

Chapter 9

INFORMATION PROGRAMS AND PRESS SERVICES

The Department provides information at home and abroad to the press, radio and television, and to individuals, to commercial interests and to institutions with a special interest in foreign affairs, with the aim of broadening public awareness of Canadian society, of Canada's part in international affairs and its potential both as an exporter and as a desirable destination for foreign investment.

Press Office

The Press Office provided the services necessary for the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Ministers for International Trade and External Relations to carry out their relations with the public information media, and it served as the Department's official spokesman.

The Press Office answered inquiries from journalists on international issues and on the Department's activities. It arranged briefings, press conferences and interviews with ministers and officials and assisted Canadian journalists travelling abroad by providing background briefings and material and by ensuring that Canadian posts abroad would assist them in understanding the political, economic and social situations of the countries visited.

When the Prime Minister or any of the three External Affairs ministers went abroad on official visits, the Press Office arranged a background briefing on the objectives of the visit and provided a press kit to the media. Similarly, when foreign dignitaries made official visits to Canada, it arranged pre-visit briefings and interviews for both journalists accompanying the visitor and Canadian journalists, and made logistical arrangements for the accompanying press. The Press Office regularly assisted the 40 or so foreign correspondents who cover the Canadian scene and who are resident in Canada or in the United States.

Departmental news releases were issued through the Press Office, as were ministerial statements and formal announcements. It provided a daily telegraphic scan of news to posts abroad to keep them informed on events in Canada.

International expositions

The Department has responsibility for managing Canadian participation in international expositions, sometimes referred to as world fairs. In July 1983, Canada announced participation in the 1984 Louisiana World Exposition, to be held from May to November in New Orleans on the theme of fresh water. A major component of the Canadian pavilion will be an IMAX film entitled *River Journey*, produced by the National Film Board. Canada will participate with a major pavilion in Expo 85, at Tsukuba, Japan, on the theme of science and technology in relation to dwellings and the environment. Two international expositions were registered in 1983 viz. a specialized exposition in Brisbane, Australia, in 1988 and a

universal exposition in Chicago and Seville, Spain, in 1992.

Canada will serve as host for the 1986 World Exposition, Expo 86, in Vancouver, on transportation and communications. The Department is responsible for the international government-to-government promotion and co-ordination of the exposition, in which 30 countries have already agreed to participate. The Exposition is to run from May to October 1986, and will be located on 50 hectares of downtown waterfront property in Vancouver.

The Department also managed a collection of over 50 information exhibitions circulated throughout the world to increase foreign awareness of Canadian society. In 1983-84, exhibitions covering topics such as facts on Canada, high technology, crafts, rivers and famous Canadians were produced to support posts' public affairs activities abroad.

Information programs abroad

Through its External Information and Creative Services Division the Department sought to reach "opinion-formers" and influential groups abroad in order to increase knowledge of Canada and its foreign relations, interests and priorities as well as its technological capabilities and investment and trade potential. During 1983-84 particular emphasis was placed upon export promotion.

The trade publishing program produced a number of publications to improve understanding of the Department's trade objectives. Several were aimed at a domestic audience, such as those dealing with the Program for Export Market Development, Promotional Projects Program, Export Development Plans, and Market Studies, and a number of publications provided Canadian businessmen with information needed to conduct business in specific areas of the world.

Other publications were intended for international distribution, through trade commissioners at Canadian posts abroad. Most were promotional directories or catalogues in multilingual formats dealing with specific industries.

The Department also produced the promotional material used in a number of international trade fairs and shows to promote sales of Canadian goods and services in world markets. It also continued to produce *Canada Weekly* and *Hebdo Canada* as the principal departmental vehicle for conveying Canadian information abroad. A total of almost 30 000 English and French copies were distributed each week as well as a bi-weekly total of some 5 000 copies of the Spanish and Portuguese versions.

In addition, 15 Canadian posts abroad produced regular publications, mostly quarterlies, which were sent to over 225 000 selected names in their areas.

A new series of colour posters, *Regions of Canada*, was brought out, as well as numerous information publications. The Department's domestic information services in the trade