

to the Cabinet - normally although not invariably - through the Cabinet Committee for External Affairs and National Defence. Infrequently, (for example, in the event of a government decision to participate in a major peacekeeping operation abroad) specific parliamentary approval will be sought.

Where in addition policy decisions have resource implications for the principal foreign service departments, or alter their normal operations in some important way, recommendations go forward to Ministers from the Inter-departmental Committee on External Relations, meeting under the chairmanship of the Under-Secretary. It was through ICER and its sub-committees that the principal foreign service departments worked out the implications on foreign operations of the budget cuts decided upon by the government in the summer of 1978. Thus, for example, the government decided in August 1978, that four posts abroad should be closed. This decision was arrived at quite independently of foreign policy considerations. Through the ICER machinery, an interdepartmental process was then set in train which ultimately produced recommendations about which posts, in the light of foreign policy considerations, might best be closed. These recommendations provided a basis for Cabinet discussion. But the final decision about which posts were actually to be closed was a decision of the Cabinet. The implications of this decision, like those of other decisions flowing from the government's economic measures, affect many country programmes. The country programmes affected are now in the course of being revised in this light.

*In other words, there is a system for taking account of major intervening adjustments in government priorities that alter plans drawn up through the normal planning cycle.*

Ensuring co-ordination and coherence is a characteristic problem of contemporary foreign policy-making. The inter-play of foreign and domestic problems today is more intense than ever before. The number of individual Canadians, private Canadian organizations, provincial and federal government departments with legitimate interests and activities abroad is incomparably greater today than in previous generations. Ensuring that these interests are accommodated within the framework of a coherent foreign policy is a constant preoccupation. The federal government seeks to arrive at satisfactory understandings with individuals, private bodies and with the provincial governments through discussion and negotiation; so far as the federal bureaucracy itself is concerned, the government is in a position to impose certain disciplines. One is to designate a central agency for foreign policy, the Department of External Affairs. Another is to stipulate that recommendations about or relating to