

Canada looks at Europe — survey proves positive

A majority of Canadians favour closer links between Canada and the European Community, according to a survey carried out by the University of Montreal. Some 86 per cent of the 1,433 persons questioned in 23 urban centres across Canada approve of a *rapprochement* between Canada and Europe; however, many lack detailed knowledge of European institutions.

Canada/EC relations

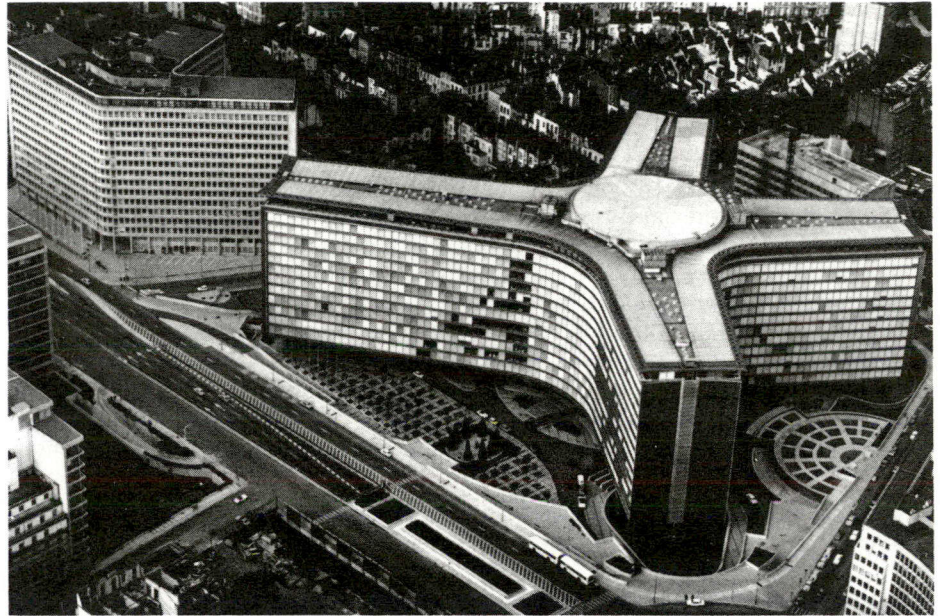
The results of the survey of Canadian attitudes towards Europe, and the European Community in particular, were announced during a press conference in Ottawa on September 30.

The survey, carried out by the University's Centre of European Studies and Documentation and Opinion Centre, was under the auspices of the Department of External Affairs; the Quebec government's Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, and its Department of Immigration; and the Commission of the European Communities.

Although there are notable gaps in their knowledge of EC institutions, 83 per cent of those interviewed feel that the European Community has benefited all its members and 62 per cent would deplore its dissolution. Most of the respondents perceive the main goals of the Community to be of an economic rather than of a political nature. Of those polled, 80 per cent realize that although the EC has established a common agricultural policy it has not yet realized political union, 65 per cent of those interviewed are aware of the customs agreement among the nine countries that make up the EC, but only 51 per cent know that the Community does not yet have a common economic and monetary policy.

Many answers underline the relevance to Canada of its relations with Europe. For example, 79 per cent of Canadians consider relations with Europe to be "very important" and 53 per cent of them see those relations as having intensified over the past ten years; 49 per cent expressed some sentimental attachment to one or more European countries.

Canadian perceptions of the importance of relations with Europe are also



Cliché C.C.E.

The European Community has a dual executive — the Commission, which proposes and supervises the execution of laws and policies, and the Council of Ministers, which enacts

indicated by the fact that 87 per cent of respondents approve of Canadian participation in NATO. On the other hand, one third have doubts about the efficiency of the Alliance and expressed reservations about Canadian military commitments to Europe in case of war.

International relations

The survey suggests that Canadians are generally quite realistic and clear-headed in their appreciation of international relations and that they tend to think about them in terms of Canadian economic realities. Opinions are divided about the usefulness of the Prime Minister's visits to Europe in 1974 and 1975: 53 per cent see such visits as useful in furthering closer economic ties, while the remainder expressed a more critical view.

Half of the respondents are fully aware of the relation between the Prime Minister's trips to Europe over the past two years and the objectives of concluding an agreement with the EC. Only 6 per cent said they were unaware of the negotiations in progress. Almost two out of three respondents said they had read about the European Community in the press, 70 per cent had learned about it from the radio and television, while 55 per cent were aware that the EC had been much

laws and programs based on Commission proposals. The Commission's headquarters (above) is in Brussels; the building beside it is where the Council of Ministers meets.

in the news over the four previous weeks. (It should be noted that this survey was carried out in May and June 1976, as the final steps towards the signing of the agreement between the EC and Canada were being taken.)

Agreement mutually beneficial

As for the attitude of Canadians to the agreement itself, the survey shows that 42 per cent of the respondents think that both sides will benefit equally, while 30 per cent feel that the agreement will be to the net advantage of Canada. Better access to markets and investment capital are seen as the major advantages to Canada. A minority of 28 per cent consider there might be distinct disadvantages: they are divided between those who think that European exports might constitute serious competition on the Canadian market, and those who fear that the relationship could be unfair, with the EC gaining access to Canadian raw materials without providing markets for Canadian manufactured goods.

The survey concludes that, while the attitudes of Canadians towards closer ties with Europe are positive, there is an almost equal interest in the strengthening of Canadian relations with the rest of the world. There is a very clear desire to open up to various parts of the world: seven out of ten of the res-