

am told that we should make our concern known through highly publicized demands and threats. Most Canadians would agree, on reflection, I think, that such emotional response not only would not have the desired effect of relieving the immediate problem, but even if it were possible and not contrary to our bilateral or multilateral obligations, it would only exacerbate the general relationship between the country concerned and Canada. More particularly, it would also cut across our diplomatic efforts to resolve the situation. It might even create fresh difficulties for other Canadians living or travelling in that country.

Special problems can arise in connection with naturalized Canadians or, in some cases, native-born Canadians of naturalized parents who may be regarded by the country of their birth, or their parents' birth, still to be citizens of those countries. These "dual nationals," are considered subject to the laws concerning taxation, military service, and so on, of their country of origin. Often the authorities in the countries concerned refuse to entertain any representations and insist on their laws being applied -- an attitude which may be quite consistent with international law and practice, but which we usually try to suggest, may not make for the best relations between ourselves and them. This problem exists with a wide range of countries, in Western and Eastern Europe, in South America, in Asia. Recently, there have been a number of cases involving United States citizenship. Under United States law all male persons born in that country of Canadian parents, and who are therefore dual nationals, are required to register for Universal Military Service immediately upon attaining the age of 18, whether or not they are present in that country. Where such dual United States-Canadian citizens neglect to comply with such procedure they are liable to prosecution upon re-entering the United States. The same requirements for registration at age 18 and liability to prosecution for non-compliance apply to all Canadian male children who are permanent residents of the U.S.A. In such complex cases, our representatives make contact with the Canadian involved, when they are aware of his predicament, but there is little direct help that they can give. As I have said, these problems are not confined to the United States.

I do not want to leave you with the impression that our consular officials spend their time visiting jails full of Canadians, who in their innocence have contravened some obscure foreign regulation. This is a relatively rare occurrence.

Canadian officials are there to help in many other circumstances. Deaths and illnesses occur while Canadians are abroad; they become injured, they lose money or passports or are victims of robberies. Because of international conflict or local tensions they may require urgent assistance and possibly evacuation from the area. In such cases Canadian representatives give all possible assistance; notifying next-of-kin, arranging for medical attention, providing emergency financial assistance, emergency evacuation, and so on. The vast majority of these situations have happy endings and I receive many letters testifying to this. During the past year, our embassies and consulates abroad provided over 200,000 consular services to Canadians in difficulties or seeking assistance for one reason or another.

These services are also given in happier circumstances: for instance, the registration of the birth of a Canadian abroad. Many of our embassies and missions have facilities for reading Canadian papers and for receiving news bulletins. In this way, Canadians can explore the Taj Mahal or the cathedrals of Europe and still be in touch with the latest struggle for the Stanley Cup, or with the bulls and bears of the Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal exchanges.