

our embassies and consulates abroad provided 204,600 consular services to Canadians in difficulties for one reason or another who asked for assistance; in only an exceedingly small percentage of these cases was there any complaint on the part of the person concerned or the next-of-kin. Unfortunately, as I pointed out earlier, it is these few instances which come to public attention and criticism. While I welcome such criticism if it concerns errors of omission or commission on our part, I think it is unfair if it relates to these few situations beyond our control or when it ignores the fact that such situations represent only a very small proportion of the many, many consular cases which are resolved quietly and successfully. The Government and my Department attach very great importance to the protection of Canadian citizens and interests abroad and we shall continue to exert our best efforts to maintain and improve the services that we can provide.