

Canadian assistance policies, by far the most obvious factors influencing these policies have been Canada's Commonwealth ties and the growing recognition of the country's "French fact". While English-speaking Canadians dominated the political and economic life of the country, Canada's economic assistance went to English-speaking parts of the Third World. During this period of *anglophone* domination, aid to the *francophone* Third World was non-existent. But as both Quebec and Canada awoke to the need for increased *francophone* influence in Canadian domestic life, there occurred simultaneously a dramatic increase in "aid" allocations to the French-speaking developing world.

This pattern has been most obvious and most traceable in the period between the beginning of a real Canadian assistance program in 1950 and the creation of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in 1968. The effects of domestic considerations can still be discerned in CIDA's programs since 1968, but the trends have become more ambiguous, and, one might hope, the policies have attained a more objective basis.

#### Commonwealth commitments

The most important factor in the early development of Canadian policy towards the developing world was the Canadian commitment to the Commonwealth. Before the initiation of the Colombo Plan in January 1950, Canadian aid policy had been largely without focus. The Plan, embracing the Commonwealth countries of Asia, was aimed in its early days not just at the promotion of development but at stopping the spread of Communism in Asia. Initially, the Indian Government's desire to see Western recognition of the recently-victorious Communist government in China brought an apparently positive response from External Affairs Minister Pearson, the head of the Canadian delegation to the Colombo Conference. But the tide of anti-Communism in North America, particularly as expressed by the Conservative leader, George Drew, appears to have altered the attitude of the Canadian Government. On his return from the Colombo Conference in February 1950, Pearson commented in the House of Commons:

"Communist expansionism may now spill over into Southeast Asia as well as into the Middle East . . . It seemed to all of us at the Conference that, if the tide of totalitarian expansion should flow over this general area, not only will the new nations lose the

national independence which they have secured so recently but the forces of the free world will have been driven off all but a relatively small bit of the great Eurasian land-mass . . . If Southeast Asia and South Asia are not to be conquered by Communism, we of the free democratic world . . . must demonstrate that it is we and not the Russians who stand for national liberation and economic and social progress."

Recognition of China was put off, of course, with the beginning of the Korean War. But anti-Communism alone did not dominate early Canadian aid policy.

There were obvious advantages to a concentration of Canadian aid through the Colombo Plan in the years when aid policy was getting started. For a country with a relatively modest aid budget, concentration on a few recipients for maximum effect was a necessity. The Commonwealth provided Canada with an opportunity to direct its aid to countries with which it had a common historical link, which had inherited administrative systems and planning organizations of supposedly reliable stability, and which, on the basis of the British connection, could command the emotional support of English-speaking Canadians, who might be ambivalent about aid in general.

Until Ghana received its independence in 1957, Asia was all there was of the non-white Commonwealth and that continent monopolized Canadian aid in the early years.

Canada was able to play an important role in the Commonwealth aid program in Asia because it was regarded as a senior member, the first to get Dominion status, yet not an imperial power. Canada's close relations with India dominated Canadian Asian policy for several years. It was the prodding of Nehru that looked for a while as if it might help Pearson convince Prime Minister St. Laurent of the need for recognition of China, although the Korean War eliminated the political wisdom of such a move. When St. Laurent in 1954 made the first world tour ever made by a Canadian Prime Minister, India was his main stop. When Nehru considered leaving the Commonwealth after the Suez crisis, Canadian representations helped to dissuade him. Canada has been able, on the whole, to play a mediating and strengthening role within the Commonwealth, right up to the 1971 Singapore conference, where the Canadian Prime Minister apparently helped to avoid a split over the issue of arms sales to South Africa.

The concentration of Canadian aid on

*Advantages seen to concentration of Canadian aid through Colombo*