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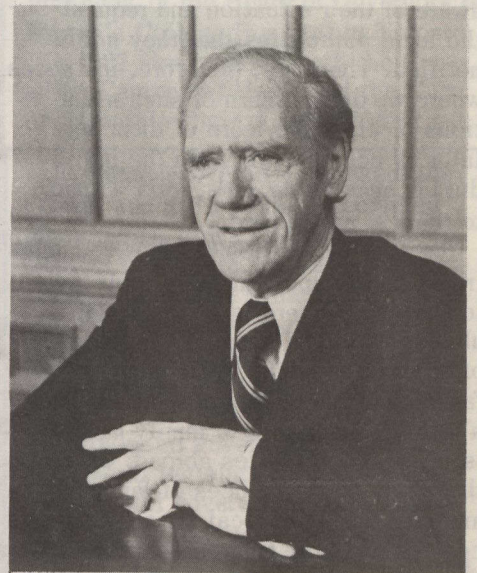
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Consular assistance for Canadians abroad

The following excerpts are from a statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mitchell Sharp, on January 23 regarding the nature and degree of assistance provided to Canadian citizens who find themselves in difficulties with the laws and regulations of the countries they are visiting or in which they are temporarily resident:

...Canadian citizens residing or travelling in other countries are subject to the laws and regulations of those countries, just as foreign citizens residing or travelling in Canada are subject to Canadian laws and regulations. When such persons run afoul of these laws and regulations, they must be expected to be dealt with in accordance with local procedures and practices, just as foreign citizens in violation of laws in Canada must be dealt with in accordance with Canadian laws and regulations. Unfortunately, many countries have laws, regulations and legal procedures which could be regarded as severe and even harsh by Canadian standards. Some countries, for example, permit almost unlimited detention without charges, pending an investigation of a case; severe punishments are often imposed, particularly for trafficking in or use of narcotics; conditions of detention, while perhaps adequate by local standards, are sometimes far below what we would consider to be even minimum standards in Canada. Legally and officially all that Canadian representatives abroad can do in such circumstances is to ensure that a Canadian citizen is treated no less fairly than other foreign nationals or than the citizens of that country would be treated in similar circumstances, and to ensure that appropriate legal counsel is obtained. Unofficially, Canadian representatives abroad can and do assist by making representations to local authorities to consider possible mitigating circumstances, to speed up otherwise slow judicial processes, and to appeal for leniency on possible humanitarian grounds to the extent which local law and practice permit.

Travel statistics indicate that, on a *per capita* basis, the number of Canadians travelling abroad is probably



*Mitchell Sharp,
Secretary of State for External Affairs*

greater than that of any other country and our own passport figures bear out this estimate. In 1973, the number of Canadian passports which were issued amounted to 561,500, a 10 percent increase over the number issued in the previous year and more than double the number issued in 1967.

* * * *

Canadians, upon being detained by the local authorities abroad can normally inform our embassies of their arrest either by telephone, telegram, letter or through consular officers and lawyers visiting jails. I should point out that foreign governments are under no obligation to inform our representatives when a Canadian is in custody, unless the person detained so requests or our representative makes an inquiry. Nonetheless, most foreign governments do notify our representatives when a Canadian is in custody. Whenever our embassies and consulates abroad are notified that Canadian citizens have