

# Statement

Secretary of  
State for  
External Affairs



# Déclaration

Secrétaire  
d'État aux  
Affaires  
extérieures

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## NOTES FOR A SPEECH

BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOE CLARK,

IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS DURING

AN OPPOSITION DAY DEBATE ON

"CANADA AND THE NEW EUROPE"

OTTAWA

May 31, 1990.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to discuss foreign policy in the House, although I confess to some puzzlement at both the timing and the content of the motion. The motion alleges a lack of "effective policy initiative in foreign policy" - and yet, in the last seven days, Canada has welcomed the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who came specifically to express his appreciation of Canada's contribution to that most central of the world's organizations; the Vice-President of the European Communities, here as part of a deliberate process of high-level meetings between the Community and Canada, initiated by this Government; and the first visit to Canada in nineteen years by the leader of the Soviet Union.

The world is changing dramatically - in the Soviet Union, in Europe, in South Africa, in Central America, in Cambodia, in Mexico, in Latin America at large - and Canada is pursuing an active, effective foreign policy on each of those fronts. We will welcome suggestions from other Parties as to other initiatives we should consider, but we do that against the background of a foreign policy which I am proud to defend, anywhere in Canada, or the world.

Let me deal briefly with the reference to parliamentary consultations. I think Governments traditionally make too little use of Members of Parliament in foreign policy, and we have tried to change that practice, and will consider any serious proposal Members might make as to how that role can be enlarged.

In that spirit, the Minister of Energy and I met this morning with colleagues who had visited AECL facilities in Romania. I have accepted enthusiastically to meet Members of the Standing Committee to discuss the recent trip to the Soviet Union and I can report to the House that, last week, the Standing Committee asked if there could be increased contact between Canadian and Soviet parliamentarians to discuss Arctic matters. I made that proposal to Mr. Shevardnadze on Tuesday, and he agreed immediately. I am prepared to act with similar dispatch on other practical proposals colleagues might make.

Five central issues were discussed in the meetings by the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and myself with President Gorbachev, Mr. Shevardnadze, and the Soviet Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Mr. Maslukov.

First was the high priority both countries assign to enlarging our cooperation as neighbours and as nations sharing a widening range of common interests. That mutual priority is demonstrated by the fact that, in the last seven months, the Prime Minister and Mr. Gorbachev have held two sets of long personal discussions, and Mr. Shevardnadze has visited Canada for consultations in February and again in May. I have accepted his invitation to return to Moscow this fall, to maintain that momentum.

Second, Canada affirmed our strong support of the profound academic and political reforms in the Soviet Union and discussed practical ways in which Canadians can help - in changing COCOM rules; in helping boost Soviet integration into the world economic system; by more joint ventures to add to the thirty-five already signed; by attractive arrangements to encourage immediate delivery of Canadian agricultural products; and by the discussion of new agreements regarding fisheries, tourism, health and potentially educational exchanges.

Third, we made the case that it contributes to stability throughout Europe to have a united Germany actively involved in institutions like NATO and the European Community; and we heard and understand the case that the Soviets need to see evidence of changes in NATO before they will believe that institution is adapting to the new realities of Europe. As the Prime Minister said yesterday, Canada will work to ensure that Article 2 of NATO, the political article originally proposed by Canada, becomes much more central to NATO.

Fourth, we discussed in detail measures on which Canada and the Soviet Union agree to strengthen the process and the relevance of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Our two nations are on the outer ends of the new Europe that is emerging. We have a special interest, and a common interest, in developing strong institutions that define and unite a large Europe, from Vladivostok to Vancouver Island.

Finally, the Prime Minister and I both raised the serious situation in the Baltic States, and repeated our expectation that there would not be a crackdown, and that the issues, whose sensitivity everyone acknowledges, will be resolved by negotiation. I welcomed Mr. Shevardnadze's assurance that the Soviet Union intends to seek political solutions to disagreements, whether those relate to matters they consider to be internal or external.

Mr. Speaker, 1989 was the year of European revolution. 1990 is the beginning of a decade of re-construction. New societies and new institutions must be built, and that task has only just begun.

The revolution of 1989 has fundamental implications for all of Europe - and for North America which, in terms of ties of language, family and history, is in many ways Europe across the Atlantic. That is why this government has been conducting a full review of its policy towards Europe.

Canada's interest in Europe is not for reasons of history, or nostalgia, or charity. It is not only their security which is at stake, it is ours. It is not only their prosperity, it is ours.

The means by which we pursue those interests must change radically, to reflect the new security framework now in evolution; to reflect the growing power and unity of Western Europe; and to reflect the particular advantages and assets of Canada.

The primary Canadian bridge to Europe has been our contribution to the North Atlantic Alliance. That contribution has involved thousands of Canadian troops on the ground in Germany, troops whose lives have been put on the line daily in the defence of freedom.

That military contribution is bound to decline.

An organization whose primary role has been to defend against plausible aggression must revise its role when that aggression becomes less plausible. It is only natural for NATO to assume a more political role, a role which would reflect both the new European reality and a declining military mission.

That is a change which Canada fully supports and which meets Canadian interests.

NATO must review urgently and comprehensively all aspects of its nuclear and conventional strategy. It makes little sense to retain those short-range nuclear weapons based in Europe whose only target can be our new friends in Poland, Czechoslovakia and East Germany. It makes little sense to retain a military strategy which is based on a scenario of a surprise attack across a front which no longer exists and where surprise is no longer possible. And it makes little sense to continue to retain in Europe the largest peace-time deployment of military force in the history of the world.

This is not to deny the continuing requirement for prudence and military stability at this time of historic change. The possibility of instability is there and Soviet military capabilities remain substantial. Therefore, a strong military mandate for NATO continues to be valid and the North American commitment to Europe represented by the presence of Canadian and American troops there is crucial as we strive for strategic stability at significantly lower levels of military force.

It is important that NATO become even more actively engaged in the dynamic new security dialogue.

In the field of arms control and disarmament, NATO should develop an enhanced capacity and role in confidence-building and verification activities. Dedicated, multinational forces on the ground might be deployed for this purpose. NATO should also look to the establishment of a Verification Centre to co-ordinate these activities.

In addition, NATO should move away from a rigid forward defence to a much more flexible approach involving mobile units, possibly including forces of a multinational nature.

Mr. Speaker, NATO is of enduring value. But it has its limitations, a function of its mandate and its membership. There are other institutions whose role must be enhanced and transformed.

Central among these is the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Its membership is comprehensive, encompassing the nations of Europe, North America and the Soviet Union. Its mandate extends across the board.

The role of the CSCE must now be expanded so that it becomes the drawing board for the new European architecture. As a complement to NATO, the CSCE can become a true instrument of co-operative security, one which would supplement deterrence with re-assurance.

Until now, the CSCE has lacked the institutional framework now required for effective and ongoing co-operation and confidence-building.

Canada believes that continuing political direction from the highest level is required. Canada proposes that the CSCE should meet annually at the level of Foreign Ministers and bi-annually at the level of Heads of Government. This political body could serve as the beginnings of a Council for European Co-operation, a future, permanent forum for dialogue on pan-European issues.

The CSCE should develop a forum to reflect the increasingly democratic character of its membership. Therefore, we also propose the establishment of a CSCE Assembly where parliamentary delegations from member states would meet on a regular basis to discuss issues of common concern.

In the security area, the CSCE will have a role in mandating a further round of conventional forces reduction talks. These talks should be conducted among all 35 members of the CSCE, rather than solely the members of NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

The CSCE should also increase its role in verification and confidence-building, and in crisis prevention and conflict resolution. This could involve the creation of a mechanism to facilitate dialogue, to conduct fact-finding investigations if required and to recommend a strategy to resolve crises - whether it be mediation, arbitration or even peacekeeping. If the crisis develops into conflict, the CSCE could initiate mediation activities. These activities could be supported by a permanent Institute for the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes which would provide valuable expertise.

Beyond the security field, the CSCE should build upon the other principles contained in the Helsinki agreements. The essential structures of democracy should become a common commitment of CSCE members, including the right to free elections and the rule of law. Pluralism should also be legitimized through the CSCE process, as should the rights of minorities, freedom of religion and a prohibition on hate propaganda.

In the economic dimension, the CSCE may also have a valuable role in the future, building on the tremendous success of the recent Bonn Economic Conference. It should not duplicate existing and effective economic institutions. But there is room for growth in encouraging co-operation and dialogue. I believe a permanent CSCE forum for economic dialogue, supplementing the emerging OECD work, is worth serious consideration.

NATO and the CSCE are two complementary institutions in building the new Europe. But there is another institution - the European Community - which is central to Europe's future identity and prosperity.

The European Community is now a welcome and fundamental pillar of the international system. A uniting Europe is an engine of prosperity and a trigger to enhanced trade. Increasing co-operation in the political and, eventually, the security fields will ensure European consensus and co-ordination in ways which can only enhance international stability.

But, Mr. Speaker, a wall dividing Europe cannot be supplanted by a wall around Europe. Two impermeable blocs cannot be replaced by one new bloc which, whether in trade or security or political matters is less open to dialogue and co-operation than it is today. The new Europe must be an open Europe, open to the West and open to the East.

Of course, Canada is not a member of the European Community. But we are traders. And we have a profound interest in the questions of foreign policy which are increasingly the subject of European Political Co-operation.

It is for this reason that Canada is now proposing a new, more intense Canada-EC relationship. We are proposing regular meetings between the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of the European Council. These should be supplemented by regular in-depth discussions between the Canadian Foreign Minister and the Foreign Minister of each incoming Presidency. There should also be regular meetings between experts on issues of common concern. In addition, we propose that there be an exchange of priorities at the beginning of each Presidency which would set the agenda for the upcoming period.

And finally, I was very attracted by West-German Foreign Minister Genscher's proposal to me for an EEC-North American Declaration which would confirm shared principles and interests in openness and enhanced co-operation. Certainly, a broad re-affirmation of the trans-Atlantic relationship would be useful.

In trade, the challenge is acute. The Government has already announced its Europe 1992 strategy to help Canadian industry prepare for the opportunity and demands which the Single European Market will present to all traders. However, I also believe there may be virtue at the conclusion of the Uruguay round of trade negotiations in examining the desirability of a formalized, open trading arrangement between Canada and the EC, perhaps including the United States - or indeed other members of the OECD.

Mr. Speaker, a new direction for NATO, an expanded role for the CSCE, and an intensified relationship with the EEC: those are the institutional pillars of our new policy towards Europe.

But our policy towards Europe hinges, as does the future of the new Europe itself, on the continued success of the reforms now underway in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Those reforms have a long way to go before promise becomes reality.

The task of simultaneously constructing democracy and an open market economy, and doing it from the ground up is unprecedented. The West has an abiding interest in seeing the East succeed. And that is why Canada has actively supported Soviet integration into the Western economic system. That is why Mr. Shevardnadze thanked me yesterday for Canada's support for Soviet membership in the new European Bank and our support for their observer state in the GATT. That is why, last year, we established a program to assist Poland and Hungary in their efforts at economic reform.

It is time for the international effort to expand to include the other new democracies emerging from the revolution of 1989. In the weeks ahead, the 24 countries which co-ordinated the program for Hungary and Poland will meet to broaden that effort to include these other countries. Canada will support this initiative and we will announce our own expanded national program in the near term. Canada is also participating fully in the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Finally, we have established a Task Force on Central and Eastern Europe, which will elaborate the details of our expanded assistance program, administer it, and co-ordinate private and public sector activities. This Task Force has begun an intensive series of consultations with Canadian groups and individuals, encouraging them to participate financially and in practical, concrete ways - and asking them for their advice on initiatives we might undertake.

Mr. Speaker, assistance to Eastern Europe is not a matter of dumping large amounts of cash into the hands of these new governments. What is more important and more effective is the provision of expertise, the training of managers and decision-makers, the teaching of the tools of democracy, and the encouragement of private sector investment in specific projects and enterprises.

In this task, Canada has an asset available to no other nation. We have our multicultural community. One in ten Canadians is of Soviet or East European ancestry. They are a business asset, a trading asset for Canada. They know the customs. They know the decision-makers. They know the systems. And they know the languages.

We want these Canadians to exercise their natural advantages, to tell us how we can help and how we can do what we do better - and to pursue this opportunity of a lifetime.

The policy I have outlined again today addresses a Europe in transition. The policy itself must also evolve with the region it addresses. Europe is not static; and neither will be Canadian policy.

Mr. Speaker, engagement with the new Europe is not a luxury; it is a necessity. And Canada will be there, as we must, for our own sake, our own security, our own prosperity.