

of 1991 a joint Canada-NATO international seminar on the role of the military in democratic societies.

Beyond Artificial Barriers

As a rule of thumb, experts say that environmental problems are 10 times worse throughout Central and Eastern Europe than in the West. Yet no other realm better illustrates the world's interdependence than the environment, which overarches political and geographic boundaries without distinction. That is why Canada has mounted a campaign to ensure all countries have access to the information, technology and resources essential to the environment's preservation.

Other Canadian environmental initiatives include the donation of high-tech radiation detectors to the Ukraine for use in the area surrounding Chernobyl and a joint Canada-World Bank study on the reclamation of mined lands in the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic.

Warming Relations in a Cold Land

As a northern nation, Canada has a special link to the Arctic. Sharing joint stewardship of the unique land with seven other Arctic nations, Canada's most extensive co-operation has been with the Soviet Union. In November 1989, the two nations signed a series of ambitious environmental agreements

Soviet Union, the United States, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland. It hosted a circumpolar Conference on the Protection of the Environment in Yellowknife, N.W.T., in April 1990 and has proposed the formation of an international Arctic Council to deal with shared civilian interests such as the environment, transboundary pollution, indigenous Arctic populations, transportation and cold weather technologies.

Canadian author Josef Skvorecky now receives accolades in the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic where before he had only underground recognition.

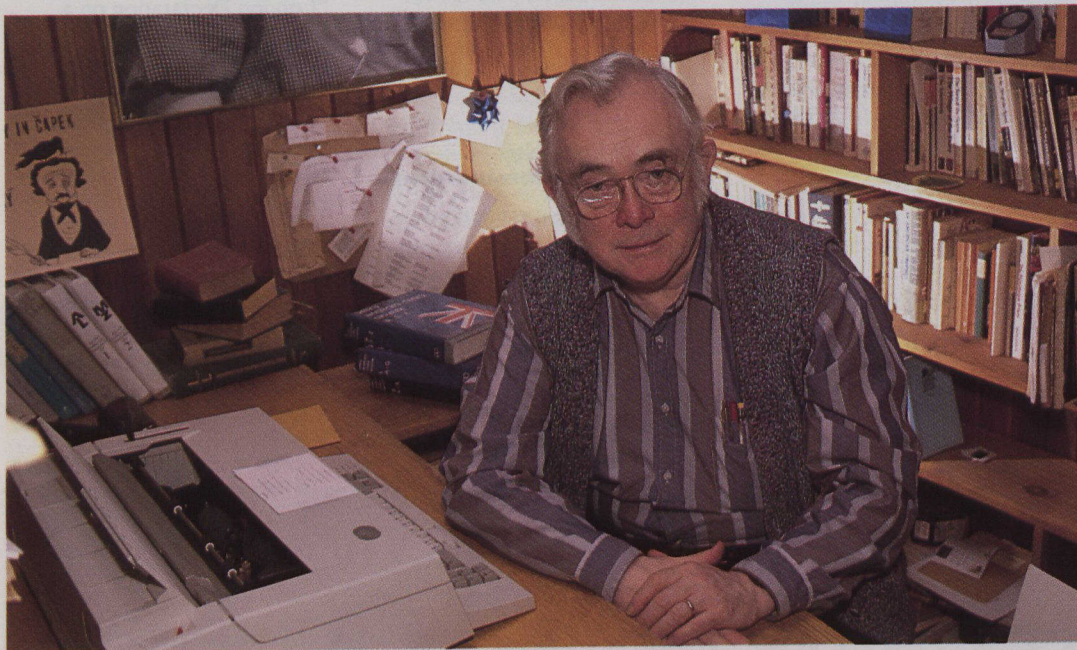
sport, where Wayne Gretzky transformed forever the game of hockey, Canadians of Ukrainian descent have helped build a distinct nation. Canadian literature abounds with gifted ethnic writers such as critically acclaimed Czech-Canadian novelist Joseph Skvorecky and Alain Hovic, a Croatian Muslim and noted Quebec poet. Maryon Kantaroff, child of Bulgarian immigrants, is a pre-eminent artist and sculptor; Peter Gzowski, of Polish descent, a leading journalist; and Professor Vytautas Pavilanis from Lithuania, a world-renowned medical researcher. Czech-Canadian Thomas Bata heads the world's largest shoe manufacturing company, and Andrew Sarlos, a leading Hungarian-Canadian financier, has established an \$80-million development fund for his homeland.

As impediments to direct contacts between people disappear, Canada's ethnic communities are restoring ties to their lands of origin, building on the natural bonds of language and culture. Almost daily, new exchanges, co-operative programs or twinning arrangements are launched in fields as diverse as science and culture, academia and sports.

Into the Future

In the last decade of this millennium, old structures are coming down as new ones go up throughout Central and Eastern Europe. The world has learned that it is easier to tear down than build up, for along the path of reform there have been disappointments, failures and setbacks.

Yet the foundation for change has been laid and from it a new European architecture is rising. The exact dimensions and form of this new Europe will not be clear for many years. The newly erected political and economic structures are as yet incomplete and fragile. Making those structures strong and ensuring the success of reform will demand courage, sacrifice and above all vision, for together East and West are building a framework of the future. As such it is a vision too valuable to be allowed to fail. ♦



Brian Willer

A founding member of the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe, Canada contributed \$1.5 million to the independent, Budapest-based centre. Fostering environmental protection throughout the region, the centre provides information and expert advice on environmental and health-related issues, promotes environmental education, and develops institutional capabilities in areas such as research, technology transfer and energy management.

providing for joint Arctic research and protection programs and committing both nations to sustainable development.

Another Canadian-Soviet agreement promotes co-operation on a range of civilian interests, including economic development, social and cultural issues, and science and technology. Among its many initiatives are enhanced contacts between aboriginal peoples.

Canada is also actively promoting greater circumpolar co-operation among all eight Arctic nations: Canada, the

The Ties that Bind

At the most fundamental level, Canadian-Central and East European relations are built between people. Virtually no other nation possesses the myriad of personal connections to Central and Eastern Europe that Canada does. One in 10 Canadians traces his or her roots to the region.

It is no surprise then that so many famous Canadians are of Soviet and East European ancestry. From the country's highest political post of Governor General to the world of