

An important dimension of this five-year plan is the development of Canadian studies abroad. The project we are launching today is very much a part of this programme. So too is our support for the efforts of British academics to develop a network of Canadian courses in other British universities. In one or more of the fields of geography, literature, history, economics, political science and sociology, actual or potential interests exist at the universities of Birmingham, Cambridge, East Anglia, Leeds, London, Oxford, St. Andrews, Strathclyde, Sussex and Warwick.

I have referred on another occasion to the rôle of Professor Wreford Watson in relation to Canadian studies at this university: but this catalytic rôle has a national dimension as well. He is the first President of the British Association of Canadian Studies which was formally launched only last month at the University of Leeds.

This is the first year that a Canadian studies programme overseas had been supported by our Government. In addition to Britain, other countries now included in this new public affairs element of Canadian foreign policy are France, Japan and the United States. Next year, this programme will be extended to Belgium, Germany and Italy. The Canadian studies component of our five-year plan for expanding cultural relations with other countries is to be developed through the exchange of professors, the support of joint research opportunities, the encouragement of inter-university communications, the provision of Canadian books and learned journals and the organization of conferences and seminars.

You may well ask what the Canadian Government hopes to achieve by this wider projection of Canadian cultural interests and activities on the international scene. I suppose most of all we see this as a new way of testing the qualities of our own achievements as a nation. We believe there are valuable mutual benefits to be gained when countries share not only their separate cultural experiences, at as many levels of people-contact as possible, but also their cultural judgments and critical analyses, favourable or otherwise.

The most important answer to that question, of course, must come from Canadians themselves - our artists, our writers, our performers, our scholars, our scientists, our thinkers, and all others in every national community who support and enjoy their works.

We in Government are aware that culture is not something created by an act of Parliament - not even the Parliament at Westminster! It flows from the minds and the spirits of the individuals who make up a society, a nation. Institutions, governmental and otherwise, can offer encouragement and open new opportunities for cultural endeavours; but only individuals can create those works that go into the formation of a nation's cultural heritage.