

V RESOURCES: PERSONNEL AND COMMUNICATIONS

Personnel

A foreign service is people—people working for Canada in posts abroad under a variety of conditions, people being recruited, trained and counselled about long-term career paths, people and their belongings being moved from post to post, people whose daily needs and comforts while abroad must be looked after if they are efficiently to serve their Department and their country. All organizations of any kind have personnel sections, but the varied nature of the Department's work and the environments in which it is performed, the daily challenges posed by changing conditions at home and abroad and by the evolving policies and regulations of the public service as a whole, the complex human problems involved in a rotational service—all these factors make the functions of the Personnel Bureau and its component parts, the Personnel Operations Division, the Personnel Planning and Development Division and the Staff Relations and Compensation Division, both unique and vital to the Department.

During 1974 the number of Canadian public service employees in the Department increased modestly from 3,041 to 3,087. Of these, 790 officers and 1,264 support staff are members of the foreign service, of which 440 officers and 850 support staff were stationed abroad at the end of the year. In addition, the Department was served by approximately 2,200 locally-engaged employees at posts abroad. Both the Canada-based and the locally-engaged support staffs at posts support the program activities of all Federal Government departments engaged in foreign operations. Increased demands for manpower during the year included, for example, the opening of the embassy in Saudi Arabia and additional emphasis on the Department's information program.

To reflect Canada's bilingual nature, extensive efforts were being made in 1974 to ensure that a big majority of departmental employees would eventually have a working knowledge of both official languages and

that opportunities were provided for them to learn the local language required at the post in which they might be serving.

The foreign service has been blessed for many years by the presence of talented and vigorous women in its ranks, and the Personnel Bureau is working to see that this continues. Women have served at all levels and in virtually all major activity areas in the officer group, as well as providing great strength in the various support functions, including the communications and clerical as well as the stenographic. Several women have served and are serving as heads of post abroad and as directors general and directors at headquarters in Ottawa. The Department has continued to attract numbers of excellent female candidates in its annual recruitment competitions.

Recruitment of officer and support personnel is conducted through open competition. Foreign service officer recruitment is held each fall at universities throughout Canada and consists of written examinations and individual interviews. Stenographers and some other support personnel are also recruited through interviews conducted periodically in all major Canadian centres. These competitions constitute major activities for the Personnel Bureau. Specialists located in Ottawa—e.g. librarians, finance and personnel administrators and information officers—are recruited through the Public Service Commission as the need occurs.

Besides those functions common to most personnel administrations, including job classification, pay, vacation, health plans, and superannuation, the Personnel Bureau administers such items as educational, hospitality and other allowances, assisted leave, student travel and Canada leave, and foreign travel and removal. It also studies and reports to Treasury Board on the conditions of service abroad. In these and other ways the Bureau provides the services which help in aiding Canadians to serve efficiently.