

department. Well, we have tried to recruit our officers from all groups in Canada. It may be that at the present time we have not as many representatives of certain occupations as we should have, but I would point out to him, and to other hon. members, that we take young men into our department after competitive examinations. Whether they come from agricultural colleges or arts colleges or any other kind of colleges, we do not mind. We do not examine into their background in that sense. We have been fortunate, I think, in the type of men we have been able to secure, and I should like to pay tribute to them. Of course in the development of a young service it takes time for the young men to reach the top positions, so it is true that at the present time some of our missions are headed not by career men but by men we have brought in from outside, very often at considerable sacrifice to themselves.

In what I thought was a very constructive speech this morning the hon. member for Eglinton (Mr. Fleming) expressed the hope that we would recognize our career men by giving them top posts in the service. We do that. Of our present missions, sixteen are headed by career men who have risen through the ranks in the Department of External Affairs and four by men who have joined our department from other branches of the public service. It may be of some interest to hon. members if, as an example of our desire to recruit our officers from all parts of Canada, I say that of the twenty-four most senior posts in our service, ten are filled by men whose mother tongue is French. We try to build up our service not only as representative but as bilingual.

During the course of his remarks the hon. member for Peel mentioned the representation of other parties on Canadian delegations at international conferences. He has himself been a very effective representative of Canada at more than one such conference. I agree that we should do what we can to keep our foreign policy as much as possible on a non-partisan basis; but under a parliamentary system of responsible government, in our actual representation at international conferences it is not easy to reconcile that kind of government with the inclusion of representatives from opposition parties. The difficulty, of course, is that full membership on delegations by representatives of other parties might limit their complete freedom of action, by placing them in a position where they would have to share responsibility for decisions taken. I am not sure, however, that we cannot accomplish the purpose we have in mind by attaching representatives of other parties to our Canadian delegations, on suitable occasions, as parliamentary advisers. We have done that in the past, and it has worked out quite well. Possibly in the future it may be well to try it again.

Insofar as the growth of our External service is concerned, and some reference has been made to that by various speakers, I should like to mention that during the last year the number of people in our department at home and abroad has increased only from 1,213 to 1,248. We are doing our best to keep our numbers and our expenses within limits.

During this debate the member for Peel (Mr. Graydon), as well as other members have mentioned the desirability of providing the people of Canada with all possible information as to our external policy--what we are doing and why we are doing it. I agree with them entirely as to the importance of this responsibility. In a democracy foreign policy must be based on intelligent public opinion. Public opinion will not be intelligent unless it is informed. It will not be informed if the government does not take the people into its confidence in this field to the greatest possible extent.

I noted in his statement--I hope I am not doing him an injustice--a feeling that we were not doing as much as we should in this regard. To support that feeling the hon. member made reference to an article by a prominent newspaperman which was critical of the information activities of this department. I agree that not very long ago it may well have been that the information activities of our department and our facilities for informing the people of Canada on external affairs were not as extensive as they should have been. I would however inform the House, Mr. Speaker, that it was not very long ago that we wound up the Canadian information service and initiated the establishment of an information division in