

issuance programs abroad. New forms are being developed, through new technology and electronic systems, and security experts have participated fully in this process.

At the operational level, the re-engineering of the application process was scheduled to begin this year but has been postponed until early 1998-99. The passport itself is currently being redesigned, and letters of interest and requests for proposals have been initiated. Local offices have been empowered to handle certain security cases. In addition to cases regarding custody and repatriation, the Passport Office now has the ability, based on Bill C-41, to suspend the passports of people who are trying to flee debt obligations with respect to child support. During the entitlement process, security is of the utmost importance, and passports can be refused based on fraud or misuse. This year, some 200 cases were refused, and all incidents are evaluated, to be incorporated into policy and procedural development.

#### SUMMARY

Security has taken an active role in promoting awareness by communicating with shareholders, the public and other parties regarding the detection of fraud. By providing effective security advice regarding printing and development of secure documents, our expertise has been made available to other domestic and international organizations. We have also cooperated in an American investigation regarding an organized crime ring involved in producing fraudulent Canadian passports. We are continually sending the message that we are vigilant when we issue passports, which in turn promotes confidence in the Canadian traveller at the global scale.

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While negative publicity and heightened sensitivities arose from the Mossad incident, the truth is that such incidents **validate the concerns** of the Passport Office for stringent and continuously improving security measures.

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