

CHAPTER 2: INFORMATION PROGRAMS AND MEDIA RELATIONS IN CANADA AND ABROAD

Information Services Abroad

All Canadian embassies, high commissions and consulates engage to some degree in press relations and information work. Such activity is most intense in the largest missions, such as Washington, London, Paris and Tokyo, but even the smallest missions are required to have information programs and are provided with resources for that purpose.

With the support of information materials produced both in Ottawa and abroad, a wide range of projects was undertaken in 1978 to convey the messages of the Government's information program to foreign audiences in terms suited to their special interests. Films, exhibits, audio-visual aids, publications, speeches and seminars were used to create a clearer understanding of Canadian aims, policies and achievements, to portray Canada as a distinctive, sophisticated and stable society with much to offer the rest of the world, and to inform the foreign public of political and economic developments in Canada.

Canadian missions abroad paid increased attention to the foreign media. To help them keep up with developments in Canada, they were sent briefing materials on Government policy, texts of statements and speeches, press scans and press-guidance and background materials on a variety of domestic and foreign-policy issues, including the economic situation in Canada, federal-provincial relations, energy, urbanism and developments in science and technology. Illustrated articles and photo-stories were prepared for foreign publications. Press kits were put together for journalists accompanying Canadian ministers making visits abroad or attending international conferences, and for journalists visiting Canada with foreign leaders. Under the Department's Visits Program, briefings and familiarization tours were organized for nearly 800 journalists and "opinion-formers" from 48 countries. Background material was prepared for speech-makers, and lecture tours by Canadians were arranged both at home and abroad in support of specific objectives.

Motion pictures continued to play a basic role in the public-affairs program. As in previous years, the Department sent prints of National Film Board and private films, in a variety of languages, to its posts and provided assistance to foreign film teams on location in Canada. It also took part in the production of a film on Canada specially created for television viewers in the United States, a documentary on the Canadian political system and an "orientation" film on Canada for use throughout the world.

In keeping with the expanding role of television in mass communications, the Department provided assistance to foreign networks wishing to do programs in Canada. Twenty-six such posts -- in the United States, Western Europe and Japan -- received public-affairs