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WINDING UP OF THE AFFAIRS OF THE CUSTODIAN

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Don Jamieson, announced today that the Government has decided to bring an end to the programme for the return, to eligible former owners, of property which vested in the Custodian in World War II. Persons whose property in Canada vested in the Custodian at that time because such persons were resident in enemy occupied territory or because such persons were resident in Italy have until December 31, 1978 to apply for the release of their property. Applications received after this date will not be considered by the Government of Canada.

Mr. Jamieson said the vast bulk of these assets had long since been returned and the residual assets were those whose former owners had not come forward and could not otherwise be traced. The residual assets are identified with persons who resided in the following territories, during World War II:

Austria, Belgium, China, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, France, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Yugoslavia.

No claims may be made in respect of property formerly owned by persons who resided in enemy countries in World War II other than with respect to property formerly owned by residents of Italy. This latter property is an exception by virtue of the Agreement between Canada and Italy of September 20, 1951 for the settlement of certain Canadian war claims and the release of Italian assets in Canada.

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