

In addition to the Prime Minister's visit to Latin America, visits were made in both directions to promote closer economic relations. In May, the Deputy Minister of Natural Resources of Mexico came to Canada to discuss the purchase of CANDU reactors. During the same month, a Venezuelan trade mission headed by the Minister of Development and the Minister of Basic Production arrived in Canada to examine purchasing possibilities. A Canadian trade mission visited Ecuador and Peru in June. In the same month, the Venezuelan Minister of Mines and Hydro-carbons visited Canada to discuss co-operation in the development of oil technology and the sale of Venezuelan oil to Canada. In September, the Minister of Agriculture went to Brazil to discuss agricultural co-operation and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce visited Venezuela. In November, the newly-established Canada-Brazil Joint Committee met in Ottawa.

The President of the Treasury Board, Robert Andras, represented Canada in December at the inauguration of President José Lopez Portillo, and held informal talks with Mexican authorities.

The Canadian Association for Latin America (CALA), the members of which are Canadian companies with interests in Latin America, continued to familiarize Canadian firms with trade and investment prospects in Latin America. The Brazil-Canada Chamber of Commerce continued providing the same services for Canadian business firms interested in Brazil. CALA's fifth major conference, CALA V, was held in Caracas in January in conjunction with the Prime Minister's visit to Venezuela.

Canada's bilateral aid program in Latin America is small compared to its programs in some other parts of the world because of the relatively advanced stage of the economies of several countries in the region and the Canadian policy of concentrating only on the poorest countries and populations. The Canadian International Development Agency provided \$27 million to various countries of the region, of which \$4.2 million went to Guatemala for relief in the aftermath of the devastating earth-

quake that occurred in February. About \$3 million was committed by CIDA in matching grants to Canadian non-governmental organizations with programs in Latin America. The President of CIDA made two visits to the region in 1976. In March, he went to Guatemala to assess the effect of Canada's aid to that country after the earthquake, and to Colombia and Peru to discuss industrial-development co-operation and evaluate Canada's assistance programs in those countries. In November, he went to Venezuela for discussions with various regional financial organizations, and to Brazil to discuss new forms of co-operation.

Canada also provided funds for multilateral assistance programs through the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and through various specialized technical organizations. Since Canada became a member of the IDB in 1972, it has committed \$382 million to the Bank.

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC), which has its headquarters in Ottawa and is financed by Canada, continued to fund research on the application of science and technology to the needs of developing countries. For the fiscal year 1976-1977, the IDRC approved 29 projects in Latin America with a total value of \$6 million. The local institutions carrying out these projects included the Bolivian Institute of Agricultural Technology, the Regional Centre of Co-operation on Population in Colombia, the Tropical Agriculture Centre of Research and Formation in Costa Rica, the National Council of Science and Technology in Mexico and the Peruvian Association of Faculties of Medicine.

Canadian relations with Latin American countries extended into many other areas. During the Prime Minister's visit to Latin America in January, a cultural agreement with Mexico and a sports agreement with Cuba were signed. A Canadian parliamentary delegation visited Venezuela, and Mexican parliamentarians came to Canada. The Latin American countries, especially Mexico and Cuba, continued to attract a large number of Canadian tourists.