

proven to be very good throughout the years. We recruit at the University level. I think that we have to make sure, that exams are designed to be fair and equitable to society at large. For a long time, for example, there was some criticism that men were favoured in this regard.

What skills are most valuable to the foreign service?

We have to make sure that our foreign service is representative of Canada and ensure that young people, recruited at the entrance level, have the personality traits that we are looking for, and that we know what the ingredients for success are in this kind of career. For example, flexibility is extremely important in our Department; people must have good interpersonal skills. They will be exposed to all kinds of cultures and people, so obviously they have to relate well to other cultures. Their interests, by definition, have to be quite broad. Those young people must have the potential to carry out a wide variety of assignments in different environments. These are just some of the traits that we have always been looking for, but remain valid to this day.

A major change has happened that is forcing us to also look at other skills. As you know we now have four major streams in this Department. We have to respond to new and more technically complex foreign policy issues than in the past. Therefore we must search for, and recruit, people who have some specialized skills. We need all kinds of skills in this Department. We need linguistic specialists to interview potential immigrants or refugees, lawyers to draft international agreements or treaties, and MBA's or economists to monitor trade matters. We need some scientists to provide good advice to Ministers on environmental issues, and agronomists to ensure the success of our Agricultural Development Assistance Program. So, in order to attract sufficient numbers of top candidates from various fields that have not traditionally provided many candidates, we are looking towards these new pools of talent. We hope that the media will help us in our recruiting efforts by spreading the news that our

foreign service is striving to recruit Canadians from all walks of life. The net result will be a high quality foreign service for the years to come, and that is in the interest, not only of the individuals concerned, but of this Department and of the Government as a whole.

Are you taking any initiatives to invite established professionals into the Department?

Yes, I'm glad you're raising that question because the question of lateral entry is a very difficult one in this Department. We have traditionally been a rotational department, and External Affairs, essentially, remains one. However, because of those special skills that have been required quickly over a rather short span of time, we have had to import people with the skills needed to do the job, meaning an increasing number of non-rotational employees in this department. This is, again, one of the challenges of the coming years: how to make sure that the increased number of non-rotational employees in this Department also feel not only at home, but that they have some kind of a career pattern in this Department.

To conclude I'd like to say that my personal experience of 23 years in the Department has convinced me of the need in this Department, to care about our people because of the special difficulties or problems that are unfortunately not always understood by those who do not live abroad. So if there are a few messages that I would like to leave with your readers, the first one is this idea of caring. I certainly do care, otherwise I would not have accepted this job. Second, I always have to make sure that our political agenda is understood and known at all levels of the Department. I will ensure that this message is communicated throughout the Department. And finally, I will spare no effort to get the machinery in place to deliver our objectives. We know where we are going. We know how to get there. We have a road map to get there, but we always have to remember that a lot of the priorities of this Department will be imposed upon us by events anywhere in the world over which we have no control.