

Union by Lester B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, a trade agreement was signed, and the possibility for cultural exchanges was noted. At the time of Mr. Pearson's visit, mention was also made of possible Arctic cooperation, noting in particular the "exchange of information on scientific research."³

In 1959, around the time that he was presenting his "vision of the North," Prime Minister Diefenbaker stated that the Canadian government had initiated proposals to discuss with the Soviet Union cooperation in the area of "northern research and administration."⁴ It is interesting to note that, at the time of these proposals, the Canadian government stressed its interest in the social as well as the technical sciences for any cooperative projects. Soviet officials balked at the suggestions for including social sciences. More important, the Soviet Union was not prepared, for security reasons, to allow Canadian scientists, be they sociologists or geologists, to travel in the Soviet North.

During the 1960s, there was not very much activity to follow up these proposals with one major exception, which is believed by some to have been a turning point in the Soviet attitude toward Arctic cooperation. This was the exchange of Ministerial delegations in 1965, when for the first time a group of Canadian government officials and scientists travelled in the Soviet Arctic. At the time, it was believed that the visits created a climate for closer scientific cooperation on Arctic-related issues.⁵ Despite these intentions, there was a hiatus of six years before a flurry of activity in Canadian-Soviet relations in the early 1970s, which included a significant step in the area of Arctic cooperation. During the May 1971 visit of Prime Minister Trudeau to the Soviet Union, Soviet Premier Kosygin expressed interest in the possibility of exchanging information on experiences in economic development, including those related to northern regions.⁶ Shortly thereafter, another exchange of Ministerial delegations took place. The Canadian delegation, led by Jean Chrétien, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, visited several Soviet cities and towns in the Soviet Arctic. While there, Mr. Chrétien noted Canada's desire to have an exchange of scientists specializing in Arctic issues, a point which was reiterated by the head of the visiting Soviet delegation to Canada a few months later.⁷ While this increased contact was paving the way for a programme of exchanges on Arctic-related issues, an institutional framework for bilateral relations was being implemented under which this type of cooperation could take place. Two major agreements governing Canadian-Soviet relations were signed in 1971: the Agreement on Cooperation in the Industrial Application of Science and Technology in January and the General Exchanges Agreement in October.

With these Agreements in place, and in the prevailing spirit of cooperation, discussions were held between Canadian and Soviet officials in February and November of 1972 to try to agree on specific areas of scientific

cooperation, which included technical sciences such as geology, hydrology, meteorology, and ecology, plus research on social issues in respect of northern native people. Memoranda of Understanding were signed on both occasions, but when it came time to detail research programmes, the Soviets refused to include subjects related to the social sciences. The Canadian side responded that, without the inclusion of research on the social sciences, none of the programmes would be implemented. A series of meetings and diplomatic correspondence could not persuade the Soviet negotiators to change their position and by 1975 talks on the northern dimension of Canadian-Soviet cooperation, which many believed to have held such promise, had reached an impasse.

Four years later, when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan and the Canadian government suspended all government-funded programmes of cooperation with the Soviet Union under extant bilateral agreements, it seemed as though all discussions and negotiations on Arctic cooperation were about to be put to rest. But then, in late 1981 and early 1982, events took a rather unexpected turn. Coinciding with a reassessment by the Canadian government regarding its overall relations with the Soviet Union, the Soviets submitted a proposal for scientific cooperation on Arctic issues, including "possible cooperation in the social and ethnographic aspects of northern development." Canadian insistence on social science research had finally triumphed over Soviet reluctance.

CURRENT GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES

Despite the frustrations of ten years of unsuccessful negotiations, the lure of the Arctic was still alive, and the Canadian government responded positively to the Soviet request to reopen discussions. The subsequent round of meetings — March 1983 in Ottawa and April 1984 in Moscow — were successful. On 16 April 1984 a Protocol of Canadian-Soviet Consultations on the Development of a Programme of Scientific and Technical Cooperation in the Arctic and the North was signed. Attached to this Protocol was a programme of cooperative projects in four main subject areas: geoscience and Arctic petroleum; northern environment; northern construction; and ethnography and education. In total, there were eighteen topics for cooperation, several with sub-topics, each envisaging an exchange of scientists and/or information. In the two-to three-year period of exchange activity under the 1984 Protocol, fourteen Canadian delegations visited the USSR, each for a period of approximately one to two weeks, with fifteen Soviet delegations coming to Canada for similar periods. In all, eighty specialists took part.

When the Protocol was being renegotiated in February 1987, both sides expressed their satisfaction with progress, and as a signal of their continuing commitment to the programme, expanded the number of topics from eighteen to thirty within the same four major scientific themes. In