

The programme is being carried out in conjunction with the Inter-American Development Bank. Various loan projects are under consideration. We have already approved a loan to improve the port facilities in Acajutla, El Salvador, and are about to name a consultant for this project. We have signed an agreement with Ecuador for a pre-investment study of the Guayas River basin. Under a loan to Paraguay, Canadian engineers will be making feasibility studies for an improvement to that country's highway system.

In co-operation with the Inter-American Development Bank, which is acting as administrator of loan funds on our behalf, Canada is initiating a programme of loans to finance pre-feasibility and pre-investment studies in Latin America. I can now announce that the Canadian Government has given approval in principle to the first of such loans to Argentina and Peru. These loans are subject to final investigation now being carried out by the Inter-American Development Bank.

These different projects will involve Canadians in the actual work being done in the various locations involved in Latin America. I expect that, in some cases at least, they will involve the visit to Canada of individuals from the countries concerned. We may expect, therefore, to have new contacts between individuals and agencies in various technical fields as a result of this loan programme.

I believe that, in spite of these expanding contacts, there is general agreement in Canada that we still need to know more of Latin America. Greater political involvement must proceed hand in hand with contacts in other spheres and increasing mutual awareness of the distinctive features of our traditional outlook.

I am not simply repeating a well-intentioned cliché, therefore, when I say that we do not know enough of one another. That is why I welcome the occasion provided by this ILO conference for persons representing important interests in Latin America to see something of Canada. I think that you will find current developments and ideas of interest to you in different spheres. Within this country, I have always encouraged the developing interest in Latin America reflected in press, radio, television, schools, universities and private associations of various types.

In the current categories of international economics, Canada is listed as a "developed country". We may, however, have some experience in the field of economic development different from that of the older and larger industrial states and more immediately relevant to the problems of some Latin American developing countries. We have learned much from others and we offer whatever may be of value in information about our economic and social institutions and procedures to our friends anywhere in the Hemisphere. I am sure that this conference and the associated visits in Canada will lead to useful discussions of common problems now and to fruitful contacts in the future.

In closing, I extend my best wishes for the success of the conference, and for mutually-beneficial relations between Canada and the nations of the Americas whose representatives are assembled here today. Our interests and responsibilities are wide and diverse, but I think that we meet here with some common convictions.