

In dealing with the national press at their headquarters, an important distinction from most media is that they still have specialists. The decline of the weekly "all inclusive" periodicals and the rise of specialist publications in their place has not yet occurred in the case of the dailies. Readers might subscribe to a number of periodicals to keep abreast of people, money, science, investments, sports, sex and the like. They still will turn to the daily newspaper for up-dates beyond what the electronic media can provide. Thus, it is a productive practice for Canadian government officials to know who the specialists are and to keep them in mind as contacts for coverage. This is true even for defensive reasons. When economic moves are taken in Washington, the Times, Post and Wall Street Journal correspondents will be under pressure to file a quick story to meet deadlines and the competition of the wires. The value of having an immediate Canadian reaction from Washington rather than a day late from Ottawa is obvious but it will not happen unless the trade specialist on these papers thinks to call a contact in the Embassy. This is true to a lesser degree where the bureaus are located but it can happen if there are geographic considerations such as commodities for Chicago or Minneapolis, or shipping in the West and Gulf ports.

The bureaucracies of the national press are subtle and shifting. It would be difficult and probably unprofitable for any but a few Canadian officials to attempt to stay abreast of them. Yet, some changes should be recognized. The Times, for example, is increasing its feature coverage. This trend has been going on for some time and culminated in the special sections on entertainment and "living". The business and financial coverage of the Times has also been changing in the direction of more critical -- even adversary -- treatment of established interests