



Statements and Speeches

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CANADA AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

Statement of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, to the Canadian Institute of International Affairs in Toronto on November 2, 1973, delivered by Mr. Pierre DeBané, Parliamentary Secretary to Mr. Sharp.

...We are indebted to the CIIA for the focus it is giving to the European Community — and for the timeliness of this conference, which coincides so neatly and usefully with the official visits to Ottawa of Sir Christopher Soames and his delegation of European parliamentarians. It is my hope that exchanges of this nature will be seen in a wide context — as a part of that dialogue between Canada and the Community that was called for in the communiqué following the European Community summit meeting last October.

For reasons related as much to the evolution of the European Community itself as to immediate Canadian interests, the conference is devoting its attention in large part to economic issues — to questions of trade, industry, agriculture and energy. At the same time, and at the risk of stating the obvious, it is necessary to recall that Canada's relations with Europe have never been, nor are exclusively — or even primarily — based on trade. History, common values, for many of us, common European origins and the sentiment deriving from these factors are the source of continuing and potent links with Western Europe.

The relation, then, is strong and firmly rooted. But it is not static. Sir Christopher Soames and many of you will remember that Canada's approach to the development of the European Community was not always enthusiastic. But as the Community itself developed, as its institutions and its outlook expanded, there has been a responsive evolution in the Canadian attitude toward the Community.

The Canadian attitude has also been shaped by recognition of the world stature of the European Community. The increasing cohesion of the Nine is not simply a matter of new institutional arrangements in Europe. It also represents a growth of real power — self-confidence and influence — which has significantly altered the world balance of power.

The Canadian reaction to these developments was expressed by Prime Minister Trudeau in the message he sent to Prime Minister Heath on the occasion of British accession to the European Community. The message read in part:
