

Mr. Sharp to visit the U.S.S.R.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mitchell Sharp, announced last month that in response to a long-standing invitation of the Soviet Government he would visit the U.S.S.R. from November 18 to 24; the invitation was extended by Soviet Foreign Minister A.A. Gromyko during his visit to Canada in October 1969.

During his stay in the U.S.S.R. Mr. Sharp will talk with Foreign Minister Gromyko and senior Soviet officials on international and bilateral questions of mutual interest. The discussions will take place within the framework of the Canadian-Soviet Protocol on Consultations concluded by Prime Minister Trudeau and Premier Kosygin in May 1971.

Mr. Sharp is expected to spend two or three days in Moscow and also visit one or two other cities in the Soviet Union before returning to Canada.

Canada Council gives away books

The Canada Council is purchasing 132,800 books worth \$523,000 for free distribution at home and abroad. Works by Canadian authors, published by Canadian publishers, will be distributed in January in the form of "book kits".

Over 600 kits, each containing 200 books, will include a wide variety of titles ranging from best-sellers by Pierre Berton, Farley Mowat, Marie-Claire Blais and Gilles Vigneault to books on regional history and poetry. Textbooks will not be included.

In co-operation with the Department of External Affairs, the Council expects to distribute two-thirds of the books abroad. Foreign recipients will include universities, cultural centres and other institutions. The remaining books will go to various groups and institutions in Canada, which would not normally have funds for the purchase of books.

Applications for the book kits to be distributed domestically are now being accepted by the Canada Council.

Among organizations which received free books in the first round of the program, last summer, were rural libraries, community groups, senior citizens' homes, youth organizations and

native people's groups.

The book-purchase program is part of a larger scheme of Canada Council assistance to Canadian publishers which also includes grants for the publication and translation of Canadian books.

Oil policy change

The Government is withdrawing its offer to the United States to supply refineries in Washington State with Alberta crude oil to keep super-tankers carrying Alaskan oil out of the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Instead, Ottawa wants Alberta crude sent by pipeline into Quebec, which now relies on oil from the Middle East and South America.

For the first time, regular deliveries of Alberta crude oil are to be made to Montreal refineries this month. A total of 53,000 barrels a day of Alberta oil has been contracted for November (oil is sold on monthly contracts). The emergency purchases amount to less than half the immediate oil shortages now experienced by refineries in the Maritimes and Quebec. Deliveries will be made by tankers taking on oil at Sarnia and other Ontario points that now serve as the eastern Canadian terminals of the oil trunk pipeline from the West.

All import duties on gasoline, light heating oils, diesel fuel, aviation fuel and feedstocks in petrochemical industries were abolished on October 24.

Quebec election results

In the Quebec provincial election on October 29 Premier Robert Bourassa's Liberal Party won 102 seats, the Parti Québécois 6 and the Creditistes 2. The Union Nationale, which had been the Opposition in the former government, was unsuccessful in electing any candidates.

Mr. Rene Lévesque, leader of the Parti Québécois, was defeated in his riding of Dorion.

At dissolution the former government comprised 70 Liberals, 16 Union Nationale members, 11 Créditistes, 7 Parti Québécois and 2 Independents. Two seats were vacant.

Death penalty for prison guards and policemen

After more than 50 hours of debate since January, Members of Parliament voted 119 to 106 on October 24 to limit capital punishment to killers of prison guards and policemen on duty. The bill, which is expected to obtain routine Senate approval and royal assent, will be in effect until December 1977.

A similar ban on capital punishment that had been law since 1967 expired last December 28; persons on trial for murder committed since that date will be covered by the new law.

In the new bill, the terms "capital and non-capital murder" have been replaced by "murder punishable by death and murder punishable by imprisonment".

Had the Government motion been defeated, all persons convicted of premeditated, or capital murder, would have been executed by hanging.

Canadian bravery decorations

A recent announcement from Government House, contains the names of 19 recipients of Canadian decorations for bravery. Decorations for heroism, the Cross of Valour, the Star of Courage and the Medal of Bravery, are awarded to persons who risk their lives to save or protect others or prevent a disaster.

The Star of Courage is awarded posthumously to the following three persons who, in the course of rescuing others, lost their own lives:

Drowning in Ottawa

Thomas William Smart, 13, a boy from Kemptville, Ontario, who drowned on July 9, 1971, in the Rideau River when he went to the aid of another child, Sheila Mackey.

Four children were playing in shallow water when the little girl, trying to retrieve a surfboard that had floated out of reach, got into difficulties and panicked. Thomas Smart, who swam to her assistance, succeeded in pushing her towards shore where others came to her aid. In the excitement no one noticed for some minutes that the boy had disappeared. An older child located and brought him to shore but efforts to revive him were without success.