



CANADA

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 70/2

MR. SHARP VISITS PARIS AND BONN

A Statement to the House of Commons on April 9, 1970,
by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the
Honourable Mitchell Sharp.

... I went to Paris to open the new Canadian Cultural Centre there and to talk to Mr. Maurice Schumann, the French Foreign Minister, and to Bonn to return the visit paid to Canada last year by Mr. Willy Brandt, who is now the Chancellor, and to discuss matters of common interest with members of the German Government.

Our new Cultural Centre in Paris will assist Canadians in France, especially students, and bring to the French people information about Canada, reflecting our bilingual and bicultural character and the many cultural strands that make up the Canadian fabric. The director of the Centre is Mr. Guy Viau, who was Assistant Director of the National Gallery here before taking up his new responsibilities. Mr. Viau is particularly well qualified for the job, and I am sure that the Centre, under his direction, will forge new ties between Canada and France.

The interest of the French Government and the people in the new Centre and in Canada as a meeting-place of two great cultures was well expressed by the French Government's representative at the inaugural ceremonies, Mr. Léo Hamon, who said:

"What makes your country unique is the imbrication and the juxtaposition of its two cultures. This Centre will fully reflect the originality and the wealth of resources of a country intent on retaining its own personality in the New World notwithstanding the size and power of its southern neighbour, which can be achieved only by preserving its diversity."

In Paris I met with the French Foreign Minister, Mr. Maurice Schumann. The principal subject we discussed was our bilateral relations, and the most important part for me was Mr. Schumann's categorical statement that the French Government has absolutely no intention of intervening in the internal affairs of Canada. If there is no misunderstanding between us about this, and I hope there is not, our problems will be easier to deal with in the future.