

Information for Parliament

As should be expected, the first call on the public information resources of the Department is from the political representatives of the Canadian people and highest priority must be given this information function. As it is the duty of Members of Parliament and Senators to take the best and most authoritative information and opinion as the basis for their responsible judgments, it is the duty of the Executive to supply all appropriate information unless there are overriding considerations of state to prevent this. The carrying out of this responsibility is that of the Minister who may call for the preparation and organization by officials of such material as may be required. The means by which Parliament receives its information on external affairs are the following:

- (1) The Annual Report of the Department. The annual tabling of the Report is required by statute. If it were not, I believe serious thought would long since have been given to dropping it as its utility, related to other services and considering the time spent in its preparation, is decidedly limited. In brief recitation of activities over a year past, it normally repeats information already available and has restricted information value for Parliament, press and public. It may just have a certain use for reference libraries and archives. Some outside criticism of this Report may be justified and further thought needs to be given to it.