

abroad but is valuable in Canada because Ottawa is by no means the most important press and communications centre in this country. With more staff, more could usefully be done along these lines. Frequent contact with editors in Montreal and Toronto - and other cities - is a potentially profitable exercise.

- (b) Issue of press releases. Particularly when Parliament is not sitting, this function is essential to provide authoritative texts of governmental announcements and important statements. These texts are frequently accompanied by background material.
- (c) Response to enquiries. This form of service to the press is a central function of the press office. The thoroughness with which it is carried out and the stimulation of increased activity in this field is limited not only by inescapable requirements of discretion but sometimes by shortage of manpower equipped to respond to questions.
- (d) Briefings by press office. Systematic briefings have not yet become a regular feature of the operation of the press office and this is a gap which should be filled. There has been a laudable beginning of background briefings, generally but not necessarily, off-the-record, on various world problems arranged