

greater awareness among our European partners of Canada's specific and distinct personality, as well as of its problems and aspirations as a North American country with uniquely close relations with Europe.

Canada's response to the Nine's invitation, which I hope to have completed before long, will be in line with the Government's policy of diversification. The Government is very much intent on achieving, as a priority objective, stronger and more dynamic ties with the Community as a collective entity, and with each and every one of its member states.

The emergence of a strong, united and friendly European Community corresponds to the fundamental interests of Canada. As the Nine and the U.S.A. are our two major allies and trading partners, it is of vital importance to Canada that there should be the widest possible measure of co-operation and understanding with them -- and also, I must say, between them. I have no illusions about the difficulties of such an ambitious endeavour as the harmonizing of relations between two major entities like the U.S.A. and the European Community in periods of peace and prosperity. For its part, Canada's stake in the success of this endeavour is considerable. It is an important prerequisite for our security and continued well-being.

We have for some years regarded our NATO membership as going well beyond a concern for some narrow definition of security. We see the organization as an indispensable forum for the common pursuit of political aims of *détente* and the harmonization of views on a whole range of issues. NATO has never been more active in this field than at the present time.

Canada will continue, therefore, to play a useful role in the elaboration within NATO of a declaration flowing from Dr. Kissinger's initiative of April 23 last year, which has the aim of revitalizing the solidarity of the alliance. At the same time, the Government will continue to work, in the context of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), towards the lowering of barriers that impede the freer movement of persons, ideas, information and trade between the East and the West. If agreement is reached on satisfactory provisions in these and other areas, the final stage of the conference will take place in Helsinki, in the course of this summer, at ministerial or higher level. Simultaneously, Canada is participating in the talks going on in Vienna on the Mutual and Balanced Forces Reduction between NATO and Warsaw Pact countries.

Canada became a full-fledged member of the United Nations Economic