

(f) Exchanges and Study Tours

At least insofar as schools are concerned (and these, after all, were the object of this assignment) nothing happens unless teachers and students are reached. The greatest gap in this report's recommendations thus far is that they neglect first-hand personal experience and concentrate on vicarious experience. If Canada and the U.S.A. were oceans apart, there might be some excuse for such a weakness; but under the circumstances there can be none. Orderly, organized, and -- above all -- purposeful movement of personnel should be thought of as an integral part of any serious attempt to tackle the present problem. "Purposeful" is the key word here, for it cannot be stressed too strongly that the astonishing flow of traffic across the Canada-U.S. border for business and pleasure, welcome though it may be, is no substitute for a visit comprising a planned series of experiences designed to provide first-hand experience with the major characteristics of the other culture.

There have been sporadic efforts to exchange classes, or school bands, or school choirs between Canadian and American communities. Usually these have been in terms of one-day or over-night bus trips with, perhaps, a concert or some other social event as the major purpose. Behind this approach has been the conviction that it is impractical to try to handle lively young students for any greater period of time. However, Expo '67 and the Centennial Youth Travel tours have taught us some lessons in this regard and it is important that we apply them in the international field. When the trips are properly planned and organized, young people measure up very well indeed and can profit greatly.

Any teachers contacted during this assignment were unanimously in favour of exchanges of students -- individually and in class groups, for a week or two or for a year -- as an essential part of any program to improve cultural understanding between our countries. It is therefore recommended that the Information Division take the initiative in promoting