

MAY YOU ONLY HAVE A LIGHT CASE OF C.S. (continued)

Usually in this stage the new arrival takes a superior attitude to the people of the host country. His or her sense of humor begins to exert itself. Instead of criticizing he jokes about the people and cracks jokes about his or her own difficulties.

He or she is now on the way to recovery. And there is always the poor devil who is worse off than yourself whom you can help, which in turn gives you confidence in your ability to speak and get around.

In the fourth stage your adjustment is about as complete as it can be. The new arrival now accepts the customs of the country as just another way of living. You operate within the new milieu without a feeling of anxiety, although there are moments of strain. Only with a complete grasp of all the cues of social intercourse will this strain disappear.

With a complete adjustment you not only accept the foods, drinks, habits and customs, but actually begin to enjoy them. And if you leave for good you generally miss the country and the people to whom you have become accustomed.

Culture shock has its stages which the patient must get through. There are also reactions of other people to the sufferers of culture shock which might be considered.

If the visitors are frustrated and have aggressive attitudes toward the people of the host country, they will sense this and in many cases respond by a similar hostility or simple avoidance of the visitors.

To fellow Canadians and other foreigners who are well-adjusted, the sufferers of culture shock become somewhat of a problem. They tend to increase their dependence on fellow countrymen much more than is normal. Some can and will help, some will try to avoid those persons. In any case, until the individuals have achieved a satisfactory adjustment they are not able to play their parts on the job or as members of the community.

Culture shock probably affects wives more than husbands. The husband has his professional duties to occupy him and his activities may not differ too much from what he has been accustomed to. The wife, on the other hand, has often to operate in an environment which differs much more from the milieu in which she grew up, consequently the strain on her is greater. Also, if there are children in the family, coping with their problems tends to strain an already tense wife even further.

Having described the stages and symptoms of culture shock, it is necessary to suggest how to get over it. First of all, try to get your domestic matters in order as quickly as possible. However, do not make the mistake of putting off sight-seeing, travel, getting acquainted with the language, the city, and the culture, until you are "well settled". Some of us are so fastidious and meticulous that if we waited until the household was really perfect, we would never emerge to learn about and enjoy our new country.

As in most cases, a happy compromise no doubt is best. Do try to get settled but simultaneously try to reach out and get acquainted with your new environment.

Obviously the best way to begin to familiarize yourself with the new culture is to begin to learn the language. Many foreign languages, of course, are difficult for most Canadians to learn, and to try to learn them thoroughly is most likely not worthwhile to those who are planning to be at a given post only two or two and one-half years. But certainly try to learn numbers, how to find the floor number of an apartment, how to shop a bit, how to make your basic wants and needs known. This will greatly relieve the strain of getting about. And learning standard greetings and polite phrases is a sure way to win friends and influence people.

When Canadians first arrive on a new posting, they may encounter kinds of persons with whom they have the least in common.

Don't judge all local nationals by the people you meet on the street, the shop keeper, the beggars, the watchmen; judge them by people who are educated to your level, by those who are your counterparts. You will have a good first impression and find many common interests and friendships if you go about it in this way.

Culture shock takes a month to a year, sometimes, to conquer. Once conquered, most Canadians find most of their posts abroad rewarding places to live in. One has only to call on Canadians who have returned to Canada after a two to three year stay at a given post. The large number of them recall their stay as a truly valuable, enjoyable episode in their lives.

Some of the worst sufferers of culture shock become in the end the most devoted to the very country that first gave them such distress.

In a word, may you have only a light case of C.S., a long, happy stay, and a short case of reverse culture shock when you return to Canada!

OCTOBER, CANADA EXPORT TRADE MONTH

October is Canada Export Trade Month. For every great nation, flourishing foreign trade has been the key to its achievement of its national goals. Nowhere is this more true than here in Canada. Most Canadians are aware of their country as a modern and industrialized one but far fewer recognize it as one of the world's leading trading nations.

The latest U.N. statistics (1984) ranked Canada the seventh in total trade and seventh largest exporter with an export trade valued at U.S. \$86.8 billion. Canadian exports of goods plus services in 1985 were valued at \$146.9 billion (Canadian) of which, goods alone accounted for \$120.3 billion.

Satisfying as this may appear, Canada's strong export performance is no reason for complacency. Growing numbers of Canadian business leaders are focusing public attention on the importance to the country of a brisk export trade.

The 1986 objectives of the fourth Canada Export Trade Month are:

- to create an intensified focus on the benefits of export trade, and,
- to encourage increased participation in export trade.

Individually and in a host of interlocking alliances, CETM provincial committees, linked through a small national task force working out of the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa, stage export trade-related seminars, exhibits, workshops and other events in communities large and small across the country. The object of the exercise is to demonstrate that rewarding export trade opportunities abound for entrepreneurs willing to break out of the home market mindset and "go for it" abroad — and then help them to do it. Many activities will take place in October such as:

- A seminar on the basics of exporting.
- Presentation of the annual Canada Export Awards to Canadian companies which have been recognized by a panel of their peers for significant export achievements over a three-year period.
- Educational initiatives planned for introduction during CETM '86. For example, a resource kit for teachers which will help them develop an appreciation of Canada's position in the world among students in elementary schools.

The immediate focus of CETM '86, however, will be on success, illustrating the capacity, tenacity and global competitiveness of a group of largely unsung Canadians who number among the 20,000 small, medium and large exporters who successfully sell their wares in 147 countries around the world.