

PLANS FOR CONSULAR EXPANSION - 1940-1947

For the aforementioned reasons as well as departmental recognition that an unplanned expansion of the consular service could prove disastrous for Canada's image in the eyes of the Americans, External Affairs prepared three plans between 1940 and 1947 for directing the development of consular representation in the United States.²⁸ The third scheme of 1947, the proposal finally adopted, is important as it provides a reference for the consideration of subsequent departmental modifications of the consular system.

The first comprehensive plan for the opening of Canadian consular offices in the United States was prepared on July 13, 1940, by Dr. Hugh L. Keenleyside, Assistant Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs.²⁹ It was prompted by the exigencies of the wartime situation, namely, the desire of the RCMP to impose wartime passport restrictions on Americans visiting Canada after October 1, 1940. Consulates proposed in this plan appear to have been envisaged merely as small offices to be used solely for the issuance of passports and visas. The examination and recommendations were based on the British consular organization in the United States combined with advice given by the Director of the Canadian Government Travel Bureau on the chief locations of the origin of Canadian tourist traffic. The plan, however, was quietly dropped, and no supporting letters or documents in the External Affairs files indicate the reasons.³⁰

Keenleyside's plan proposed a hierarchical organization of consular offices in the United States.³¹ The Senior Consul General, also the Minister in Washington, would occupy the apex of the system and exercise full control over all the consulates. The next tier was to consist of four consular districts headed by consuls general who would