

relations. Our problem is simply how best to make our weight felt in support of our interests. The problem has been with us every since Canada has had an independent policy: think, for example, of the difficulties the wartime government had in ensuring that Canada received a hearing in Allied Councils commensurate with its economic and military contribution to the collective war effort. One of the main reasons why Canada strongly supported the creation of NATO, and has continued ever since to be a tireless advocate of consultation within the alliance, has been simply to ensure that the great issues of peace and war were not decided over our head and without regard to our interests. The same thought has been behind our participation in the OECD: the hope that steady, structured consultation between close economic partners would produce a permanent sensitivity to each other's special concerns.

The story repeated itself with the creation of the European Economic Community and the expansion of the Six to the Nine. We were outside this time. How could we ensure that our interests were not overridden or ignored? This was one of the motives behind the negotiation of the Framework Agreement between Canada and the EEC. While I have been critical of the Agreement in other respects, I find no fault with it as a device for ensuring that a permanent consultative mechanism permits -- indeed obliges us -- to confront problems in economic relations between Canada and the EEC systematically.

Economic summitry at the outset raised the same sort of problem. Initially, although of the same economic weight as at least one other participant, we were excluded. Canada had to assert a claim to be heard directly at the summit, and after some difficulty, the Canadian claim was conceded.

You may find nothing special in all this, since every country has to find ways to ensure that its voice is heard and its interests are not ignored. True enough. But the problem has been a persistent one in our foreign relations, especially with the countries of Western Europe. This is a particularly powerful group of states. Large and powerful states are tempted to pursue their own interests while paying no more attention than they have to to the interests of others. They are at the same time automatically aware of the interests of the United States: people are not normally inclined to overlook a super-power. But they are not automatically aware of Canadian interests and are sometimes inclined to assume -- incorrectly -- that all North Americans are alike and that Canada's interests, when revealed, will turn out simply to be an extension of United States' interests.