

clear. We have said on many occasions that the continuation of colonial rule in Africa is not compatible with the evolution of events in recent years, or with the philosophy of human dignity to which the great majority of countries subscribe.

Nonetheless the PAIGC forces in Guinea Bissau are not at the present time able to meet the standard criteria under international law that we accept as the yardstick for the existence of a new state.

Consular protection  
of Canadian interests

Now that I have described our philosophy of relations between states, I should like to say something about the jobs which our missions abroad can and do perform, and also something about the limitations on their actions.

The first requirement for us to be able to do anything for Canadians abroad is to have a presence in the main areas of Canadian interest. The presence can vary from a very large embassy with a network of consulates, such as we have in the United States, to an agreement to enter into diplomatic relations. This latter state is short of presence but, through accreditation of officials at other posts, allows for the beginnings of a dialogue and, through visits and the right of calling on ministers and other officials, starts the process of advancing Canadian interests in that country. I am often asked why we don't have missions in this or that country. The reason is the classic one of priorities for limited resources, both financial and human. These priorities are constantly being reassessed and our program of increasing our missions abroad is modified as necessary by changing circumstances and requirements.

The protection and assistance our missions abroad can give is based on long-standing traditions and conventions. The problem of protection of national communities in foreign countries is not a new one.

It was the Greeks again, and other inhabitants of the Mediterranean who developed a system not unlike our modern consular offices. The system continued through Roman and Medieval times and some most interesting early documents have been found which lay down codes for the conduct of international trade and the rights of foreigners in other countries. These were elaborated in a time that historians usually refer to as the "Dark Ages".

More recently, the rights and duties of foreign representatives, and of the states receiving them, have been codified in the Vienna conventions on diplomatic and consular relations of 1961