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## Western Europe

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It was in the context of Canada's continued efforts to strengthen its links with Western Europe, especially with member countries of the European Community, that one of the notable events of 1974 took place—the visit to France and Belgium of Prime Minister Trudeau.

During Mr. Trudeau's Paris stay attention focused primarily on the bilateral aspect of Canada-France relations. In Brussels, on the other hand, the multilateral dimension of our relationship with Western Europe was more heavily emphasized. Indeed, at Brussels Mr. Trudeau disclosed to the Commission of the European Communities Canada's hope of establishing a contractual link between this country and the European Community. And as a token of our continuing attachment to the Atlantic Alliance the Prime Minister also paid a visit to NATO headquarters. Mr. Trudeau's European tour was, in fact, the first stage of a journey which was to be continued in 1975 with visits to five other member countries of the Economic Community: The Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Britain and Ireland.

### France

1974 was a significant year in the development of Canada's relations with France. Mr. Trudeau's visit to Paris in October marked the auspicious beginning of what may be considered a new chapter in the relationship. The co-operation between Canada and France which had already existed in the scientific, cultural, economic and other spheres gained further strength through new technical and industrial contacts. It was agreed, for instance, to set up working groups to study problems of energy and industrial co-operation. This move, it could be foreseen, would undoubtedly contribute to the success of the meeting of the Franco-Canadian Economic Commission, scheduled to be convened in May 1975, and to the promotion of increased bilateral trade. On

this last score it may be noted that Canadian exports to France increased markedly in 1974; during the year they rose by \$300 million, 65 per cent over the 1973 figure.

The announcement that a Canadian consulate general would be opened in Strasbourg was further evidence that the two countries were continuing to draw closer. The new post will have a European dimension, since it will provide a point of contact with the Secretariat of the Council of Europe. It will also give Canadian Parliamentarians the opportunity to exchange views with members of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe and of the European Parliament, both of which bodies meet in Strasbourg.

In April, prior to his official visit to France in October, Mr. Trudeau was in Paris to attend the funeral of President Pompidou, evidence of the esteem and respect which Canada felt for the French leader. The year was also marked by a series of visits by Canadian Cabinet Ministers: Robert Stanbury, Minister of Revenue; André Ouellet, the Postmaster General; Jean Marchand, Transport; John Turner, Finance; Warren Allmand, the Solicitor General; and Bryce Mackasey, who succeeded Mr. Ouellet as Postmaster General.

During his official visit to Paris Mr. Trudeau met several times with President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and Prime Minister Chirac, their political discussions and other activities taking place in a cordial, almost family, atmosphere.

These personal contacts between political leaders led to a strengthening of intergovernmental bonds. Accentuating this trend were the visits to France of important representatives of Canada's provinces, including the December visit of Quebec's Premier, Robert Bourassa. The annual meeting of the France-Canada Interparliamentary Association in Paris in October exemplified yet another aspect of the closer bonds with France.