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1996

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Dept. of External Affairs
Min. des Affaires extérieures

CANADA QUARTERLY

April 1996

Volume 4 Number 2

AXWORTHY URGES CONTINUED U.S. ENGAGEMENT IN WORLD AFFAIRS

AP Photo/Mark Wilson



Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy, left, and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher after signing a five-year renewal of the NORAD agreement.

Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy, in his first official visit to Washington on March 27 and 28, called on the United States to collaborate with Canada in "pursuit of internationalism and engagement" to achieve common ends in foreign policy, and he registered Canada's concerns about several areas where the U.S. has acted unilaterally.

In a speech at Johns Hopkins University, Mr. Axworthy said the "unique partnership" the two countries have developed, built on an elaborate framework of rules and agreements, offers the world a model of cooperation in solving problems.

He cited their successful collaboration

in the defence of North America through the North American Aerospace Defence Agreement (NORAD). Originally established in 1958 to provide early warning of an attack by long-range Soviet bombers, NORAD has evolved to meet new circumstances, first to counter the threat posed by long-range missiles and, since the fall of the Soviet Union, to monitor aircraft suspected of drug trafficking. In Washington, with Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Mr. Axworthy signed a five-year renewal of the agreement that includes a new emphasis on global surveillance from space.

In his discussions with Secretary Christopher and National Security

Advisor Anthony Lake, he emphasized opportunities for close cooperation between Canada and the United States, in the civil reconstruction of Bosnia, furthering the Middle East peace process, promoting human rights and democracy, working for arms control and disarmament, and combatting terrorism and drug trafficking.

One key area for collaboration is broadening democratic development in Haiti. After the U.S. began withdrawing its troops from the island in March, Canada assumed command of the U.N. peacekeeping force, which has been extended through June. The multinational force, which has been reduced to

some 1,200 military personnel and 300 civilian police from 4,000, will include about 50 Canadians at the command and control headquarters and 100 Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers. The U.N. contingent will be augmented by an additional 700 Canadian troops who will help maintain a visible presence throughout the country and provide security for the U.N. mission.

Mr. Axworthy's meeting with U.S. Labor Secretary Robert Reich focused on developing joint strategies to promote the development of labour standards for the global economy and to halt the exploitation of child labour in the Third World.

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