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INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

The information and cultural work of the Department has two main purposes: the first is to present to other countries a true and adequate picture of Canadian policy, Canadian institutions and the Canadian way of life; the second is to disseminate information in Canada about the Government's external policies, interests and objectives. The Department is responsible for the co-ordination of the Government's information and cultural activities outside Canada.

This effort is devoted both to projects handled solely by the Department and also to those undertaken jointly with other agencies of government. The bulk of the work consists in answering requests and in providing information services and material. Information and cultural activities are undertaken also in co-operation with organizations such as NATO, the Colombo Plan, the United Nations and UNESCO.

1. Information on International Affairs and International Organizations

The demand continues to increase both at home and abroad for information and publications concerning Canada's role in world affairs and its participation in international organizations. Canada's active participation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Colombo Plan, and the United Nations continues to stimulate public interest, and the increased emphasis on Commonwealth relations has also been reflected in requests for information.

The primary responsibility for NATO information and cultural activities rests with member governments. In the field of information this involves distribution in Canada of publications produced both by NATO and by the Department, and the implementation of an annual programme agreed on with other member nations, which includes journalists' tours, exchanges of films and radio material, exhibitions, seminars and conferences. In addition to the regular NATO information programme additional activities were undertaken during 1959 through all the information media to mark the tenth anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. As part of the anniversary celebration, Canada received a visit from the NATO Council, following its ministerial session in Washington in April, and for this special publicity arrangements were made.

Liaison with voluntary organizations supporting NATO in Canada assumed increasing importance. Close relations were again maintained with the Canadian Atlantic Co-ordinating Committee, Canadian affiliate of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and with the Canadian branch of the NATO Parliamentary Association, an organization of members of parliament in member countries whose general purpose is to support NATO objectives and to further co-operation within the Atlantic Community.