

The Canadian Delegation to the Conference was led by Mr. W. J. Browne, Minister without Portfolio, and included Mr. H. O. Moran, the Canadian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Mr. A. R. Menzies, Mr. D. M. Cornett and Mr. S. C. H. Nutting, of the Department of External Affairs, Mr. W. D. Mills, of the Department of Trade and Commerce, and Mr. D. Hudon, of the Department of Finance. During the Meeting Mr. Browne announced that the annual Canadian contribution to the Colombo Plan would be increased in 1958-59, subject to the approval of Parliament, to \$35,000,000, thus bringing to more than 231 million the total of Canada's contribution to the Plan since its establishment in 1950.

The Conference arrangements made by the host country (Vietnam) were excellent. A preliminary meeting of officials was held from September 30 to October 5 to prepare the ground for the chief task of the officials, the preparation of the draft annual report. The main body of officials arrived for the Officials Meeting, which was held from October 5 to October 21, during which time they prepared for the consideration of delegation leaders (most of whom were Cabinet Ministers) a draft annual report reviewing the progress of economic development in South and South-East Asia and considering the tasks which lie ahead. The officials also set-up sub-committees to consider the specialized fields of technical assistance and information.

The Meeting of the Consultative Committee was officially opened by the inaugural address of President Diem of Vietnam. He spoke of the political, social and economic aspirations of the peoples of the newly independent nations of South and South-East Asia and the part which the Colombo Plan was playing in helping to raise the standard of living in the area. In the course of his speech he said:

We all share in the uniqueness of the Colombo Plan. Like the great Commonwealth of Nations which gave it birth, the Plan is a voluntary and flexible arrangement, imbued with the practical idealism of raising man's lot to a higher station.

During the next four days the Ministers considered the draft report and discussed the common problems arising out of it. Each of the Ministers made a speech in which he outlined the views of his government on Colombo Plan matters. Mr. Browne concluded his speech in these words:

We have come a long way in the six years since the beginning of the Colombo Plan. In those years a great many Canadians have become newly aware of the problems of the peoples of South and South-East Asia. We have had the pleasure to welcome in Canada many Asian trainees and officials. This has increased our knowledge of them and of the tasks with which they are confronted. Our experts return from Asia having formed a close attachment to the countries in which they worked and, inspired by the manner in which the people are meeting the challenge of economic development.

... I think that the assistance, both capital and technical, that has been given by Canada has been put to good use and that my country's continued support is fully justified.

Throughout these meetings, which were conducted in a friendly and informal atmosphere, many useful discussions were held between the representatives of the member governments. Following the tradition established at successive Colombo Plan Conferences, the discussions were frank and cordial.

On the last day of the Meeting the delegates accepted the invitation of the United States to hold next year's Meeting in the United States. The Meeting adopted the draft annual report and issued a communiqué which noted the economic progress which had been made in the area in the year under review and set forth some of the tasks which lie ahead in the field of economic development.