

effectiveness in this part of the Department's role. Several informants outside the Government recorded appreciation for helpful services at a number of missions abroad. One or two, however, indicated that there was a certain unevenness in the degree of helpfulness encountered at various missions. Renewed efforts may be necessary to provide guidance from headquarters on the desirable level of service to be extended to Canadians abroad in various circumstances.

A major service function of the Department of External Affairs in Canada is the issuance of passports. This is linked to the consular function abroad but the Passport Office with its six branches across Canada is run as a largely self-contained operation under the general policy direction of the Department and the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It appears to be generally regarded as a highly effective service. Earlier suggestions that it might be lodged in some other Department have not been renewed and it seems logical that the Department that knows most about foreign countries and that provides consular services to Canadians abroad should also be the one that issues travel documents in Canada.

The Department provides some advisory services to Canadians on international legal matters. It cannot, of course, supplant private legal services but it frequently offers informal procedural advice. It has a considerable role to play when Canadian citizens with claims against foreign governments have exhausted any possibility of private action or find it is not available and need the backing of their Government.

One of the areas of service that has not been very precisely or systematically defined is the role of the Department of External Affairs in providing advice and information to Canadian businessmen, both at home and abroad. The Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce is, of course, the Department mainly concerned with trade and investment abroad but External Affairs is frequently approached by Canadian business representatives and it does have information and advice to offer that is complementary to the services of I.T.&C. or other government agencies. Generally, the Department's role vis-à-vis the Canadian business community has been responsive but not especially active. It provides information and advice when asked but the amount of information available and the extent of advice offered varies a good deal from case to case. With the Canadian business community much more active abroad than formerly and the world much more susceptible to rapid changes that affect business operations, it may be time that External Affairs reviewed this part of its role in some depth. Businessmen are interested in such matters as political risks, cultural and social factors, personality profiles, and strategy toward foreign countries, as well as the economic circumstances and marketing conditions.