solidify ties between NATO and the ESDP. Cooperation might also take the form of procurement of military equipment. Outside the military sphere, cooperative ventures could be mounted involving commercial and academic constituencies. The point to stress was that the willingness was there, in both countries, to pursue important projects together for mutual benefit.

The Canadian responder, Ambassador April, commenced by acknowledging that the Dutch, more so perhaps than any other Europeans, realized that Canada was "more than just an additional dose of glue with which to bind the United States to Europe." Canada appreciated that the Netherlands had long accepted Canada as a "partner in its own right" in the transatlantic relationship. And while at times the overconcentration of Europeans (and Canadians) upon the US might be misplaced, such was not the situation after 11 September: in the early aftermath of that tragic day, it was assumed by many that US policy would demonstrate a recommitment to multilateralism. But this had not turned out to be the case, notwithstanding the initial expectation that NATO's invocation of article 5 would reveal it to be an "Alliance of equals."