

In the field of science and technology, the bilateral agreement continued to encourage exchanges of specialized knowledge. The expedition of the West German research vessel Polarstern resulted in some joint scientific experiments in Canadian waters.

France

France now stands ninth among Canada's trading partners. Trade between the two countries represents less than 1 per cent of the total for each, but the situation improved in 1984. Canadian exports to France increased by 12 per cent to \$701 million, while French exports to Canada increased by 45 per cent to \$1.2 billion.

With more than \$1.07 billion in direct investment in Canada in 1984, France stands sixth among foreign investors in this country. Two large projects, Péchiney in Quebec and AMC/Renault in Ontario, are making France one of the major foreign investors in Canada.

Politically, the most significant event was the visit of Prime Minister Laurent Fabius in November 1984, the first Prime Minister to be received by Mr. Mulroney after he came to power. This visit symbolized a new stage in Canada-France relations, and the relaxed, confident atmosphere surrounding it in Ottawa, Montreal and Quebec City did not go unnoticed. While they reiterated the importance that they ascribe to political and cultural relations, the two Prime Ministers gave priority to the achievement of expanded economic relations between their two countries.

The Cultural, Scientific and Economic Joint Commissions all met in 1984, and each prepared a program of action to expand and to deepen France-Canada bilateral co-operation. The Canada-France interdepartmental management committee, created the year before, met four times.

1984 was a special year in France-Canada relations, as celebrations were held to commemorate two historic events of the utmost importance — the four-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the arrival in Canada of Jacques Cartier and the fortieth anniversary of the Normandy landing. More than 15 Canadian ministers visited France during this period. When the Minister of Communications visited in January 1985, Canada and France signed an agreement on joint animation film production and agreed to create a France-Canada prize and to have Canada participate in TV-5, the only French-speaking cable television network in Europe. About ten French ministers visited Canada during the year.

Italy

A modest recovery in Canadian exports, which totalled \$578 million, and a spectacular increase of some 40 per cent in Canadian imports from Italy, which totalled more than \$1.1 billion, highlighted trade relations between Canada and Italy in 1984. Various commercial and industrial missions helped to promote contacts between companies in the two countries during this period. Especially noteworthy was the industrial co-operation mission managed jointly by the Departments of External Affairs and Regional Industrial Expansion, which took place in Italy, March 12-14, 1985.

The Secretary of State for Multiculturalism visited Rome and Sicily in late April 1984. The Veterans Affairs Minister visited Italy from June 1 to 3 to commemorate the fortieth anniversary

of the liberation of Rome. Finally, the visit to Rome in December 1984 of the President of the Treasury Board underscored Canada's interest in Italian government and business.

The quality of Canadian relations with Italy was emphasized by the visit of the Italian Foreign Minister in May 1984. During this time, a cultural agreement between Italy and Canada was signed, which called for the creation of a joint commission and for expanded cultural exchanges. The Italian Education Minister also paid a working visit to Canada in June 1984.

Holy See

Media attention was practically monopolized by the September 1984 visit to Canada of His Holiness Pope John-Paul II. The Holy Father visited most of the country's regions and was enthusiastically received by Canadians. The Canadian government set up a working group, consisting in part of departmental officials, to co-ordinate the activities of the various organizations involved and to make the visit a success.

Belgium

Belgium is one of Canada's main European export markets, with sales of \$677 million in 1984. The high point of trade activities last year was the signing, in February 1985, of a \$50 million contract awarded to Bombardier to supply the Belgian army with 2 500 all-terrain vehicles. It is expected that many other overseas markets for these vehicles will be found as a result of this agreement.

Under the auspices of the Belgium-Canadian Chamber of Commerce, an industrial development mission consisting of 30 Belgian business people visited Montreal and Toronto. Several interesting investment opportunities were revealed and are being pursued.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs met with his Belgian counterpart in Brussels in 1984, on the occasion of a ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council. A Canada-Belgium Businessmen's Association was formed to further economic and trade relations between the two countries. In the cultural field, the tenth session of the Permanent Joint Committee, established by the 1967 cultural agreement, was held in Brussels in October 1984.

The Netherlands

Bilateral cultural relations with the Netherlands were further developed through consultations and co-operation in finalizing plans for Canadian participation in the Holland Festival in the summer of 1985. The embassy was also heavily involved in the co-ordination of planning for Canadian participation in the fortieth anniversary of liberation celebrations.

In May 1984, preliminary discussions were held with a view to negotiating a social security agreement.

Bilateral co-operation in defence relations was enhanced through the visit to Canada, in January 1985, of the Dutch Minister of Defence, and co-operation in defence research and production was assisted by the visit of the Dutch State Secretary for Defence. Canadian-Dutch trade in defence products has always been strongly in favour of Canada, but the patrol frigate program will provide important opportunities for Dutch manufacturers.