

Chapter I

INFORMATION TO PUBLIC & PRESS IN CANADA

The provision of information to the Canadian public on international affairs and the position of the Canadian Government in this regard constitutes both an obligation and an opportunity. In addition to the absolute right of the public in a democratic society to know and approve of the way its taxes are being spent, the issues of war and peace, of international development and stability are of life and death concern to this and succeeding generations and they must know the circumstances and the way their Government is facing these circumstances. The Report of the Glassco Commission on Public Information has this to say regarding "The Public Right to be Informed":

"Knowledge of government activities is a public right, and indeed a necessity; but both the growing size and diversity of Government make the satisfaction of this need more and more difficult. The machinery and processes of government are therefore taking increasingly into account the public demand to be informed."

2. This requirement to try to meet the public demand for information on the activities of government carried with it an opportunity and a challenge to governmental agencies to supply a basis of understanding of the issues involved and an explanation of the policies determined by the Government to meet these issues. As the Glassco Commission has stated:

"In certain situations, operations of government can be assisted and their value enhanced when public co-operation is enlisted. In these cases, a properly directed information programme proves to be an invaluable aid to the economy and efficiency of government."