

With immigration has come a variety of social questions of concern to our respective governments and to the Canadian of Italian origin including the matter of social security. As Prime Minister Trudeau indicated during his visit to Rome, the latter is a question of considerable technical and jurisdictional complexity in which quick progress is difficult. He also spoke about the Government's Green Paper on Immigration since it, too, came up for discussion. He affirmed that Italians would continue to be welcomed, as always, as immigrants to Canada.

One of the principal objectives of the Prime Minister's recent visit to Rome was to discuss a number of these various multilateral and bilateral matters with the Italian Government, and indeed with the Vatican. As the Prime Minister made clear in his press conference in Rome on March 7, discussions were conducted in a very friendly atmosphere, and on each of the issues -- to use the Prime Minister's words -- "we found that agreement was easy". There was satisfaction on both sides with the results. There is no doubt that bilateral relations between Canada and Italy were further strengthened by the visit.

But the Prime Minister had an additional and very important objective to attain. It had to do with the fact that Italy is one of the major members of the European Economic Community.

Canada is seeking closer relations, not only with individual members of the EEC like Italy, but also with the Community itself. The purpose is to help secure a counter-weight to the overpowering influence of the United States on Canada, and to obtain full appreciation and acceptance of Canada as a separate political, economic and social entity on the North American continent, distinct from the United States. During his visit to Rome the Prime Minister sought and received a sympathetic and positive response from the Italian leaders to Canada's desire to secure contractual links with the Community.