

their American counterparts. As part of this growth, Canadian trade unionists have been independently exposed to such things as human rights views of Swedish trade unions. Ties between the congress and various church groups dealing with international human rights was also one of the things pinpointed during the briefing. However, one comment during the session was more than a little puzzling. It was suggested that dialogue between the department and the CLC in the past might have been hampered by the close CLC ties to the New Democratic Party (NDP). As a result, communications tended to be more with the political party than with the labour organization. If that is true, it is difficult to understand why the communication channels have changed when it is considered that the CLC-NDP ties are, perhaps, tighter than ever before. Even if some of the reasons are puzzling, the two sides are talking and both see this as a positive step.

### Economic Summit

Sometimes the communications channels are elaborate. Labour's input to the prime ministerial briefing for last June's economic summit in Venice, is a case in point. The process began in February when the CLC received a draft statement from the Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris. The statement was being prepared for the summit of trade union leaders from the seven major economic powers, scheduled for Rome just prior to the Venice gathering of the heads of State. The draft document was reviewed by the International Affairs and Research and Legislation departments at the CLC and observations and comments were relayed back to Paris. There, a paper incorporating the changes suggested by the various national trade union central bodies was adopted by a TUAC meeting at the end of May.

In the meantime, External Affairs was informed of the general direction the CLC expected the trade union summit to take and thus, the direction labour wanted the governments to take. Any last minute changes in Rome (there were none) would have been communicated to the department as well. At the 1979 economic summit in Tokyo, CLC officials personally briefed then Prime Minister Joe Clark the day before he met other heads of government. Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau did not receive a similar briefing in Venice because the CLC's McDermott was unable to go to either Rome or Venice.

The trade unions summit had called upon the government leaders to pay particular attention to the international development concepts outlined in the Brandt Commission report on North-South relationships. Instead, the Venice meeting seemed to concentrate more on East-West political questions and the energy issue. It is impossible to say whether there would have been any noticeable change in this position had McDermott been able to meet with Trudeau. But the

CLC is hopeful that Prime Minister's personal interest in the North-South issue will lead him to concentrate on it in future. Trudeau had already indicated the topic will play a major role at the 1981 summit to be held in Canada.

Other lines of communication between the CLC and the federal government are less complex than the steps leading up to the meeting of the Big Seven. There are periodic communications between Harker and Allan Gotlieb, Undersecretary of State for External Affairs. Neither of the two is reluctant to call the other on specific issues. Regular contacts are maintained with External Affairs desk officers who sometimes use the CLC network of contacts to obtain information on specific areas. Relationships with CIDA are good and some contacts are maintained with the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce (ITC).

Communications, however, sometimes break down. For example, when the government was drafting a code of conduct for Canadian companies operating in South Africa, it would not give the draft to the CLC. Having obtained a pirated copy, the CLC was able to approach External and ITC to point out where it believed the code needed strengthening "to have a modicum of realism." It also forwarded copies of the draft code to churches for their input, despite the fact that the government had displayed no initial interest in involving church groups. Now the CLC plans to monitor how well companies are following the code, which it still does not regard as strong enough.

The code of conduct is not the only area where the CLC feels it has played a leadership role in the country's foreign affairs. It takes much of the credit for initiating the legal action against Space Research Corporation, an arms manufacturer convicted in the United States of illegally shipping arms to South Africa. The company has since been fined \$50,000. The CLC started to build an extensive file on the corporation after Zimbabwe's ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo charged, in 1977, that illegal arms shipments were being made to South Africa from Canada. Nkomo made the allegations during a news conference at the CLC's Ottawa headquarters. Using its trade union contacts, the labour organization provided then External Affairs minister Don Jamieson with shipping, docking and loading details. But despite these efforts, the CLC was not believed.

The CLC enhanced its credibility in its 1979 'Operation Solidarity' donations of more than \$500,000 in supplies to war-torn Nicaragua. The government assisted that initiative by providing aircraft to transport the goods. 'Operation Solidarity', however, raised other problems for the CLC. The scope of the exercise led some groups to expect the CLC to continue its substantial relief effort—even if it meant jeopardizing a principle labour holds dear. The Nicaraguan end of the emergency operation had been coordinated by CUS, the