

“Progress and Possibilities for Scientific and Technological Co-operation.”

November 3, 1977.

The most remarkable event since Helsinki has been the conclusion of the long-term agreement between the Governments of Canada and the Soviet Union concerning economic, industrial, scientific and technical co-operation. This agreement establishes a framework for possible co-operation between Canada and the Soviet Union, including co-operation in the fields of science and technology, for the next ten years. There are some very positive elements in this and we, for our part, contemplate the continuation of this co-operation and intend to give it the fullest expression desirable.

As for other Eastern European countries, I must admit that our scientific and technological relations are in a more preliminary stage. It is true that in recent years a certain number of these countries have expressed the desire to sign general co-operation agreements with us in these fields and naturally we have welcomed these proposals with great interest. Nevertheless, these considerations lead me to state Canada's position on such agreements in some detail.

Canada does not consider such agreements of a general and intergovernmental nature either as panaceas or as points of departure — or even as necessarily desirable in themselves. If they are needed, and if they must be of an intergovernmental nature, we prefer that they should confirm existing and active relations. Before we make the frame, we must have the picture that goes inside it. I do not deny that our position is based on our experience. The fact is that, while we are generally satisfied with the level of and outlook for our co-operation in the field with the Soviet Union, we are aware of the cost and the administrative burden of co-operation founded on such bases. Similarly, I do not deny the existence of a certain feeling of disappointment among our scientists with respect to co-operation — and particularly exchanges with the Eastern countries in the fields we are discussing. Were they expecting too much? Have they found that the benefits do not sufficiently outweigh the difficulties? The facts are there.

From this arises the need to ensure that such co-operation, though it