

Greek Prime Minister Papandreou visits Canada

Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou visited Canada from March 27 to 31, at the invitation of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau.

Mr. Papandreou was accompanied on his trip by Mrs. Papandreou, Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs Yannis Haralambopoulos, Greek Minister of Research and Technology George Lianis, Greek Deputy Minister to the Presidency for Press Affairs Dimitris Maroudas, Deputy Minister to the Presidency for Greeks Abroad Asimakis Fotilas, Greek Deputy Minister of National Defence Pausanias Zakolikos and Greek Deputy Minister of National Economy Konstantine Vaitzos. A number of senior government officials also accompanied the Greek prime minister.

During his stay in Canada, Mr. Papandreou visited Ottawa, Montreal, Quebec City and Toronto. The Greek community in Canada numbers nearly 350 000 with the main centres of concentration being in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver.

While in Ottawa, Greek Prime Minister Papandreou held talks with Prime Minister Trudeau on international and bilateral issues and answered questions at a joint session of the House of Commons Standing Committee on External Affairs and Defence and the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mr. Papandreou told the committees that he sought increased economic co-

operation with Canada especially in the area of defence. He also said that he hoped his close ties with Canada would help promote expanded trade in that area.

A social security agreement between Canada and Greece was also ratified during the Ottawa segment of the visit. The protocol ratifying the agreement was signed by Canadian Minister of State (Finance) Paul Cosgrove and Minister to the Presidency for Greeks Abroad Asimakis Fotilas.

This agreement co-ordinates the operation of the Canada Pension Plan, the Old Age Security Act and the Greek social security programs which provide disability, old age, death and survivor's benefits. As many as 5 000 persons are expected to receive Canadian benefits under the agreement. An additional number of persons will also receive benefits from Greece under the agreement.

In Montreal, about 7 000 of the city's 65 000 Greek-Canadians filled a downtown exhibition hall to greet Prime Minister Papandreou who gave a speech reviewing his domestic and foreign policies.

Afterwards, the Greek prime minister was guest of honour at a dinner hosted by federal Consumer and Corporate Affairs Minister André Ouellet. Mr. Papandreou also flew to Quebec City to meet with provincial Premier René



Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs Allan J. MacEachen (right) greets Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou at the Ottawa International Airport.

Lévesque and members of the National Assembly.

At the Toronto airport several hundred flag-waving Greek-Canadians turned out to welcome Prime Minister Papandreou. He later attended a dinner given by Prime Minister Trudeau.

Mr. Papandreou taught economics at York University from 1969-1974 following his exile by the Greek military junta. It was in Toronto that he founded the Panhellenic Liberation Movement that spearheaded the overthrow of the military dictatorship in Athens and helped bring his Panhellenic Socialist Movement to power in the 1981 elections.

While in Toronto, the Greek Prime Minister toured the Royal Ontario Museum where the Greek exhibition, *In Search for Alexander*, is showing until July. He attended a luncheon given by the Ontario government, spoke to the Greek community at a rally and received an honorary degree from York University.

The main component to Canada's cultural presence in Greece is the Canadian Archaeological Institute in Athens. The institute is a non-profit organization founded in 1974 to encourage and to develop academic and cultural relations between Canada and Greece. In 1976, the institute was given the status of a national foreign school by the Greek government and in October 1981 it opened an office next to the premises of the Canadian embassy in Athens.



Canadian Minister of State (Finance) Paul Cosgrove (right) and Deputy Minister to the Presidency for Greeks Abroad Asimakis Fotilas sign the protocol ratifying the Canada-Greek social security agreement. Prime Minister Trudeau (standing right) and Prime Minister Papandreou (standing to the extreme left) look on.

Richard Vroom photos