

U.S. outreach effort a success

Showcasing Canada to Capitol Hill

On February 5, 2003, the Canadian Embassy in Washington organized a **Canada Day on the Hill** to welcome the 108th Congress. International Trade Minister Pierre Pettigrew, together with a group of Canadian parliamentarians from various political parties and business representatives, took part in events organized on both the House of Representatives and Senate sides.

"The main objective of Canada Day on the Hill was to raise awareness among new and incumbent members of Congress, as well as with key U.S. business leaders, on why Canada matters to U.S. security and economic prosperity," said Minister Pettigrew.

An estimated 1,200 Congress members and staffers participated in the event on the House side, which featured information booths on key trade, political and security issues. This event helped to emphasize with U.S. decision makers key elements of the Canada-U.S. relationship, such as the fact that Canada is the largest supplier of energy to the U.S. and that Canada is the number one market for products and services for 37 of the 50 states. Fine Canadian cuisine and lively Celtic music from Cape Breton also contributed to the lunchtime reception.

Another 700 guests participated in the reception on the Senate side later that evening, which featured Colin Mochrie of "This Hour Has 22 Minutes"

and a cast of Canadian and American comedians.

"These events provided a big boost for Canada, helping to raise awareness with U.S. decision makers on issues of mutual concern," added Canadian Ambassador to the U.S. Michael Kergin.



International Trade Minister Pierre Pettigrew (left), Canadian Ambassador to the U.S. Michael Kergin and Canadian Senator Céline Hervieux-Payette, at the Canada Day on the Hill event

During his two-day visit to Washington, the Minister met with U.S. Trade Representative, Ambassador Robert Zoellick, and U.S. Commerce Secretary Donald Evans, where he discussed a variety of trade-related issues including progress in the Doha round at the World Trade Organization, as well as softwood lumber. He also took part in a roundtable at the Woodrow Wilson Center where he shared his views with students and leading academics on the future of liberalism.

In a keynote address at a breakfast jointly organized by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian American Business Council, Minister

Pettigrew focused on the importance of furthering Canada's North American trade agenda and working towards the elimination of Canada-U.S. border impediments to trade, investment and business development.

He also participated in a working lunch with U.S. Chamber of Commerce President Tom Donohue, Canadian Council of Chief Executives President Tom D'Aquino, Canadian Chamber of Commerce President Nancy Hughes Anthony, and a dozen other U.S. business representatives.

"It is imperative that we continue to organise these types of advocacy and outreach efforts," said the Minister. "In a very busy city like Washington, we need to call the attention of U.S. decision makers with special events like 'Canada Day on the Hill'."

Recognizing that cross-border trade is critical to Canada's economy, the Government of Canada has recently committed \$11 million over the next two years in Budget 2003, as well as additional resources from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Industry Canada, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, to bolster Canada's representation and trade promotion activities in the U.S.

For more information on Canada-U.S. relations, go to www.can-am.gc.ca or contact DFAIT's U.S. Relations Division at (613) 944-7960. *

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Joint Economic Commission

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Last January in Paris, International Trade Minister Pierre Pettigrew co-chaired the 13th session of the Canada-France Joint Economic Commission. The two parties reaffirmed their common desire to further consolidate bilateral economic relations by increasing cooperation.

"The European Union (EU)—especially France, our third-largest export market in Europe and our third source of direct investment in the world—is a key partner with which we want to intensify and liberalize our trade," said Minister Pettigrew.

Despite the general economic downturn, Canadian exports to France surpassed the \$2 billion mark for the first time in 2001. Exports in the high-technology sector—particularly in the aerospace sector—are increasing steadily.

Targeted bilateral cooperation Investment, after several years of spectacular results, has sagged somewhat in the current economic climate. In the future, industrial and technological cooperation efforts

between the two countries will be directed at the information society technologies (IST), aerospace, biotechnology, environment and energy sectors, to name a few.

EUROPE

These efforts have already begun with a round table on energy at the joint commission session, which highlighted cooperation in off-shore exploration. Representatives of French industry associations, corporations and research centres shared their views with representatives of Industry Canada (IC) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT).

An information session in Paris on strategic and technology transfer alliances between French and Canadian firms in oil and gas technologies and equipment off Canadian shores, will soon be organized by IC, the Canadian Embassy in Paris and the French Groupement des Entreprises Para Pétrolières et Para Gazifières (GEP).

Also, "technology" meetings to facilitate specific, well-targeted exchanges of information between corporate leaders and research centres will be organized on a regular basis. "New materials" (advanced plastics) is the theme for the next Canada-France technology meeting to be held in Canada this year.

In the agri-food sector, **SIAL** will be coming to **Montreal** (see p.8) next month—the first time this trade show will be held in North America, further proof that Canada and France share an interest in this sector. In addition, cooperation between the two countries on the promotion of cultural diversity will continue at both the bilateral and international levels.

The EU was also discussed at the joint commission. The Minister mentioned that talks are well under way toward defining "proposals for the development of a new type of bilateral agreement to strengthen trade and investment between Canada and the EU." The next joint commission session will be held in Canada next year.

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Record Canadian participation

Huge turnout at Pollutec

Held this past November in Lyon, France, **Pollutec** was attended by over 2,300 exhibitors and some 62,000 visitors. A Canadian delegation of 20 companies participated, including 13 exhibitors and 50 company representatives from several provinces.

This exhibition, which features environmental technologies, products and services, afforded Canadian

companies the opportunity to make key contacts. During the exhibition, three agreements were signed and companies expressed satisfaction with their participation.

In France, the demand comes essentially from the public sector, where procedures are very complex. Canadian companies, very much aware of this problem, have tried to establish close ties with local operators. Other factors

that will lead to success in the French market include establishing a base or acquiring a well-established local company.

Attending Pollutec—the largest European environment exhibition—is a must for Canadian companies in this field. It is not too early to register for the next event, to be held in Paris from **December 2 to 5, 2003**.

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