

broad policy issues and current hard questions of interest to other central agencies, key domestic departments, and domestic departments with substantial interests abroad. Examples are preparations for economic summit meetings, defence issues, and relations with key industrial countries.

The Under-Secretary chairs the Interdepartmental Committee on Economic Relations with Developing Countries which has a broadening mandate to preside over the development of Canada's economic relations with the Third World. It shapes instruments of policy such as our program of development assistance. It also deals with a broad range of Canadian trade and financial issues as they affect our relations with developing countries. Also important in dealing with Canadian relations with the developing world is the membership of the Under-Secretary on the governing or advisory boards of the Export Development Corporation, the International Development Research Centre and CIDA.

The most important committee for the management of Canada's international operations is the Interdepartmental Committee on External Relations, commonly referred to by its initials, ICER. The fact that there are three departments operating a foreign service is often overlooked: in addition to External Affairs there is the Trade Commissioner Service of the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, and the Immigration Service of the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission. There are also several departments and agencies, such as CIDA, National Defence, RCMP, National Revenue, and National Health and Welfare which maintain program officers in Canadian posts abroad. Indeed of the 1,130 program officers abroad about 60 percent are from departments other than External affairs.

Given the variety of sources from which Canadian representation abroad is drawn, the Government, in 1970, created ICER. Its purpose is to promote the integration and coherence of our operations abroad. Membership is at the deputy minister level and includes representatives from the foreign service departments, other departments with significant operations abroad, the Secretary to the Cabinet and the Secretary to the Treasury Board. The Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs is Chairman of ICER in recognition of the Department's leading role in the area of international relations.

After an initial period of success in the early 1970s ICER began to stagnate somewhat. The momentum towards foreign service integration gradually dissipated. Hard-headed resource allocation in accordance with changing priorities was largely unnecessary because of the continuing availability of additional resources. This meant that ICER working groups could take existing program levels for granted and concentrate instead on allocating new resources.

My return to the Department coincided with major changes in the environment in which ICER had been operating for some years; the era of expanding resources was over and the period of government restraint had begun. As a consequence, the need for coherent resource allocation for the foreign service as a whole became the major priority of ICER. The Government decided to renew the original goals of integration and operational coherence.

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