

relationship with the newly-enlarged European Economic Community. Important Canadian economic interests are at stake, particularly with the situation arising out of the admission of Britain. To the extent that we continue to play a positive and constructive role in NATO, I am convinced that our participation in the alliance cannot but assist us in establishing a good working relationship with the EEC.

NATO strength and solidarity can take much of the credit not only for maintaining peace but also for the progress made to date on East-West issues. The West German Government itself has acknowledged that its *Ostpolitik* could not have succeeded without the backing of its allies. The road to the opening of the negotiations in Helsinki on the CSCE and in Vienna on MBFR required an unstinting diplomatic effort on the part of all concerned, and deliberate and careful consultation in NATO. There is a strong conviction in Europe, which we share, that NATO solidarity will need to be maintained throughout the negotiations which have already been initiated.

Our membership in NATO is our admission-card to the consultations and negotiating tables of the alliance. This is particularly important at the present time, when Canada is directly participating in two separate but related negotiations which have opened a further phase in the lowering of tensions and increasing security in Europe and in the world. The first of these is the Multiple Preparatory Talks in Europe, which have been under way in Helsinki since November last year, with some 35 countries participating. Canadian interests are closely engaged in the CSCE agenda items, and it is worth singling out the economic and freedom-of-movement issues to illustrate the range and importance of the CSCE issues for Canada's foreign and domestic policy aims.

The second set of negotiations in which we are directly participating is the exploratory talks on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions, which have been under way in Vienna since late January. The main participants in this negotiation are the countries of NATO and the Warsaw Pact which maintain forces in Central Europe. We expect this to be a difficult negotiation, but it seems to us that it would be illusory to expect *détente* to flow from the CSCE negotiations if parallel steps are not taken to reduce the tensions stemming from the present confrontation of forces in Central Europe.

This is why we regard the CSCE and MBFR as parallel sets of negotiations which we hope will lead to further progress in East-West *détente*. Needless to say, they present an unprecedented opportunity for Canadian co-operation with the countries of Europe, and in particular with our fellow members of NATO, where consultation on the Western position in these negotiations is proceeding apace.

Canada is determined to maintain and strengthen its traditional ties with the countries of Western Europe. This policy will serve Canadian interests not only because of the direct benefits arising from improved bilateral relations with the individual countries but also because it will serve to underline our separate identity and offset somewhat the preponderant influence of the United States.

NATO provides a unique forum in the shape of the Council, where almost every day Canada has an opportunity to express its national point of view on policy matters of key importance to the European members as well as to the United States. Through our participation in the Council and the NATO committees, we have frequently found ourselves siding with the Europeans on issues where the views