

CANADIAN PARTICIPATION IN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

Many of the baffling problems with which the Western democracies have been faced since the last war have been met with imagination and determination. Nowhere has this imagination and determination been displayed more appropriately than in the acceptance of the obligation to extend technical assistance to less fortunate under-developed countries in their efforts to better their economic and social conditions.

The newly-won political independence of many economically retarded countries has thrown into harsh relief the misery of their people, who produce too little food and too few goods, because they are undernourished and illiterate and because they lack the technical knowledge and the capital. These peoples are no longer willing to accept the conditions of grinding poverty which have so frequently been their lot in the past. Many of these countries, however, have been hampered in their peaceful development since the War by disruptive forces which have been quick to utilize such conditions as breeding grounds for discontent. Only if their willingness to help themselves by mobilizing their material resources to improve the lot of their peoples is matched by the sympathetic and disinterested concern of the free countries of the West for their welfare can they lessen the risk of their achievement of political independence becoming a chimera. The Canadian Government, along with other western democracies, shares a common concern for the material progress of the peoples of these under-developed areas of the world, both as a humanitarian end and because it is convinced that this progress will further the advance of human freedom and secure the ground for a democratic way of life and the development of international understanding.

This concern was recently underlined by Mr. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, in his review of the current international situation delivered at the Federal-Provincial Conference on December 4, 1950, when he said:

"The forces of Communist aggression in Asia have in the past successfully allied themselves with the forces of national liberation and social reform. The task of the Western democratic powers is to assist the democratic governments in those areas to break that unnatural alliance. For this purpose, it is essential that the Western countries help the Asian democratic countries in their plans for economic development, in order to relieve the distress and poverty there, on which international communism feeds. Within the measure of its resources Canada should, I think, do its part to help in this great effort to promote human welfare and hence to ensure peace."

Canadian Contribution

The extent to which the Canadian Government is already implementing this policy of "enlightened self-interest" by its participation in programmes of technical assistance to under-developed countries has perhaps been overshadowed by the urgency of political and military developments of the past few months. In a previous issue of *External Affairs* (Vol. 2, No. 7, July 1950, pp. 269-271) reference was made to the setting up of the United Nations Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and to the Canadian financial contribution of \$850,000 to the fund for the first eighteen months of its operation. At the same time, the Canadian Government made a contribution of \$400,000 for the first year's operation of a Commonwealth sponsored programme of technical assistance for the countries of South and South-East Asia, which has since been so much broadened in scope as to lose its exclusively Commonwealth character and is now known as the Colombo Programme for Technical Co-operation in South and South-East Asia. The programme is designed to