

their business sector in addition to their own particular firm. The reports they have to file at the end of the mission must reflect that fact. Furthermore, they undertake to make generally known in their own sector the business opportunities they have discovered while on the mission. This may be done through speeches, through articles in trade publications or through their day-to-day contacts with their colleagues. I am pleased to note how well many of the members of past missions have done in this respect.

Because of the relatively short time a mission has to accomplish the task (usually three to five days), every member has to be very well prepared. A first meeting of the mission members is, therefore, held before the group reaches the country of destination. This first meeting may be held either in Canada just prior to departure or somewhere *en route*. In addition to routine administrative questions, the mission is briefed on its purpose; the political, economic and trading conditions that prevail in the country to be visited; difficulties that may be encountered; and, in a general manner, the task that has been set for each member. Shortly after its arrival in the foreign country and before the mission officially begins, a second briefing meeting is held at which the embassy officials go over the various points already covered at the earlier briefing and bring the members up to date on the latest developments. The mission members then have the opportunity to go over their individual programs with the trade commissioners at the post, discuss their objectives and make any adjustments if necessary.

Once the mission has officially begun, the pace becomes rather hectic, leaving little time for rest. I think this will be attested by anyone who has taken part in such a mission. A typical day starts around 8 a.m. with a briefing session, usually led by the senior official on the mission, during which the previous day's activities are reviewed and assessed (the minister's and other members'), the members' activities for that day explained and any difficulties discussed, following which the group breaks up and each follows his own individual program (the minister making official visits on his counterparts -- officials and businessmen doing likewise). At the end of the day, each businessman is expected to file a report on his visits of the day. These are reviewed by the trade commissioners and the mission secretary and summarized for the minister. The minister is de-briefed on the day's activities and prepares for his meetings scheduled for the next day.

Once or twice during the mission's stay, the group will meet in plenary session to discuss its progress, findings and any difficulties. This general exchange of ideas helps each member assess his own progress in a proper context and it is also useful to the minister in his discussions with his counterparts.

When the mission has completed its business and returns to Canada, the work is not finished. The businessmen, as I mentioned earlier, must report to their colleagues and industry associations, the mission secretary prepares a final mission report which is made available to any interested Canadian businessman and, depending on the circumstances, a task force is set up or a person designated to follow up on matters and opportunities resulting from the mission.