

make it a strong international competitor. For years now, Sweden and Japan have been reaping advantages from the Swedish Institute and the Japan Foundation. Likewise, Israel, Egypt, Mexico, the U.S.S.R. and China—as well as many other countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America—are expanding their operations and developing specific policies and programs to make their cultural presence felt throughout the world.

This is the international environment within which Canada must pursue its interests. It is an environment which reflects a growing awareness of the fundamental importance of cultural relations to national development and foreign policy. It is also an environment which is highly competitive. To compete successfully, policies must be well conceived and programs designed to achieve the maximum impact for the most realistic expenditure of funds.

In contrast to countries with well-established traditions in cultural diplomacy, Canada's experience is quite short. Although the National Film Board and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation were involved in international activities prior to the 1960s, Canada's official foray into cultural diplomacy was really only launched in 1963 when the Government approved a modest reciprocal program with France, Belgium and Switzerland. In all probability, Great Britain would have been included on the list had it not been for the fact that developments within the Commonwealth were already more advanced than elsewhere. It was not until 1965, however, that the first real breakthrough occurred. In that year, not only was the program extended to Italy, Germany and the Netherlands and a formal cultural agreement signed with France but, significantly, Cabinet approved the establishment of a Cultural Affairs Division in the Department of External Affairs. Thus the Government declared its intention to engage in cultural diplomacy in earnest through the establishment of a cultural policy and operations unit within the department primarily responsible for the conduct of Canada's foreign relations.

Cultural relations have grown steadily in importance since that time. In 1967, a cultural agreement was signed with Belgium; in 1971, a program was developed with the U.S.S.R. followed in 1972 by one with the People's Republic of China. Exchanges were arranged with the United States and Britain in order to supplement activities taking place through private ini-

tiatives. In the mid 1970s formal cultural agreements were concluded with the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan and Mexico. The experience gained, coupled with the steady expansion of artistic and academic programs, signalled the need for a larger policy and operational unit within External Affairs. In 1979, the Department responded to this need by establishing the Bureau of International Cultural Relations.

Since Canada is a federal state, the system devised to promote Canada's international cultural interests is, understandably, a highly complex one. Cultural agreements and meetings with foreign governments on cultural matters must involve the provinces while at the federal level External Affairs is not the only Department involved. Far from it. Other institutions and agencies have a mandate and play an active role.

All federal cultural agencies are involved in Canada's international cultural relations. The Canada Council is empowered by its Act to discharge a number of important duties, including the promotion of the arts abroad and, through the Touring Office, to assist foreign artists perform in Canada. By virtue of the fact that they hold a similar mandate in the academic and scientific fields, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the National Research Council and the Medical Research Council also play a key role. Through its international programs, the National Museums Corporation is involved in exhibitions into and out of Canada, as are the museums, national and associate, under its jurisdiction. The National Film Board (NFB), the Canadian Film Development Corporation (CFDC), and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) play an active role: the Board through its world distribution system and offices abroad which are responsible for showing roughly 40,000 prints to an estimated annual audience of almost a billion people, the Film Corporation through its involvement in production arrangements with foreign partners; and the CBC through its broadcast transmissions in many foreign languages to countries all over the world and its network of exchanges with foreign broadcasting organizations. Finally, mention must be made of the National Library, the Public Archives and the National Arts Centre: the Library and Archives for their international activities involving librarians, books and archival material and the Arts Centre for its programs involving foreign artists in Ottawa as well as tours abroad of its orchestra and theatre companies.