

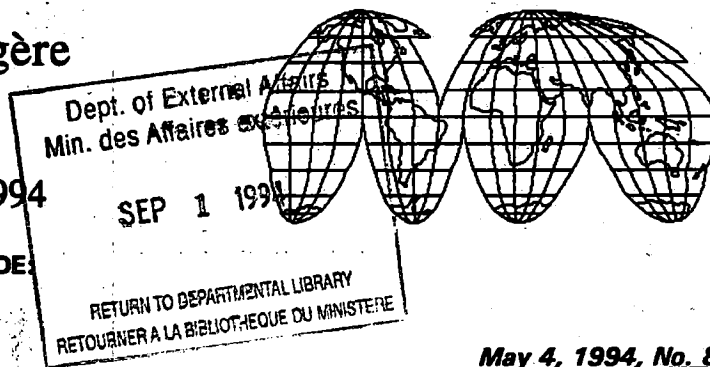
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Le commerce et
la politique étrangère
cette semaine

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April 28 to May 4, 1994



DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE
PRESS RELEASES:

MacLaren Establishes Task Force to Advise on Trade Issues

May 4, 1994, No. 88

The Honourable Roy MacLaren, Minister for International Trade, announced the establishment of three permanent task forces of the International Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC) to provide in-depth advice on trade issues. The new task forces are on trade policy, international business development and trade and the environment. The ITAC Task Force on Trade Policy will examine domestic and international factors that affect Canada's international competitiveness and recommend how Canada can best address these issues within the multilateral trading system. The ITAC Task Force on International Business Development will examine Canada's performance in the global economy and the challenges, plans and initiatives of both industry and government in promoting international business expansion. It will make specific recommendations to improve Canada's competitiveness. The ITAC Task Force on Trade and the Environment will examine factors that affect the achievement and reconciliation of Canadian trade and environmental objectives. "Canadians need to co-operate and work toward a common agenda to meet the competitive challenges of the global economy," Mr. MacLaren said. "These new task forces will be instrumental in building a consensus on the progressive and outward-looking approach we need to defend and promote Canada's interests."

Ouellet Welcomes Signing of Israel-PLO Agreement on Palestinian Autonomy

May 4, 1994, No. 87

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet welcomed the signing in Cairo of the Agreement on Palestinian Autonomy in Gaza and Jericho by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). "This agreement marks a major milestone on the long road to peace in the Middle East," said Mr. Ouellet. "It is eloquent testimony to the courage and leadership of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat." The Minister pledged continued Canadian support for the Middle East peace process, both bilateral and multilateral, including the Refugee Working Group that Canada chairs. The Working Group holds its next meeting in Cairo, May 10-12.

Governor General to Visit Guangdong

May 2, 1994, No. 86

His Excellency the Right Honourable Ramon John Hnatyshyn, Governor General and Commander in Chief of Canada, will pay an official visit to the Province of Guangdong in the People's Republic of China from May 2 to May 3, 1994. The Governor General will be accompanied by the Honourable Ralph Goodale, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, and a delegation representing some of Canada's leading agri-food industries. The visit is being held in conjunction with a major trade initiative by the Government of Canada and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong, which has helped organize a Canada-Hong Kong-China Week within the framework of the Pearl River Delta Festival.

Ouellet Congratulates South Africans on Conduct of Election

May 1, 1994, No. 85

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet congratulated the people of South Africa on the historic occasion of their first truly democratic election. Preliminary assessments from Canadian observers, as well as observer missions from the United Nations, the Commonwealth, the European Union and the Organization for African Unity indicate that, despite certain incidents, the balloting was essentially conducted in a free and fair manner. "The road to this election has been long and hard. These positive assessments are a testimony to the commitment and courage of the people of South Africa. Whatever the results of the election may turn out to be, South Africans can take pride in their magnificent achievement. On behalf of the people of Canada, I congratulate them on their entry to the community of free and democratic peoples," said Mr. Ouellet. Some 180 Canadians travelled to South Africa to observe the election, including an official Canadian delegation lead by Mrs. Christine Stewart, Secretary of State for Latin America and Africa. "Earlier today I spoke by telephone with Mrs. Stewart in Pretoria. She assures me that despite some difficulties, the election was properly conducted, and therefore the results will reflect the will of the people of South Africa. I also took the opportunity to thank Mrs. Stewart, the Canadian team and all other Canadians in South Africa, for working so hard to ensure that the election took place as it did," Mr. Ouellet added.

STATEMENT:

It gives me great pleasure to be here with you today. I would have liked to use this opportunity to describe North America's strong and vital relationship with Europe. Instead I find myself contemplating two continents that are in danger of drifting apart.... In essence, then, North America's post-war strategic partnership with Europe has given way to growing economic rivalry to which we both seem unable to adjust. The most obvious expression of this is the rising pressure on each side of the Atlantic for exclusionary regional blocs....The danger of this trend for Canada cannot be overstated. Europe remains our next most important economic partner after the United States, regardless of perceptions to the contrary. Last year our merchandise trade with the countries of the European Union was valued at \$25 billion, or approximately £14.5 billion. How do we rebuild a critical transatlantic bridge? No doubt there are a number of existing institutional tools such as NATO or the OECD that could be employed more effectively to further our mutual interests.... One constructive step would be to commit ourselves to a policy of "open regionalism", i.e., the notion that existing continental arrangements should be defined less by regional exclusivity than by a shared commitment to deeper levels of free trade—a GATT-plus if you will.... Perhaps the single most important structure for bridging the Atlantic in the years ahead lies with the newly-formed World Trade Organization (WTO).... Of one thing I am certain—North America and Europe will need each other in the days ahead at least as much as we have in the past. Notes for an Address by the Honourable Roy MacLaren, Minister for International Trade, to the European-Atlantic Group (London, England, April 28, 1994, 94/21).