

B. The Task Force on Information

The principal outcome of the 1969 Task Force on Information was the establishment of Information Canada. In its recommendations the Task Force included the following references to information activities outside Canada:

"This organization (Information Canada) would facilitate and coordinate the technical and operational aspects of information activities in Canada and abroad..."

"Canada's information programmes abroad be developed by the interested departments in harmony with the policies administered by the Secretary of State for External Affairs with the advice of a board drawing its membership from the public and private sectors; and that appropriate programmes be serviced by a division of Information Canada". (Task Force Volume I, p. 61)

"The authority of the Secretary of State for External Affairs to fulfil his responsibilities for the projection of Canada abroad be reinforced by giving his Department the necessary resources". (Volume I, p. 68).

Insofar as they envisaged Information Canada assuming an active role in information activities abroad, these recommendations were not implemented.

C. The Pierce Commission (report unpublished) recommended that there be a single comprehensive system for an integrated foreign operations program that would develop foreign policy recommendations and coordinated plans for foreign operations and that would manage foreign operations. This system would include a single unified Foreign Service drawn from the Departments of External Affairs, Industry, Trade and Commerce, Manpower and Immigration, and the Canadian International Development Agency. It would also include a "department reporting to the Minister responsible for Canada's foreign affairs" with responsibility for leadership in identifying and harmonizing the components of foreign policy, for service to other departments, for management of the unified Foreign Service and for management of posts abroad. There would be an Interdepartmental Planning Committee and an Interdepartmental Programming Committee, and there would be provision for direct communication on functional matters between officers abroad and departments at home. The Commission made a number of other specific recommendations pursuant to this concept of a unified foreign service.

The extent to which the Pierce recommendations were implemented is indicated in the section on Cabinet decisions.