

PART III.—THE GOVERNMENT AND FOREIGN TRADE

Section 1.—Federal Foreign Trade Services*

Foreign trade contributes substantially to the welfare and prosperity of Canadians, largely because the productive capacity of Canada is greater than the ability of its population to consume the output of farms, factories, forests, fisheries and mines. Every effort is made, therefore, to establish and maintain close commercial relations with other countries whose markets are essential to the Canadian economy. It is appreciated, however, that two-way trade should be encouraged in order that goods and services may be accepted in partial payment for the products Canada is in a position to export. Furthermore, many commodities that are not indigenous to this country must be imported. Some of these are required for industrial processes and others may be classed as consumer goods necessary for the maintenance of the Canadian standard of living.

Although many private firms have established connections in other countries that enable them to maintain a steady flow of goods in either direction, others require the assistance of government agencies in finding markets or sources of supply. Import and export controls imposed by many countries for a variety of reasons, together with foreign exchange difficulties, present problems that no single firm or even an association of manufacturers, exporters or importers can solve without assistance from government representatives.

The federal Department of Trade and Commerce, the primary function of which is the promotion of external trade, makes available to businessmen a wide variety of services to assist them in selling their products abroad. These services are provided by the Department's head office in Ottawa, four regional offices in Canada, and a corps of Trade Commissioners stationed around the world.

The highlight of the 1963 trade promotion program of the Department was "Operation World Markets", a comprehensive four-stage campaign which took place from Mar. 23 to May 3. It included a program entitled World Markets Machinery, held Mar. 23 to 31, for which nearly 200 foreign businessmen and government officials were brought to Canada; a National Canadian Samples Show, held in Toronto Apr. 2 to 4, attended by more than 600 buyers from Britain, Ireland, Western Europe, the West Indies and the United States; an Export Trade Promotion Conference, held in Ottawa Apr. 16 to May 3, at which 1,143 Canadian businessmen discussed export opportunities with Trade Commissioners brought from their posts abroad; and a Trade Commissioner Conference which carried out detailed group studies and discussions on special problems encountered in trading areas abroad.

Services available from the various branches, divisions and agencies of the Department of Trade and Commerce are described below. The work of these entities is interrelated, each operating in its own field but working closely with the others to effect the over-all objective of trade promotion.

Trade Commissioner Service.—The Trade Commissioner Service is the overseas arm of the Department and is actively engaged in the promotion of Canadian trade and the protection of Canada's commercial interests; 64 offices are maintained in 47 countries.

Every effort is made by the Trade Commissioners to bring Canadian exporters and prospective buyers together. On their own initiative, and in response to requests from the Department and Canadian businessmen, they study potential markets for specific Canadian commodities and services. Reports are provided on the demand in the country concerned, prices, competition, trade and exchange regulations, tariffs, shipping and packaging requirements, credit terms, channels of distribution, labelling regulations, etc. Inquiries from local businessmen for goods obtainable from Canada are forwarded to the Department in Ottawa, or directly to Canadian firms in a position to supply the products required.

* Prepared in the several branches and agencies concerned, and collated in the Trade Publicity Branch, Department of Trade and Commerce, Ottawa.