

Indeed, according to Amb. van Hellenberg Hubar, there was much wisdom in Canada's aligning itself more closely with the US, just as there had been great benefit derived by the Netherlands from its decision to integrate more fully with Germany and other European countries. "I do believe," he said, "that a country locked into a cooperative setting, be it in Europe or in North America, has more chance to uphold the essence of its views on cooperation than in isolation." That is why the Ambassador rejected the charges brought by some against John Manley, Canada's Deputy Prime Minister, namely that he was too quick to sacrifice sovereignty in pursuit of closer integration with the US after 11 September. Just the opposite applied, accordingly to the Ambassador, for Mr. Manley understood that close and fruitful cooperation with the US was a "necessary precondition for the survival of Canada as a viable state." The Deputy PM was right to think as he did, and in so doing to confute the preferences of some of Canada's "academic elite," steeped as the latter have been in the "traditional anti-Americanism of the Franz Fanon generation, grown up with the ideology of 'Les Damnées de la Terre', and [the] insularity of the British."

As for the Netherlands, integration on the European scale was so logical that almost all the country's political parties supported it. But, said Amb. van Hellenberg Hubar, Europe would not be allowed to constitute the sole focus of the country's external reach; Dutch economic, political, military, and cultural interests extended far beyond Europe. This was all the more pertinent given the recent redirection of the European integration project, away from the federalist preferences of the Dutch and toward the kind of Europe of states envisioned by Charles de Gaulle. "We are now at a turning point, and De Gaulle's vision seems more up-to-date than I, for one, ever believed possible."

Amb. van Hellenberg Hubar acknowledged that there were major differences in the processes and norms of continental integration on the two sides of the Atlantic, stemming largely from the disproportionate weight enjoyed by the US within North America as compared with that of even the largest European country within the EU. Some things, however, were similar: Canada, like most of the EU countries, had been spending less than it should on defence. Canada and the European NATO members had allowed the capability gap separating them from the US to expand. Nor were matters helped by Canada's "regrettably ... falling behind" in the provision of nonmilitary assistance to developing countries, particularly in light of the country's declaratory policy and its capacity to pay.

Neither the EU Allies nor, by extension, Canada should have an interest in promoting a division of labour within the Alliance that left the burden of military intervention ("hard power") to one ally or only a few Allies; subscribing to such an idea would be the quickest way to self-marginalization for a country. It also constituted "an