A ready we know that the European r, the nity is prepared to establish a pren its own external relations in so has no agreement, or Contractual th any other industrialized counect and y F en without the signing of any ail, has green ent, but unquestionably a product d those fits a plomatic background, the Commuthat this it is opened a diplomatic mission in s that brottage its third foreign mission after ence, haspose c tablished in the United States and

pur 20se <mark>apan</mark>. For the Community, Sir Christopher And youngs of Britain, the commissioner for fied - the termal relations, described the exercise, of the for an interview last spring, as pioneering. n integrals breaking new ground - this is what m of its akes it all so fascinating," he declared. the last recause it would constitute a precedent, e Community would move with all delibnuch morate caution. For Canada, Prime Minister ss or fail rudeau said Europe was "une bonne utional erance une grande chance, une chance on an l the simportante". He used those words in have gives report to the House of Commons on rms o political 28, 1974, on the first of his two its to Community capitals.

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nesses negative both sides consider the Link of conomic me importance. And clearly it is a major is as ar madian initiative. Yet one will search in hat up on in outside specialized publications such n Europe this one for any consistent or thorough vo decadecverage of the Link and what it is all

at the r sout. and set a The reasons are not difficult to find. y be tterither the Government nor the Opposies to come n in Canada appears to rate foreign icy high on its scale of priority. Our ding politicians make few speeches with intention of enlisting public support foreign-policy initiatives. There has to be a full-dress debate in the Comns on the Contractual Link, and rarely recent years has there been discussion any other aspect of foreign policy.

The detail of the Link has changed stantially since External Affairs Miner Allan MacEachen last addressed the use of Commons Standing Committee External Affairs and National Defence the subject on October 22, 1974. The definitive word was delivered in d ours lves idon by Prime Minister Trudeau on nomic and e, but vith ich 13 of last year. More about that r but the speech was one of the Prime hister's omnibus sermons about the ations coulte of the universe, and the newspapers been, exceentrated on his "impassioned call for d consultion to redress the balance of wealth nlikely everween developing and industrial nais". The press has reported progress to

date poorly, but the Government has given it little encouragement to do better.

One of the first things the Government wanted the Europeans to do was to distinguish clearly between Canadian and American interests. Anyone following Canadian and American policies with regard to Europe itself will have noticed a distinct difference in style. Our diplomats were working quietly away on a new policy for Europe when the Nixon Administration announced, with suitable fanfare, the illfated "Year of Europe". Perhaps the fact that it did fizzle speaks well for the quiet Canadian style. Yet the lack of any public identity for the Canadian initiative, then in a very early stage, caused us to softpedal and delay our own progress.

The fact is that we were not sure where we were going. Canadian policy swung round slowly, from one of questioning relations with Europe and a reduction in military support for NATO in the late Sixties to an unequivocal embrace by the end of 1975.

The sign at the end of the long road back can be taken as the announcement. at the end of November 1975, to bolster the commitment to NATO. Prime Minister Trudeau said in a speech in Calgary in April 1969 that, in the order of defence priorities, the protection of Canadian sovereignty was in a separate category, with precedence over support for NATO. Yet, when Mr. James Richardson, the Minister of National Defence, was asked about the first priority at the end of 1975, he said that the main threat to Canadian sovereignty would come in Europe. Canada could adhere to the first priority by strengthening its defence support in Europe. What a timely and convenient rationalization to make when Canada and the European Commissions were trying to clear away the last European (Danish) reservations to allow negotiations on the Link to begin!

The Europeans have not formally linked the Link to the question of Canada's future support for NATO. Several Euroleaders did have some pointed

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Announcement of decision to bolster NATO commitment