

Relations between France and Canada were further strengthened in 1971. Among the Canadian Ministers who visited France during the year were the Secretary of State, the Honourable Gérard Pelletier, who went to Paris and Marseilles in March to attend the twenty-first annual convention of the France-Canada Association; the Minister of Communications, the Honourable Robert Stanbury, who represented Canada at the ceremonies in Paris marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of UNESCO, and the Solicitor-General, the Honourable Jean-Pierre Goyer (both in November). Other important Canadian figures visited France as well, including the Premier of New Brunswick, the Honourable R.B. Hatfield, in January; the Prime Minister of Quebec, the Honourable Robert Bourassa, in April; the Premier of Nova Scotia, the Honourable G.A. Regan, in May, and the Prime Minister of British Columbia, the Honourable W.A.C. Bennett, in September.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the French Republic, Mr. Maurice Schumann, was welcomed to Ottawa on September 22 and 23, and to Quebec City on September 30 and October 1.

These visits and the exchanges between France and Canada and various Canadian provinces, particularly Quebec, made a valuable contribution to the growing co-operation between the two countries. The France-Canada Inter-parliamentary Association met in Canada in June. The France-Canada Joint Economic Commission convened in Ottawa at the end of May, and at the end of September the annual meeting of the France-Canada Joint Commission on Cultural, Scientific and Technological Relations was held in Paris. In this connection it should be noted that France and Canada agreed to make special efforts to increase their co-operation in the scientific and technological fields; cultural relations are progressing very satisfactorily.

Relations between Canada and the Federal Republic of Germany continued to develop in 1971. A science and technology mission visited the Federal Republic in March. At the end of March, the two countries concluded a Social Security Agreement. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce led a trade mission to Germany in April. While there, he signed an Agreement for Co-operation in Science and Technology. In September a German science and technology mission visited Canada. Discussions are in progress with the Federal Republic on the possibility of training German troops in Canada. The Federal Republic of Germany remains Canada's fourth-largest trading partner and one of Canada's most important sources of immigrants and investment.

The highlight of relations between Canada and the Benelux countries was the April visit of His Excellency Governor-General Roland Michener of Canada to the three countries. This first state visit to Europe by any Governor General was a pronounced success. The Secretary of State for External Affairs, who accompanied Mr. Michener, took advantage of the opportunity to hold talks with the top officials of the three countries. He also signed an agreement for scientific and technical co-operation with Belgium during this visit.

The number of visits to these countries by government officials and by federal and provincial delegations was increased. The same is true to a lesser extent of other countries like Switzerland and Austria, with which Canada's relations are excellent.