

Canada and Belgium discuss culture

The seventh meeting of the Canada-Belgium Mixed Commission was held recently in Quebec City, to discuss cultural co-operation between the two countries.

The commission was established under a cultural agreement signed by Canada and Belgium in July 1967.

The co-chairman of the commission were Jacques Gignac, Deputy Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs for the Canadian side and F. Dethier, Director General of High Education and Scientific Research at the Belgian Ministry of National Education.

The Canadian delegation was composed of representatives of Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, as well as officials from federal departments and agencies involved in the administration of cultural exchange programs between the two countries.

Cultural relations expand

At the meeting the commission reviewed Canada-Belgium cultural activities during the past year. Cultural relations during that time received a boost from the "Belgian Autumn in Canada" program which included the appearance in Montreal and Ottawa of the Theatre Workshop of Louvain-la-Neuve, the Delvaux exhibition in Montreal and Calgary and the cross-Canada tour of an exhibition of works by contemporary Flemish painters.

In Belgium, Canada presented a number of events in the performing and visual arts, including an exhibition of contemporary Canadian tapestries in Brussels, the Art Gallery of Ontario's exhibition of ten Canadian artists of the 1970s at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Ghent, and concerts in a number of Belgian cities by the Orford String Quartet, guitarist Liona Boyd, Mimes Electriques and Claude Gauthier. A centre for Canadian studies was also established at the Free University of Brussels.

Exchanges stressed

The commission agreed that this year emphasis would be placed on inter-university co-operation, on exchanges of young artists and on literary exchanges as an extension of the Canada-Belgium literary prize. The two sides also agreed to give priority to developing their respective audio-visual and cultural programs.

Future Canada-Belgium cultural events include an exhibition of Canadian Inuit

art to be presented in Belgium in 1983 or 1984 by the Winnipeg Art Gallery. Two Belgian exhibitions — one of drawings by Rubens and one on the *Art nouveau* movement will also tour Canada. In addition, in 1982, the Canada Council will invite two Belgian experts, one from both the French and Flemish communities to familiarize themselves with the activities of the Council. The National Museums Corporation of Canada will invite a Belgian expert to Canada to view their national exhibition services.

The Department of External Affairs will also provide grants next year for tours by Canadian artists in Belgium, including Le Théâtre de Carton, Mimes Omnibus and the Eddy Toussaint Dance Company.

Mitel expands in France

A fast-growing Canadian telecommunications firm has announced that it will establish a wholly-owned subsidiary in France.

Mitel Corporation of Kanata, outside Ottawa, has been granted approval by the French government to establish the subsidiary in the Vosges region of France. The company said it would employ more than 1,000 people in that region by the end of 1985 in the manufacture of a complete line of Mitel superswitch telephone switching equipment.

The company will enter into a distribution agreement with the Paris-based Association des Ouvriers en Instruments de Precision (AOIP), a manufacturer of PBX.

International distribution

Under the agreement, AOIP will distribute the current line of Mitel Superswitch PBX systems for an 18-month period and the recently announced Mitel SX-2000 digital communications system for a ten-year period. The French group will distribute the Mitel products within France and in Belgium, Luxembourg and several African countries.

The company said it had chosen to move into France because it is considered to be one of the most lucrative markets in Europe with an interest in telecommunications.

Earlier this year, Mitel announced plans to build a \$90-million plant in Wales and a \$20-million facility in Mexico.

The company also announced this summer that it would establish three more Canadian manufacturing plants — one in Ontario and two in New Bruns-

wick. Mitel is building a \$28.6-million plant in Renfrew, northwest of Ottawa. Two manufacturing plants are being built at a cost of \$48 million in Bouctouche, north of Moncton, New Brunswick. The two plants are expected to begin operation in 1983 and 1984 and are expected to employ 1,000.

Relief for Afghan refugees

Canada is providing two grants of \$150,000 each to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the League of Red Cross Societies (LRCS) to assist Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

The grants, part of the humanitarian relief program of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), are in response to separate appeals by the two organizations and will be channelled through the Canadian Red Cross Society.

Since the invasion of Afghanistan, Canada has provided the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR) with \$3.15 million and a bilateral food aid package worth \$2 million to Pakistan for distribution to the Afghans.

Asia-Pacific foundation studied

The federal government is studying the feasibility of creating a foundation to promote Canadian interests in the Asia and Pacific region.

Secretary of State for External Affairs Mark MacGuigan has appointed John Bruk, chairman of Cyprus Anvil Mining Corporation of Vancouver, to head the study.

The minister said that Canadian relations with the region have expanded and "show growing promise and diversity". Dr. MacGuigan added that what was needed "is a means by which all of these relationships — political, economic, cultural — can be fostered and supported and greater mutual awareness stimulated between Canadians and peoples of Asia and the Pacific". He said that a foundation for Asia and the Pacific, removed from government, might achieve this goal by serving as a clearinghouse for ideas and by supporting initiatives.

During the study, which will be completed early next year, representatives of provincial governments, academic institutions, business, labour and other interested parties will be consulted.