



Bulletin

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INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH CENTRE

The Government will provide at least \$30 million to the proposed International Development Research Centre of Canada for the first five years of its operation.

In moving the second reading of the bill to establish the Centre on January 12, Mr. Mitchell Sharp, Secretary of State for External Affairs, described the measure as "one of the most promising and exciting proposals" that the House of Commons had considered for some time. "This," he declared, "can be considered a new and dynamic element to improve the quality of life in the less-privileged areas of the world."

Excerpts from Mr. Sharp's statement follow:

...The gap between the low-income and the wealthier nations of the world is, to a large extent, a science and technology gap. There has always been a gap between rich and poor within most societies but the massive disparities between the nations of the less-developed areas of the world and the more industrialized nations is a fairly recent phenomenon. The average inhabitant of Southeast Asia, prior to

the industrial revolution, enjoyed a standard of life not so very different from his counterpart in Europe, despite the differences in their cultures and modes of life. Certainly, the vast material gulf which separates them today did not exist then.

In the last century, those nations which were in the vanguard of the industrial revolution have achieved unprecedented levels of economic activity. This has come about in large measure because of their ability to unlock the secrets of science and to develop technologies and techniques for the application of scientific knowledge to the processes of production and distribution. The burgeoning market economy of these nations continues to provide powerful incentives for the employment of our scientific and technological resources in the search for new products and processes for the affluent consumer.

GAP WIDENS

There is no similar incentive to apply science and technology to the problems of the less-developed world. The very science and technology which has provided the key to the wealth of the industrialized nations has added to the difficulties of the less-developed nations. Eradication of disease by mass immunization and the use of antibiotics has reduced death-rates in the developing countries dramatically and brought about rapid increases in population. It has proven much more difficult for these countries to develop the increased productive capacity required to provide their growing populations with the basic ingredients that enable men to live in dignity. At the same time, science has devised synthetic substitutes for many of the natural products which these countries have depended upon for most of their export earnings. Despite the fact that, in absolute terms, the less-developed nations have made a significant amount of progress in recent years, the gap between them and the wealthy industrialized nations continues to grow.

CONTENTS

International Development Research Centre	1
Message to Reunited Nigeria	3
First Canada-U.S. Historic Park	3
Anthropologist Honored	4
NRC Design to Reduce Jet Noise	4
World's Largest Tomahawk	4
Gallery Buys Hals Portrait	5
Long-Life Navigation Light	5
Arctic Nato Exercises	5
Kenya Medical School	6