

Exchanges between the two countries were greatly stimulated as a result. There has been periodic consultation between the two governments since then concerning our bilateral interests and international affairs, just like the consultation we have with the United States or Britain. Two or three times a year, I meet with my good friend and colleague Mr. Couve de Murville. From time to time, other ministers of the two governments have exchanged visits to discuss problems of mutual interest. There have also been numerous meetings between officials. I should also mention the activities of the France-Canada Parliamentary Association, which, since its creation a year ago, has held meetings in both countries.

I cannot overstress the benefit which both countries have drawn from these repeated contacts. As a result, each country has a better understanding of the attitude of the other towards the great problems which confront the modern world. This has helped to maintain the friendly atmosphere which marks our relations and helps us to achieve our common objectives.

In our cultural relations, we have made great progress since we established our programme of cultural exchanges with French-speaking countries in 1964. When we started, we had \$250,000 at our disposal. Since 1965, we have raised this amount to \$1 million. In November 1965, the French Ambassador and I signed the first general cultural agreement between our two countries. This agreement, which aimed at a better organization and co-ordination of cultural exchanges between the two countries, has resulted in our welcoming to Canada at least 100 French scholarship winners every year, who have come to study at post-graduate and research levels in our universities. Under the same agreement, about 20 French university professors are invited to our universities every year. In return, France has granted nearly 80 scholarships to Canadians to study in France, and also welcomes several members of our academic community.

In addition, to underline the importance of La Maison Canadienne for students in Paris, the Federal Government has made a grant of half a million dollars to permit its expansion, raising its capacity from 70 to 125 students. (By the way - may I offer my most sincere thanks to Mr. Ostiguy, who is sitting at this table, for his initiative and co-operation?)

Thanks to the federal programme of exchanges with French-speaking countries, we have been able to help several Canadian groups go abroad during the past year. I might just mention a few of them: the Montreal Symphony Orchestra went to France, Switzerland and Belgium, with great success; le Théâtre de l'Egrégore played in France and Switzerland; les Feux-Follets took part in the international music-hall festival at the Olympia in Paris; a Canada Week was organized at Mulhouse. Lastly, book collections of more than 800 works, covering all phases of Canadian life, have been given to six large French libraries.

I should also mention our efforts in Belgium and Switzerland, where we have multiplied our cultural exchanges, particularly in the academic field. Every year, we receive about ten students from each of these two countries on Canadian Government scholarships, while five or six Canadians go there, thanks to their scholarships. Before long, we hope to sign an agreement with Belgium which would provide for the expansion of these exchanges.