

Canadian-Soviet bilateral ties: the record and the prospects

by Murray Goldblatt

Canadian-Soviet relations in 1971 developed at a pace that might suggest a whirlwind courtship on the part of one side or the other. But the undertakings set out in last year's bilateral accords were a product of relations fostered in a variety of ways during the past seven years.

Nevertheless, events of the last 12 months represented the culmination of these developments. In January 1971, Canada and the U.S.S.R. signed an agreement for Co-operation in the Industrial Application of Science and Technology — a channel for exchanges in the field of industrial technology and a spur to trade in this area. In May, during Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau's visit to the Soviet Union, Mr. Trudeau and Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin signed a Protocol of Consultations — a document designed

to place Canadian-Soviet intergovernmental contacts on a more systematic and structured basis. And in October, during Mr. Kosygin's reciprocal visit to Canada, a General Exchanges Agreement was signed to expand bilateral exchanges in scientific, technical, academic, cultural, athletic and other fields.

Disparity in power

Canadian-Soviet relations are obviously conditioned by a great disparity in power, differences in political and social systems and, in some cases, by conflicting external policies. But both sides have recognized the opportunities for mutual benefit in closer bilateral ties.

Until about 1965, Canadian-Soviet relations had been limited except for a brief period in 1955-56 when Lester B. Pearson, then Secretary of State for Ex-



During his Ottawa visit, Soviet Premier Kosygin was guest of honour at a Canadian Government state dinner. At the head table, left to right: Mr. Justice G rald Fauteux, Chief Justice

of the Supreme Court of Canada; Margaret Trudeau, Mr. Kosygin, Prime Minister Trudeau, Mrs. Luidmila Guishiani, Mr. Kosygin's daughter; and former Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson.