



STATEMENT

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**NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY
THE HONOURABLE ANDRÉ OUELLET,
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,**

**ON THE OCCASION OF AN ANNOUNCEMENT
OF A GRANT TO THE NATIONAL BALLET OF CANADA**

**TORONTO, Ontario
May 17, 1994**

Ladies and gentlemen:

It is with great pleasure that I announce today my department's support for the extended tour that the National Ballet of Canada is about to make in Germany, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands. The National Ballet will also travel to Israel for the first time - a fitting symbol of our maturing relations with a region on the brink of real peace.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade is contributing \$300 000 towards this tour. This is an investment which recognizes the artistic excellence and the international reputation of your company. I also wish to pay tribute to the Province of Ontario and to Anne Tanenbaum together with Joey and Toby Tanenbaum for their contributions in making this tour possible. This joint action clearly shows what a strong partnership between the arts and various sectors of society can achieve: a climate of confidence in which all can thrive. In this context, I invite other players in the private sector to profit from the remarkable creativity of Canadian artists, and to share the limelight with them on stages around the world.

This grant is a sign of our appreciation for the contribution the National Ballet makes to the cultural life of Canada, as well as to the projection of Canada's culture abroad. In particular, your company has put Toronto on the map as a city where dance flourishes in all its many forms. Toronto is now a centre of artistic excellence in virtually every field. This is why we view this contribution as an investment. The returns will be beneficial to all.

For all these reasons, the Canadian government regards the National Ballet of Canada as a special partner in projecting the unique personality of Canada on the international stage at a time when the international environment is undergoing a profound transformation.

This government has explicitly recognized the importance of a vibrant cultural sector, not only for our sense of belonging as Canadians, but also for Canada's place in the world. As we stated in the Red Book:

Culture is the very essence of national identity, the bedrock of national sovereignty and national pride. At a time when globalization and the information and communications revolution are erasing national borders, Canada needs more than ever to commit itself to cultural development.

The following quotation is, equally relevant:

Finding jobs, ...enhancing national unity, ...and enriching the cultural identity of Canadians are all goals inextricably linked to how Canada acts in the global arena.

In the context of my ministerial responsibilities, I am putting these policy principles into practice. The Special Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Review of Canadian Foreign Policy held a round table discussion in Ottawa on May 12, at which time these questions, and many others, were addressed. I attach great importance to the contribution of the cultural sector to the foreign policy review because of its acknowledged role in helping to chart the future course of our country and its presence and recognition abroad.

In concrete terms, the International Cultural Relations Program of my department, in co-operation with other players in this field, provides support for international touring, thereby helping to promote the viability of a unique sector of our society. Our interpreters, creators and entrepreneurs create and reflect the commonality and the individuality of our Canadian culture. Their activities inspire and encourage all of us to look beyond our daily horizons, and to participate in the celebration of life.

Your performances on the stages of major cities around the world help to define us as Canadians. There could be no better way of demonstrating the objectives of our cultural presence on the international scene.

Because of the relatively small size of our domestic cultural market, and because of its regional fragmentation, your confirmed presence in the international markets is crucial not only to your artistic development and to Canada's cultural dynamism, but also to the creation and protection of meaningful jobs. Once again Canada's domestic and international concerns are inextricably linked.

I salute your creativity, your commitment and your energy. I wish you great success in your performances in Europe and the Middle East. We are all very proud of you. I know Canada's artistic excellence will be well represented by such fine ambassadors.

Thank you.