

The presence of this group of native Canadians did much to strengthen the cultural ties between the two nations. Their participation helped publicize

the 1994 Commonwealth Games, which will take place in Victoria, British Columbia.

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## **F. WESTERN EUROPE AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY (EC)**

Canada maintains a close, dynamic and productive relationship with Europe. Links to Europe are vital for Canada's well-being because the European countries are major Canadian trading partners, major sources of capital investment, tourism and immigration, and key cultural, technological, security and political partners.

During the year under review, Canada mounted a major political and diplomatic effort to minimize community measures inimical to trade interests while simultaneously spearheading a campaign to increase awareness of trade opportunities in a united Europe. The increase in importance of political cooperation among the members of the European Community, and its significance in defining Western approaches to events in Europe and elsewhere, were reflected in proposals Canada presented in February to improve the effectiveness of political consultative mechanisms between Canada and the 12 member states of the EC.

A major effort was undertaken to modify proposed Community legislation that would have the potential to affect seriously Canada's fur and fur product exports to the EC. The issue was raised during the May bilateral meetings in Brussels and in February 1990, the Department participated in organizing a familiarization tour of the Canadian fur industry by key European parliamentarians involved in the proposed legislation.

Bilateral political consultations on the rapidly evolving situation in Europe were carried out in Ottawa in February between the Secretary of State for External Affairs and several Western European Ministers, including the British Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, the French Foreign Minister, Roland Dumas, and the West German Foreign Minister, Hans Dietrich Genscher, who also met with the Prime Minister.

Canada's contacts with the EC were enhanced by the visit of Irish Foreign Minister Collins, who came to Ottawa