

Saskatchewan has always been aware of the importance of world events to local people. Examples:

- The South Saskatchewan Council for International Co-operation and the National Farmers' Union have shared their skills with distant communities in other lands.
- The Saskatchewan Indian Federated College established a leadership training program here in Saskatoon for Native leaders from Central America.

These activities respond to and shape our continuing efforts at the federal level to link Canada and Canadians to their foreign counterparts.

One reason I am pleased to be here today is to dispel any notion that Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs deals only with foreign issues -- and that domestic issues are parked over here somewhere. In reality, what I am attacking every day and what I deal with are Canadian issues, that is, the rights, concerns, needs and aspirations of Canadians as they are affected by -- and affect -- international situations and developments.

Our foreign service officers, for example, do not spend their entire lives going to elegant diplomatic receptions. At a very practical level, Canada's network of embassies around the world helps hundreds of thousands of Canadians every year in a thousand different ways -- whether it is information, guidance or assistance with a business project -- sometimes in life-threatening situations. Our posts are rallying points for Canadians, and, indeed, I would encourage you to make use of them.

When Canadians want to sell their products or services in distant and unfamiliar markets, our trade commissioners are there to advise, to put them in touch with the right people and to make the right arrangements. In fact, even before Canadian exporters go abroad, they can get services, information and advice from our International Trade Centres, right here in Saskatoon, for example. Even in Regina!

When Canadian academics, researchers and students want to work with foreign counterparts, we help make the necessary introductions and arrangements.

There is no great mystery about foreign policy. As a former British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs once said, "Foreign policy is something that you have to bring down to its essence as it applies to the individual. It is not something that is great and big; it is common sense and humanity as it applies to my affairs and yours...."