

It is sometimes not appreciated that the alternative to not recognizing a regime is to pack up and leave. The interests section approach may not always be accepted, and as I have said, it has many disadvantages.

It is my belief also that through contact and dialogue, one is first of all in a better position to know what is really going on in a country and, secondly, one can sometimes have an influence on events. Sharp reactions often provoke obduracy rather than a desired result. Dialogue, although often a long, painful process is, in my view, a more effective method of persuasion.

There is also the rather special case of a newly emerged state. When a former colony achieves independence through negotiation with its former masters, there is no particular problem. It is when there is violence in the relationship and no clear cut break that factors must be weighed. In such situations, Canada applies the basic legal test of control over territory: has in fact a new state emerged, with reasonable assurance of permanence? Is it in a position to assume international obligations? In a civil war or colonial war situation, the answers to these questions must be clear or one may find oneself having recognized a state which subsequently disappears.

There are currently three situations where there are rival claims of jurisdiction. In South Viet-Nam, in Cambodia and in Guinea Bissau or Portuguese Guinea. The latter case is perhaps the one over which there is most controversy, since it is a colonial situation. Canada's views on Portugal's African territories are clear. We have said on many occasions that the continuation of colonial rule in Africa is not compatible with the evolution of events in recent years, nor with the philosophy of human dignity to which the great majority of countries subscribe.

Nonetheless the PAIGC forces in Guinea Bissau are not at the present time able to meet the standard criteria under international law that we accept as the yardstick for the existence of a new state.

Consular protection of Canadian interests

Now that I have described our philosophy of relations between states, I would like to say something about the jobs which our missions abroad can and do perform and also something about the limitations on their actions.

The first requirement for us to be able to do anything for Canadians abroad, is to have a presence in the main areas of Canadian interest. The presence can vary from a very large embassy, with a network of consulates, such as we have in the United States, to an agreement to enter into diplomatic relations. This latter state is short of presence, but through accreditation of officials at other posts, allows for the beginnings of a dialogue and, through visits and the right of calling on ministers and other officials, starts the process of advancing Canadian interests in that country. I am often asked why we don't have missions in this or that country. The reason is the classic one of priorities for limited resources, both financial and human. These priorities are constantly being reassessed and our programme of increasing our missions abroad is modified as necessary by changing circumstances and requirements.

The protection and assistance our missions abroad can give is based on longstanding traditions and conventions. The problem of protection of national communities in foreign countries is not a new one.