

where Canadians abroad find themselves, for one reason or another, involved in infractions of local laws and regulations. Most of these cases, I am happy to say, are dealt with quietly and effectively by our consular officers; the few cases that prove really difficult and sometimes beyond our control are the ones that draw public attention.

Canadians, upon being detained by the local authorities abroad, can normally inform our embassies of their arrest either by telephone, telegram, letter or through consular officers and lawyers visiting jails. I should point out that foreign governments are under no obligation to inform our representatives when a Canadian is in custody, unless the person detained so requests or our representative makes an inquiry. Nonetheless, most foreign governments do notify our representatives when a Canadian is in custody. Whenever our embassies and consulates abroad are notified that Canadian citizens have been arrested or are otherwise in difficulty with the local laws, they immediately seek information as to the details concerning the person concerned and the charges being laid, if any. They request immediate consular access so as to be able to ascertain and respond to the individual's wishes regarding legal counsel, notification of next-of-kin, and other specific requests he may have. Also it can sometimes happen that the individuals in question, for various reasons of their own, do not want Canadian representatives to be aware of their situation and request the local authorities that they not be notified. There are, therefore, instances where we do not learn of such situations or where we learn of them only later by accident, or when the individual concerned decides, after a time, to request assistance.

When the authorities of other countries insist on the application of their laws to Canadians, there is an understandable concern and sympathy on the part of other Canadians, particularly the families of the person concerned, that a fellow Canadian or a family member is in legal difficulties abroad, where there may be differences of language and custom. When local laws and procedures are more rigorous or harsh than those that apply in Canada, there can be even greater concern, and possibly a feeling that an injustice is being perpetrated and that the Government and my Department should "do something about it". I fully understand and sympathize with this sentiment but, unfortunately, in such situations there is usually very little other than the steps I have already outlined that the Government or my Department can do, much as we might like to do more. Our dealings with other governments on these matters must be carried out within the guidelines of international law and accepted international practice. These guidelines restrict

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