

PM's Visit to France — *Continued from page 1*

other North American markets.

Alis Technologies (Canada) and SCii Télécom (France) — purchase by Alis, a leader in communications software in 90 languages, of 51 per cent of SCii.

NOVA Expertise Solutions (Canada) and Dassault Investissements (France) — investment by Dassault of Fr32 million (\$8 million) in NOVA, a specialist in software for automatic payment and transaction security using smart cards.

COMDEV International (Canada) and Alcatel Espace (France) — two agreements to supply Alcatel with subsystems for telecommunications satellites, including a contract of Fr20 million (about \$5 million) for the M2A satellite.

CAL Corporation (Canada) and Alcatel Espace — agreement to develop and jointly market a satellite terminal with optical link, to allow communications between satellites by optical laser.

Groupe Informission Inc. (Canada) and Sporen S.A. (France) — trade alliance to develop software to enable computer clocks and calendars to make the transition to the year 2000.

Aquarium Adventures (Canada) and Cofathec et Sodexo (France) — letter of intent to create a shared-risk company to respond to tender calls for the construction and operation of large aquariums.

Business seminar

A seminar organized jointly by the Paris Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Canadian Embassy attracted over 200 representatives from the French business community.

The event enabled three Canadian companies — Bombardier, Groupe LGS and Alis Tech-

nologies — to share lessons drawn from their experience in France. In addition, two French companies — Sextant Avionique and Limagrain — discussed the results of their efforts in Canada.

The favourable conditions available for French investors in Canada were a prevailing theme of the visit. France is Canada's fourth-largest foreign investor, and French companies are present in all sectors. Canadian investment in France has risen tenfold since 1985.

Advanced technology and finance

The visit also opened the door for dialogue between GIFAS, the French Aeronautical and Space Industries Group, and Canada's Aerospace Industries Association.

As well, Mr. Manley, accompanied by representatives of companies in the financial and information technology sectors, paid a visit to France Télécom. The two parties began a dialogue on what France's liberalization of its telecommunications sector — beginning with the privatizing of France Télécom — will mean for the Canadian industry.

Renewal of the transatlantic relationship

The "enhanced partnership" between France and Canada coincides with the renewal of the transatlantic relationship, confirmed last December 17 with the signing of a joint Canada-European Union action plan.

One of the action plan's priorities will be to establish dialogue between high-level representatives in the European and Canadian business communities.

Enhancing trade

The two governments set an

ambitious objective for their business communities: to double the amount of trade between them by the year 2000. Since information technologies are among the most promising sectors, specific activities will be pursued to promote growth in them.

The recently inaugurated Media Centre in the Canadian Cultural Centre on the Esplanade des Invalides in Paris will provide a prestigious backdrop for many of these activities. This window on Canadian technological excellence and creativity was developed in partnership with leading-edge Canadian firms.

Action plan

France is one of 10 priority markets identified by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Following consultations with Team Canada members, an action plan will be published in the spring of 1997 outlining a strategic framework for expanding our relations in commerce and investment, and in science and technology, and for stimulating strategic partnerships.

The plan's priority sectors include telecommunications and information technologies, the aeronautical and space industries, agri-food and consumer goods, environment and tourism.

Future activities

The plan will be included in the activities arising from the France-Canada "enhanced partnership." Other activities are already taking shape. Visits by the Paris Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Conseil du Patronat français to explore investment prospects are planned for 1997 and 1998

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