

NATIONAL LAW CONFERENCE

The Minister of Justice, Mr. John Turner recently announced that a National Conference on the Law would be held in Ottawa from February 1 to 4, 1972.

Sponsored by the Department of Justice, the meeting will examine law and social justice in Canada and discuss such subjects as the role of the lawyer; trends in public reaction to law and justice; the new legal problems of the Seventies such as pollution and the "lifestyle" issues; technology and the law.

Half the 350 delegates will be drawn from the Canadian legal profession; the remainder will be chosen with the purpose of providing representation of the different points of view held by special interest and minority groups, labour, business and members of the general public.

Prime Minister Trudeau will give the opening address at the National Arts Centre on February 1. Plenary and workshop sessions will follow.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

While the conference will last only four days, its success will rest on the extent to which members of the public participate, both before and after the Ottawa discussion and workshop sessions. To this end there will be a considerable amount of pre-conference and post-conference activity.

While actual attendance will be limited to about 350, it is intended that the public take part in defining the areas that ought to be discussed and in contributing individual suggestions. In announcing the meeting, Mr. Turner extended an invitation to every person in Canada to be heard and invited them to write to his Department. Any letters received will be considered by a conference committee and chosen letters will be published and distributed to all delegates as background material.

FILM ON U.S.S.R. AT ROM

Russia, the first uncensored documentary film on the Soviet Union ever made, received its Canadian première at the Royal Ontario Museum on October 19.

Produced and directed by Theodore Holcomb of the United States, the feature-length film took 18 months to complete. Holcomb and his crew, without the supervision of Soviet guides or monitors, travelled more than 17,000 miles and shot about 30,000 feet of film in conditions ranging from the freezing cold of Arctic blizzards to the blazing heat of Asian deserts. In six months, they covered 12 of the 15 Soviet republics, visiting Leningrad, the Baltic States, Moscow, Georgia, Armenia, the Caucasus, Siberia and Central Asia.

The ROM showing of the film is a fund-raising event for the Museum's film library and archives.

Russia is a portrayal of the life of people of some of the 60 nationalities in the Soviet Union. It

shows, for the first time, what happened in the previously independent Baltic States of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia since they were taken over by the Soviet Union. Novgorod, the ancient capital of Russia, is compared to modern Moscow. Also shown are old and new Siberian cities linked by the Trans-Siberian Express, and the wooden villages at the edge of Lake Baykal.

The film explores Samarkand, Tashkent, the holy city of Bukhara and such out of the way places as Dushambe, Ashkabad and the vast Karakum desert.

Holcomb's journey was eventful and hazardous. There were strict regulations on photography, which made filming unpredictable, difficult and dangerous.

Besides conceiving, producing and directing the film, Holcomb also edited it and prepared the musical score. The commentary was written by noted author, Harrison E. Salisbury. Completed in the autumn of 1970, *Russia* has been shown at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and at the Institute for Humanistic Studies in Aspen, Colorado.

ARCHIVIST FOR STRATFORD

James R. Aikens has been appointed the first full-time archivist with the Stratford Festival, Artistic Director Jean Gascon announced recently. In making the announcement, he expressed the hope that other theatres in Canada would follow Stratford's lead. "We believe the preservation of already historical documents, and of papers that will one day become historical, is a very real responsibility which our theatres haven't taken seriously enough. Stratford will be doing Canadian theatre a service if it can set a pattern for others to follow," he said.

It is believed that Mr. Aikens is the first full-time archivist to be employed by a professional theatre in North America.

The material that Stratford has collected on the founding and development of the theatre has grown to the point where cataloguing can no longer be handled on a part-time basis. The archivist's first task will be to sort through the collection, which includes such diverse material as committee reports, correspondence, production data, theatre programs and posters, photographs, design sketches, music tapes and videotapes of the past three seasons' productions.

In time, it is hoped, the archives will house all papers related to the theatre's history and operation, thereby providing scholars with access to all pertinent data in one central location.

Mr. Aikens eventually hopes also to act as an historian for the Festival, compiling research data on such subjects as the history of the Avon Theatre, which was purchased by the Stratford Festival in 1963, after serving as a home for theatrical productions in the area since the turn of the century.