

SPEEDIER TARIFF CUTS POSSIBLE

Mr. Mitchell Sharp, Secretary of State for External Affairs, announced recently that, since the beginning of the year, Canada had been actively involved in intensive discussions with the major trading countries on the trade aspects of current difficulties in the United States balance of payments.

"It has been and remains the primary objective of the international trading community to develop a positive solution to these difficulties and thus to avoid United States consideration of the application of border taxes or other restrictive trade measures," the Minister's statement declared. "As a means of achieving this objective, a number of countries have indicated that they would be prepared to accelerate their Kennedy Round tariff reductions by introducing on January 1 next year the reductions scheduled for January 1, 1970. Canada would be prepared to join in a collective move of this kind and we have made this clear to our trading partners."

The Director General of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), under whose auspices these discussions had taken place, had, Mr. Sharp continued, just issued a statement in Geneva emphasizing "the importance of achieving a positive solution and outlining the position taken by various countries".

"It is unlikely," the Minister concluded, "that any final decision on these matters will be reached for some time, and Canada will continue to be in close consultation with the U.S. and other trading partners over the period ahead and will work for an agreed international solution involving expansionary rather than restrictive trade measures."

ESKIMO HOUSING

A \$12-million housing programme that will provide every Eskimo family with permanent rental housing is well under way in the Eastern Arctic. About 500 families have already moved into three-bedroom homes, with oil heat, electricity and sanitary services, and 314 more will have houses this summer. The programme, which is administered by the Northern Administration Branch of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, will be extended to other Arctic areas, and it is hoped that by 1971 all Eskimos will be living in adequate accommodation.

"Warm, dry housing and facilities for basic sanitation and cleanliness are key factors in reducing the high rates of infant mortality and tuberculosis among the Eskimo people," says Northern Development Minister Arthur Laing. "It is the aim of my Department to make available to all Eskimo families these essentials — as well as education and employment opportunities to bring their way of life more in line with southern standards."

UTILITIES INCLUDED

Under the programme, the monthly rent includes heat, electricity, water and sanitary services. Each house is equipped with basic furniture (to a maximum of

\$500) dishes, cutlery, and cleaning equipment. The rent is based on a sliding scale according to income and employment opportunities in various settlements. A board of local Eskimos decides housing priorities and sets the rent for hunters living off the land. Services (water delivery, sewage and garbage disposal) are handled, where possible, through Eskimo co-operatives.

In Igloolik, Whale Cover and Pelly Bay, Eskimo co-operatives have been awarded contracts to construct the rental houses; co-operatives at Gjea Haven and Holman Island have requested similar agreements. About \$1,000 is allowed for construction costs on every three-bedroom house worth \$9,600. The total figure includes manufacture of prefabricated components in southern Canada, transportation costs and basic furniture. Tenants who wish to purchase their houses, may do so with the assistance of loans and grants.

TRAINING PROGRAMME

An adult education programme described in booklets in Eskimo syllabics explains the financial obligations and responsibilities to the tenants. Eskimo home-makers are trained in the use of unfamiliar electrical appliances, cleaning equipment, basic nutrition, and the use of adequate, warm clothing to replace the traditional fur garments that are seldom worn by the modern Eskimo.

"Civilization has now reached in varying degrees every community in the North," Mr. Laing said. "Infections that are common and relatively harmless in the South are of grave concern when they touch groups with limited immunity. We believe that a warm, dry, sanitary environment is of major importance during this critical transition from isolation to active participation in northern development."

FRENCH-CANADIAN THEATRE

The curtain went up on the first play staged in Canada 362 years ago at Port-Royal in Acadia. The play was *Neptune in New France*, by Marc Lescarbot.

Over the intervening centuries, "putting on a play" was an important part of the curriculum of the upper classes in Quebec's classical colleges. The plays chosen were French classics, and it was not until the thirties of this century that a truly French-Canadian drama began to emerge that has developed, not without growing pains, to its present flourishing state.

The story of these 30 years or more of evolution was told by Jean Hamelin, art critic and novelist, in an interesting brochure published three years ago by the Cultural Affairs Department of the Quebec government, in its series *Arts, Humanities and Sciences in French Canada*.

The English translation of Jean Hamelin's work, entitled *The Theatre in French Canada* was presented to the public on May 6 at the Quebec National Library (formerly the Saint Sulpice Library), in Montreal by the Quebec Cultural Affairs Minister, M. Jean-Noël Tremblay.