

officers. This is the period of basic instruction and learning of the work of the foreign service officer. It is also the period of basic orientation to departmental organization, philosophy and goals. As such this is the period demanding the most highly developed training assignments and programmes.

199. Because of the critical importance of the first few years of an officer's career, we believe it is of great importance that there be fairly close alternation of training and experience, that the initial posting abroad should not be too long delayed, and that it should not itself be too long. We are therefore recommending that an officer's original assignment in Ottawa run no longer than fifteen months, that all first postings - regardless of the classification of the post - be restricted to two years, and that all officers return for a two-year assignment to Ottawa after their first posting abroad. This should ensure that no officer will be kept too long at some of the jobs abroad which have limited development potential and that all officers will be able to learn the skills of the journeyman desk officer within the first five years of their working career in the Department. This arrangement will also benefit the Department, in the sense that officers with experience abroad will be able to do many of the desk jobs which probationary officers have trouble doing well because of their inexperience. At the same time the Department will be able to assess more accurately the abilities of junior officers who would otherwise remain comparatively unknown quantities for some years.

200. We therefore recommend the adoption of the following programme :