



Report

**Visit of the Honourable Noël A. Kinsella,
Speaker of the Senate,
and a Parliamentary Delegation,
to France and the Federal Republic of Germany,**

November 18-24, 2012

The Honourable Noël A. Kinsella, Speaker of the Senate, and a delegation of Senators visited France and the Federal Republic of Germany from November 18 to 24, 2012.

The delegation has the honour of tabling its

Report

The official delegation led by Speaker Noël A. Kinsella comprised the following members:

- The Honourable Noël A. Kinsella, Speaker of the Senate
- Mrs. Ann Kinsella;
- The Honourable Claudette Tardif, Senator;
- The Honourable Judith Seidman, Senator;
- Ms. Janelle Feldstein, Chief of Staff of the Speaker of the Senate; and
- Mr. Michel Marcotte, Secretary to the delegation.

Background

Further to her visit to Canada in September 2011, Her Excellency Hannelore Kraft, President of the Federal Council (Bundesrat) of the Federal Republic of Germany, extended a formal invitation to Speaker Kinsella to visit Germany. As negotiations toward a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Canada and the European Union were quite advanced, this was an opportune time to accept the invitation and reinforce interparliamentary relations between Canada and Germany, as well as between Canada and France, as these countries are two of our key European partners.

Objectives

The objectives of the visit were as follows:

- To enhance relations between Canada and France and between Canada and Germany;
- To encourage ongoing parliamentary dialogue by further promoting parliamentary exchanges;
- To highlight the range of Canada's interests in the region;
- To discuss foreign policies with respect to issues of international and mutual interest;
- To promote educational exchanges;
- To promote research sharing in the area of agriculture;
- To promote collaboration between container shipping ports; and
- To pursue good relations in all fields of contact.

France

Building on the work of the Canada-France Interparliamentary Association, and especially of its Chair, Senator Claudette Tardif, the visit to France aimed to enrich

discussions between parliamentarians from both countries. The delegation visited the cities of Le Havre and Dieppe before travelling to Paris for a series of meetings with French parliamentarians, as well as representatives of the education sector and of the Francophonie.

Visit to the Port of Le Havre

The delegation met with Mr. Gilles Fournier, President of the Supervisory Board for the Port of Le Havre, as well as with Mr. Jean-Baptiste Gastinne, Municipal Councillor and assistant to the Mayor of Le Havre. A very detailed and instructive presentation on the Port of Le Havre was followed by a tour of the port facilities. This visit presented the opportunity to discuss the many trade possibilities between the Port of Le Havre and Canada's Atlantic ports.

Meeting with Mr. Édouard Philippe, M.P. and Mayor of Le Havre

The delegation met with Mr. Édouard Philippe, the M.P. and Mayor of Le Havre, at his office in City Hall along with some of his assistants. Topics of discussion included the economic growth of Le Havre and partnership opportunities with Canada's Atlantic ports. They also discussed student exchanges between the two countries.

Meeting with Mr. Sébastien Jumel, Mayor of Dieppe

The Mayor of Dieppe welcomed the delegation to his office, accompanied by the Deputy Prefect for Dieppe, Ms. Martine Laquière. Topics of discussion included the friendly relations between Dieppe and Canada and between Dieppe and its sister city: Dieppe, New Brunswick. Speaker Kinsella gave Mayor Jumel a letter from his Acadian counterpart, Mayor Yvon Lapierre. The delegation discussed the recent 70th anniversary celebrations of the Normandy landing, which the Governor General of Canada, David Johnston, and the Minister of Veterans Affairs, Steven Blaney, attended.

Ceremonies in Dieppe and at the Dieppe Canadian War Cemetery

The delegates then proceeded to the Canadian memorial at the foot of the cliffs of Dieppe to lay a wreath on behalf of the Senate of Canada in memory of the fallen. Local officials, including the Mayor of Dieppe and Deputy Prefect Laquière, also laid wreaths.

The delegation, accompanied by the local officials, then visited the Dieppe Canadian War Cemetery (Cimetière des vertus) at Hautot-sur-Mer to walk down each row and leave roses on the graves of several soldiers.

Dinner at the official residence of the Ambassador of Canada to France

The Honourable Lawrence Cannon, Ambassador of Canada to France, hosted a luncheon on the theme of La Francophonie in honour of the delegation's visit. The members of the delegation had the opportunity to speak with certain La Francophonie stakeholders, including:

- The Minister Delegate for French Nationals Abroad, Ms. Hélène Conway-Mouret;

- Senator Claudine Lepage (PS), Chair of the France–Canada Friendship Group in the Senate;
- Ms. Catherine Coutelle, Deputy (PS), Chair of the France–Canada Interparliamentary Association;
- Senator Louis Duvernois (UMP);
- Ms. Marie-Christine Saragosse, President and CEO of Audiovisuel extérieur de France;
- Ms. Anne-Marie Cordelle, President of the Richelieu Senghor Circle of Paris; and
- Mr. Bernard Cerquiglini, Rector of the Agence universitaire de la Francophonie.

Meeting with Monseigneur Luigi Ventura, Apostolic Nuncio, in France

The former Apostolic Nuncio to Canada hosted a breakfast for the delegation at his official residence in Paris to discuss subjects of mutual interest.

Visit to the Canadian Students' House (MEC)

The delegation met with the Director of the Canadian Students' House (MEC), Mr. Letartre, as well as his wife, Mrs. Nicole Letartre. They explained the history and operation of the House and provided a tour of the building. It was clear to the delegation that Senator Joseph-Marcelin Wilson played a key role in establishing the Canadian Students' House. In the wake of that visit, the delegation also met with Ms. Carine Camby, Director of the General Delegation of the Cité internationale universitaire de Paris (CIUP).

Lunch with French parliamentarians

The Chair of the France–Canada Friendship Group in the Senate, Senator Claudine Lepage, organized a breakfast in honour of the delegation. Participants included at least 12 French senators as well as the Chair of the France–Canada Friendship Group in the National Assembly, Deputy Corinne Narassiguin. In addition to Senator Lepage, Senators Karine Claireaux, Catherine Morin-Desailly, Charles Revet, Hervé Maurey, Pierre-Yves Collombat, Jean-Claude Lenoir, Catherine Deroche, Christiane Kammermann, Jacques Cornano, Jean-Léonce Dupont and Jean-Pierre Plancade attended. This meeting gave the delegation an opportunity to discuss points of view on various subjects linked to Canada–France relations, including parliamentary affairs and politics in general.

Meeting with Mr. Jean-Pierre Bel, President of the French Senate

President Bel met with the delegation in his office, in the company of several French senators. The discussion addressed the next Speakers' Consultation of the Presiding Officers of the Upper and Unicameral Houses of the G20. President Bel indicated to Speaker Kinsella that the Speaker of the Russian Duma confirmed he would attend the upcoming G20 Speakers' Consultation in Mexico. Speaker Kinsella and President Bel also discussed themes to be addressed at the Consultation. Topics of discussion included trade between France and Canada and the large number of Francophones living outside Quebec. Speaker Kinsella invited President Bel to visit Canada to gain a

better understanding of the country. President Bel said he was interested, all the more because he knew Ambassador Zeller well.

Federal Republic of Germany

The delegation first visited Stuttgart, the capital of the home state (Land) of the President of the Bundesrat, Mr. Winfried Kretschmann, who hosted the delegation. The delegation then travelled on to Berlin and Hamburg.

Meeting with Mr. Alexander Bonde, Minister of Rural Affairs and Consumer Protection for Baden-Württemberg

Discussions addressed food trade between Canada and Germany, as well as global food supply. This will be discussed at the next Speakers' Consultation of the Presiding Officers of the Upper and Unicameral Houses of the G20. While most of the beef consumed in Baden-Württemberg comes from Argentina or the United States, there are opportunities for Canadian beef. Most student exchanges and scientist exchanges funded by European programs are with Australia and New Zealand. Participants expressed a desire to initiate more in-depth exchanges on food (both trade and research) between Canada and Baden-Württemberg.

Meeting with Mr. Winfried Kretschmann, Minister-President of the state of Baden-Württemberg

As the Minister-President of Baden-Württemberg, but also as the President of the Bundesrat and therefore the host of the delegation, Mr. Kretschmann met with the delegation in both Stuttgart and Berlin. In addition to the signing of the official guest book of the State Government, the first meeting provided an opportunity for both leaders to get to know each other. At their second meeting, they discussed the upcoming meeting of the Speakers' Consultation of the Presiding Officers of the Upper and Unicameral Houses of the G20 and the topics that would be addressed at the meeting. Speaker Kinsella invited President Kretschmann to send officials of the Bundesrat to the Parliamentary Officers' Study Program (POSP), while President Kretschmann invited Speaker Kinsella to send officials from the Parliament of Canada to participate in upcoming parliamentary exchange programs with the German parliament. President Kretschmann mentioned that he had visited Canada three years previously with the Baden-Württemberg state Finance Committee: he was very interested in discussing Canada's equalization payments and how Alberta fares in this system, which he compared to Germany, where Baden-Württemberg, like Bavaria and Hesse, is considered a rich state.

Meeting with Mr. Markus Löning, Commissioner for Human Rights Policy and Humanitarian Aid

Commissioner Löning discussed his role, mandate and actions with the members of the delegation. They also discussed German human rights and humanitarian aid policies, as well as Canada's *Indian Act*.

Meeting with Ms. Annette Schavan, Minister of Education and Research

Speaker Kinsella emphasized the importance of student exchanges and research exchanges between Canada and Germany, and mentioned that he would like to see more of these exchanges take place in the next few years: the number of Canadian students who spend even one semester abroad is too low, in his opinion. Since a lack of knowledge of the German language could be preventing people from pursuing these exchanges, Speaker Kinsella suggested encouraging more Canadians to pursue German language courses, especially through the Goethe Institute, in order to reach this objective. Minister Schavan was also in favour of increasing the number of exchanges.

Meeting with Mr. Norbert Lammert, President of the Bundestag

The meeting with the President of the Bundestag provided an opportunity to discuss relations between Canada and Germany, as well as current issues that are important to German and Canadian parliamentarians.

Meeting with Ms. Hannelore Kraft, Minister-President of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia

Ms. Kraft was very pleased that Speaker Kinsella had taken her up on the offer that she had extended the previous year to visit Germany. She mentioned that she had been very impressed by her visit to Canada and that her son is currently studying at McGill University. The very high potential for trade between Canada and her state was of particular interest, especially given Minister Fast's recent visit. The delegates spoke about various economic sectors, especially Alberta's energy, which could travel through Duisbourg, Europe's largest interior port. They also discussed internal mobility issues within Germany and problems receiving foreign workers.

Meetings with German parliamentarians

On at least three occasions, the delegates were able to converse with German parliamentarians at length. In Stuttgart, they met with members of the state government of Baden-Württemberg over breakfast, organized by the Vice-President of the state parliament, Ms. Brigitte Lösch. In Berlin, the delegation was invited to breakfast by the Chair of the Germany-Canada Parliamentary Group in the Bundestag (Deutsch-Kanadische Parlamentariergruppe), Mr. Klaus-Peter Flosbach, accompanied by five other German parliamentarians. At another breakfast, held by the President of the Bundesrat, Mr. Winfried Kretschmann, the delegation had the opportunity to meet with 13 members of the Bundesrat. In Hamburg, the Vice-President of the Parliament of Hamburg, Ms. Barbara Duden, welcomed the delegation and four Hamburg parliamentarians. On each of these occasions, the parliamentarians were able to freely discuss Canada-German relations and their key concerns.

Other visits

The delegation also met with Ms. Bilkay Öney, Minister of Integration of the Federal Republic of Germany.

The delegation had the opportunity to visit several historical sites. In Stuttgart, the principal sites were the “Haus des Geschichte,” the state parliament (Landtag) and the Villa Reitzenstein, seat of the government for Baden-Württemberg. In Berlin, the delegation was able to visit the Berlin Wall memorial, accompanied by the Director of the Berlin Wall Foundation, Mr. Axel Klausmeier, and representatives from the Bundestag and the Bundesrat. The delegation also attended a concert, “Mendelssohn Bartholdy” in the plenary room of the Bundesrat. The delegation’s visit was also officially recognized at the 903rd plenary session of the Bundesrat. In Hamburg, the delegation had the opportunity to take a boat tour of the port facilities and engage in an in-depth discussion with the Hamburg port authorities. The delegation also visited the fully automated HHLA (Hamburg Hafen und Logistik AG) container terminal and discussed business opportunities for Canadian ports with representatives from HHLA Container Terminals GmbH.

Acknowledgements

The members of the delegation would like to thank the staff of the Canadian Embassy in France for their hard work organizing the visit, with special thanks to Mr. Marc Berthiaume, who accompanied the delegation to each of its meetings and activities in France. The valuable support of Mr. Lawrence Cannon, Ambassador of Canada to France, was greatly appreciated by the delegation during its official meetings in Paris.

The members of the delegation also expressed their gratitude to their German hosts for the excellent itinerary prepared for them, with special thanks to Ms. Alexandra Kretschmar of the Bundesrat protocol office (Präsidialbüro), who accompanied the delegation in its travels through Germany. Thanks also to the support provided by the states of Baden-Württemberg and Hamburg, which ensured the success of the delegation’s visits to Stuttgart and Hamburg.

Finally, the delegates wish to thank the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Library of Parliament for the documentation they provided in preparation for this trip.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Noël A. Kinsella
Speaker of the Senate,

Travel Costs

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Republic of Germany

TRAVEL	\$ 49,419.62
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 0.00
PER DIEMS	\$ 2,418.19
PROTOCOL	\$ 5,512.26
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 7,669.40
TOTAL	\$ 65,019.47