

years and even that sum only includes projects which had a reasonable chance of being completed in that six year period. Even if all that capital is found and used it will do little more than hold the present deplorably low standards of living at their present levels. This is due to the constant increase in population and other economic factors; but it is reasonable to hope, that, when the far-reaching effects of all that capital investment are fully realized, which they cannot be for a number of years to come, then they would snowball, private capital would be attracted on an increasing scale and a real improvement in living standards could be expected.

Now the next question is: where is that huge amount of capital coming from.

The poverty of the area is such that it was quite impossible for the Asian countries to find such a huge amount, and aid had to be sought outside. It came from the United States Government; the United Nations; the International Bank and the Colombo Plan.

The United States has contributed at least \$500 million by various means to countries in the Southeast Asian area since the middle of 1950.

The United Nations specialized agencies have given very considerable and valuable assistance in the field of technical assistance, but it is the aid given by the Colombo Plan, in which Canada is assisting, about which I want to talk principally today.

For the benefit of any of you who might not remember the background of the Colombo Plan, I will go over it very briefly. It is a Commonwealth Plan, it was given birth at a meeting of Commonwealth foreign ministers held at Colombo, Ceylon (that is how it got its name) in January 1950. At that meeting the ministers - one of whom was our own Mr. Pearson - considered the vital needs of the countries of South and Southeast Asia. A decision was taken to set up a Consultative Committee which would meet from time to time and survey the needs of the area and the progress being made to meet them. This Committee has had several meetings: in Australia in 1950; in London in 1951, and the one from which I have just returned in Pakistan in 1952. The next meeting will be held in India early in 1953.

The objective is to raise the standards of living of the people by pushing forward with the greatest possible speed the economic development of the area. This is done on a co-operative basis, each country contributing whatever it can. The special and urgent problem is the growing of more food for the empty stomachs to be found in their millions and it is to the solving of that problem that most energy is being devoted.

I want to emphasize here that what we are doing under this Plan is to try to give effect to schemes devised, and in many cases started, by the Governments of India, Pakistan and Ceylon particularly. I do not want you to think that our Commonwealth partners in Asia are sitting back helplessly and waiting for aid from us; they are working like beavers to try and solve their problems. Our role as one of the rich and fortunate countries is to assist them in the way which they think will be most helpful.