

I have asked the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce to lead an official trade mission of Canadian businessmen to France in 1975.

Brussels

In Brussels, where I profited from formal discussions with Prime Minister Tindemans and his Cabinet colleagues, as well as with Prime Minister Thorn of Luxembourg, the same intensity of purpose was manifest – to build on the warm relations now existing with Canada, to intensify the contacts and exchanges now pursued, to support Canadian initiatives with the European Community, to co-operate in multilateral sectors.

In Brussels too, as in Paris earlier in the week, there was broad agreement not simply on the identification of the major issues of global proportions but also on the postures that must be adopted with respect to them. We discussed, and agreed, that the dangers of nuclear proliferation demanded the design and implementation of more thorough and effective safeguards. We also agreed that the critical elements of the present state of the world economy – inflation, slow growth, balance-of-payments deficits, recycling, trade negotiations – demanded liberal and statesmanlike attitudes as distinct from cautious and protectionist ones. In this latter respect, the Minister of Finance and I have now sought and received the views and understanding of no fewer than eight prime ministers and presidents in the last six weeks. We shall continue our efforts in weeks to come.

Toward a New Europe

Western Europe is, of course, much more than the geographical location of several nation states. It is, as well, the site of a number of international organizations – in Paris, UNESCO and the OECD, in Brussels, NATO, and others elsewhere. It is still something else; it is an evolving conception, a process, an idea to which dedicated men, in spite of formidable obstacles, are bending their efforts through the growing and ever-maturing European Community. This Europe is not the sum of the national parts; it exists of them and for them, yet it exists in addition to them. It is not enough, Jean Monnet was fond of saying, to add together the several sovereignties; men had to

create the new Europe. They are now engaged slowly, sometimes painfully,, in that creative process. This Europe, this entity of the future, is organic in nature. As yet, its potential size and strength and attitudes can only be conjectured. But one fails at one's peril to recognize the sense of destiny which fuels this evolution.

Our Government recognizes that emerging fact, and we applaud it. We applauded last week in Brussels, just as we applauded two years ago on the occasion of the entry into the Community of Britain, Ireland and Denmark. And these expressions of understanding have coloured the way in which our current approach to the European Community has been received. That initiative is no less and no more than to seek ways of engaging the Community in a dynamic, co-operative enterprise.

We wish to add a new, yet parallel, dimension to the expanding links we are already building with our partners among the nine member states – a relationship that will grow as the Community itself moves from infancy through adolescence to full maturity, a relationship in which Canada's interests and its singular identity are recognized and reflected in decisions taken, a relationship in which consultation and reciprocal advice are accepted, a relationship of mutual respect, of give and take.

There is a degree of novelty to this exercise. The Community, understandably, is as yet far from certain of the shape it will assume, the jurisdiction it will occupy, or the powers it will possess in years to come. Nor is it for Canada to say. This is a European exercise. Yet one thing is certain. It is that this new Europe – which already accounts for 20 per cent of world trade – will be an increasingly formidable actor on the world stage – in commerce, in science, in economic and financial activity, in technology and more. That being the case, it would be irresponsible for a Canadian Government not to seek a distinctive relationship with it. Without question, such an exercise could be conducted along more familiar channels were we to wait a few years, as most other countries have apparently chosen to do. But that would ignore the advantages to be gained from engaging the Community at an early stage; that

would ignore the spirit of creativity that now permeates the Community and to which we seek to contribute. Comfort and familiarity are not our criteria; benefit to Canada is.

European Economic Community

This desire, this technique, this goal, are shared by the European Commission. Our discussions with President Ortolí, with Vice-President Soames and with other Commissioners, left no doubt about this. There was a significant meeting of minds both on the conception of this new relationship and on the initial steps to set the process in motion. It is bound to be a lengthy process, but we must begin. As a result of my talks in Brussels, it was agreed that a new process would be initiated involving concrete steps to strengthen the links between Canada and the European Community. The parties agreed to begin exploratory talks in the near future on the nature and scope of negotiations intended to define the form and content of the relationship between them.

For this purpose, Canadian and Community officials have been instructed to schedule meetings without delay. In addition, the President of the Commission has agreed to visit Ottawa at an early date. I am also pleased that a full delegation office will be opened in Ottawa in 1975, of the same nature as those already operating in Washington and Tokyo.

Consulate General in Strasbourg

I invite all Honourable Members to share in this process. Happily, an increased opportunity to do so will soon exist as a result of a further agreement reached last week. While in Paris, I was able to announce, with the approval of the French Government, that the Canadian Government would open a consulate general in Strasbourg. This office will permit a Canadian presence to be extended into an important region of France for the benefit of our commercial, cultural, information and immigration programs and for the extension of services to Canadian tourists and businessmen. It will also support an enhancement of present links between the Parliament of Canada and the Parliament of Europe, and with the Council of Europe. As Honourable Members are aware, the European Parliament is situated in Strasbourg, and