

all changed. A communication drafted in the East Block at Ottawa at lunch time can, with relative ease, be presented to the State Department in Washington later in that same afternoon. A careless remark or a provocative speech in any capital can be distributed throughout the world at the speed of light. Whereas in the life of the Nineteenth Century diplomatists there was time for sober second thoughts and alternative solutions, there is now little or no impediment to the rapid interchange of international courtesies and discourtesies. Improved means of communication have drawn the frontiers of diplomatic negotiation closer to the metropolitan centres of decision, and as a result the sphere of independent authority of a diplomatic representative, as well as his scope for initiative have been drastically limited.

But increased networks of communication have facilitated not only the transmission of words; accelerated means of transportation have enabled foreign ministers and foreign secretaries to move about and around the globe at short notice for direct and personal conversations with their counterparts elsewhere in the world. That these innovations have their advantages I would be the first to admit. I am convinced that in many instances a person to person encounter is worth an entire archive of elegantly phrased messages. At the same time there can be no doubt that in diplomacy, speed is not an unmixed blessing and in this sphere more than almost in any other, precipitant action without careful thought, appraisal and re-appraisal, whether agonizing or not, must be avoided. The spirit of calm, unfortunately, is rapidly disappearing from diplomacy, if it has not already vanished entirely. Thanks to rapid telegraphic communication, lights burn late in foreign office around the world as Mr. Khrushchev's cocktail comments are decyphered and interpreted for the post-breakfast edification of higher officials and ministers. On-the-spot negotiations are, nowadays, frequently conducted through the medium of simultaneous translation which, while undoubtedly accelerating the rate at which comments can be exchanged, also imposes a kind of psychological obligation on the negotiator to reply without delay. It is therefore little wonder that negotiators in self-defence sometimes come to the conference table with rigidly fixed positions which they enunciate under conditions of simultaneous provocation. The aircraft too makes possible for a Foreign Minister in a week an itinerary which would have dumbfounded the participants in the glittering Congress of Vienna; it also seriously curtails his meditative and contemplative functions. He is too frequently up in the air and moving from personal encounter to personal encounter to get his feet under his desk for sufficiently long and undisturbed periods to devote to policy decisions the calm and deliberate thought which they require. Improved means of communication and transportation - and I return to an earlier