

At all times it must be borne in mind that this data base may well only be able to supply officers with portions of the the information they require. It is essential that it be possible to link requests for material from this 'published' file with the internal records management information system being developed for the Department and to the 'Country Data Sets' being created by the Policy Analysis Group. This "linkage" will probably have to be accomplished through the intervention of knowledgeable staff who are fully aware of the coverage and scope of the various systems. In theory at least, it should also be possible to link up the various systems during a search providing the files are designed in a compatible fashion.

The utility of the system for those on the 'political' side of bilateral posts abroad seems to be relatively limited as virtually all their work is presently done with classified sources and, while they would perhaps profit from the use of unclassified material, they generally feel that they do not have the time available to read it. If a bilateral post is making a major presentation on a specific topic the directives governing that presentation will have been prepared in Ottawa and it is the post's responsibility only to understand the issue and to make the best possible presentation. As one senior officer abroad commented, "people abroad are not expected to be 'experts' in a way