

I sometimes receive suggestions that we take drastic action toward this or that government; that we sever trade or aid relations; or that we should make our concern known through highly publicized demands and threats. This seems to me to be a sort of verbal "gunboat diplomacy" which Canadians will surely consider obsolete.

I ask the persons involved whether the important thing is the public assertion of our position, or the relief of the immediate problem. Most Canadians would agree, on reflection, that the important thing is to resolve the question. Public declarations of righteousness are a luxury that one can dispense with.

Another factor is that any unnecessary publicity concerning a question can often cut across our diplomatic efforts to resolve the question, and can create fresh difficulties for other Canadians living or travelling in that country.

I have spoken at some length of difficulties with foreign laws but there are also a great many other circumstances in which Canadian officials can be of help.

Deaths and illness occur while Canadians are abroad; they become injured, they lose money or passports or are victims of robberies. Because of international conflict or local tensions they may require urgent assistance and possibly evacuation from the area. In such cases, Canadian representatives give all possible assistance; notifying next-of-kin, arranging for medical attention, providing emergency financial assistance, emergency evacuation, and so on. The vast majority of these situations have happy endings and I receive many letters testifying to this. During the past year, our embassies and consulates abroad provided over 200,000 consular services to Canadians in difficulties or seeking assistance for one reason or another.

Services are also rendered in happier circumstances: the registration of the birth of a Canadian abroad; helping a foreign bride of a Canadian to come to Canada; making available Canadian papers and news bulletins about events at home.

Perhaps before concluding this part of my remarks, I might say a few words about passports. These are essentially internationally recognized identity documents, which are accepted by foreign governments as proof that its bearer is a Canadian citizen.

The passport contains the formal request to all concerned to "allow the bearer to pass freely, without let or hindrance, and to afford the bearer such assistance and protection as may be necessary."

There is sometimes some misapprehension that passports are somehow more than this. They are not, for instance, permits to enter foreign countries. They do not afford any special protection or immunity from foreign laws and regulations. Nor are they certificates of good conduct.

If a Canadian passport is usually highly regarded by foreign immigration and travel authorities, it is because Canada and Canadians on the whole, enjoy a good reputation abroad, through the policies and attitudes we have adopted in our external dealings and through the understanding of Canadians generally of the