



Statements and Speeches

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PIONEERING A NEW KIND OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

A Statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, on the Occasion of the Signing of the Framework Agreement for Commercial and Economic Co-operation between Canada and the European Communities, Ottawa, July 6, 1976.

Foreign policy, like all human affairs, is dictated partly by the logic and the pressure of events and partly by design. This much we must accept. The better the design, however, the more likely we are to be able to shape events, and to reach the goals that nations, no less than individuals, set for themselves.

Some years ago, Canada reviewed its goals in the light of the changing realities as we were about to enter the last quarter of the twentieth century. It was clear to us from this review that we could not simply allow nature to take its course, not even in the case of relations with the Western European nations, to which Canada is linked by many ties of tradition, culture and language.

The European Community had embarked upon a new course that promised to create a new and significant dimension of the international reality. While we did not discount, as the Europeans themselves did not discount, the nature of the obstacles that lay between promise and achievement, we had always had confidence that Western Europe would continue to move forward towards greater unity. This unique development in world affairs, with the perceptible and rapid changes in the Canadian situation, called for a new response on our part.

Clearly, a new design was needed in our foreign policy to take account of the changing circumstances and to steer events in the desired direction. As most of our European friends are aware, a basic tenet of Canadian foreign policy is to develop in harmony with the United States, but distinct from it, in the affirmation of an individual national personality and in keeping with our own national interests. Thus it was logical for Canada to seek to give a stronger and larger economic dimension to its relations with the European Community, which is the world's largest trading entity, with a highly-advanced industrial base and increasing import requirements.

The impulse of the new policy orientation would undoubtedly have led to an increased level of interchanges between Canada and Europe, but it was the view of the Canadian Government, and I believe it was
