

States, which to a more remote country might be of little concern, affect us most intimately. The rapid removal last year of nearly all price controls was a case in point, for we are currently buying three-quarters of our imports from the United States. The extent of income tax reductions in the legislation recently adopted by Congress is another, as the Minister of Finance recently pointed out. In the traditional field of diplomacy, it is important in Ottawa to have accurate inside information on the main developments in the relations between the United States and other countries, especially in these days of great power politics.

In keeping one's government informed on matters such as these it is not enough to follow the press and to read official documents. Collectively, the members of the Embassy must have a very wide acquaintance with government officials, politicians, members of other diplomatic missions, particularly those of British Commonwealth countries, the press and the public. They must be able to assess wisely the information and opinions they receive, to check them against other sources, and to forecast with good judgment the likely course of future developments. They cannot isolate themselves in their offices and do their work from studying papers.

This duty of collecting and sifting information useful to the Canadian Government, while it is the most time-consuming task of any diplomatic mission, is not its most important one. Coupled with it is the responsibility for seeing, or attempting to see, that the framers of policy in the country concerned do not take decisions touching Canadian interests except with knowledge of what these interests are. My friend the United States Ambassador in Ottawa shares with me the task of seeing that this is done, just as I share with him the task of advising the Canadian Government of the importance to the United States of acts of the Canadian Government.

This also is a duty which involves a wide range of personal contacts. It merges with the responsibility for conducting negotiations, a very important matter, which is what diplomats are popularly supposed to do when they are not attending social functions. The range of negotiation between Canada and the United States is very wide. It covers many subjects from the trivial to the highly important. We may, for example, one day wish to enlist the support of the Secretary of State for securing the effective participation of Canada in the framing of the German settlement. We may also, on the same day, be discussing some technical points about the allocation of a shortwave radio frequency or the extradition of a criminal or the interpretation of a customs regulation.

The bulk of the business of negotiation is transacted with the Department of State, but it is necessary also to maintain contact with all, or nearly all, the other departments and agencies of government. Because the relations between our countries are in general harmonious, we do not have dramatic arguments and protests, such as are not infrequently reported from certain foreign capitals. I can testify from long experience that Canadian representations are cordially received in the State Department, even if they are not always acted upon, and that an easy atmosphere of informality surrounds our negotiations on both vital and trivial matters.

Another aspect of the work of a Canadian Embassy is to assist in spreading accurate and useful public information about Canada. Nearly every government has greatly expanded its publicity abroad during the last few years. I think it safe to say that none of them is satisfied with the methods developed, or results attained, in building up official information services. It is widely recognized that some such service is desirable, even necessary, but nobody has found the answer to the question of exactly how it can best be done. We have a modest special staff engaged in the dissemination of information in Washington and New York, the main functions of which are to answer inquiries, to assist American writers who wish to write about Canadian affairs, to distribute literature of various sorts, and to follow matters relating to Canada which appear in the press and periodicals.

Sometimes when a Canadian visiting the United States encounters an American with strange beliefs, such as that Canadians are taxed from