

I am grateful for being able to appear before you. You have chosen a very timely and important topic to examine. Canada's developing relationship with the European Economic Communities is of increasing importance. It is one of the preoccupations of the Government in foreign policy. We want these relations to be closer. We welcome your examination of them and we shall look forward to your suggestions. Indeed, during your own travels to Europe, you will be able to assist our efforts in this direction.

For all these reasons, I wish to provide a framework for your consideration of these relations.

First, what is the actual state of our relations with the ten countries of the enlarged EEC? You are aware of the closeness of the ties forged during two world wars and our post-war alliance. The EEC now contains both our founding nations, and, as well, other countries of birth of many Canadians. The two most used working languages of the new Europeans are the two official languages of Canada. I do not suggest that this alone provides a basis for new relations. But I do think that we speak the same language as the Europeans in many important respects.

We admire the imaginative concept that the enlarged Community provides for Europe's potential.

The Prime Minister underlined this potential in his messages of congratulation to Prime Minister Heath and to the Presidents of the EEC Council and EEC Commission at the time the new members signed the Treaty of Accession in January. Mr. Trudeau wrote, "Canadians admire the audacity of concept of the new Community and skillfulness with which it has been designed. We are confident that the economic strength which will flow from it will be employed in a fashion of benefit not just to the partners but to all members of the International Community. A co-operating, prospering, Europe has much to offer the world in friendship, in trade, in economic assistance and in example".

In political terms, the entire Atlantic world is going to be affected by this new dynamic Europe which is taking shape before our eyes. Adjustments are going to have to be made in recognition of the new balance which will come about in the Western world. For its part, the United States has long wanted the Europeans to assume a greater share of the burden of ensuring their own security. These two tendencies have a cumulative effect on the way the Atlantic Alliance -- as we have known it since the war -- will work in future. European unity is by no means incompatible with stronger ties with Europe's major partners. Thus, there are problems of adjusting relations as between the Western countries. These require solutions not only for their own sake but also because solidarity in the West is as important as ever in an era of rapidly evolving relations with Eastern Europe.