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MONTREAL'S NATIONAL THEATRE FOR CHILDREN
LES PISSENLITS
A SUCCESS IN USSR AND SWITZERLAND

The Department of External Affairs is pleased to announce that the Montréal-based NATIONAL THEATRE FOR CHILDREN LES PISSENLITS has just completed a successful three-week tour of the USSR, May 28 to June 15, and one week of performances in Switzerland, May 21 to 26. The company was acclaimed by Soviet and Swiss audiences and critics in Geneva, Tbilisi, Moscow and Odessa, the four cities where they performed. The tour of the Soviet Union was part of the programme of exchanges for 1978 and 1979 governed by the 1971 General Exchanges Agreement between Canada and the USSR.

In the USSR, les Pissenlits gave sixteen performances of Gulliver, an adaptation in French of Jonathan Swift's famous story, to sold-out houses and to audiences in which adults outnumbered children four to one. Audience response was so enthusiastic that the company even had to rehearse additional encores. Children and adults eagerly participated through sing-alongs and dialogue because René Lemieux, who played the role of Gulliver, had learned to deliver essential lines in Russian. Official tribute was paid to the company by the Soviet Bureau of the International Association of Theatres for Children and Youth. Also, the Congress of Soviet Theatre Directors, which was meeting in Moscow and attended a performance, expressed its wish to see les Pissenlits return to the USSR.