

# *Colombo Plan Consultative Committee*

FIFTEENTH MEETING, BANGKOK, 1963

THE FIFTEENTH meeting of the Consultative Committee of the Colombo Plan for Economic Development in South and Southeast Asia was held in Bangkok, Thailand, from November 11 to 14, 1963. Member countries represented at the meeting, in addition to Canada, were: Australia, Bhutan, Britain, Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, the United States and Vietnam. Cambodia was not represented. During the meeting, the Consultative Committee agreed to welcome the Maldives Islands and Afghanistan as members of the Colombo Plan. Observers from the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, the World Bank, the United Nations Technical Assistance Board, the United Nations Special Fund and the Asian Productivity Organization attended the meeting, as did the Director of the Colombo Plan Bureau.

The Canadian delegation to the Consultative Committee meeting was led by Mr. H. O. Moran, Director-General of the External Aid Office in Ottawa. A meeting of officials was held before the meeting from October 30 to November 8. The Canadian delegation to this preliminary meeting was led by the Canadian Ambassador to Thailand, Mr. C. E. McGaughey.

## **Origin of Consultative Committee**

It will be recalled that the Colombo Plan was conceived at a meeting of the foreign ministers of the Commonwealth held in Colombo in January 1950. In recognition of the pressing needs of the quarter of the world's population that lives in South and Southeast Asia and of the responsibility of the more fortunate Commonwealth members to help meet those needs, the ministers recommended that "steps should be taken urgently to raise living standards and promote social welfare amongst the people of South and Southeast Asia, thus enabling this area, with its vast potential resources, to play an increasing part in fostering well-being and furthering world prosperity". To pursue these objectives, a Consultative Committee was established to survey the needs, to assess the resources available and required, to focus world attention on the development problems of the area, and to provide a framework within which bilateral assistance programmes could be developed. Although the establishment of the Colombo Plan was an initiative of the Commonwealth countries, non-Commonwealth countries within the region were soon welcomed as members, as were the United States and Japan as countries determined to assist in the economic development of the region. A Colombo Plan Council for Technical Co-operation in South and Southeast Asia was established in Colombo and a small Bureau was set up to service it. The Infor-