

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Encouraged by a good dinner and congenial company I propose to defy the traditional wisdom of ministerial speech making--that a Minister should address himself to the most topical issue of the day. The most topical issue or, if you wish, the burning issue of the day, and, indeed of the last five months is, of course, energy. This evening, I propose not to talk about energy--at least to avoid the current concentration on this subject. I am going to talk about other important subjects--ones which I can discuss in much more positive terms--relations between this country and the Federal Republic of Germany and more generally between Canada and the European Community.

In a word, Canadian-German relations are "burgeoning". Ten years ago, trade between Canada and the Federal Republic, amounted to about 315 million dollars. At last count the figures were approaching a billion dollars annually. Over the 10 year period, this is an increase of 160%. Over the past year, there has been an increase in both directions of 25%. Germany has become our fourth largest trading partner. These are impressive figures and I am sure that in large measure, they reflect the vision and hard work of many members of the German-Canadian business and professional community.

However, left as they are, these figures do not tell the whole story. There is, in fact, an imbalance. While our exports to the Federal Republic have been increasing they have not kept pace with the volume of imports from that country. For our part the Government is trying to reduce this imbalance by encouraging increased sales to the Federal Republic, not only of raw or semi-processed material but also of a range of manufactured and processed goods. In a free society this is a co-operative enterprise and further success will depend to a great extent on the support and initiative of Canadian business.

Trade is, of course, only one aspect of Canadian relations with the Federal Republic. Other common interests are reflected in agreements on Science and Technology, Defence Research and Production, Social Security and in a proposed agreement on cultural co-operation. An agreement on bilateral consultations, on matters of common concern, was signed by Herr Scheel and myself this last September. In Science and Technology alone the results have been very satisfying to both sides. Industrial co-operation is already taking place in marine technology and there are prospects of useful collaboration in communications satellites.

With The Federal Republic, as with Europe as a whole, our relations have never been exclusively nor are even primarily, based on trade. History, common values, and for many of us, common European origins are the source of continued and potent links.

The links are strong, but the relationship is not static. The problems and perspectives of the European Community are subject to change. Canada's approach to the Community, particularly under the Diefenbaker