

Energy Minister Addresses Dinner of Thai-Canadian Association

On the evening of May 31 in the Kittl Hall of the Dusit Thani Hotel, members of the newly-revived Thai-Canadian Association were treated to a stimulating address on the development and prospects of Thailand's petro-chemical industry by Minister Sulee Mahasanthana, who is the Minister responsible for energy matters within the Prime Minister's Office. Following his speech, Minister Sulee also offered his reflections on the results of the visit to Canada of Prime Minister Prem whom he accompanied.

The evening was very successful, the dining hall being packed to capacity with over 150 guests. Within the few months of its short existence, the Thai-Canadian Association has grown in both size and, more significantly, in stature. Thus, distinguished head-table guests included Dr. Akom Sorasuchart, President of the Thai-Canadian Association and an influential politician within the Democrat Party; Dr. Tongchat Hongladaromp, Governor of the Petroleum Authority of Thailand; Mr. Chira Xuto, the President of Siam Cement; Dr. Chokechai Aksaranan, Secretary-General of the Association of Thai Industries; and Dr. Kasem Suwanakul, Rector of Chulalongkorn University, as well as Ambassador and Mrs. John L. Paynter.

In addition to delicious food and interesting conversation, the members of the Association were treated to an exhibition of early Canadian photographs depicting Canada's oil industry in the mid to late nineteenth century. An abbreviated version of the recently created "Introduction to Canada Exhibition: Asean Version" was also shown and both displays were extremely well received.



Her Royal Highness Princess Galyana Mahidol of Thailand recently visited Canada's Niagara Falls. After being guided around the Falls by Mr. George Bailey, the Niagara Parks Commission's Director of Public Relations, Her Royal Highness was the guest of the Government of Canada at the Skylon Revolving Restaurant where she was afforded a spectacular view of the brilliantly-lit Falls.

As the first major event organized by the re nascent Thai-Canadian Association, the evening was considered very successful by all concerned. Those interested in further information concerning the Thai-Canadian Association are invited to contact Mr. Rodney Briggs, Second Secretary, at the Embassy or Khun Norarit Komalarajun at telephone number 279-8924 or 279-6324. While the Association's Board is still functioning on a temporary and acting basis, it is expected that a new Board will be elected at a full membership meeting next fall. Any persons having a particular connection with Canada are invited to join the Association.



Minister Sulee with other head table guests at the Thai-Canadian Association dinner.

Canadian Dancers Earn Great Acclaim

The visit of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens (GBC) to Bangkok 1-6 June 1984 was a resounding success. It represented the first major Canadian cultural event in Thailand since the establishment of the Embassy and, as such, contributed greatly to Canada's expanding profile.

On the artistic side, the performances were highly acclaimed by local critics, one of whom described the company as "Brimming over with vitality, they left the audience breathless. . .". Of particular delight to the Thai audience was a piece choreographed specially for the Thai visit by James Kudelka to the music of a composition by His Majesty King Bhumipol Adulyadej, entitled "Candle-light Blues".

The Bangkok performances were jointly organized by the prestigious Siam Kolkarn Music Foundation, the Canadian Embassy, and the Dusit Thani Hotel. Preparations began as far back as May 1983, following the decision of the Governments of Canada and Quebec, in association with Canadian Pacific Airlines, to assist in the financing of the Asian tour.

On June 1st, Ambassador Paynter hosted a welcoming reception which attracted more than 500 guests from all sectors of the artistic and media world. The guest of honour of that evening was Deputy Prime Minister H.E. Bichai Rattakul. On June 2nd, an elegant Gala dinner for 550 guests which was attended by many of Thailand's leading business, Thailand, who had assisted in making the Bangkok stop possible were also present. The guest of honour was the President of the Privy Council, Dr. Sanya Dharma-sakdi, who represented the Royal Family which was in mourning following the death of Queen Rambhai Bharni, widow of King Rama VII. The dinner was also graced by the presence of Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda.

The June 3 performance was presided over by Privy Counsellor Dr. Chao Na Sylvanta, and both performances were exceptionally well-received by enthusiastic Thai audiences.

The visit was topped off by a farewell party hosted by Khunying Phornthip Narongdej, Vice-President of Siam Kolkarn Music Foundation, where the company was treated to a feast of Thai food and a performance of Thai classical dance.

The success of the GBC visit augurs well for further cultural initiatives in the future. As this experience clearly demonstrated, with the proper product, planning, and promotion, the prognosis for Canadian in culture in Thailand is most favourable indeed.