

manner to the objects of external policy. As a means to that end, and in the interests of co-ordination, there exists an Interdepartmental Committee on Canadian Information Abroad. I am glad to say that the agencies mentioned have, along with Canadian missions abroad, accomplished a good deal in recent years in the cultural and information field.

In addition there have been significant steps taken to promote cultural and educational relations with particular groups of countries. It was only a few years ago that we embarked on the Commonwealth Educational Scheme. Last summer Canadian artists performed in the Commonwealth Arts Festival in Britain under official sponsorship. Last November Canada entered into a cultural agreement with France and we hope that this will be followed by cultural agreements with Belgium and Switzerland as well. In the present fiscal year \$1 million are being spent on specific cultural exchanges with France, Belgium and Switzerland. In looking to the future, we hope to extend cultural programmes to other areas as well. In this way the Federal Government will be stimulating exchanges of benefit to all the country, closely related to general foreign policy, and parallel to the exchanges and contacts which provincial governments and private agencies have with other countries in these fields.

At this point I might direct your attention to another area of diplomatic activity which I consider to be of the greatest importance. I have always held strongly to the belief that Canada's foreign relations like all other basic aspects of our national policies, should, express the bilingual and bicultural character of our country. The steady development of our bilateral relations with France and the French speaking world is helping to develop that new dimension in our policy.

I am convinced that such a positive and constructive development in our foreign relations can greatly benefit Canada as a whole. At the same time