

But our multilateral efforts should not obscure the importance and opportunities which our efforts in bilateral cooperation promise. We are here today to continue these efforts and to give them further impetus.

Economics alone do not explain the strong desire of Canadians to retain and strengthen our ties with your Community. The depth and range of our historic bonds are well-known. This sense of shared experience and spirit gives rise to a special feeling of affinity between Canada and the Community. As bystanders, we have watched attentively the construction of Europe. From its simple beginnings in the form of commercial arrangements among a few, it has evolved into the Community of Nine with its own institutions, its common policies and its prospects of both further enlargement and greater unity.

This special sense of affinity and our mutual desire that our relationship should take account of the evolution of the Community and the shared challenges of the 1970's led logically I suggest to the undertakings we entered into in July 1976 to deepen and diversify our economic relationship, undertakings which were reaffirmed at the first session of this Committee in December 1976.