

EC, brought about by depressed economic conditions, the appreciation of the Canadian dollar vis-à-vis European currencies and lower commodity prices.

Western Europe

Relations with West European countries remained a priority for Canada in light of our strong historical and cultural links, our similar views on a variety of global issues and because the region comprises the world's greatest concentration of industrialized democracies including four of the seven states that participate in the economic summits.

The year was marked by a significant increase in high-level contacts. The Governor General, accompanied by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, carried out state visits to the five Scandinavian countries in the spring. The Prime Minister, in preparing for the Ottawa Economic Summit, visited Britain, France, the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy. There were also a number of high-level contacts with the British government in connection with patriation of the Constitution. These bilateral contacts were supplemented during the year by numerous collective discussions on matters of joint concern, notably in the context of NATO, the OECD, and the CSCE.

Relations with the United Kingdom were largely focused upon patriation of the Constitution, a process that moved to its conclusion in the course of the year, notably with the federal-provincial agreement in November. The very lively interest of British parliamentarians and the British press in this complex dossier required a sustained program of contact and information in London by the High Commission.

Canada mounted a highly successful trade and cultural show, Canada Days in Birmingham. The United Kingdom remained Canada's largest source of landed immigrants (16 per cent of the 1981 total), its second largest source of direct foreign investment and its third most important export market, \$3.3 billion in 1981.

In the first six months of 1981 the main factors affecting bilateral relations with France were the approaching presidential election and preparations for the Ottawa Summit. The election of President Mitterrand and the coming to power of a Socialist government in France brought a renewal of efforts toward rapprochement which were begun by both countries several years ago.

The Summit provided President Mitterrand and his ministers with their first opportunity to make official contact with Canada. The general tone of relations was set by a meeting in Paris in June between the French President and Prime Minister Trudeau and by several ministerial visits that included trips to Canada by the French ministers for Planning and Economic Development, Research and Technology, and Labour as well as visits to France by the Canadian ministers responsible for Science and Technology, Industry, Trade and Commerce, the Canadian Wheat Board and Regional Economic Expan-