

PART I. Role of Branch Passport Offices

INTRODUCTION

A decision taken on October 18, 1968 by the Cabinet Committee on External Policy and Defence whereby the Department of External Affairs was authorized to "open branch passport offices in cities where major air terminals are located for scheduled overseas flights beginning with Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto" was confirmed by the Cabinet on October 24, 1968, (see Annex A) along with other measures designed to improve the security of the Canadian Passport. Subsequently, in announcing details of the program a Departmental Press Release on January 22, 1969, authorized by the Minister, expressed the hope that these offices would be opened by January 1, 1970 (see Annex B).

AIMS

The original purpose of the branch office structure was to achieve greater passport security; provide better service to applicants in emergency situations by decentralizing passport issuance; as a consequence, personal advice to applicants in the completion of their passport applications would reduce errors that cause delays and frustration. Although decentralization should speed up the processing of properly completed applications, it will not increase productivity because of the slower examining process involved in the personal screening of applicants.

POLICY

Initially, the Department has undertaken to open offices in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver because of the volume of applications emanating from