
"I should like to congratulate you and your European partners on this splendid example of co-operation. Canadians admire the audacity of concept of the new Community and the skilfulness with which it has been designed. We have confidence that the economic strengths 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 to the world in friendship, in trade, in economic assistance, and in example."

If that is our basic philosophical approach to the Community, there is also a very practical foundation to our desire for closer and broader relations. One such foundation is, very simply, statistics. Total trade between Canada and the enlarged Community amounted in 1972 to some \$4.6 billion. Canadian exports to the Community in 1972 were some \$2.5 billion. And I understand that for the first six months of 1973 they show an increase of approximately 14 per cent. This makes the European Community by a wide margin the second-largest of our trading partners — and we are confident that the volume of trade between Canada and the Community will continue to grow. The figures speak for themselves. To Canada, a country heavily dependent on international trade, mutually beneficial dynamic relations with the European Community are vital.

In another very practical way, an expanding relation with Europe is an essential feature of one of the Government's most fundamental policies. This is the policy to diversify — to reduce the vulnerability of the Canadian economy to one continental market — to maintain our freedom of action on the international scene — and, equally important, to preserve and nourish our individuality.

In this perspective, the importance of an alternative and readily accessible major market that combines economic, cultural, historical and linguistic links is very clear.

At the same time, let me be equally clear in stating that we were not thinking of substituting Europe for the United States as a trading partner. We are North Americans and the United States, of course, remains our most important partner.

But the mere acknowledgement of this fact does not lead us to accept the constraints of any so-called continental determinism. We believe we can multiply our exchanges with other countries, particularly in Europe, with a view to promoting the cultural life and economic prosperity of Canadians without loosening in the process our vigorous ties with our southern neighbours.
