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VISIT TO OTTAWA BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER
OF LUXEMBOURG

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, announced today that the Foreign Minister of Luxembourg, His Excellency Gaston Thorn, will be making an official visit to Ottawa on February 19 and 20, 1973. Mr. Thorn's visit is in response to an invitation from Mr. Sharp, who accompanied Their Excellencies the Governor General and Mrs. Michener on their visit to Luxembourg in April 1971.

Mr. Thorn will be spending a day in Montreal on his way to Ottawa.

(Notes on relations between Canada and Luxembourg and a curriculum vitae of Mr. Thorn are attached.)

Relations between Canada and Luxembourg

Canada and Luxembourg established diplomatic relations in 1945. The warm ties between the two countries derive in part from relationships formed in the wake of two world wars, and the fact that Grand Duke Jean lived in Canada during the last war and studied at Laval University in Quebec City.

In the area of foreign policy, Canada and Luxembourg have a number of common concerns: support for the UN, participation in NATO, and the search for security and reduced tensions. Luxembourg is a member of the European Economic Community, and a valued partner in Canada's efforts to establish ever closer economic and cultural ties with Western Europe. Another characteristic the two countries have in common is bilingualism: French is Luxembourg's official language, and German is also widely spoken. Both countries take part in the activities of la francophonie, both being members of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation. The Association of French-speaking Parliamentarians, of which Canada is a member, was established as the result of efforts initiated by Luxembourg.

Trade between the two countries is currently running at \$9,000,000 worth of Canadian exports and \$3,000,000 worth of imports from Luxembourg annually.

Mr. Thorn's visit continues a series of exchanges of distinguished visitors between the two countries. In 1967, Canada had the pleasure of welcoming one of Mr. Thorn's predecessors as Foreign Minister, Mr. Pierre Grégoire. The Governor General and Mrs. Michener, accompanied by the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, made an official visit to Luxembourg in April 1971.

Curriculum Vitae - Gaston Eg. Thorn

Gaston Eg. Thorn was born in Luxembourg on September 3, 1928. His university education was acquired shortly after the war in Montpellier, Lausanne and Paris. He has a doctorate in law and is a member of the Bar of Luxembourg. He was President of the Luxembourg National Union of Students, the World Student Conference, and the World Federation of Democratic Youth. He first stood for election in 1959 and was elected as a centrist member. He was a member of the Luxembourg City Council from 1959 to 1969, and Deputy Mayor from 1961 to 1963. Member of the European Parliament from 1959 to 1969: Vice-Chairman of the Liberal Group, Chairman of the Committee on the Developing Countries, and Chairman of the Parity Committee of the Association CEE-EAMA, a body consisting of representatives of the European Economic Community and the Associated States of Africa and Madagascar. Member of the Council of Europe.

Appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade, the Civil Service, and Physical Education and Sport in the government formed after the election of December 15, 1968.

In 1961, at the age of 33, he was elected President of the Democratic Party, and he was re-elected to that office in 1964, 1968 and 1972.

President of the Liberal International since 1970.

Married to Liliane Thorn-Petit, journalist, and father of Alain, born December 12, 1962.