

You say, "We advise." Who is "we," and at what levels does it happen, and how is it done?

Hon. Mr. Sharp: We use mainly what I have referred to as "the classical method," that is, the embassy. Our ambassador is instructed to inform the Secretary of State of the United States on various developments in our policy that we would like the United States to know about. He might do that by a personal interview, if he could see the Secretary of State; but, if not, he would see one of the other officials in the Department of State. On certain questions of a specialized character the contact might be between the Canadian minister and his counterpart in the United States.

Let me give an illustration. When Canada was trying to make up its mind as to whether to withdraw from the International Control Commission in Vietnam I had a number of conversations with the Secretary of State, both on the telephone and in Washington—

Senator Grosart: You have a "semi-hot line," or a "luke-warm line."

Hon. Mr. Sharp: I do not use that one. I just use the ordinary telephone. When we had decided that we were going to withdraw, we advised the Secretary of State, through the embassy, that we had made that decision, and I received a telephone call from Dr. Kissinger, who was then in the White House, and not the Secretary of State, asking if we would delay this announcement for a period, to permit him to conclude his negotiations in Paris with Le Duc Tho. I informed him that, no, we had made up our minds to make our decision this week, which was the week of the announcement, but that if it would assist him in his negotiations, we would delay our withdrawal from Vietnam by thirty days. He said, "I would like you to do that." So we did it, in order to accommodate a friend and because we did not want in any way to be responsible for the breakdown of those peace talks. That is an example of how this kind of advice and consultation is carried on.

My colleague, the Minister of Finance, kept very closely in touch with Secretary Shultz from time to time on some of the main issues facing the international financial world, and kept him advised as to Canadian attitudes, and asked him as to American attitudes. On agricultural matters, I know my colleague Mr. Whelan is from time to time in touch with his counterpart in the United States on some of these issues that have been in the news recently.

Senator Grosart: Then is there a lower level of contacts, as I understand there is, sometimes called the administrative or departmental or public servant level? How are they integrated with these higher level consultations or contacts?

Hon. Mr. Sharp: Well, they are done only with the authority of the minister of the department. I am sure my colleague, Mr. Turner, asks his deputy minister, or one of the assistant deputy ministers, to get in touch with his counterpart, or somebody at about his level, to exchange views, and these are reported to the minister.

My Under-Secretary, Mr. Ritchie, does not do this very frequently, because we have in Washington an ambassador who is under the authority of the Under-Secretary, and he can use the ambassador to do this kind of thing, which is not, of course, open to other departments where they have some specialized question that they would like to talk about. But, of course, the ambassador does often

act on behalf of other departments than that of the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Senator Connolly: Senator Grosart, may I ask one supplementary question?

Senator Grosart: Well, may I ask one first, Senator Connolly, because it follows right on from this.

To give a quantitative value to this, would you say in general that the totality of these contacts in a year would be in the scores, the hundreds or thousands?

Hon. Mr. Sharp: At least hundreds. It might be in the thousands, but it certainly is in the hundreds.

Senator Connolly: I have a supplementary question on the point where you speak about the duties of an ambassador. In an embassy—and I suppose this applies to many embassies—there are a number of specialized officials: there is a defence man, a trade man, perhaps an energy man, a food and agriculture man. Would you mind saying something about what these people do in the matter of relationships between the two countries?

Hon. Mr. Sharp: The members of the embassy staff engage themselves in two general types of activities: one is to gather information by contacts with the members of the administration in their specialized fields; and also to pass along information about Canadian developments that they think would be useful for the American government to know.

We have in Washington a number of specialists: we have some on trade, some on finance; and we have had an energy man in Washington for many, many years and, of course, we have had agricultural specialists. They spend the whole of their time gathering or supplying information, sometimes in response to questions from American officials and sometimes the information is offered so as to keep as general an understanding as possible. There is also an effort made in the embassy to convey information other than to the government itself. We have, of course, information officers who spend all their time supplying information about Canada to the media, to senators, to representatives, to their staffs and so on. To some extent also the ambassador and his staff have contacts with members of the Congress, whether senators or representatives.

One has to be careful, however, that one does not create the impression that the embassy is engaged in trying to circumvent the administration. Here in Canada, for example, if members of foreign embassies were to try to convert members of Parliament or senators to their point of view in a conflict or a difference of opinion between the government of that country and the Government of Canada, we would take the strongest exception. We would say to those representatives that they must not engage in trying to deal with the legislature rather than with the administration. They are accredited to the Government of Canada and they should deal with the Government of Canada. That does not mean that if a member of Parliament wanted to get information that they should refuse to give it to him, but they would have to be circumspect in their dealings or they might make themselves not very acceptable to the government in dealings between their government and ours.

Senator Grosart: Should all senators and members of Parliament report any such incidents to you?