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THE HONOURABLE
ALLAN J. MACEachEN
IN SCOTLAND

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CANADA'S NEW FIVE-YEAR PLAN FOR CULTURAL EXCHANGES
AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CANADIAN STUDIES ABROAD

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

EDINBURGH (October 21) -- The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, announced today that his department will implement a new five-year plan recently approved by the government to expand and diversify Canada's cultural relations with other countries.

"Cultural interest and activity in Canada is enjoying a period of unprecedented vigour," said Mr. MacEachen. "It was plain that this growth and diversification should be reflected in the foreign policy of our government, so as to project on the international scene the breadth, depth and creativity of Canadian cultural activities."

For these reasons, the minister went on to say, and subject to the budgetary restraint which current economic conditions may force it to exercise in the next few years, the Government will therefore attempt to expand and diversify Canada's foreign cultural exchanges.

"You may well ask what the Canadian Government hopes to achieve by this wider projection of Canadian cultural interests and activities on the international scene," Mr. MacEachen continued. "I suppose most of all we see this as a new way of testing the qualities of our own achievements as a nation. We believe there are valuable mutual benefits to be gained when countries share not only their separate cultural experiences, at as many levels of people-contact as possible, but also their cultural judgements and critical analyses, favourable or otherwise."

"We in government are aware that culture is not something created by an Act of Parliament -- not even the Parliament at Westminster. It flows from the minds and spirits of the individuals who make up a society, a nation. Institutions, governmental and otherwise, can offer encouragement and open new opportunities for cultural endeavours; but only individuals can create those works that go into the formation of a nation's cultural heritage."

The Canadian minister is in Scotland at the invitation of the Foundation for Canadian Studies in the United Kingdom and of the University of Edinburgh. He attended today the inauguration of this university's new chair and Centre of Canadian Studies. The inaugural lecture "Movement of People and Movement of Ideas", was given by Professor Ian Drummond, from the University of Toronto. Mr. MacEachen attended earlier the second board meeting of the foundation, which has endowed Edinburgh University's new chair and centre; he also opened an exhibition of Canadiana at the University Library. The minister's visit to Edinburgh was preceded by a stopover in London during which he was the guest at a luncheon given by the British Foreign Secretary, Mr. James Callaghan.

"An important dimension of our five-year plan is the development of Canadian studies abroad," Mr. MacEachen said at the inauguration. "So too is our support for the efforts of British academics to develop a network of Canadian courses in British universities."

That the first chair and centre of Canadian studies in the United Kingdom should be in Scotland is in no way surprising, noted Mr. MacEachen, since "there are the strongest of ethnic and cultural bonds between our country and this region of the United Kingdom."

"I myself represent Nova Scotians of varied Scottish ancestry in our Parliament, but there are also the French-speaking descendents of the Fraser Highlanders in Quebec; the descendents of Scottish settlers of Glen-garry in Ontario; the Selkirk immigrants to Manitoba; the Hebrideans who people the South of Saskatchewan; the Glaswegians who dug the first coal mines on Vancouver Island -- in all more than two million Canadians who claim Scottish forebears and who form the country's third largest ethnic community."

"Many a ship which for two centuries carried Scots westward across the Atlantic, would bring back not only timber for the great shipyards of the Clyde, salt fish, fine furs and abundant wheat, but Canadian students bound for the Scottish universities -- St. Andrew's, Glasgow, Aberdeen and particularly Edinburgh."

The Scottish influence had a profound impact on the early development of Canadian education systems, Mr. MacEachen recalled: "Indeed, I suppose it is more to our Scottish ancestors than to any others, that we owe the fact we have long enjoyed in Canada the kind of comprehensive school systems that are still in dispute in parts of this country."

Returning to the new five-year plan for cultural exchanges, the minister noted that in addition to Britain; the countries now included are France, Japan and the United States: next year, the programme will be extended to Belgium, Germany and Italy. Canadian studies are to be developed through the exchange of professors, the exploitation of joint research opportunities, the encouragement of inter-university contacts, the provision of Canadian books and learned journals and the organization of conferences and seminars.

Mr. MacEachen recalled that Canada is subjected, more than any other country perhaps, to generally welcome but somewhat too pervasive cultural influences from the United States, a situation which, together with the bilingual and multicultural make-up of Canadian society, accounts for the key parameters of the Canadian Government's foreign cultural policy:

- To maintain and strengthen the country's British and French connections;
- To sustain its participation in the cultural institutions of the Commonwealth and La Francophonie;
- To diversify cultural exchanges towards selected countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America.

But the new five-year plan also reflects a new approach to cultural relations by Canadian authorities. First, a greater variety of activities are planned for the programme of major cultural events, so that more countries can be reached and that Canadian artists and intellectuals can be more effectively assisted in establishing closer ties with their foreign counterparts.

Second, in response to new needs, conventional exchanges will be supplemented by new programmes such as interfaculty exchanges in the academic field and youth exchanges in the socio-cultural field.

Third, the new plan takes into account the findings of recent UNESCO studies in that it will place greater emphasis than in the past on the exchange of people, as opposed to the trading of cultural goods.

In conclusion, Mr. MacEachen thanked, on behalf of the Government of Canada, all those whose dedication and hard work made it possible to establish in little more than a year Edinburgh University's new Chair and Centre of Canadian Studies: the university's Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Sir Hugh Robson; the President of the British Association of Canadian Studies, Professor Watson and other faculty members; the Directors of the Endowing Foundation, particularly Lord Amory; the past and present Canadian High Commissioners in London, Mr. Jake Warren and the Honorable Paul Martin, as well as the staff of the High Commission.

The Foundation for Canadian Studies
in the United Kindgom

The Foundation for Canadian Studies in the United Kingdom was established in June 1974 under the chairmanship of Canada's High Commissioner in London, Mr. Jake Warren; the present High Commissioner and former Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Paul Martin, became the Foundation's Chairman upon his appointment to London. The purpose of the Foundation is to provide a vehicle through which financial support can be mobilized to promote Canadian studies at institutions of higher learning in the United Kingdom. The Canadian Government contributed a third of the Foundation's initial endowment of 180,000 Pounds (approximately 360,000 Dollars); the remaining funds were readily obtained from British and Canadian private sources, "thanks largely to the efforts of Lord Amory", noted Mr. MacEachen. Viscount Amory is a former Chancellor of the Exchequer and was Britain's High Commissioner to Ottawa in the early sixties; he is presently Chancellor of Exeter University. The other original members of the Board of Directors are Lord Trend, Rector of Oxford University's Lincoln College, Mr. John Elton, Chairman of ALCAN(UK), Mr. H.L. Fawcett (Treasurer), Assistant General Manager of the Bank of Nova Scotia in London, Mr. H.A.R. Powell, Board Chairman of Massey Ferguson Holdings and Mr. Alastair Down, Board Chairman of Burmah Oil. The Secretary of the Foundation is Mr. Clarence Devine.