

The functions of government external information apparatus are basically two-fold: a) to convey an accurate, balanced picture of the Canadian entity to foreign peoples as background to more immediately and specifically directed activities. This activity of a general nature is known in the jargon of public information as "image-building" and in terms of time and money requires the larger share of effort. Some Canadian information agencies, such as the National Film Board, operate entirely or predominantly in this area; b) to support directly external policies of the Canadian Government as they evolve and are announced. This sort of specifically pointed activity is an important part of the information work of External Affairs and a number of other departments, notably Trade & Commerce, Immigration, Travel Bureau, etc. However, while the specialized information work of other departments is normally confined to promotion abroad of policies in the domain of that one department, External Affairs information activity must attempt to forward, outside Canada, government policy in any field, though it must be most closely related to policy in the international political and economic fields. Having noted two main, distinguishable areas of external information activity, it would be a mistake to suggest that they are anything but mutually dependent parts of the same whole, with general information providing a context for more specific information while immediate programmes must serve an official purpose launched from a platform of relatively broad understanding of Canada's nature and significance. I strongly believe that the information activity of External Affairs has been handicapped for a long time by failing to put these two interdependent lines of external information activity under one institutional roof.