

Chapter 9

INFORMATION PROGRAMS AND PRESS SERVICES

Press Office

The Department's Press Office disseminated to the media information on all aspects of Canada's foreign policy. To assist the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Ministers for International Trade and External Relations in their relations with the media, the Press Office arranged briefings, organized press conferences and set up interviews with the Ministers both in Canada and abroad. The Press Office answered enquiries from journalists on international issues and on the Department's activities, and served as the Department's official spokesperson.

When the Prime Minister or any of the three External Affairs Ministers travelled abroad on official visits, the Press Office arranged background briefings on the visits and provided the accompanying journalists with the economic and political data they required for their assignments. Similarly, when foreign dignitaries made official visits to Canada, the Press Office arranged pre-visit briefings for journalists and made logistical arrangements with regard to interviews, photo opportunities, press conferences and the issuance of communiqués and statements. When necessary, the Press Office arranged for the accreditation of foreign and Canadian journalists.

The Press Office assisted Canadian journalists on foreign assignments by helping them plan their visits and by ensuring that Canadian posts abroad provided them with any help they required. The Press Office also assisted foreign correspondents reporting on the Canadian scene, as well as visiting journalists and editors.

The Press Office maintained a comprehensive computerized mailing list of 1 700, which includes the House of Commons, the Senate, the Parliamentary Press Gallery, provincial governments, major news organizations, all Canadian posts abroad and a wide variety of interest groups and individuals. During 1984-85, the Press Office distributed more than 250 departmental news releases and statements to those on the mailing list.

The Press Office's electronic media monitoring facilities enabled about 800 relevant news transcripts to be produced and distributed to officials within the Department and to Canadian consulates and embassies. To keep posts abroad informed of major events in Canada, the Press Office continued to provide a daily telegraphic news scan.

International expositions

The Department is responsible for managing Canadian participation in international expositions, sometimes referred to as world fairs. In 1984, Canada participated in the Louisiana World Exposition, and the Canadian pavilion was the most popular, primarily because of its IMAX film entitled *River Journey*. Canada is also participating in Japan's

Expo 85, an exposition on science and technology in relation to dwellings and surroundings, between March and September 1985. Consideration continues for a specialized international exposition in Brisbane, Australia, in 1988 and a universal exposition in Chicago/Seville, Spain, in 1992.

Canada will host the 1986 World Exposition, Expo 86, in Vancouver, on transportation and communications. The Department is responsible for the international government-to-government promotion and co-ordination of the Exposition, in which 42 countries have already agreed to participate. The Exposition's Commissioner General is a member of the Department. The Exposition will run from May to October 1986, and will be located on 50 hectares of downtown waterfront property in Vancouver.

The Department also manages a collection of over 35 information exhibits circulated throughout the world to increase foreign awareness of Canadian society. In 1984-85, exhibits covering topics such as facts on Canada, trade, high technology, crafts and famous Canadians were produced to support the Department's public affairs activities abroad.

Information programs abroad

The External Information Services Division's basic objectives are to strengthen the image of Canada abroad as a reliable, confident, stable and vibrant society, advanced economically, technologically and socially, and to support the government's trade development, investment promotion and foreign policy aims abroad. Principal target audiences abroad are decision-makers and "opinion-formers" such as political leaders, exporters, investors, business organizations, government officials, foreign media, lobbyists and academic and cultural organizations.

For international audiences, more than 330 different publications were produced in a variety of languages to support promotion of Canadian exhibits in 52 international trade fairs, in which almost 700 Canadian companies participated. Trade publications produced for use abroad other than at trade fairs included surveys of seven Canadian industry sectors for a directory published in China. Other publications covered various commodities, computers, defence products, hydro-electricity and integrated office equipment.

Steps were taken during the year to increase the trade, technological and investment promotion content of the Division's general publications program, a principal objective of which is to convey an overall positive image of Canada and its foreign and domestic policies. Some publications were terminated and the focus of others was changed. A total of 607 titles were published, some in as many as ten languages.

This figure includes 46 issues of *Canada Weekly* and *Hebdo Canada* (30 000 copies weekly, distributed abroad)