

open to the public. The galleries, and part of the floor of the House, were very nearly filled with distinguished guests, including members of the diplomatic corps, and interested members of the public. Press, television and newsreel cameramen covered the session.

Meeting Opened by Prime Minister

The Prime Minister opened the meeting with an address of welcome in which he paid tribute to the Colombo Plan and to its Asian members. He laid stress on the human values which the Plan is designed to serve, and he expressed satisfaction with the increasing knowledge which the people of Asia and the people of the West are gaining of each other's aspirations and ways' of life. The parts of his speech which were spoken in French were particularly appreciated by the delegates from Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia. The Prime Minister was followed by Mr. Deshmukh of India, Lord Reading of the United Kingdom, Dr. Sunario of Indonesia and Mr. Mohammed Ali of Pakistan, all of whom gave thoughtful expression to their countries' attitude toward the Colombo Plan and to their hopes for the meeting and for the future of the Plan.

During the ensuing five days the Ministers and their advisers met continuously to consider the draft report and to discuss common problems. Outside the meetings the delegates and their wives were appropriately entertained by the Canadian Government and by the heads of missions of Colombo Plan countries. Among the Canadian hosts were His Excellency the Governor General, the Prime Minister, the Speaker of the Senate, Mrs. L. B. Pearson, and Mrs. Hugh O'Donnell, daughter of the Prime Minister. Mayor Charlotte Whitton visited one of the meetings and presented the delegates with a scroll of welcome on behalf of the City of Ottawa.

The atmosphere in the meetings was unspectacular but cordial. Many of the Ministers and officials who were present had attended previous meetings of the Consultative Committee and had come to know one another well. The discussions were at all times pervaded by a spirit of friendly informality which reflected the ease with which all member countries fit into the free association of the Colombo Plan. It is not the practice of the Consultative Committee to make policy decisions which are binding on members but it is the aim of the Committee, when it meets, to reach agreed judgments regarding the progress being made under the Colombo Plan. All delegation leaders participated in the discussion of this subject. Valuable contributions were also made by the observers representing the three United Nations agencies.

Most delegates, recognizing that the Colombo Plan had passed the half-way point of the period covered in the first report, seemed to feel that it has reached a transition stage in its development. There were frequent references in the meetings to the fact that the Plan was at its mid-point or moving into the final stages of at least the first planning period. Some delegates suggested that a "new spirit" was evident in the Consultative Committee; the exact nature of this new spirit was not defined but the suggestion seemed to reflect a feeling that the Committee's capacity for constructive co-operation in a mutually understanding atmosphere was increasing.

There was a further indication that the Colombo Plan is in transition. During the Ottawa meetings the membership of the Consultative Committee was