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EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
Charleston, Illinois

news

May 30, 1986

Local

HARRY READ, Director of Information and Publications (217) 581-2820

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL.--Dr. Ted Ivarie, Eastern Illinois University dean of the College of Business, recently returned from a weeklong trade mission to Canada working to improve the economy of east central Illinois.

Ivarie was one of 50 Illinois business leaders and public officials in a delegation, headed by Lieutenant Governor George Ryan, that spent a week in Montreal, Toronto and Quebec City meeting with their Canadian counterparts.

His trip was sponsored by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs and a grant from the Small Business Development Center.

"As a group we were looking for ways of selling Illinois products in Canada while also looking for Canadians interested in investing in Illinois businesses," Ivarie said.

"My particular role was to represent EIU and the East Central Illinois Development Corporation by visiting prospective business firms and studying the economic development programs of some higher education institutions.

"Currently there is more trade between Canada and the U.S. than the U.S. and Japan. . . Canada is our major trading partner," he explained. "Right now Canada imports one-fourth of what the U.S. exports with Michigan the No. 1 state and Illinois No. 2.

Ivarie explained that Illinois has a great advantage because of its proximity to Canada, the commonality of the cultures and the economic dependence of both on the Great Lakes as a major inland waterway for transporting goods.

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"According to the Canadians, this state can attribute 77,000 jobs directly related to trade with them," Ivarie said.

As an example, Ivarie pointed out that Canada imports heavy industry products from Illinois based corporations such as Caterpillar, International Harvester and John Deere.

Similarly, the U.S. is highly interested in forest products and petroleum from its northern neighbor. "We have taken this relationship for granted for some time however there is great potential to improve the business climate.

"We were greeted with interest and hospitality, and it was an interesting time to be there because of the current negotiations to reduce the trade barriers to open free trade between the two countries."

Besides meeting with educational leaders, Ivarie represented businesses in the nine county area served directly by EICDC.

"I did make some interesting contacts. For instance, there are a couple companies moving their business enterprises to Illinois and there is a consulting firm that helps Canadian companies relocate.

"We also talked with a customs broker who assists businesses through the entanglements of customs and makes arrangements to have freight forwarded."

Ivarie also returned with a 'best prospects' list which is a guide for American industry as to the best opportunity to do business in Canada. "Essentially you get a sense of which products have the best prospects for being marketed up there."

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Ivarie's trip may also benefit the University directly since the business college staff has been working with the Canadian Consulate in Chicago for the past two years to "establish a Canadian Studies program at Eastern.

"Right now we have approved an International Studies option in business with a concentration in North American Studies through the management/marketing department."