

UNCLASSIFIED

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*Circular, American*

THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

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October 19, 1962

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am gratified that, even though no specific reply was requested, a large number of our Chiefs of Mission have responded to Under Secretary Ball's letter of May 11, 1962. That letter renewed the call, in conjunction with the implementation of the State-Commerce Agreement on International Commercial Activities, for maximum support of the export drive.

I am also heartened that our Chiefs of Mission realize that the Export Expansion Program is not a bureaucratic device to export more work to our posts but a fundamental effort to increase our exports and thereby to improve our balance of payments. It is apparent to me, as I know it is to you, that there is a direct correlation between the level of our exports and our ability to accomplish many of our important foreign policy objectives.

The Executive, from the President on down, is vitally interested in expanding the volume of American exports. We know that in order to succeed we must have a direct and active participation in trade promotion by all of our Chiefs of Mission.

The role of our Chiefs of Mission is subject to change. What was traditional and helpful yesterday may be outmoded and inadequate today. I have come to the conclusion that this is the case as regards trade promotion. Mission Chiefs, their deputies, and indeed all top officials of the mission have many acquaintances in host government ministries and in business and other circles who can be sources of trade leads for our manufacturers and exporters. Not only commercial officers but the entire mission is obligated to be alert to these opportunities.

In today's

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In today's competitive markets we can do no less than our competitors, short of participating in actual sales or giving unfair competitive advantage to one American company over another. In the absence of explicit restrictions in the regulations, it is left to the discretion of the Chief of Mission as to how far to go in assisting American businessmen establish trade connections.

Admittedly, competitor nations historically have a larger dependence on export trade than we. The governments of those countries therefore have a deeply imbedded tradition of assistance to their traders which they continue to follow. But we have no mean tradition ourselves. In the early years of our Republic, our Ambassadors and Consuls had a primary mission of promoting our commerce and trade, and made a significant contribution to the success of the "clipper ship" era in world commerce. Perhaps we need to recapture some of the zeal of our forebears, for we are in the export business not just for today and tomorrow but for the long haul. Accordingly, I am requesting that you as well as your principal aides be alert to and seek out export opportunities for American business.

I should like to add a word about relations between the mission and the local American business community. Where such a community exists, the success of your trade promotion effort is heavily dependent upon the strength of these relations.

I therefore urge that you re-examine this situation as it concerns your mission as well as the Consular Officers under your supervision. Many Ambassadors have found it useful to meet regularly with the leaders of the American business community in order to brief them on foreign policy developments and to obtain from them whatever assistance they may have to offer in both foreign policy and trade promotion matters. I am confident that such cooperation cannot help but work to our mutual benefit.

Sincerely,

*Dean Rusk*

Dean Rusk

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