Biographies

(May 1984)

THE HONOURABLE ALLAN J. MACEACHEN

Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs

Mr. MacEachen was born in Inverness, Nova Scotia in July 1921, the son of Angus MacEachen and Annie Gillis.

He was educated in Inverness schools and at St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, where he received his B.A. He received an M.A. from the University of Toronto and did postgraduate studies in economics and industrial relations at the University of Chicago and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston.

He became professor of economics at St. Francis Xavier University at the age of 25 and, from 1948 to 1951, was head of the university's Department of Economics and Social Sciences. During this period, he also directed the People's School and an adult education program sponsored by the university's Extension Department.

Mr. MacEachen first entered federal politics in 1953 when he was elected member for Inverness-Richmond, his home constituency. He was re-elected in 1957, 1962, 1963, 1965, 1968, 1972, 1974, 1979 and 1980.

In 1955, Mr. MacEachen attended the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York as parliamentary observer. He was alternate delegate in 1956 to the Economic and Social Council of the UN in Geneva. Between 1958 and 1962 he worked in Ottawa as Special Assistant (for economic affairs) in the office of Opposition leader Lester B. Pearson.

Following the election of a Liberal government in April 1963, he was appointed Minister of Labour. He piloted the Canada Labour Code through Parliament and brought about the settlement of a long-standing Great Lakes labour dispute.

Mr. MacEachen was appointed Minister of National Health and Welfare in December 1965, and brought forward a series of major programs in the social security field. These included the Canada Assistance Act, the Health Resources Fund, Medicare and the Guaranteed Income Supplement for needy pensioners.

Mr. MacEachen was Government House Leader in 1967-68 and served as chairman of the Committee on the Reform of Parliamentary Procedure, which produced a series of wide-ranging reforms updating the rules and procedures of Canada's Parliament.