

III Foreign Policy Co-ordination

Interdepartmental Committee on External Relations

The Interdepartmental Committee on External Relations (ICER) consists of the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs as chairman and the Deputy Ministers of the Departments of Industry, Trade and Commerce, Manpower and Immigration, and Public Works, the President of the Canadian International Development Agency, the Secretary to the Cabinet and the Secretary of the Treasury Board as members. The Committee was established in May 1970 to advise the Government, through the Secretary of State for External Affairs, on such matters as the formulation of broad policy for foreign operations, the harmonization of departmental and agency "country" plans, the allocation of resources for the conduct of programs abroad, program implementation, the recommendation of heads-of-post appointments, and personnel policies for foreign operations. The Committee is served by a secretariat staffed by representatives of the major departments and agencies responsible for foreign-operations programs. To assist it in dealing with a wide range of problems, the ICER is aided by several subcommittees, including the Ad Hoc Subcommittee and the Personnel Management Committee.

During 1975, the ICER continued to pursue policies and to develop procedures designed to achieve the Government's objectives with regard to the development of more effective and efficient foreign-operations programs and activities. In exercising its mandate, the Committee was guided by the Government's aims and priorities in formulating a global statement of Canadian operations programs. Moreover, in planning for the future it was particularly cognizant of these goals and priorities and of the need for restraint and anti-inflationary measures.

The major mechanism used in the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of the Government's foreign-operations programs is the ICER Country Programming System. This involves the formulation by departments and agencies of Canadian program objectives for each post and their harmonization into "country objectives", the annual preparation by the posts of their plans of action to achieve these objectives and the consideration of these plans by various geographical and functional interdepartmental committees. In addition to examining the overseas program plans of departments and agencies, the interdepartmental

committees recommend resource allocations. These committees are composed of representatives from more than 20 federal departments and agencies that are either responsible for the implementation of foreign-operations programs or activities or have a major interest in such programs.

In the fiscal year 1975-76, through the Country Programming System, financial and human resources were allocated to some 13 programs in over 140 countries or territories and 34 major international institutions. In general, Canadian foreign-operations programs are implemented by a network of 121 Canadian embassies, high commissions, consulates, permanent delegations and offices located in 78 countries or territories. The overseas network is composed of approximately 1,650 program employees from over 20 federal departments and agencies and 3,250 support personnel, administered primarily by External Affairs. Of those, approximately 1,220 were Canada-based officers, the balance consisting of 2,730 locally-engaged employees and 945 Canadian administrative and support services personnel.