



Statements and Speeches

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CANADA AND AUSTRIA - SHARERS OF MANY HUMANE COMMITMENTS

Speech by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, at a Dinner Given by the Austrian Foreign Minister, Dr. Erich Bielka-Karltru, Vienna, May 25, 1976.

In responding to the kind and friendly words of His Excellency, Dr. Bielka, I should like to express my gratitude for the warm welcome and gracious hospitality for which Vienna is so justly renowned, which I have received since my arrival. This is not my first visit to Vienna, but it is the first visit of a Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs to Austria. My country and yours have much in common, more perhaps than may be readily apparent. Much of Canada's cultural and ethnic heritage finds its roots in Europe, and Austria has long been a well-spring of Western civilization. Our two countries share many fundamental attitudes. Both are deeply committed to Parliamentary democracy, equality before the law, social justice and human freedom. Our constitutions are federal, reflecting the diversity that is the essence of federalism, and both of our societies comprise mosaics reflecting the breadth and variety of our ethnic backgrounds.

In foreign affairs, our policies present striking parallels, and where they differ they tend often to be complementary rather than contradictory. I know, for example, that Austria is keenly interested in a vigorous transatlantic relation between North America and continental Europe as a whole, which you refer to as "the Atlantic Dialogue". For our part, we attach great importance to our transatlantic ties with Europe. The Canadian Government has for some time been pursuing a policy we call "the Third Option" -- a policy of diversification of our political relations. In the context of this policy, we place a very high priority on our relations with Europe.

Like Austria, Canada does not participate directly in the economic and political integration of the European Community, although we are now negotiating an agreement on economic co-operation with it. Like Austria, Canada does not see its future relations with Europe exclusively in terms of a link with the European Community. Rather, it is our intention to develop and deepen our bilateral relations with the countries of Western Europe, inside and outside the Community, and with Eastern as well as Western Europe -- a policy pursued with marked success by Austria.

Of course, my country is a member of NATO, while Austria is committed to permanent neutrality. But I was struck, in our discussions

this afternoon, by the extent to which your active policy of neutrality is so positive and dynamic. The importance your Government attaches to the United Nations family of organizations and to multilateral diplomacy is shared by my Government. An important United Nations conference on human settlements is soon to begin in Canada in Vancouver. Austria has hosted many important United Nations conferences. Canada is the host country to ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization). Austria's role, as host country to the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) and the UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organization) and important United Nations conferences, is symbolized by "United Nations City" on the banks of the Danube.

I am aware of the myriad occasions in the context of the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies when Canada and Austria find themselves making common cause in the search for a more secure, stable and just world order. This is applicable as much to the UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) meetings in Nairobi as to the disarmament, non-proliferation, arms-control and outer-space conferences at which our two delegations have worked so closely together. I refer also to our collaboration in the CSCE (Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe) negotiations in Helsinki and Geneva, which led to the Helsinki Declaration, a document regarded by many as laying down the basis for a political *détente* between East and West. We are indebted to Austria for hosting the negotiations directed towards Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions between East and West. While Austria's contributions to these wide and varied activities may be understandable in terms of securing Austria's status of permanent neutrality, they have benefits for the international community as a whole, going beyond even this important Austrian national objective.

Our two nations have both renounced a nuclear-weapons option by becoming parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It is, I think, indicative that neither Canada's membership in a major collective security alliance nor Austria's status of permanent neutrality has prevented us from participating together in United Nations peace-keeping missions. Both of us benefit only in the sense that every member of the international community shares the interest of all in preventing breaches of the peace. No better example can be found of our common desire to contribute to a peaceful world. I cannot fail to mention, in this context, Dr. Kurt Waldheim, the distinguished Secretary-General of the United Nations. It is fitting for me to pay tribute to him in the capital that remembers him for the many contributions he had made in the conduct of Austria's foreign policy, not the least of which was his role as Ambassador to Canada.

It is the most natural thing in the world that two such countries as ours should have found a great potential for ongoing co-operation and collaboration in such crucial multilateral undertakings of our time as the "North-South Dialogue" in all its forms, in the law-making, peacekeeping, arms-control and disarmament activities in the United Nations family of organizations and in a wide range of other significant organizations and conferences. Even with respect to international activities not directly related to governmental positions or foreign policy issues, it is interesting to note that Innsbruck has just hosted the 1976 Winter Olympics, while Montreal will soon be hosting the 1976 Summer Olympics. I have no doubt that in the purely bilateral field, as well as in the multilateral field, there exists a potential for a fuller and even more intensive co-operation than that already realized, and I look forward to the achievement of those objectives.

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