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A DIPLOMATIC TOUR OF EASTERN EUROPE

Statement by the Honourable Paul Martin,
Secretary of State for External Affairs,
in the House of Commons, November 17, 1966.

I should like to take this opportunity to make a brief report to the House on the talks I had during my recent official visit to Poland, the U.S.S.R. and Italy. When in Rome I concluded my exchanges with a valuable talk with the Pope.

In both Poland and the Soviet Union, I was cordially received. Their leaders listened to the Canadian views which I presented. We made progress on a number of bilateral matters. On some major international issues there was evidence of common interest. I should not, however, want to hide the fact that there is still a considerable distance between us in many important areas.

In all three countries my most extensive discussions were with the foreign ministers, but I also had the opportunity to meet and talk with many other leaders. In Poland I talked with Prime Minister Cyranciewicz and President Ochab. In the U.S.S.R., I talked with President Podgorny, Prime Minister Kosygin, the First Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Polyansky and General Secretary Brezhnev. Finally, in Italy, I was able to exchange views with President Saragat, Prime Minister Moro and Deputy Prime Minister Nenni.

The Polish Government is desirous of settling the long-outstanding matter of the claims of certain Canadians arising out of post-war nationalization, and we expect to enter in the very near future into detailed negotiations to that end.

We have agreed with the Soviet Union to enter into early negotiations for the conclusion of a comprehensive agreement on cultural, scientific and technical exchanges in order to ensure better reciprocity and to raise further the level of mutually beneficial exchanges between the two countries. We have also agreed on the opening of a Soviet Consulate-General in Montreal to deal with the growing flow of trade and persons both ways. It was agreed that Canada has the right to open a comparable office in the U.S.S.R. whenever it wishes.