

The Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs, was disappointed to learn that the Council of Ministers of the European Communities is considering the imposition of a Community-wide ban on imports of the products of young harp and hooded seals on October 1, 1983. Moreover, he regretted that the Council has decided to maintain measures currently in place restricting trade in these products.

He noted, however, that the ban was contingent on further investigation into the scientific aspects and consequences of the culling of harp and hooded seals and that the Council has asked the European Commission to continue to seek, in the context of further contacts with Canada, solutions which would make restrictions on imports unnecessary.

Canada remains fully prepared to cooperate in these investigations, but must insist that they be rigorously scientific and that their results be interpreted without bias. We are confident that if all parties concerned are seriously prepared to engage in a rational and cooperative approach to the problem, it will be possible to reach a satisfactory solution.