

International

Quebec hosts second Francophone summit

Delegates from 40 countries representing 200 million French speakers throughout the world came together in Quebec at the beginning of September for the second Francophone Summit meeting.

The idea of an association of French-speaking nations was first suggested by President Senghor of Senegal and President Bourguiba of Tunisia in the late 1960s. It then gained momentum with the formation in 1970 of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation (ACCT), which was set up to promote co-operation in the fields of culture, communications and technology.

Although Quebec (and later New Brunswick) were able to participate in the ACCT through the 'participating government' formula, there were constitutional obstacles to their taking part in a full summit. These obstacles were finally resolved in November, 1984.

Canada has now become a major force in La Francophonie. Besides contributing 34.6% of the budget of the agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation and an even larger percentage of the programme budget of the Conferences of Education and of Youth and Sports, it also spends £750 000 on the Special Development Programme it initiated and contributes largely to the Association of French Language Universities and many other non-governmental organizations.

Canadian contributions to La Francophonie have increased considerably in the last 18 months in order to implement a number of special projects adopted by the first Francophonie Summit of Paris.

Business

Thomson Group acquires Associated Book Publishers

Canada's International Thomson Organisation has pulled off its biggest acquisition ever. It has bought Associated Book Publishers for well over £200 million.

Associated Book, which has

operations on three continents, includes some of the most illustrious names in British publishing, such as Routledge and Kegan Paul, Eyre and Spottiswoode, and Methuen. It covers the whole spectrum of publishing from academic and technical subjects to children's books and fiction.

Thomson, which once owned The Times, already has publishing interests as well as oil and gas operations and leisure travel businesses. Its operating profits last year were around £150 million on a turnover of £1.5 billion.

Capel and Schroder move into Canada

The internationalisation of Canada's securities markets is gaining momentum as two major British financial institutions announce that they are moving across the Atlantic.

Stockbroker James Capel is buying a substantial stake in Brown, Baldwin, Nisker, a small Toronto broker with a highly regarded research department.

At present, no foreign institution may own more than 50% of a stock broking firm in Canada, but under the federal government's deregulation plans, this will rise to 100% in mid 1988.

Meanwhile, Schroder Ventures, the venture capital arm of the merchant banking group, has also moved west. The company has set up a £37.4 million fund to finance management buy-outs in Canada.

Technology

UK defence ministry orders submarine detection equipment from Canada

Canada's burgeoning high-tech electronics industry received a boost recently when Britain's Ministry of Defence placed a £17-million order for submarine detection equipment with CAE Electronics. This is the largest single Canadian defence sale to the UK in recent years.

The equipment – magnetic anomaly detectors (MAD) – will be fitted to the Royal Navy's Lynx and Sea King anti-submarine helicopters and replace older

equipment aboard the RAF Nimrod 2. It works by detecting small disturbances caused by submarines in the earth's magnetic field and is intended to complement existing acoustic systems.

The MAD technology was originally developed by Canada's Department of National Defence and later licensed to CAE Electronics of Montreal for commercial production and marketing purposes. CAE already enjoyed a worldwide reputation as a leading manufacturer of flight simulators for military and civil aircraft.

The company says it has increased the sensitivity of the detectors by a factor of ten and has produced a more compact integrated package, which reduces the possibility of human error. Since it can be installed inside a helicopter, it overcomes the operational restrictions imposed by towed systems.

The CAE system is already in operation with the Australian defence forces, and earlier versions are in use in Canada. CAE believes that its new system will find important markets elsewhere.

CAE, which won the order in the face of keen competition, will undertake the contract in partnership with a UK firm – Normalair Garrett Ltd (part of the Westland Group). At a press conference to announce the contract, Canadian High Commissioner, Roy McMurtry said, 'It is an important day for the whole concept of expanding co-operation between Canadian and British industry in the high-technology defence sector'.

People

Duke of Gloucester reopens memorial to a Canadian founder

A restored memorial to a founder of Canada – Lord Strathcona – has been officially opened to the public by the Duke of Gloucester.

The Strathcona Mausoleum in Highgate Cemetery, London, is the burial place of Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal who is often described as the most eminent Canadian of his century

– fur trader, railroad financier, banker, politician, diplomat and benefactor.

After being vandalised and falling into disrepair over the years, the mausoleum has now been refurbished. The restored memorial is expected to attract interest from Canada, Britain and elsewhere.

Pictures and text lining the mausoleum illustrate Scots-born Lord Strathcona's life and achievements. A plaque depicting the badge of the Strathcona Horse – a regiment he raised to support the Empire in the Boer War and which is still in existence – is to be erected.

The family were involved in the restorative work. Also, Canadian Pacific (Lord Strathcona was a director – he drove the stake that completed the trans-Canada railroad) and British Petroleum (he was the first chairman of its forerunner company, Anglo Persian Oil) contributed towards the cost.

Quebec appoints new Agent General

Quebec's new Agent General in London is Reed Scowen, who took over from his predecessor Patrick Hyndman, in August this year.



A graduate of Bishop's University Lennoxville, Harvard Business School and the London School of Economics, Reed Scowen spent 17 years building and expanding the Montreal based paper manufacturing company, Perkins Papers Ltd. In 1975 he moved into the public sector as special advisor to the Minister of Industry and Commerce for the Government of Quebec. This was followed by two appointments in the Federal Government before he was elected to the National Assembly