

Offshore gas study for Burma

Petro-Canada International Assistance Corporation (PCIAC) has signed an agreement with the Burmese Myanma Oil Corporation for a technical assistance project valued at \$3 million. The agreement was signed in Calgary, Alberta by PCIAC chairman Peter Towe and Burma's Deputy Minister of Industry #11, U Kyaw Za.

Under the terms of the agreement, PCIAC is conducting a pre-investment feasibility study to define the Martaban offshore gas field development project. The study is being co-ordinated with the World Bank which has agreed to help the government of Burma determine the export potential of the Martaban reserves and to evaluate the risks involved in undertaking their development. Development of the gas field could lead to large-scale investment, currently estimated at approximately \$1 billion (US).

Considerations of study

The PCIAC pre-investment study includes: an evaluation of the recoverable reserves of the offshore Martaban Basin, as well as the onshore Payagon Field that could supply the gas volumes required for the downstream petrochemical facilities under consideration; engineering and cost estimates for the offshore production and pipeline facilities required to produce pipeline quality gas from the Martaban gas field and deliver it to a petrochemical complex on land in the area of the Irrawaddy River Delta; identification of the optimum site for the petrochemical facilities; and a market study to determine the optimum product mix which could enable Burma and other agencies to make the appropriate investment decisions.

PCIAC is being assisted by consultants from the D&S Group, Lavalin Offshore, Partec Lavalin, and the A.D. Little Company. The study is expected to be ready for presentation to the Burmese government in the early summer.

Tour of plants in Canada

Officials from Burma's Ministry of Industry #11, the Myanma Oil Corporation, the Petrochemical Industries Corporation and the Technical Services Corporation, all state-owned enterprises of the government of Burma, were recently in Canada visiting plants and meeting with representatives of the international gas sectors.

Since it was established in 1982, PCIAC has provided project and technical assistance to help 18 oil-importing developing countries find domestic sources of hydrocarbons.

Permanent eye care centre established in India

Operation Eyesight Universal (OEU), based in Calgary, Alberta and the British-based Bhopal Commonwealth Society for the Blind (RCSB) are establishing a permanent eye care centre for the victims of eye injuries resulting from the Bhopal gas plant leak in India.

The government of Canada will contribute up to \$100 000 towards the establishment of the centre and this initial contribution will allow OEU and RCSB to meet the immediate as well as the long-term eye care needs of the gas victims.

Over the coming months the Canadian government will monitor the long-term effects of the tragedy in India and the subsequent needs of afflicted people in Bhopal. A major problem being encountered in the

Indian disaster is the difficulty of diagnosing the exact nature of gas-related eye injuries, because the level of toxicity in the Bhopal area exceeded levels experienced in similar accidents elsewhere. In addition, damage caused by exposure to the chemicals is even more severe among people who were already suffering from an eye disease known as trachoma, which is endemic in that part of India.

OEU, a non-governmental organization, was founded by a group of Calgary businessmen in 1963 with the purpose of financing sight restoration and blindness prevention programs in the developing world. Currently engaged in 71 projects in 17 countries, the OEU estimates that the Bhopal program will be one of its largest.

Government matches private donations to Africa

Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark has announced that Canada will provide an additional \$15 million to the African famine relief fund established in November (see *Canada Weekly*, December 5, 1984), to keep pace with the overwhelming outpouring of private donations by Canadians.

In the original \$50-million relief fund, \$15 million was set aside to match public contributions. Since then Canadians have donated more than \$30 million.

In his speech to the House of Commons, Mr. Clark said that "since November, nearly 500 000 individual Canadians have contributed money personally to African famine relief. The average individual donation has been \$65 — double the amount normally contributed to non-governmental organizations".

Mr. Clark added that originally it was projected that the matching portion of the fund would be limited to between \$15 and \$20 million and therefore the additional \$15 million would end government spending to match private aid. He said that the system of matching was an important catalyst in mobilizing contributions by Canadians and that he was confident a high level of contributions would continue, even though a firm limit had been now set on the matching portion of the fund for Africa.

The government will consider further special steps Canada might take in response

to the crisis in Africa after receiving a report from Special Co-ordinator for the African crisis David MacDonald and the recommendations of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence.

Continuing programs

Other Canadian initiatives for Africa include:

- a \$6.5-million shipment of food has been delivered to Ethiopia through the World Food Program;

- another \$11 million in food aid is to be delivered to the three Sahel countries, Mali, Niger and Chad in the coming weeks;

- Canada will also contribute \$100 million over the next four years to the World Bank's Voluntary Special Facility for Sub-Saharan Africa. This is an entirely new initiative taken by the World Bank, to supplement their regular program in Africa, and is designed to support the efforts of African governments in undertaking policy and institutional reforms to develop their own agricultural production;
- supplementary grants of \$6 million have been allocated to the Canadian Food Grain Bank, for the shipment of 30 000 tons of food for the Horn of Africa, including Ethiopia, and the Sahel; and

- a grant of \$3 million for UNICEF is targeted specifically at health care for mothers and children and the development of long-term nutritional and sanitary service measures.

These contributions are in addition to the Canadian International Development Agency's (CIDA) regular Africa program which this year totals almost \$300 million. Most of CIDA's programs that have longer-term objectives, aim at assisting African countries to become self-sustaining, particularly in agriculture.



Joe Clark