

Western Europe

France

Canada's relations with France retained the high priority of recent years.

A major event affecting bilateral co-operation was the April meeting of the France-Canada Joint Economic Commission. The Commission, created in 1949, studied the development of exchanges between the two countries, methods of diversifying and increasing them, and such questions of common interest as inflation, the environment, investments and natural resources.

The France-Canada Subcommittee held a meeting on scientific co-operation in May. Seventy-three new areas for exchange were identified; one of the most important projects under way at present is the installation of a giant telescope on Mauna Kea by France and Canada in co-operation with the University of Hawaii. It was also decided by mutual agreement that the subcommittee would meet in future as a joint commission.

At the same time, the Joint Cultural Commission examined such university matters as the teaching of French, various forms of co-operation and methods of cultural promotion. As part of the cultural-exchange program, particular mention should be made of the Fontainebleau Exhibition at the National Gallery, the Canadian tour by the Comédie-Française and the opening of an outlet for the distribution of Canadian books in Paris.

The new France-Canada co-operation agreement on defence research provided for the exchange of documentation and researchers in a variety of sectors.

Many Canadian ministers, both federal and provincial, visited France during the year, including: Jeanne Sauvé, Minister of State for Science and Technology; Jean Marchand, Minister of Transport; Hugh Faulkner, Secretary of State; Ron Basford, Minister of State for Urban Affairs; and Gérard Pelletier, Minister of Communications. Canadian Members of Parliament welcomed their French counterparts to the annual meeting of the France-Canada Interparliamentary Association. Canada also received members of the Audit Committee of the French National Assembly and a delegation from the French Senate Committee on Constitutional Laws.

Political co-operation between Canadian and French delegations increased steadily throughout the year within major international organizations such as the UN, NATO, ICAO, the OECD, and, in particular, the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation.

Belgium

The development of good relations between Canada and Belgium accelerated during the year.

In April, Canada demonstrated the importance it placed on these relations by accrediting a full-time ambassador to the Belgian Government. There are two other Canadian ambassadors in Brussels, accredited to the Commission of the European Community and to NATO.



The Hon. Mitchell Sharp and the Canadian Ambassador to NATO, Mr. A. R. Menzies, at the NATO Ministerial Meeting in Brussels in December. (NATO Photo)