

various kinds is given to persons who find themselves in other forms of distress. For instance, Canadian citizens abroad sometimes sustain financial losses in circumstances in which legal recourse is indicated. A consular officer may assist by suggesting names of lawyers, put the persons in touch with such local organizations as the Better Business Bureau, the Chamber of Commerce, or the Bar Association and maintain a general interest in the matter to ensure that justice is done. Also, Canadians sometimes claim forceable conscription in the armed forces of foreign countries, some find themselves in foreign mental institutions and seek to return to Canada, and others get into minor difficulties of various kinds with foreign local officials. One of the primary duties of Canadian officers performing consular duties abroad is to assist Canadians in distress by all appropriate means.

Sometimes Canadian citizens may find themselves destitute abroad. Canadian tourists, for instance, not infrequently find themselves bereft of their wallets including very often their passports and other identification. Sometimes they turn to the Canadian diplomatic or consular post for advice and assistance. The consular officer may tell them what steps they can take to try to locate their wallets or passports. If unsuccessful, the consul may wire to their home town to get an advance of funds from their families or other relatives. If they have some money left or a small bank account on which they can draw, they are advised where they may stay cheaply until their return to Canada is arranged. One bit of advice that might be given to all Canadian tourists is to purchase their return tickets to Canada before setting out for foreign countries and to keep the tickets in a safe place rather than in their wallets. It sometimes happens that Canadians abroad who are bereft of funds have no resources whatsoever for their return to Canada. When circumstances justify it, the Canadian consular officer may be authorized to advance funds to get the distressed Canadian back to Canada as quickly as possible. Of course, the distressed Canadian is required to sign an undertaking that he will repay to the Canadian Government the amount expended on his behalf.

Assistance to Canadian citizens abroad is not limited to the granting of protection in emergencies or assistance in case of distress or destitution. The range of advice and assistance is very broad and stretches from the care of Canadian beach-combers who, in their escape from civilization, have wandered as far as Tierra del Fuego at the southernmost tip of Chile by the Straits of Magellan, to the answering of letters from a housewife living abroad requesting the consular officer to collect labels from Canadian grocery tins to help the lady win a new car in a competition.

A consular officer must always be on the alert to safeguard the interests of Canadian citizens abroad. For example, some Canadian citizens, not native born, are in danger of losing their Canadian citizenship through lengthy residence abroad. If such persons come to the notice of consular officers, they are given advice on the risk they run and the steps they should take to protect their citizenship should they wish to do so. Other persons seek to bring to Canada as immigrants their close relatives or friends. Although immigration matters are the concern of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Canadian consular officers frequently must deal with such problems and give advice to prospective applicants in those countries in which Canadian immigration officers are not located. Canadian babies born abroad of Canadian