

most knowledgeable of all French politicians on the subject of Canada — Mr. Labarrere, deputy to the National Assembly and Mayor of Pau, who taught for more than ten years at Laval University. He is an active member of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Assembly and would be called on to play an important role in the field of foreign affairs should a leftist government come to power. With such a spokesman, as well as other leftist leaders, mainly socialists, who have had contact with parliamentarians, government officials and academics in Quebec and Canada, there is no chance that the latter will be overlooked or misunderstood in France if the left comes to power.

Germany

The most important state in Western Europe and the Common Market is undoubtedly the Federal Republic of Germany. "What Do We Know About Canada?" was the headline in the July 22 daily newspaper *Neue Ruhr Zeitung*. In an article by Jens Feddersen, the paper's answer was: In fact, we know very little: it is a large country, has lots of forests and water, not many people, some bears, wheat that is sold to Moscow and Peking, German immigrants, a few Eskimos, a little language barrier between French and English, and "Liberal Prime Minister." As a matter of fact, the newspaper emphasized and explained that the reality was quite different. However, it took a humorous tone in summing up its readers' superficial knowledge.

Fortunately, knowledge of Canada among German leaders is more extensive. The visits to Bonn by the Prime Minister in 1975 and by the Minister of External Affairs in 1976, and Chancellor Schmidt's visit to Ottawa in the summer of 1976, enabled terms for closer co-operation between the two countries to be established. Chancellor Schmidt and Prime Minister Trudeau also had an opportunity to meet at the summit conference on economic problems in Puerto Rico. In addition, since January the two countries have been co-operating as members of the United Nations Security Council, to which they were both elected last fall.

In concrete terms, West Germany is much interested in co-operating with Canada in the field of nuclear technology. This is an area in which Canada has developed advanced techniques and can be a strong, well-developed partner. Germany is also interested in Canadian raw materials. Co-operation could, therefore, grow along the lines of the Third Option, especially in the nuclear field, where reduction of the dependence on the United

States should result in the development of advanced-technology industries in Canada.

However, West German businessmen, academics and leaders have difficulty in understanding Canada's concern about American influence. With its alliance with the United States as a mainstay of its policy and with a dynamic economy and cultural life, West Germany cannot see what Canada is so worried about. At any rate, German leaders see the response as part of an internal Canadian solution to the American challenge. It is up to Canada to show its excellence in the technical and cultural fields, and American influence will dwindle by itself. It is hard for West Germany to visualize the effect on the Canadian and Quebec cultures of the difference in scale between the United States and Canada, taken together with their proximity. The Third Option policy is, therefore, regarded sympathetically and with an eye to the economic advantage to be gained by Germany, but without being clearly understood.

This review of attitudes of Western European countries towards Canada is by no means exhaustive. We shall not, for example, discuss Italy, and shall take only a brief glance at the viewpoint of the smaller Common Market countries. The Benelux countries — Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg — have close relations with Canada; they were the first to understand clearly the Canadian position and to encourage ties between Canada and the European Economic Community. Denmark has been much more hesitant, as could be seen by its last-minute opposition on the raw-materials question, which delayed the signing of a framework agreement between the Community and Canada. Even if the opposition was for the purpose of establishing a precedent for future negotiations with Denmark's oil-rich neighbour Norway, it was nonetheless indicative of a degree of ignorance of the stakes involved for Canada in these negotiations.

Non-members

There remain the smaller Western European countries that are not members of the Common Market. Some of them, such as Spain, are of a respectable size. Just as we have not considered Ireland and Italy in the Common Market, we shall concentrate on only two non-members of the European Community — Sweden and Switzerland. Because of their neutrality, these two countries should be in a position to understand more readily Canada's desire for independence.

Third Option gets sympathy but no clear understanding from Germany