

POST REPORT ON OTTAWA

(Editor's Note: Our motherly Department, as you know, prepares reports on our various missions abroad for the guidance of members of the Department who are departing for foreign service. These reports, of course, contain admonitions on what clothing, furniture, kitchen utensils, electrical apparatus and so on it is advisable to take abroad and, since these post reports are usually somewhat historic documents, they have in general generated more rage and bafflement than any other document issued by the Department. It has been customary to give to the newest arrival in each mission abroad the preparation of the post report as his first duty before the bloom of the new appointment has worn off, and before he has had time to discover, for example, the voltage and cycle of the local electricity supply or the prices of commonly used commodities.

It seems to us clearly logical that, to make these post reports complete, there should be one dealing with Ottawa, for the benefit of newcomers to the Service leaving their native towns for the first time, for members of the Department returning to Ottawa after long years abroad and, of course, for the diplomatic community. Reluctant to be convicted of the vulgar errors which mark so many of the casual post reports on our mission abroad, we have engaged, regardless of expense, an expert on Ottawa who now submits the first part of this report which will be continued in subsequent issues.)

SECTION I - GEOGRAPHY

Ottawa is situated at the apex of a triangle of which the other two points are Toronto and Montreal. Considerable numbers of Foreign Service personnel spend their entire lives within this triangle before their first posting abroad. (By the way, it is often possible to win an easy dollar from some know-it-all character who is unaware that Ottawa is slightly south of Montreal. This is a good thing to remember toward the end of the month). The city itself is pleasantly situated near the confluence of the Rideau and Ottawa Rivers, both of which inundate considerable areas of the city each spring at the time of the annual floods. In earlier days when the population consisted of temporary encampments of a few hundred Indians, a certain measure of flood control was practised by the hurling