

commitment of our respective bureaucracies to attend to any difficulty, any irritant that pops up between us. We are friends. Let's talk. Let us resolve whatever impediments we may find in the pursuit of our common objectives, as friends would do, by talking them out frankly.

A third step should be to consider, as a matter of priority, how best to strengthen the role of institutions such as La Chambre de Commerce France-Canada, in order to maximize your impact throughout our vast country and among small and medium size businesses. In that perspective, the recent initiative taken by the Chambre to establish a number of regional delegations is much to be welcomed.

There are also a number of areas outside our purely bilateral concerns in which we could work more closely together. We should, for example, do whatever is necessary to combat the pressures of protectionism that threaten the world trading system. This means working together as members of the Group of Seven industrialized summit countries, and as members of the GATT.

We in Canada are also aware of France's growing interest in the countries of the Pacific. I need not point out that Canada is also a country of the Pacific. In 1986, we will host a major international transportation fair in Vancouver, our leading Pacific port. I am grateful for the decision of the French government to be represented at this fair. My government will be pleased to cooperate in bilateral activities relating to it.

You have no doubt heard of the importance our government has given to improving our relations with the United States. You may even be concerned about it. In my opinion, however, there is no reason for concern. Our approach to the United States will not be at the expense of our relations with France or our other trading partners. Indeed, closer relations with the United States can mean more opportunities for us to do business together. For example, we are reequipping our Armed Forces; we are currently building six new frigates for our navy, we are evaluating proposals for a low level air defence of our bases in Germany, and there will be more requirements in the future. Firms that will be awarded contracts in this venture are those which invest adequately in Canada and assure a significant technology transfer. Moreover, firms established in Canada can also bid for defence requirements in the United States, thanks to our defence production sharing programme with that country.