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STATEMENT DISCOURS

SECRETARY
OF STATE
FOR EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS.

SECRÉTAIRE
D'ÉTAT AUX
AFFAIRES
EXTÉRIEURES.



STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY
OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
THE HONOURABLE MITCHELL
SHARP IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
THURSDAY, APRIL 29, 1971

VISIT TO EUROPE

Mr. Speaker:

I have just returned from Europe, where I had the honour to accompany the Governor-General and Mrs. Michener on a series of official visits to The Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. Queen Juliana and the Prince of The Netherlands, the King and Queen of Belgium and the Grand Duke and Duchess of Luxembourg received Their Excellencies with great kindness. These visits served to underline the closeness of the bonds of kinship and affection between Canada and the host countries, bonds forged by a shared history, strengthened by comradeship in two world wars and maintained by our alliance in NATO. His Excellency reminded his hosts in all three countries of the contribution made by so many Canadians of Benelux origin to the development of Canada and the friendship between our countries. He stressed the growing importance of trading relationships and scientific and cultural exchanges. I am sure I speak for us all when I thank the governments and people of the Benelux countries for the warm welcome given to the Governor-General and Mrs. Michener wherever they went. Their Excellencies took advantage of their visits to The Netherlands and Belgium to join with their hosts in paying homage to the Canadian dead of two world wars by visits to Canadian cemeteries at Holten and in Flanders.

While in Europe, I had useful talks on a number of questions, including particularly the Common Market, with the Benelux governments, the Italian Government, members of the European Economic Commission and the Secretary-General of NATO. Our Ambassadors to France and Germany joined me for a day of discussions in Brussels, enabling me to have some contact with all six countries of the European Economic Community.

The principal subject of all my talks was the current negotiation for the enlargement of the Community. As the House is aware, the Government, through meetings at the Ministerial level, diplomatic representations and public speeches, has been making known over a period of many months Canadian concern about some of the effects of the anticipated enlargement of the Common Market. The Government is not opposed to the broadening and deepening of the Community; on the contrary, we see this development as an important contribution to greater stability and prosperity in Europe and the world. We have urged, however, that it is neither desirable nor necessary that this economic unification should take place at the

expense of third countries like Canada. We have made concrete proposals to minimize the possible adverse effects of enlargement. In the same constructive spirit, we have urged the Community to be open and outward-looking and non-discriminatory in its trading policies, and to do everything to avoid a trade confrontation with the United States costly to themselves, to us and the Western world as a whole.

While in Europe, I re-emphasized these points, as did my colleague the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce who, as the House knows, was in Bonn at the same time. I went a step further on this occasion and urged both the member governments and the Commission of the EEC to give serious consideration to the establishment of procedures for regular consultation with Canada. Honourable members will readily understand that if and when enlargement is achieved relations between Canada and the other great trading entities - the European Community, the United States and Japan - as well as among these entities themselves, will assume even greater significance for us and for them. It will be a different trading world.

I believe I am justified in saying that the Canadian concerns are fully understood in Europe and that the response has been positive, principally because our fundamental attitude to European unity has been constructive. We shall continue to press our case on every suitable occasion during the months ahead when crucial decisions are to be made.

While in Brussels, I signed, on behalf of Canada, an Agreement for Scientific and Technological Co-operation with Belgium. This Agreement will facilitate and encourage expansion of scientific, industrial and technological co-operation between our countries. The Agreement illustrates how Canada is broadening the scope of its relations with Europe, one of our major policy objectives, so identified in the Government's foreign policy review.

While in Rome, I was received in audience by the Pope. Our discussion ranged over the troubled areas of the world and concentrated upon the Middle East, which is one of His Holiness' gravest concerns. The Pope recalled with pleasure a visit he paid to Canada some twenty years ago, and the expression of his warm sentiments for this country brought to mind the thoughtful comment he made in 1969 when he said that the forces uniting Canadians seemed to him stronger than the forces that tend to divide us.