

## New prime minister of France visits Canada

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney welcomed France's Prime Minister Laurent Fabius to Canada at the outset of the French prime minister's 72-hour official visit here from November 7 to 10.

Mr. Fabius was the first foreign head of government to be received by the Canadian prime minister since his recent election and it was Mr. Fabius' first official visit abroad as prime minister.

### Closer ties

The meeting of the two leaders is expected to lead to more understanding and better business relations between the two countries.

At an official dinner on November 7, Mr. Mulroney said that while the Canadian government would continue to exercise all of its constitutional responsibilities in international relations, "federalism as we intend to exercise it, far from being an obstacle to the legitimate Quebec-Paris dialogue, will enhance and strengthen it". Mr. Mulroney added that the Canadian government would be pleased if France "wishes to undertake, with the same respect for institutions, initiatives with French-speaking groups outside of Quebec".

Mr. Fabius said that, while France's link with Quebec was at the heart of France-Canada relations, "our ambition is more vast and is aimed at all Canadians".

The two leaders also met privately over a working lunch and agreed to increase co-operation in economic, technological and cultural fields.

After his meetings in Ottawa, Mr. Fabius flew to Quebec City, where he addressed a special session of the National Assembly. He also visited Lévis, across the river from Quebec City, and twinned with Grand Quévilly in France where Mr. Fabius is assistant to the mayor. The two cities are twinned because soldiers from Lévis in the Régiment de la Chaudière, liberated Grand Quévilly during the Second World War. Mr. Fabius ended his Canadian visit in Montreal.

Quebec Premier René Levesque said he was glad that Mr. Fabius had visited Quebec during his first official visit "because it underlines the importance of the ties between the old country of our roots and the people we have become".

### Agreements announced

While Mr. Fabius was in Canada, it was announced that Petro Canada Inc. had become a shareholder of a major holding company, Internationale de Services Industriels et Scientifiques (ISIS), acquiring 27 per cent for \$11.6 million, and had entered into a research and development co-operation arrangement with ISIS' major shareholder, the Institut Français du Pétrole (IFP). The agreement, which includes as a minimum the performance of research and development programs costing IFP some \$3.8 million, will give Petro Canada a direct and privileged access to the research organization of IFP. The formal closing of the agreement, which was set out on August 14, and the transfer of funds and shares, took place on November 6.

Mr. Mulroney and Mr. Fabius also announced that the two countries had agreed to establish a France-Canada Award to be given to two Canadian or French creators of joint productions in film and television. The awards will be made every two years with the first award being presented in 1985.

In Quebec it was announced that Quebec and France had agreed to finance seven joint projects in the field of biotechnology. After his speech to the National Assembly, Mr. Fabius said, "we have decided to follow up what were exclusively research projects to encourage industrial projects (in the area of biotechnology)". In addition, he said, tenders would be issued in 1985 for new joint projects in the field.

Mr. Fabius was accompanied on his visit to Canada by five cabinet ministers, members of Parliament and several industrialists.

## Four-nation satellite agreement

The Canadian government has signed an agreement with the United States, the USSR and France to continue a joint effort using satellites for air and sea rescues.

The agreement, which will be in effect at least until 1990, was signed in Leningrad on October 5 and announced jointly by the four governments on October 17.

Began as an experiment in 1979, the program known as SARSAT uses polar orbiting satellites to find lost aircraft and vessels in distress.

Under the new accord, the United States and the USSR will provide two satellites each, while Canada and France will supply instrumentation for the American spacecraft.

One search and rescue satellite can cover the entire earth every 12 hours, while four satellites can cut this time to three hours.

In addition to the satellites, all four countries will co-operate in the program through surface communication stations and air and sea rescue facilities.

A spokesman for Canada's Mission Control Centre, at Canadian Forces Base Trenton, said the SARSAT program is "a tremendous improvement" over the old method of finding lost aircraft and vessels in distress. The Trenton centre co-ordinates the rescues after it receives the information from the satellite by informing search and rescue squadrons. "Before SARSAT, the only way we would find out about a plane or ship in distress was if a plane passing overhead picked up the signal," the spokesman said.

SARSAT is credited with saving nearly 300 lives to date including 60 Canadians.



Canapress

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney (right) meets with French Prime Minister Laurent Fabius during his visit to Ottawa in November.