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narrowing of the gap between the great powers and the super-powers in order to promote effective dialogue, which is often unbalanced owing to the extreme differences in the sizes of the countries?

If this is self-evident, as I believe it is, let us then leave these hypotheses and move on to consider Canada's role in the international community since the beginning of the century. As a middle power (the largest of the small or the smallest of the large, depending on how you view it), Canada's participation in the wars of 1914 and 1939 and, to an even greater extent, in the postwar restoration of Europe, has adequately proved that our country's actions can be both unique and indispensable. Owing to our geographical location and political situation, we are inevitably attracted towards Europe. Canada seeks alliances on the other side of the Atlantic, certainly not out of indifference, and even less out of aggressiveness towards the United States — which is at once our most important supplier and our largest customer —, but because Canada cannot be a single-alliance country. Nearly two centuries ago Canada chose between continental integration and independent existence. It clearly decided in favour of the second alternative and hence chose to be faithful to the European sources of its founding cultures. However, this choice must be constantly reaffirmed. Canada does this every day and, to this end, seeks and will always seek to balance the influences that act upon it, for this balance is the keystone of the policies it has established for itself. For the same reasons that it refuses continental integration, Canada is pleased to see the consolidation of Europe and is led to establish ties with the European Economic Community. Of course, we maintain cordial and intimate relations with the United States, but this also requires us to seek dialogue with our other allies, without whom there would always be an imbalance in our bilateral relations. Over the past few years, I believe that Canada has proved itself capable of establishing an original and distinctive foreign policy, not through ostentation or bravado but because such a policy was appropriate to the country's self-image and, naturally, to its interests.

Canada is becoming increasingly aware of what Europe has to offer, but we sometimes wonder if Europeans are equally aware of the possibilities that a strong and independent Canada offers them. I am, of course, referring to Canada's vast natural wealth, to its industries and to its fishing and agricultural resources, but also to its desire to maintain multiple alliances, to its privileged relations with France and Britain, to its dual membership in the Commonwealth and the *francophone* world, and its desire to extend its influence. Europe would be contributing to its own decline if it let itself be supplanted in Africa, if it considered Latin America as a private preserve, or left all initiatives in Asia up to others. And, in these three fields of action, Europe can consider Canada as an ideal ally, as an already-established partner whose long-term interests and objectives converge with its own. If the Canadian presence were to disappear from these three regions of the world, who would come in to replace it? It is not difficult to predict that this new presence might block European action, whereas our own offers possibilities of fruitful co-operation.

Does France see the matter in the same light? The dream of an independent *francophone* republic in the northeast part of the American continent is perhaps appealing to some. But surely this is, in fact, just that — only a dream, an illusion.

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