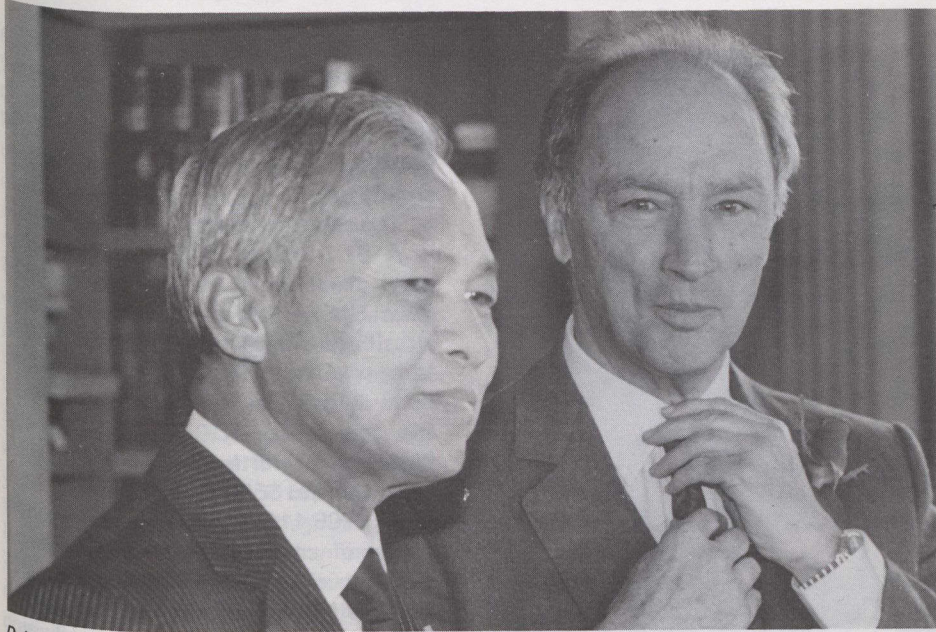


## Thailand's Prime Minister leads delegation to Canada



Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda is welcomed by Prime Minister Trudeau.

Canada's relations with the kingdom of Thailand reached a significant milestone in mid-April when Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda made the first official visit to Canada by a Thai head of government.

General Prem, leading an 84-person delegation of ministers, business executives and officials, arrived in Vancouver, accompanied by Foreign Minister Siddhi Savetsila, Agriculture Minister Narong Wongwan, Commerce Minister Kosol Krairiksh, and the Minister attached to the Prime Minister's office, Flying Officer Sulee Mahasanthana. The main objectives of the visit were to reaffirm the cordial bilateral relations between Thailand and Canada, to discuss individual issues of common interest, and to encourage increased trade and investment.

General Prem was greeted in Vancouver by Canada's Minister for International Trade Gerald Regan, who accompanied him to a meeting with the government of the province of British Columbia hosted by Premier William Bennett. He received a briefing on EXPO 86, Canada's international transportation and communications exposition to be held in Vancouver in two years' time. During the Prime Minister's visit it was confirmed that Thailand would join some 28 countries already participating in the fair.

From Vancouver Prime Minister Prem and his party flew to Ottawa where they were received at the airport by Canada's Defence Minister, Jean-Jacques Blais, representing Prime Minister Trudeau.

Important bilateral meetings between

Prime Minister Prem and Thai Ministers and Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and Canadian Cabinet ministers followed the next morning. After these meetings both Prime Ministers witnessed the signing of three important agreements which demonstrate the rapid growth of Thai-Canadian relations. The first, a Double Taxation Treaty, will provide a regime for the conduct of business in both countries by establishing clear guidelines as to tax liability in each nation. The agreement was signed by Trade Minister Gerald Regan and Thai Foreign Minister Siddhi Savetsila.

Next, the initialling of a memorandum of understanding provides for a \$3-million grant from the Canadian International Development Fund (CIDA). This is earmarked for a rural development project in northeastern Thailand and will support the efforts of Thailand's largest non-governmental organization, the Population and Community Development Association to develop self-help programs in northeastern Thailand. A third agreement pledged \$5 million to the creation of the Thailand Development Research Institute, a key policy planning organization.

Minister of International Trade Gerald Regan also took this opportunity to announce that Kenting Earth Sciences of Ottawa had won a \$25-million contract to conduct an airborne geophysical survey of Thailand, the largest such single contract ever awarded. Mr. Regan particularly noted that "under strict international tendering procedures, this

Canadian-owned company has won this Asian Development Bank contract against competition from the world's major aerial survey firms".

On the final evening in Ottawa, Prime Minister Trudeau hosted a state dinner in honour of the Thai Prime Minister. In a toast to the distinguished visitors, Prime Minister Trudeau referred to the rapid growth and exciting prospects for Thai-Canadian relations. On the broader scale of Pacific Rim relations, he characterized the development of Canada's Asia Pacific Foundation concept as a "new dimension in Canada's relations with the Pacific symbolizing Canada's eagerness to understand and be understood by countries in the region". He also emphasized Canada's admiration for Thailand's achievements and made particular reference to the notable contribution of Prime Minister Prem. In his reply, Prime Minister Prem referred to the rapid expansion of Canada-Thailand relations characterizing his visit as symbolic of "the desire to enhance our two countries' partnership in the emerging Pacific community". He also saluted Mr. Trudeau's role and influence as an international statesman.

On the final day of his visit, General Prem flew in a Canadian-built de Havilland Dash-7 STOL aircraft from a downtown Ottawa airport over Niagara Falls, landing at Toronto Island commuter airport. In Toronto, he met with Ontario government officials and addressed a luncheon for business executives co-sponsored by the Empire Club of Canada and the Canadian Club of Toronto.



Minister of International Trade Gerald Regan (left) greets Thai Minister of Commerce Kosol Krairiksh.