

And one could give a great many other examples of the special contacts between the Government of Canada and its various agencies and other governments for which we have not the same direct responsibility as we have in diplomatic matters. Nevertheless it is true that the department is responsible for the co-ordination of these international contacts so far as Canada is concerned, and the head of the external affairs mission in any country is the principal representative of the Government of Canada and is responsible to the minister and through him to the government.

Now, in the last few months I have had an opportunity of trying to analyse what the responsibilities of this department are, and I have come to this tentative conclusion that the classes of duties that we have to perform can be divided roughly under two headings. The first of those headings is, or might be called, reporting. This reporting involves the assembling of information coming to us from our own offices in other countries and information which we get direct from other governments through their representatives here, or through direct communication. As I see it, its purpose is to enable the minister and under him the department to recommend to government so that the government in turn may recommend to parliament policies, courses of action, which in the whole make up the foreign policy of the country. That, I think, covers a multitude of detailed duties that in general may be defined as reporting, informing and advising in order that the responsible authority may make the decisions upon which the foreign policies of the country are based. Second to that, the duties of the officers of the department are to carry out decisions once they are taken; taken by the minister in a certain range, taken by the cabinet in a range above that and taken by parliament in a range above that again.

It seems to me, that this class of duties which I have called reporting, informing and advising, probably constitutes the most important responsibility that the officers of the department have to discharge. These reports have to do with the policies, activities of outside governments as they may affect Canada or Canadian interests, and also the course of events in other countries inasmuch as they bear upon Canadian activities and the action the government may have to take.

The second group of duties—the carrying out of the decisions once they are taken—is rather difficult to describe. One might observe what happens in an embassy, in a high commissioner's office, and ask "What is all this diplomacy about anyway?" Well, I have managed to extract half a dozen headings which illustrate the ways in which the officers of the department carry out the decisions or further the policies which have been approved by the government. I am speaking now not only of the offices of the department in Ottawa but also the offices of the embassies, legations, high commissioner's offices, and consulates that we maintain abroad. They are for all practical purposes—and I think perhaps there is a little misunderstanding about them—branch offices of the department. These duties of carrying out decisions and policies may be classified this way. First, negotiations with other governments over a very wide range of matters, some of which are quite trivial except to one or two individuals, and some, of course, which are of the highest importance. Treaties, the Atlantic Alliance, and that kind of thing are most important of all; as for the trivia—one can think of a great number of examples. Secondly, officers of this department must, when they are serving abroad, try to insure that the governments to which they are accredited legislate or take action, which affect Canadian interests, only in a full knowledge of the way in which such actions may affect Canada. A recent example of that is our interest in the arms assistance program which has been before the Congress of the United States, the congress which has just adjourned. The third duty is the spreading