

Re-organization of the Department

On January 12, 1982, the Prime Minister announced a restructuring of the Department of External Affairs as part of a re-organization of several government departments concerned with Canada's economic development. Its purpose was to improve the implementation of new policies for national economic expansion and enhance export trade ability. The result of these changes is a fundamentally changed departmental mandate which now includes responsibility for trade policy and trade promotion along with the traditional area of foreign policy and the more recently acquired functions related to immigration. The new approach recognizes the vital role of the private sector and the provinces. Trade policy units of the Department work closely with the regional offices of the Ministry of State for Economic and Regional Development and the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce/Regional Economic Expansion.

The White Paper "Foreign Policy for Canadians," published in 1970, described the role of the Department of External Affairs as "the maximum integration of its foreign operations that will effectively contribute to the achievement of national objectives." Canada's national objectives have shifted towards economic emphasis. With the shift has come the need for an aggressive drive towards larger export markets at a time when the difficult international trade climate is increasingly affected by the political environment. Foreign policy and trade are inevitably interrelated.

In 1971 an interdepartmental committee on external relations (ICER) had begun to integrate elements of the foreign service by incorporating the support services of all other departments with programs abroad in the Department of External Affairs. Throughout the following decade, ICER policy and program co-ordination helped reconcile diverging program objectives among the various government departments with interests abroad. Efforts were made to ensure that heads of diplomatic missions abroad would regard themselves as representatives of the whole Government of Canada. In March 1980, consolidation was taken a step further with the integration at the senior executive level of the foreign service officers from the departments of Industry, Trade and Commerce, and Employment and Immigration; operational-level foreign service officers from Employment and Immigration; and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) field staff.

As a result of the January 1982 reorganization, all foreign service officers from CIDA, trade commissioners and Canadian Government Office of Tourism employees are now fully integrated into the Department of External Affairs, along with the trade policy and trade promotion sections of the former Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

The restructuring of External Affairs into a new department with external trade responsibilities is reflected in the portfolios of the three ministers that have been assigned to the Department. The Secretary of State for External Affairs is charged with managing the broad mandate of the Department, but he has two other Ministers with more precisely defined responsibilities. The Minister of State for International Trade is responsible for international trade and export development and serves as the minister to whom the Export Development Corporation and the Canadian Commercial Corporation report. The Minister of State for External Relations, among other duties, supports the Secretary of State for External Affairs in international social, cultural and humanitarian affairs, and is responsible for francophone states and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation.

(On January 1, 1982, the Secretary of State for External Affairs was the Honourable Mark MacGuigan. On January 12, 1982 the Honourable Pierre de Bané was appointed Minister of State for External Relations and the Honourable Edward Lumley was appointed Minister of State for International Trade. Nine months later, on September 10, Deputy Prime Minister Allan MacEachen was appointed Secretary of State for External Affairs, and on September 30, the Honourable Charles Lapointe was appointed Minister of State for External Relations and the Honourable Gerald Regan was appointed Minister of State for International Trade.)

Working with the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs are two deputy ministers corresponding to the Ministers of State – one for foreign policy and one for international trade. The Deputy Minister, Foreign Policy, is responsible for the geographic bureaux, defence, arms control, multilateral institutions, international cultural matters, security and intelligence. The Deputy Minister, International Trade, is responsible for trade promotion and trade policy, and is also Co-ordinator of international economic relations. In this newly created role, he is responsible for the co-ordination of the whole range of the government's external trade interests, including those of domestic departments such as Agriculture, Energy, Mines and Resources, Communications and Transport.

Below this senior level, departmental organization is designed to achieve maximum co-ordination of Canada's foreign relations activities and ensure that international considerations receive due weight in the formulation of domestic policy. The new comprehensive role for the Department of External Affairs makes it responsible for the policy, planning and management of all aspects of Canadian foreign relations and the link between the government's interests at home and abroad.