

Before I discuss what steps we have taken so far to implement this decision I wish to deal with some of its implications. They have been discussed on previous occasions but their importance merits repetition. It does not entail isolationism or protectionism. On the contrary, it really means a greater involvement for Canada in the rest of the world. It is definitely not anti-American. The decision to adopt the Third Option was taken in the knowledge that our links with the United States represent our most important external relationship. The effect is to strengthen those links, by developing policies that contribute to Canadian maturity and self-confidence and thereby remove those irritations in Canada which could, if not dealt with, manifest themselves in anti-American feelings.

But what have we done so far to reduce Canadian vulnerability to continentalism? The logic of the situation suggested that we should diversify our interests, and deepen our relations with other countries, especially with those which, by virtue of their own power, could help to serve as counterweights to the pull of the United States. Canada does not have global responsibilities in the same sense as the United States but we do have world-wide interests and a growing capacity and need to promote these interests. We have, accordingly, sought to strengthen Canada's relations particularly with Europe and Japan.

There have been substantial contacts between Canadian and Japanese political leaders and officials across a wide range of fields - agriculture, science and technology, atomic power, minerals and energy. In 1973-74 our Foreign Ministers met twice, while in 1974 our Prime Ministers met in Paris and in Ottawa. The objective of all these activities was set out in the communiqué issued at the end of the last Prime Ministerial meeting in Ottawa in September. The Prime Ministers agreed that "Japan and Canada would make constant efforts to cultivate, expand and enrich further their cooperative relationship in political, economic, cultural, scientific and technological and other diverse fields thereby placing the relationship on an even broader and deeper basis".