

... field of international policy, certainly, the above is an understatement if anything, since foreign policy can scarcely be developed and pursued in the absence of informed public attitudes of general and long-term approval. The responsibility of the Department of External Affairs to play a central and serious role in supplying information to the public on the affairs of the world is very clear. The establishment and conduct of foreign affairs are indissolubly linked to the understanding and support vouchsafed by the people.

3. If the need for and purposes of a public information programme in Canada by this Department are clear and the obligations are recognized, it remains to be assessed whether the task is being well planned and undertaken. Over the years, the services offered by the Department in this field have been the object of considerable criticism, some of it sustained and some desultory, some seriously and conscientiously conceived, some frivolous or fractious. The bulk of such criticism has come from the press (a term I am using to include other media of information) but private citizens, particularly from academic circles, have also complained of not receiving what they consider the help due them from the Department. It is virtually impossible to assess the validity of such criticism on any general and vague basis (a form in which it often appears) and some examination of the several ways in which information is conveyed to the general public seems called for in order to gauge where the operation is inadequate, inappropriate or missing.