



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
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Statement in the House of Commons,
December 9, 1970, by the Secretary
of State for External Affairs, the
Honourable Mitchell Sharp.

I have just returned from a round of important discussions in Europe. These included talks with government leaders in Britain, Belgium and the Netherlands, with senior officers of the European Economic Community and participation in the December NATO ministerial meeting. I took advantage of the NATO meeting to have a further talk with Mr. Schumann, the French Foreign Minister.

On this occasion I should like to report to the House particularly on Western Europe, where events are moving so rapidly.

The six nations that today make up the Common Market are expected soon to become ten. Varying forms of association will bind other European countries to the Community. Preferential arrangements have been and will be made for a number of Mediterranean countries and some developing countries in Africa.

The mood in Europe is one of buoyancy and confidence. The horizons of the Common Market are broadening at a time when the will to bring about a deepening of the relations within it is increasing.

The Government has been following these developments with the closest attention for some time. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce has recently tabled in the House a paper outlining their implications for Canada in the light of his own findings in European capitals. I made it the main purpose of my bilateral talks with the governments I visited and with the Community to emphasize certain concerns that Canada has in the face of these developments. My first concern was with the disruption and shifts in Canada's trading patterns that would necessarily arise from Britain joining the Common Market. The second was to make the Community and individual members aware that Canada intends to take increasing advantage of the enlarged EEC as a major market not only for our raw and semi-processed materials but for the finished products of our secondary industries. My third purpose was to impress upon those I visited the political as well as economic dangers inherent in any tendency towards trade polarization between the United States and the European Community.