

THE PAUSE, 1949-1952

Once the first four offices opened in 1948, the Consular Division of External Affairs contemplated no slowdown in their plans for setting up more Canadian consulates in the United States. The arrangements for the long-delayed Los Angeles office and another in New Orleans were almost complete. Austerity measures facing the Department in 1949, however, by forcing a postponement of the implementation of the consular programme, caused a delay which allowed External Affairs to study the new consular system and to evaluate its development.⁹⁹

An important modification brought about by experience occurred when the Department recognized that the proposed hierarchical arrangement of the consulates under the supervision of the Consulates General had not worked. This principle, therefore, was abandoned in 1950 when Boston was formally removed from the consular supervision of the Consulate General in New York. From that time all posts would be in the direct line of authority from the Department and the Ambassador in Washington. Removal of the hierarchy also made the distinction between consulates and consulates general much more tenuous and subjective and, therefore, made the Department a target for campaigns by the Consuls in Boston and Detroit who desired to have their posts raised to an equality of status with the others, all consulates general.

A second group of problems with the new consular system arose from the difficulty of having the two departments, External Affairs and Trade and Commerce, concurrently supervising different aspects of several posts. Leslie Chance recognized this duality as a problem for his Division, and subsequently asked the Under-Secretary in 1949 "...what should be the policy