

When, in 1975, Canada published its *Strategy for Co-operation in International Development*, covering the second half of the current decade, the Secretary of State for External Affairs emphasized that this action plan was based on lessons learnt in 25 years of Canadian intervention on behalf of the social and economic regeneration of the Third World.

It was, in fact, in 1950 that Canada committed itself to this immense international enterprise by agreeing to participate in the implementation of the Colombo Plan.

At that time, no one dreamt of employing the word "aid" to characterize this Canadian gesture of solidarity with three newly-independent countries of Southeast Asia: India, Pakistan and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), all members of the Commonwealth. As the title of the 1975 document indicated, the word "co-operation" had been more freely, and accurately, used for some time than "aid" or even "assistance", the latter two words having more often been reserved for particular forms of co-operation (public aid, food aid, technical assistance, etc.).

In fact, these semantic distinctions represented the profound changes, both quantitative and qualitative, that had occurred in the relations between nations over a quarter of a century, particularly during the present decade. There are now 27 countries associated with the structure of the Colombo Plan. Canadian public aid, in one form or another, has reached a total of \$6 billion⁽¹⁾ over 25 years, and today extends to some 70 developing countries, of which about 40 account for more than one and a half billion human beings regarded by the United Nations as the most deprived in the world and often, during recent years, the most seriously affected by economic, food and other crises.

⁽¹⁾ Amounts of money are expressed in Canadian dollars. Weights are expressed in metric tons (tonnes).