

## VIII

### LEGAL AND CONSULAR AFFAIRS

#### 1. Legal Affairs

The Department performs a number of specific tasks of a legal nature. It gives opinions and advice to other government departments on questions of international law. It assists in the transmission of documents to foreign governments under civil procedure conventions, extradition treaties and arrangements, and arrangements for the reciprocal enforcement of maintenance orders.

The Department has also been concerned with claims of Canadians who have suffered injury abroad or whose property in other countries was damaged as a result of war operations or confiscated under nationalization measures. Assistance was rendered to those Canadian claimants who were able to show that after exhausting local remedies in the countries concerned they had suffered denial of justice or discrimination. The Department has assisted Canadians in the processing of their claims under existing foreign legislation or under certain international agreements such as the Treaties of Peace with Italy and Japan, the Austrian State Treaty, and the Equal Treatment Agreements with France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. It has conducted inquiries abroad on behalf of the War Claims Commission and has co-operated with the Departments of Finance and of the Secretary of State of Canada in the disposal of various types of claims, in particular those coming under the Agreement on German External Debts.

The Department registers and publishes agreements concluded by Canada with other countries. Appendix F lists the international agreements which Canada signed or acceded to in 1955, with supplementary information on the year's developments as to ratifications or acceptances, and entry into force.

#### 2. Consular Activities

Consular assistance and services are available from Canadian representatives in 45 countries. A list of Canadian diplomatic and consular posts abroad will be found in Appendix B.

In countries where there is no Canadian diplomatic or consular representation, some services of a consular nature, such as the issuance and renewal of passports, may be provided by Canadian Trade Commissioners of the Department of Trade and Commerce. In general, however, consular services in such countries are provided to Canadians by courtesy of the United Kingdom diplomatic and consular representatives.

Consular activities include safeguarding the interests of Canadian citizens abroad; representing Canadian citizens abroad in matters of estates; assisting in finding missing persons; helping Canadian citizens