

I wish to thank the organizers of this symposium for their invitation and for offering me such a prestigious framework for reporting to you on the status of relations between Canada and Europe.

The Jean Monnet Chair, whose establishment we are celebrating today, is a model of co-operation. The father of the European Union would have welcomed such a project with enthusiasm. This chair is important for two reasons. It will help our educators and researchers to promote studies on European integration and our transatlantic relations. It also reflects our common desire to favour partnership among the Government, the academic community and the private sector. Through its openness, its spirit of consultation and by bringing people closer together, this chair will benefit all Canadians.

The Jean Monnet Chair is the first to be created outside the European Union. It is significant that Canada was chosen. This choice testifies, not only to the favourable reputation that Canada enjoys with the European Union, but also to the excellent reputation of our academic institutions internationally.

The theme of your symposium is "Europe after the Maastricht Treaty in a Changing World." We all recognize the overwhelming changes that we have faced and that continue to challenge us. As you know, our government is committed to reviewing its foreign and defence policy. I realize that the European Union and its member countries are following this review with curiosity and interest. Needless to say, in this changing world, our relations will be on the agenda in this review. I cannot tell you what major thrusts the parliamentary committee responsible for this review will favour. However, I can outline some of the factors guiding the Government in its reflection on our transatlantic relations. If you will allow me, I would like to talk about the development of our relations to date, the implications of the geopolitical and social changes of recent years, and, finally, the major courses available to us. As you can see, I am not suggesting any earth-shattering analytical framework. I leave that up to the holder of the Jean Monnet Chair and his team!

Canada and Europe: Solid and Deep-rooted Transatlantic Ties

In his memoirs, Jean Monnet offers some interesting thoughts that he had about Canada when he travelled to Western Canada as a young man in 1906. He wrote: "For the first time, I met a people whose job was not to manage what already existed, but to develop it without stint. No one thought about limits; no one knew where the frontier was."

Although it was written to describe an impression made in 1906, this phrase has lost none of its relevance. At the close of this century with its innumerable upheavals, in this era of telecommunications and immediacy, we cannot think about limits or frontiers. The ideological boundaries drawn through the heart of