

1979, the Canadian government publicly emphasized the need to deal with the root cause of this exodus—the abuse of basic human rights in the countries concerned. Canada urged the United Nations to improve its ability to deal with the most serious human rights situations, and called for the establishment within the UN structure of an Office of the Under-Secretary General for Human Rights. Canada also continued its active role as a member of the UN Human Rights Commission. International human rights questions were thus a significant element in Canadian foreign policy during 1979. Canada also continued to make representations to the U.S.S.R., China and the countries of Eastern Europe regarding relatives of Canadian citizens who wished to be reunited with their families in Canada, and further progress was made in this area.

CANADIAN UNITY AND IDENTITY

The Department continued during 1979 to pursue objectives which reflect the regional diversities of Canada, the interests of the ten provincial governments and the interests and concerns of English- and French-speaking Canadians within the framework of a coherent foreign policy.

During the course of 1979, an effort was made to develop better ways and means of involving and supporting provincial authorities in the international arena, at the same time working to help co-ordinate this involvement in order to establish clear national interests. The Department maintained close consultations with the provinces and the private sector on a wide range of international issues regarding the positions adopted by Canada in the Multilateral Trade Negotiations which concluded in 1979 and in maritime boundaries and fishing negotiations with the USA. Canada continued to participate actively in the Commonwealth and la Francophonie. Through the Department's external information and cultural programs, the international community was made increasingly aware of Canada as a democratic bilingual multicultural and richly endowed society capable of resolving positively its internal problems. Information

programs designed to interpret Canada's foreign policy goals to Canadians were broadened.

SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE TO CANADIANS ABROAD

A wide range of consular services and assistance continued to be provided to Canadians living and travelling abroad. While foreign travel by Canadians appears to have declined somewhat in 1979, perhaps due to inflationary factors and an unfavourable rate of exchange, an increase has been recorded in the number of consular services rendered by Canada's 117 diplomatic and consular posts abroad. To meet the increased demands and to render consular assistance more accessible to the travelling public, Honorary Consuls were appointed in 1979 for the first time in the capital cities of the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, and Paraguay, and also in Bombay, India. The great majority of consular services provided during 1979 were in response to relatively straightforward requests for information and assistance on a wide variety of concerns, including passport and citizenship documents and notarial services. For some 5,200 Canadians, however, the services rendered were more urgent and vital in nature, dealing with medical and financial distress, legal problems, and deaths abroad. In those parts of the world experiencing instability and tension, Canadian diplomatic and consular posts continued to provide advice to Canadians concerning local developments and to review emergency and contingency plans for the protection of Canadian citizens and interests in troubled areas.

During the past year, consular consultations were initiated or pursued with several East European and other countries, aimed at providing for new consular conventions or other consular arrangements to facilitate the extension of consular services and the protection of Canadians whether visiting or residing temporarily in those areas. Bilateral consultations were also undertaken with a number of countries with a view to establishing additional transfer of offender agreements designed to allow for the repatriation of Canadians serving prison sentences abroad.