

The tension between Paris and Ottawa was no longer necessary to Quebec, and it had everything to gain from a broadening of France's sphere of influence in relation to the Federal Government.

Franco-Canadian relations are, therefore, entering a much more clearly-defined phase of three-way interdependence. In this game, relations between any two of the players must take into account the relations each has with the third. There will, of course, be relative freedom of action in some areas for each of the three, but these areas will necessarily be limited by the dovish nature of the game. For each of the participants, this is an advantage in relation to the previous situation.

Breakdown possible

This interdependence could, of course, break down, if the governments involved decided, tacitly or by common agreement, to do nothing at all. By definition, however, this is impossible under the present circumstances since the very existence of the new triangle is based on the willingness of both France and Canada to improve relations. We should, therefore, expect Franco-Canadian relations to take on a much more dynamic aspect, not only because of the renewed *entente* between Paris and Ottawa but also because of the effect this reconciliation will have on Franco-Quebec relations. All these interactions will not necessarily conflict, though the possibility should not be ruled out, particularly if Quebec should become involved in "serious matters".

Further developments in Franco-Canadian relations will be all the more interesting to observe since they are somewhat analogous to the inverse situation Canadian diplomacy is attempting to create with respect to Western Europe. Here, again, is an illustration of two-tier diplomacy, directed, on the one hand, toward the European Community as a whole and the consolidation Canada wishes to promote, and, on the other hand, toward each of the member states. On the bilateral level, Canada favours certain nations — France and Britain, for example, for reasons that may be quite dissimilar — in the same way that France tends to show favour to Quebec while not necessarily precluding relations with the other Canadian provinces. Viewed in this context, and without minimizing the importance of the other European countries, France becomes, following Mr. Trudeau's visit, the pivot of Canada's Western European diplomacy, the central link in two separate but interdependent alliances: Ottawa/Paris/Quebec and Ottawa/Paris/European Community.

It is a gain for French diplomacy that General de Gaulle would not have rejected, and that he undoubtedly desired — provided, of course, Quebec remained a vigilant participant.

No substantial relations

It would be worth while to consider how the current situation came about. It must be said that Franco-Canadian relations were not substantial before 1967. At the governmental level, neither country saw any strategic advantage in their relations, here defined in the broad sense of diplomatic, cultural and economic ties. For Canada, France was simply one country out of many, a nation with which it was certainly advisable to maintain good relations and avoid conflict, primarily because of the Franco-British alliance, but also in deference to French-Canadian opinion (French-Canadian attachment to the former mother country was, however, over-estimated). Consequently, there was no particular awareness of France comparable to that which characterized Canada's relations with Britain or the United States. The explanation for this is historical and goes back to the bonds that developed at all levels between Ottawa, London and Washington during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These bonds were to create for Canadian leaders a structured image of the international system, in which France could not occupy a position different from that of the other European countries. Underlying Franco-Canadian relations, there was thus a basic fact: the *élite* who were to shape Canadian foreign policy over the years belonged to an interest group whose conception of the international scene was one in which

Early bonds structured leaders' image of international system

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