

you, are not the ultimate judges in these matters. In the circumstances, I should like to suggest that information officers in the government service be offered the consideration once extended to the fabled man at the piano. After all, they are doing their best.

I must add that, important as information activities may be in a foreign service, they cannot and must not be its main purposes. A foreign service provides, essentially, advice to the government as to what is happening abroad, as to what developments at home may mean in the context of our relations with other countries. A foreign service is concerned with negotiations with other countries and with the protection of national interests abroad. We must assess very carefully and objectively the extent to which information work really helps achieve these purposes. We must recognize that there are strict limits to the amount of influence that can be achieved on the posture of another government in negotiations as a result of public information activities within the country it controls. There are, as a result, often difficult choices to make between information and cultural and certain other types of representational activities. The point I am making is that, while we consider information work as an essential part of our activities, we cannot operate as a central information office. We operate a diplomatic service and our business is to field successful diplomatic officers. Information work is one of their tools. It is not their main business. I hope, however, that I have shown that they attach importance to it and that they want to use it intelligently and effectively.

★ ★ ★ ★

I have outlined the framework within which our information activities are being carried out. I have endeavoured to indicate the main features of our operations in this field. The general impression I wish to convey to you is that, while we are not doing as much as we could do theoretically, given the practical and other limitations, we have recognized the very great importance of information work in the operations of our External Affairs Department. To maximize its effectiveness, we have fully integrated our information with our other work and we are trying to make the best possible use of what is made available to us in this field. We could do more perhaps, but the question here is, can we have more? And that question, as I have suggested and as you well know, is not one for Civil Servants to answer.

It may be that the answer will be made easier as a result of the forthcoming Glasco Report. We, for our part, welcomed the whole question of information work abroad being looked into by a Royal Commission. We certainly look forward to expert suggestions for strengthening and improving the information arm of our service. Above all, Glasco Commission recommendations, constructive as I am sure they will be, are likely to promote better public awareness of the need to explain abroad our attitudes. This would be a factor that would make it easier for all concerned to give information requirements the priority they deserve.

LIBRARY E A / BIBLIOTHÈQUE A E



3 5036 01047529 4