

Nordic countries

Canada's relations with the Nordic countries are of a special cordiality that derives from a genuine community of experience and attitudes. The common experience of living in a northern climate, the commitment to democratic institutions, shared European traditions, a pragmatic general outlook and, more recently, a common concern for the welfare and development of the Arctic peoples—all these form a basis for a friendship that is strengthened by the cultural links provided by Nordic-Canadian communities. Co-operation has been developing gradually between Canada and Scandinavia in the economic, social, and environmental spheres, one result of which is a steady increase in the number of visitors from one country to the other. The Scandinavian genius for innovation, particularly in social welfare and labour relations, has aroused interest among Canadians, for whom the study of Nordic models has often proved profitable. The visits of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs to Finland and Sweden in December to examine consumer policies and practices in those countries provide one of many examples.

Finland and Sweden, unlike Denmark, Iceland, and Norway, are not members of NATO, but this fact has not impeded Canada's co-operation with all the Nordic countries in regional and international forums on many matters, such as the law of the sea, the management of resources, the protection of the environment, telecommunications and peace-keeping.

Immigration from the Nordic countries is currently modest but skilled persons immigrating to Canada are quickly integrated and make a distinctive contribution to the life of their new country.

Denmark

Prime Minister Anker H. Jorgensen of Denmark came to Canada in November at the invitation of Prime Minister Trudeau, who had visited Denmark in 1975. Mr Jorgensen exchanged views with Mr Trudeau on world economic problems (including Denmark's forthcoming presidency of the EEC) and also met with the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Ministers of Energy, Mines and

Resources, and Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and the President of the Treasury Board. During his visit, Mr Jorgensen signed an extradition treaty providing for close co-operation between Denmark and Canada in crime-prevention, including the prevention of aircraft-hijacking.

Canada and Denmark have shared common interests in the Arctic because of the propinquity of the Northwest Territories and Greenland. As well as growing cultural contacts between the Canadian and Greenland Inuit, there have been regular exchanges of scientists and technical experts in the natural and social sciences. During 1977, the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories visited Greenland to discuss with the Governor of Greenland the establishment of a staff-exchange program. A significant co-operative development during the year was the Canada-Denmark Interim Marine Pollution Contingency Plan, intended to co-ordinate cleanup operations in the event of an accident resulting from offshore oil-drilling in the waters between Baffin Island, Labrador and Greenland.

As a guest of the Danish Minister for Greenland, who had made two visits to Canada in 1976, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development visited Denmark and Greenland in May to study various social programs developed for the benefit of Greenlanders to learn something of Denmark's plans for Greenland home rule.

In November, the Canadian Ambassador in Copenhagen presented the Canadian Silver Jubilee Medal to Colonel Thomas Dinesen of Jutland, the only non-Canadian to be awarded the Victoria Cross while serving with the Canadian armed forces in 1918. Colonel Dinesen is the brother of the late internationally-known novelist Karen Blixen (Isak Dinesen).

Finland

Canada and Finland signed an air-transport agreement in Ottawa in May. The routes specified in this agreement are on a third- and fourth-freedom basis, with "in-transit" rights at a point in Europe between the two countries and similar rights at Montreal and Helsinki to a point beyond.

In June, the Finnish Parliamentary Standing Committee on Salaries and the Public Service visited Canada to exchange views on