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EXTÉRIEURES.

Statement made by the Secretary of
State for External Affairs, the
Honourable Mitchell Sharp to the
Canadian Institute of International
Affairs Conference on

CANADA AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

Delivered by Mr. Pierre De Bané,
Parliamentary Secretary.

Jusqu'à présent j'ai parlé surtout de l'aspect économique de la Communauté européenne. Le reste du monde et la Communauté européenne elle-même sont en fait très préoccupés par le rôle politique de la Communauté; la motivation politique qui est tout autant à l'origine de la genèse du Traité de Rome que le facteur économique.

La question est de savoir si l'évolution de la Communauté européenne qui n'a pas une vocation exclusivement économique favorisera ou au contraire gênera les efforts du Canada en vue de réduire sa vulnérabilité vis-à-vis les Etats Unis.

Nous nous rendons compte des progrès accomplis par la Communauté dans le domaine de l'unification politique. Des étapes significatives ont été franchies à cet égard au cours des quatre dernières années. Les réunions des Ministres des neuf et des Directeurs généraux des ministères des

Affaires étrangères se sont multipliées. La déclaration de la Conférence des Chefs d'Etat ou du Gouvernement du 19-21 octobre 1972 a signifié à qui veut l'entendre la volonté politique des neuf que l'Europe fasse entendre sa voix dans les affaires mondiales et affirme ses propres conceptions dans les rapports internationaux.

Je vous dirai sans ambages que la réaction du Canada vis-à-vis l'unification politique de la Communauté européenne ne diffère en rien de celle que nous avons eue à l'égard de l'intégration économique. Il revient au neuf de prendre leurs décisions en ces domaines. Le Canada ne peut que voir d'un bon oeil une évolution dont le terme recherché est une Europe forte, unie et amie. De même que nous souhaitons voir la Communauté européenne pratiquer des politiques économiques

libérales et sensibles aux intérêts des pays tiers, il y va de l'intérêt des Européens et des Canadiens qu'il en soit de même dans le domaine politique. Une concertation politique à neuf qui ne serait pas ouverte aux problèmes et aux aspirations de ses alliés les plus proches serait à la longue stérile et boiteuse.

Il me semble que la solution à tous ces problèmes dépend dans une large mesure de la perception claire que nous aurons de l'interdépendance de nos pays.

The political role of the Community, particularly in relation to North America, has been stimulated by the American initiative of a "Year of Europe". It seems to me that this initiative was designed to serve a number of useful and timely purposes -- to redefine and revitalize

the Atlantic relationship and as a re-affirmation of an outward looking American foreign policy.

It was also, I believe, a means by which one great power acknowledged the coming of age of another great power.

Although there were some mixed reactions in Europe to the initiative, I believe that the nine were very pleased to have demonstrated to the world and to themselves their capacity to agree on a collective response to the "Year of Europe" message. Certainly, this was the impression that several foreign Ministers of the nine gave me when I spoke to them in New York in September.

There were, of course, some questions about the implications of the "Year of Europe". One of the first questions many of us asked about the Year of Europe was -- how would the interests

of the industrialized democracies, as a whole, fit this concept. Would it involve a tri-polar system -- the United States, Europe and Japan? We, of course, remain concerned not to find ourselves polarized around any of the main power centres. That is very much a part of what our policy of diversification is all about.

Nevertheless, outside this country, I have sometimes found an assumption that Canada should fall naturally and inevitably into the U.S. orbit. This is perhaps understandable, but it is unacceptable to Canadians. It is inconsistent with our conception both of what Canada is and what our interdependent world should be. It runs against the grain of post-war Canadian efforts to build an open and liberal world trading system. It is also contrary to the Canadian Government's

basic policy of a relationship "distinct from but in harmony with" the United States.

North America is not a monolithic whole - economically or politically. Nor do I think it would be in the interest of Europe to deal with a single North American colossus.

Canada's relationship with Europe is not the same as the United States relationship with Europe. There are political, economic, cultural and linguistic elements in our relationship with Europe which are unique.

Perhaps in relative terms our relationship is more important to us than the United States relationship with Europe is to the Americans. Forty-two percent of our immigration continues to come from Europe. Our national fabric is made up of distinctive ethnic groups - many of them European. These have not been assimilated into a Canadian

homogeneity. They preserve and value their links with Europe as they do their Canadian nationality.

Canada's security is indivisible from that of Europe. That is why we are members of NATO. We do not have troops in Europe solely for the purpose of defending Europe, but to defend Canadians.

However, by focussing on the need to revitalize and redefine the Atlantic Community the Year of Europe initiative has quickened the pace of development of Community policy toward the rest of the world. This heightened Atlantic dialogue is leading Canada, the Community and the United States into a greater and deeper exploration of our shared problems and aspirations. The pursuit of this dialogue reaches beyond the economic sphere to encompass all aspects of international relations. I believe that a serious and comprehensive examination of the Atlantic

Community, an effort to make the Atlantic relationship more responsive to current realities, can be beneficial to all concerned.

In this context the suggestion of a Canada/European Community declaration is attractive. But the determining factor will be substance -- not form. Canada is seeking opportunities to develop a dynamic, meaningful and distinctive long-term relationship with the European Community. If it is clear that such a declaration can contribute to this objective we will be ready to participate in its elaboration.

With or without a declaration the future evolution of the Community's trans Atlantic relationship will be of critical interest to Canada. I am confident that common interests and common sense will prevail.