

EDUCATION IN CANADA

Canada's educational system is a window on the world, allowing Canadian and foreign students entry into a realm of new ideas and skills. It is a system characterized by its diversity, adaptability, and excellence, and it offers students quality education at highly competitive prices.

Canada has for years encouraged foreign student enrolment in its institutions of higher learning. Since their arrival under the Colombo Plan in the 1950s, foreign students have played an important part in the Canadian educational system.

Today, for instance, more than 1,600 Singaporean students are currently studying in Canada. Most of them very quickly feel at home in a country whose Parliamentary and judicial systems are based on the same model as theirs, and where multi-culturalism is also the way of life. Canadian-educated Singaporeans take home with them an appreciation and understanding of Canada and its unique identity in North America. The lasting links work to the betterment of both countries in all areas — trade, commerce and social relationships.

Many of Singapore's "Canadian grads" have had highly successful careers after their return to Singapore. Several heads of Singapore corporations and six senior officials at the level of permanent secretary are graduates of Canadian educational institutions.

The very active Canadian Alumni Association of Singapore invited the Right Honourable Joe Clark, Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, to speak to its members during his June 1987 visit to Singapore for the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference. In his remarks, Mr Clark underlined the fact that Canada actively welcomes students from Singapore and other ASEAN countries.

In this context, the Minister of Employment and Immigration recently announced a series of changes designed to facilitate study by foreign students in Canada. Foreigners studying at post-secondary institutions in Canada are now eligible to work on-campus during their studies, and immediately after graduation, will be permitted to work for up to one year in a field related to their course of study. In addition, spouses of students studying in Canada will be permitted to take employment in any field for the dura-



Mr Clark met with senior Singaporean graduates from Canadian universities during his visit to the island republic in 1987.

tion of their stay in Canada. These provisions will enable foreign students to acquire practical experience in addition to their formal academic training. These changes, together with modifications made last year to permit the extension of student authorizations for the duration of their course of study, will make it easier for foreign students in Canada to have a more complete educational experience.

In Canada, high-quality education is paired with competitive pricing. Tuition costs are generally significantly lower than those in the United States, the United Kingdom, or Australia. However, tuition fees vary from province to province, and from institution to institution. In 1987/88, for example, tuition fees for foreign students in a bachelor's degree course in arts or science ranged from \$1,045 (S\$1,700) to \$5,850 (S\$9,400). Fees also vary according to the course of study, with professional courses and engineering being more expensive than the arts and sciences.

With a long history of high-quality education, Canada is interested in offering education to students from around the world at competitive prices. Apart from the 1,600 Singaporean students, 4,500 students from other ASEAN countries have taken advantage of the opportunities Canada has to offer, and they have been successful not only in their academic pursuits in Canada but in helping to reinforce the strong relationship between Canada and ASEAN.

Vocational Training on Batam

The Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) will play a major role in the development of a vocational training institute on Indonesia's Batam Island. Batam has been developed and promoted by the Government of Indonesia as a service and supply base for Indonesia offshore oil and gas activities, and the new centre will focus on training workers involved in these activities.

SAIT will play the lead role in coordinating the curriculum for the centre, and specific courses will be taught by other industry specialists. Two other Canadian companies involved to date are Alert Disaster Control Inc. of Calgary, which will provide training in firefighting, oil spill control, and other emergency response techniques, and Can-Dive Services Ltd of North Vancouver, which will provide diver training and training in the specialised underwater techniques required by divers to service offshore oil and gas installations.

Up to 15 Canadian instructors will be living on Batam in the near future, as training is scheduled to start as early as September 1988.