

CANADA - EC RELATIONS

Canada maintains close relations with the Commission of the European Communities through a permanent Canadian mission in Brussels. Since 1976 the established Canadian policy of encouraging increased economic ties with the EC in both public and private sectors has been facilitated by a Canada/EC Framework Agreement for Commercial and Economic Co-operation. Under the terms of this agreement a Joint Co-operation Committee, two sub-committees and numerous working groups meet regularly to determine what actions should be taken to facilitate closer economic co-operation. The Co-operation Committee itself meets annually at the Ministerial level and has provided the political impetus behind a work programme which involves the business sectors in both Canada and Europe. The December 17 meeting, like the two previous ones, will review activities undertaken since the 1978 meeting and agree to a work programme for 1980/81.

Among the specific sectors in which industrial co-operation activities are being pursued are aeronautics, the *péri-informatique*, forest products (including timber frame construction and pulp and paper), nuclear/uranium industries and metals and minerals (asbestos and steel in particular). The Community and Canada (in consultation with the Provinces) are also exploring possibilities for co-operation in the fields of urban transportation, food processing and health care industries (including medical equipment). Work is also proceeding apace in environment and science and technology. An analysis of the trade flows between Canada and the EC since 1962 has just been completed and should be published soon. It provides an assessment of the main factors and trends which have characterized our trade with the EC over the past 10-15 years and draws some conclusions for the future. Workshops to get at the root of the impediments which both European and Canadian businessmen are facing in dealing with each other are being organized.

Parliamentary relations is another field where links have been established complementing our other endeavours with the Community. Two significant events should render these relations even more valuable in future. First, there are the European direct elections, which reflect the various European political ideologies and tendencies on a Community-wide basis. Distinguished political personalities are leading the various political formations: Willy Brandt, Léo Tindemans, Gaston Thorn, François Mitterand, Jacques Chirac, Simone Veil, Enrico Berlinguer, etc. This factor alone should contribute to giving the Parliament added influence if not power.

Second, a delegation of members of the European parliament visited Canada during the week of November 26 and agreed with their Canadian counterparts that there should be increased parliamentary involvement in the relationship.