

In recent years the scheme has been extended to cover also Southeast Asian countries which do not belong to the Commonwealth, in view of the close ties and common problems of all the lands in this region. Canada's contribution to the Colombo Plan up to the present has totalled about \$225 million and we recently announced our intention to step up our annual expenditures for this purpose from \$35 million to \$50 million.

In addition to other economic aid we in Canada have been making direct loans to assist needy countries to obtain foodstuffs from us. The most recent example is the Canadian Government decision to make available in the fiscal year 1957--58 the sum of \$35 million to Colombo Plan countries in the form of long-term loans to finance the purchase of Canadian wheat and flour. This was in addition to the regular economic assistance under the Colombo Plan. Under this arrangement Canada concluded an agreement with India in February 1958 for the sale of 400,000 tons of wheat, worth \$24.2 million, to be financed by a government-to-government loan repayable in seven annual instalments to begin at the end of three years. A further loan of \$2 million, on similar terms, has since been made to Ceylon. The balance of the \$35 million, \$8.8 million, has been offered to and accepted by India. If the needs continue to be pressing, we will consider further loan assistance to friendly countries.

These are some of the things which we as a nation have done in the recent past in our role as a Commonwealth partner.

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