



The Canada UK Colloquia

# Canada and the United Kingdom

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SESSION 1

CANADA, BRITAIN AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY:

ROLES AND REALISM IN THE 1980s

## Discussion

Discussion of the Pentland, Wallace and Lyon papers focused on changes in the relationship between Canada, Britain and the European Community in the nineteen-seventies and the problems and possibilities of the next few years. Some participants argued that the past decade had been disappointing in terms of trade and investment flows between Canada and the Community; that personal, social and cultural links had continued to weaken; that Canadian links with the evolving process of European Political Cooperation had left much to be desired; and that Europe's internal preoccupations had meant that relations with Canada had received diminishing priority. On the other hand, however, it was also argued that, in the real world, it was unhelpful to discuss the relationship in terms of "either/or" choices: Europe or Canada for the United Kingdom or the United States for Canada. Discussing priorities was also misleading, as the priority which one partner extended to another varied from issue to issue. Britain and Canada had a mutually advantageous relationship as indeed each sought to have with other countries.

The question of priorities was considered, by a number of participants, in the context of ministerial and bureaucratic time. Some took the view that, for Britain, the pressure of European Community business left little time for other issues to be properly considered. Others thought that while this might describe a situation at one particular moment, such as during Britain's efforts to obtain equitable arrangements for financing the Community, it did not mean



that other issues were, as a matter of general practice, neglected. All countries periodically become preoccupied with their internal arrangements. In this same context, it was also suggested that Canada had not defined sufficiently clearly what it wanted from the European Community and in certain fields (e.g., over the Airbus) had chosen to cooperate with the United States rather than Europe and had not demonstrated sufficiently clearly to European countries what Canada could offer in return for a closer relationship. Perhaps, it was suggested, there had at times also been a degree of disillusionment in Europe with Canadian foreign, defence and trade policies.

In the framework of Canadian and European relations with the United States it was suggested by one speaker that Canada as a North American nation shared some of Washington's disillusionment with Europe which was perceived as "not pulling its weight in the world." Other speakers argued that Britain and Canada had a shared interest both in the security of the Atlantic area and in maintaining mutually beneficial relations with Washington. It was suggested that Britain and Canada had broadly similar policies and attitudes on a wide range of international issues, in the role of international institutions in a pluralistic international system and in resisting tendencies towards unilateralism in American foreign policy. In future Canada and Europe might find it necessary to work more rather than less closely together, Both had an interest in their relations with their "large neighbours," the United States and the Soviet Union, but both needed each other to pursue common interests and as an insurance against failure of their policies vis-a-vis the super powers. In all the fashionable talk

about *realignment* it was important not to *lose* sight of the mutual interest in *two-way* investment, trade, managing protectionist tendencies, containing Soviet expansionism and *inhibiting* American "adventurism" and in the range and extent of *unpublicised* bilateral links, such as those between the Canadian and *British Parliaments*. (While these exchanges were taking place wide-ranging discussions between Mr. MacEachen, the *Secretary of State for External Affairs*, and Lady Young, the *Minister of State in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office*, were being continued elsewhere in Halifax.)

SESSION 2

TRADE AND DIPLOMACY: FROM RECESSION

TO RECOVERY

## Discussion

Discussion opened with one speaker praising the general line of the papers presented, namely that inflation had to be stopped and protectionism ended, but doubting Mr. Curtis' suggestion of some sort of Anglo-American initiative to "operationalize" a multilateral system in disarray.

A British participant, describing himself as a "friend of Canada," expressed concern about the extent of the Federal deficit, arguing that it retarded possibilities for economic growth and industrialization. For that reason, Canada would fare poorly in the next recession as would its relations with the United States.

The same participant thought that there was a remarkable mismatch in the economic policies of the two countries. In Canada there was a greater reliance on debt financing while in Britain greater reliance on the control of monetary aggregates. Some harmonization of these approaches would be a precondition to currency harmonization of the type that he understood Mr. Curtis to be envisaging.

It was suggested that British investment in Canada was probably closer to \$15 billion than to the figure usually cited, \$10 billion. It was felt that Canadian foreign investment laws and other "restraints" on trading relations -- in the financial services and offshore development sectors, for example -- discouraged British investment. Canada might consider a differential investment policy, it was suggested. While fear of U.S. control of the economy was

*understandable, Canada should be kept open to European, and other, traders and investors.*

*Another participant noted that with the breakdown of the Bretton Woods system, arguably the single greatest economic experiment in history, the trading nations were now grappling with some economic fundamentals. Much of the existing system had been established when the public sector accounted for some 20% of GNP rather than the current 50%. Such was the steamroller effect of the expansion of the public sector that even conservative governments in the US and Britain could not roll it back. The essence of public spending was consumption spending and, hence, a diminution of investment. The Asian nations had been more supple and more successful recently largely because they had a much smaller public sector.*

*The same speaker noted that the United States had gone for price stability at any cost. The danger was that the dollar might be lost as a reserve currency and the SDR was no substitute. This policy was now being pursued in a political breach and there was an inability to reduce the public sector. The Republicans would not raise taxes; a Congress controlled by Democrats would not cut spending.*

*The same participant went on to describe Canada's "wants." Canada faced an extremely serious fiscal situation in which 1/3 of revenues were used to finance the government's debt (although another participant later argued that Canada's situation was not as grave as that in some other OECD countries). Moreover, there was a lamentable lack of public understanding of the problem. In the past Canada had profited from what would normally have been an imprudent policy*

(higher interest rates than in the US). Canada had a great deal to gain from the restoration of an orderly multilateral system.

These observations were endorsed by another participant who added that Canadian monetary and fiscal policies had been in marked contrast to those in the U.K. The British Government had tried to restrain the public sector and the deficit. Until there was a convergence of Canadian and British policies, he argued, there was little prospect for full economic collaboration.

Another participant stated that Canada and Britain shared a strategic interest in the survival of the liberal, civil state. The West had to maintain its relative political, economic and military policy. In this task it had to depend on its technological and comparative industrial advantage.

Canada and Britain had the advantage of a common language and shared the social catalyst of the liberal tradition. The two countries also shared a common virtue abroad in their interest in international development. Given this commonality institutions in the two countries, the EDC and the ECGD, for example, could more productively work together.

In response to Mr. Gray's presentation, which was characterized as the voice of jaded experience versus cosmic liberalism, one participant wondered whether elected officials and civil servants really wanted a new international economic system. Much of today's protectionism was the result of established, bureaucratic programmes. He cited the CAP and the Canadian Machinery Programme as examples of this bureaucratic tendency. He also argued that it would be in the long-

term *interest* of the developed *countries* to let the *developing countries* exercise the comparative advantages they had (*in textiles*, for example).

Another *participant* argued that the CAP was not *bureaucratic* but, rather, *intensely political*. We all had to face the *political realities* of the trade system. Given the *circumstances* we were all *hypocritical*. Still, some attempt had to be made to maintain order in a disordered system and a good first *step* would be to restore the *exchange rate* system. He cautioned that the pursuit of *perfection* could get in the way of *practical solutions*.

Mr. Gray said that he agreed with this speaker. *Ministers*, quite *understandably*, showed no enthusiasm to drop *protectionism programmes*.

Mr. Corbet, in summing up, noted that what was at issue was the *capacity* of a *country* or group of *countries*, to grow. This depended on the *ability* to adjust to *change* and, in this respect, there was *clearly* something wrong with Western Europe *vis-a-vis* the USA and Japan. There was *less predictability* in economies now because of the *high level* of government intervention. Canada and Britain had to face up to this *fact*.

SESSION 3

TOWARDS THE FIFTH DECADE: SECURITY,  
ARMS CONTROL AND THE ALLIANCE



## Discussion

The first participant to comment praised Professor Cow's presentation as a "good account of reality." In military matters Canada had to make small more beautiful. He observed, however, that the Northern Flank role made Canadians uneasy. In its vulnerability it recalled the painful experience of Hong Kong. To many it made no sense. It would seem better to beef up the Central Front but the Europeans wanted Canada to be in both places. It was, therefore, militarily and financially difficult for Canada to fulfill its NATO role in a fully satisfactory way.

This participant also suggested that Canada might make a more thorough contribution by improving its reserves along the lines of the Territorial Army in the UK. Because of a good deal of commonality in tradition and doctrine there could be very useful collaboration between the respective armed forces at the reserve level.

Another participant, commenting on the European role in the defense of Europe, said that there was a sense of disillusionment in the UK and Europe in a "straight" Atlantic link. This had prompted a new European defense dialogue and had forced the French to face up to the ambiguity of their national defense policy. The British wanted to join in this discussion but had doubts about where it might lead. There was no prospect for a grand "European Defence Community" but there would surely be a greater emphasis on European collaboration and a greater public awareness of a distinctive European policy. Procurement collaboration, made necessary by escalating costs, would result in common

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weapons. These would lead in turn to common tactics and strategies.

Canada could also fit into this evolution. European antagonism at the failure of the "two-way street" and the perceived attempt by the US to monopolize defense technology did not extend to Canada. There existed good and real possibilities of arms production and procurement collaboration. Canada need not be left out of the growing European consensus.

Another participant paid tribute to Canada's contribution to European defence. The provision of training bases and sites was indispensable and the quality and reliability of Canada's forces well known. Moreover, the government's difficult decision on the testing of the cruise-missile guidance system was appreciated and respected in Europe. He encouraged support for increased defense spending and argued that Canada should not waver in its commitment to fulfill as many roles as possible. The defense of Europe was a multinational commitment and the presence of Canadian troops on the Central Front was an important emblem of the indivisibility of NATO.

The same speaker noted that in Britain the government had fought an election on the renewal of its nuclear deterrent. Many, however, regarded its electoral endorsement as conditional on this renewed strength delivering something on disarmament. The major disarmament decisions in the world rested with half-a-dozen people in the superpowers and not, sadly, with Canada and the UK. Nonetheless, Prime Minister Trudeau's peace initiative had represented the most reasonable way forward and had paved the way for progress.

This participant also mentioned the problems of the Caribbean which, he maintained, were of interest to the security of both the UK and Canada. Britain and the liberal West had imposed independence on them. While we should not expect them to accept the imposition of our defence posture we should, nonetheless, be willing and able to assist them if asked. Canada and Britain, another participant added, could help by strengthening institutions (e.g., trade unions) and by providing small-scale security assistance (in the form of police training, for example). "

These remarks on the indivisibility of NATO prompted another participant to say that it was really just security rhetoric. Some sectoralism was inevitable. The pertinent questions were how many Canadians had to be on the ground and where in order to make credible contribution. He noted that the recently tabled British white paper on defence had catalogued the very substantial commitment of forces by the European members. That left a big question about the place and credibility of Canada's commitment.

Another participant explained that the perception of the Soviet threat to Europe was far different in Canada than in Europe and less acute. Europeans had stronger and more disparate views and were either firmly for more defence or supporters of the CND. Canadians saw the problem as far away and were thus less likely to have a strong view. In contrast, in the UK there was clear public support for the defence effort. Canada made a great contribution through training (although both governments had entered a game of charging one another too much)

and there was *potential* for high tech development in Canada.

This last remark led several participants to concur that there could be more useful collaboration in defense research and science, although one participant noted that in 1951 Canada had decided to standardize on U.S. equipment and through the Canada/US Defense Production arrangement had established an impediment to Canada/UK collaboration. The UK had been outmanoeuvred by the US and, although Canada had been unhappy to be lumped with the US at the North American end of the "two-say street," it was true that Canadian firms were protected and comfortable in their relationship with the U.S. military.

Another speaker said that defense production, especially in the US, was an occult form of high-technology subsidization. The Europeans were beginning to realize this and were attracted to it. Although pulled toward the US, Canada had an interest in getting together with Europe in this field. Picking up this point another speaker noted that Canada had an established technological capacity. A Canadian company, for example, was the largest supplier of telecommunications equipment to the US armed forces.

In summing up, Professor Nailor noted that it was not how many men but how many well-equipped men could be deployed. Only the latter would carry weight in the Alliance and that was expensive. Similarly, the "no first use" campaign implied much more expensive conventional forces. There was an important distinction between defense and security. Security comprised both defense and economics. It was economics that fundamentally constrained defense and the other institutional

elements of *security*.

In his summation Professor Cox noted that in neither Canada nor the UK was "there a debate on whether NATO should exist but rather on the degree of support required. Canada had no view on how the Europeans organized *themselves* to maintain their security but stressed that the Europeans should *realize* that any new institutions would leave Canada wondering where and whether she had anyplace in Europe. As for the *indivisibility* of NATO forces, while it was an attractive principle, it should not mean that we *could* never *change* our commitments if we perceived that in making too many we made none *effectively*.

Professor Cox ended with a brief explanation of the proposed Canadian Institute of International Peace and Security. It was *likely*, he said, to have a three-fold function: (1) providing public information; (2) doing *basic*, policy-oriented research and (3) providing *policy advice*. It was to be well funded and would have a significant *international* dimension.

SESSION 4

THE COMMUNICATIONS REVOLUTION  
MEDIA TECHNOLOGY AND PUBLIC POLICY

## Discussion

Turning to the effects of technology on newspaper coverage of news and current affairs, Denis Stairs suggested the enormous expansion of capacity to handle news also tended towards a homogenisation of news coverage. It was both easier and cheaper for newspapers to tap the wire services than to maintain correspondents abroad. Taken together, Canadian newspapers now had fewer correspondents abroad than the New York Times had in Africa. The arrival of news by conveyor belt, geared to the interests of specific clients, tended to reduce the role of editing in individual newspapers. Whether it mattered depended upon the performance of the news services. Canadian officials had complained that Canadian public opinion reflected American views on foreign policy issues and this seemed to be the case in respect of editorial views on East-West issues. Lack of diversity in reporting and opinion could prevent the full expression of divergent views.

Some speakers doubted whether legislation could arrest the process of American predominance in the mass media, although support was expressed for production funds and joint-production arrangements, including the development and production of information soft-ware. Scepticism was expressed about the value of national/foreign quotas; one person's choice might be another's example of cultural imbalance. It was also suggested that the problem was a very old one (a sixty-year-old article in the Canadian Historical Review on Canada as a "vassal state" had discussed the influence of American films on Canadian youth). Against this, it was

argued that the scale of the present problem was altogether different. One speaker argued that it was incorrect to say that the Canadian Press relied more than before on wire services; the Globe and Mail had more national and foreign correspondents than before. A number of speakers drew the distinction between the impact of the American entertainment industry on the media in general and the diversity which continued in news and current affairs. It was striking, for example, how different the coverage and handling of news was in different European countries. It was observed that many Americans were also concerned about the mediocrity of much of the material available through the mass media and that, in Europe at least, further Americanisation would be frustrated by consumer reactions. One speaker, agreeing that the problem was not a new one for Canadians, reiterated that the underlying anxiety was about the effect of American cultural predominance on underlying Canadian values and attitudes. Another argued that the large US domestic market, factory-type production of mass entertainment and drama productions and rapid exploitation of new technologies meant that, using the distributive networks of other countries, the Americans could virtually "dump" abroad the products of their entertainment industry. Other countries simply could not compete.



SESSION 5

CANADA, BRITAIN AND THE ATLANTIC COMMUNITIES:

REVIEW AND PROSPECTS

## Discussion

The discussion in the final session was led by Lord Trend, Professor David Dilks, Mr. John Holmes, and the Hon. Burnett Danson. There was general agreement that the Dalhousie colloquium, unlike its predecessors at Cumberland Lodge and the University of Leeds, had not been troubled by questions about the basic nature of the British-Canadian partnership. The healthiness, realism and mutual advantage of the relationship had generally been accepted. This had contrasted with the spirit of the two previous colloquia, at which the participants had been somewhat more nervous about trends and strains in the relationship. At Dalhousie the prevailing view had been that the relationship deserved all that the two countries could put into it. It was further argued that the two countries should not, in pursuing their common interests, overlook the importance of, for example, historic, cultural and personal links, nor should Britons and Canadians be embarrassed by the nostalgia and mutual trust which helped to maintain and nurture deep-rooted friendships.

It was pointed out that the relationship had been surveyed in the wider context of Atlantic and international issues. Much, however, had been left out. The constraints affecting governments calculating the benefits and costs of particular policies had been under-estimated or ignored as had the unforeseeable tides of history which governments could not control. British-Canadian roles in the Commonwealth had, it was suggested, also been forgotten as had the part which the two

countries might play in the Commonwealth in the future. It also needed to be recognised that governments were more influenced by public opinion than in the past and that this was particularly true in the free, liberal, well-informed societies of Canada and Britain. Meeting the concerns of articulate and concerned people, whether in respect of peace and security, care for the environment, help for the developing world or the freedom of information, suggested areas in which people of the two countries could work together.

Moving to future prospects a number of proposals were put forward for developing and widening the kind of exchanges which had taken place during the colloquium and in British-Canadian relations generally. It was suggested that the colloquium should become a regular expression of the relationship and that it might perhaps meet more regularly and be assisted by a small secretariat in both countries responsible for organising meetings, preparing the agenda and circulating papers. It was also proposed that participation in Anglo-Canadian cultural talks might be expanded to include scholars, members of the business community, and others in various forms of British-Canadian collaboration. The new Canadian Institute for Peace and Security, proposed by Mr. Trudeau, was suggested as a possible additional forum for joint scholarly cooperation. It was suggested that, in the field of student movement and academic exchanges, the overall picture was gloomier than it had been at the time of the Leeds colloquium. Among the areas needing closer scrutiny were, it was suggested, direct exchanges between universities of undergraduate and graduate students, help for academic staff to pursue sabbatical studies

*in each other's country and consideration of what needed to be done to reverse the decline in the numbers of scientists, technologists, etc., on exchange study visits. It was also argued that an effort should be made to enable Canadian students to become research assistants to MPs in the British House of Commons and that, as a research tool for people studying Canadian affairs in Britain, a quarterly digest of Canadian events should be published.*

*A number of participants referred to the possibility of more frequent colloquia. One speaker suggested that a colloquium should be held every three to four years (another suggested every five) and that in every intervening year a meeting could be held on a specific topic. Another speaker, supporting both this and the mini-secretariat idea, suggested that meetings might be held on trade, cultural relations and the arts, scientific collaboration, health services problems, banking, youth -issues and international security. Different people would attend different meetings and interest in the benefits of collaboration between the two countries would become apparent to more and more people. If this could not be done the principle of continuity for the colloquia should in any case be established: the ties they reflected needed tender loving care. Perhaps boards of people interested in maintaining and developing them should be established in both Canada and Britain. Another speaker proposed that a body be established in both countries with the sole object of looking after and improving the relationships. It was also suggested that more publicity should be given to future meetings of the colloquium. Other participants, giving a general*

welcome to the ideas for more regular meetings suggested that if this were to happen it would be necessary to define the respective roles of the Department of External Affairs and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Perhaps the answer would be to ask non-governmental institutions in Britain and Canada to assume the responsibility?

In a further discussion of problems and opportunities in the field of academic and cultural exchanges it was pointed out, by one speaker, that there were currently some 500 Canadian students in the United Kingdom and approximately a thousand British students in Canadian universities. The fall in the number of Canadian students studying in Britain perhaps partly reflected the recent expansion in the number of places at Canadian universities. There had been an increase in the number of Commonwealth scholarships available to Canada for study in Britain and there had been the recent introduction of the FCO scholarship award scheme. There had also been considerable discussion of the possibility of the reciprocal waiving of fees between groups of Canadian and British universities and the prospects for some form of collective agreement looked reasonably good. Because so many exchanges of academic staff went unrecorded it was difficult to say whether or not they were in decline. There were a number (? 70) of awards for joint British-Canadian collaboration in scientific research and much unrecorded visiting by people involved in the arts. There appeared to be an affinity of approach between Canadian and British educators involved in, for example, issues relating to education at the workplace, the education of ethnic minorities and the core-curriculum. Despite

*financial constraints there was no evidence of indifference on the part of people engaged in education, towards what was happening on either side of the Atlantic. Other speakers referred to the value of increasing cooperation between the British and Canadian Parliaments. There should be more discussion between Parliamentarians of specific issues in the relationship, as was done within the Canadian-United States Parliamentary group. Mr. Anthony Nelson, MP, the Chairman of the British-Canadian Parliamentary Group in London, extended a formal invitation for a Canadian Parliamentary group to visit London.*