

Laos

Economic assistance to Laos has totalled \$368,000, largely in the form of technical assistance; in conjunction with this programme, audio-visual teaching aids were provided last year. Of the 61 Laotian students trained in Canada, 35 were studying here last year. To date, eight advisers have been sent by Canada to Laos, five of them last year.

Laos is one of the four countries that will benefit from the \$1.3-million Mekong River project that Canada undertook for the mapping of the Mekong River basin. Canada has agreed to contribute \$2 million towards the Nam Ngum hydro and irrigation project in the region. (5)

Nepal

Economic assistance to Nepal has totalled \$335,000. Seven Nepalese students have been trained in Canada and \$60,000-worth of wheat has been sent to Nepal.

Indus Basin Development Fund

Canada was an original signatory of the Indus Basin Development Fund agreement signed in September 1960, and has undertaken to contribute \$38.9 million in the period 1960-70. The total foreign-exchange cost of the project is set at \$1,210 million.

The Indus basin development plan was devised by the World Bank in an effort to resolve the dispute between India and Pakistan over the use of the waters of the Indus basin. The dispute arose because the border demarcation between the two Commonwealth members cuts across six major rivers of the Indus system. India controls the upper reaches of the rivers and was anxious to expand its use of their waters, whereas Pakistan was anxious to preserve its traditional supply.

After eight years of negotiation, the scheme agreed on was a ten-year multilateral enterprise, administered by the World Bank. The objective is to achieve maximum productivity for some 23 million acres of land in the Indus plain area which produce 75 per cent of West Pakistan's food and fibre; in addition, the project will increase the supply of electric power and will irrigate arable land serving millions of people.

The Indus basin project will include the largest earth-moving task ever undertaken, the construction of a major dam, seven river-diversion barrages and 430 miles of canals in a complex of four watercourse systems.

(5) See also Cambodia, Thailand and South Vietnam.