

rotational have continued in the personnel, information, cultural and other specialist fields.

Restrictions on the employment of married women in the Public Service, which had been reimposed in 1947, were revoked in 1955. Romances, naturally, had frequently blossomed in the Department, and a number of women had given up their jobs for marriage. The role of wives is important, particularly in the Service abroad. As one senior Canadian ambassador recently stated: "... Without wives the Service could not be as effective and as representative of our country as it is now." He added: "They are the ones who ensure the show remains on the road." Now that it is no longer necessary to stop working in the Department after marriage, more young women are carrying on, even after the birth of children. Postings to the same mission have occasionally been arranged for husbands and wives employed in the Department, or in cases where one spouse may be in another department that has its own operations abroad. Recently, some young women have accepted foreign postings and taken their husbands, and occasionally their children, with them. At the moment, the whole question of spouses who have their own careers outside the foreign service is a matter of concern to rotational families.

While International Women's Year was not a "watershed", it was a time for pause and reflection. A Women's Bureau had been established in the Department of Labour in 1954; the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada, set up in 1967, brought in its report three years later; a member of the federal Cabinet is responsible for the legislative, statutory and administrative changes necessary to implement the commission's recommendations, particularly those aimed at the Public Service; a Co-ordinator, Status of Women, has a supervisory role in the Privy Council Office; an Advisory Council on the Status of Women represents the private sector; and the Public Service Commission has an Office of Equal Opportunities for Women. The Department of External Affairs has its own EOW Committee.

As a prelude to IWY (1975), a United Nations interregional meeting was held in Ottawa in September 1974 to study various national mechanisms throughout the world that might be adopted by other countries where the status of women needed improving. The Canadian case study was well received. A Canadian delegation took part in the UN International Women's Year conference in Mexico last

summer. Canada voted in favour of the Plan of Action, which provided for measures at the national level during the next ten years, proclaimed as the UN Decade for Women and Development, with a follow-up conference in 1980. One recommendation in the Plan of Action was carried out here this spring when the Cabinet agreed that the Secretary of State for External Affairs, in exercising his authority to approve proposals for participation in international conferences, should ensure equitable representation of both sexes on all Canadian delegations.

The Federal Government, through the Treasury Board, has recently enunciated a policy of equal access to employment, training and development, and career opportunities for all employees. External Affairs has reported, as requested, on its plans for the current fiscal year, and will report in March 1977 on plans for 1977 to 1982. The activities undertaken by the Department are a response to the changing social and economic needs of all its employees rather than to the special problem of equal opportunities for women. These include: the removal of the age-limit on the entry level to the Foreign Service group (which has meant employment for widows now serving abroad); new categories of employment open to women, resulting in the posting abroad in 1975 of the first female security guard, the widow of a member of the Department; the promulgation of a policy on the employment of spouses and dependents abroad, if this is acceptable to the recipient country; issuing of diplomatic and special passports in the maiden name of a female applicant if the host country does not object; and arranging for educational leave (occasionally on full pay, when the studies are academic and related to the work of the Department) or for technical studies that would be of help in more advanced work.

The foreign policy review also recognized the need for integration of the support services of the Government's foreign operations, to create a more closely-knit organization under each head of post abroad. This has brought into the Department a number of qualified women from other departments who, on their return to Ottawa from abroad, occupied desks in the Lester B. Pearson Building on Sussex Drive.

"La haute diplomatie" now embraces relations of many kinds between Canada and other countries, particularly through the Department of External Affairs, in the political, economic, defence, scientific, legal, consular and public affairs spheres.

*Cabinet decision  
on representation  
of both sexes  
on delegations*

*Recognized need  
for integration  
of support services*