

In fact, I was tremendously impressed with all that I saw of Australia. Although I had read a good deal about Sydney and had seen pictures of its famous harbour, one has to visit the city fully to realize the vitality and sophistication of the life there. During my visit I was pleased and honoured to be tendered a dinner by the Canadian-Australian Committee to whom I spoke of the intimate relations our two countries enjoy as fellow members of the Commonwealth. Our visit to Canberra, where we met and talked with the Government leaders, I have already mentioned, and our two stop-overs at Darwin gave us a further opportunity to see something of the tremendous development going on in that northern territory.

The Colombo Plan Conference

We arrived in New Zealand on December 3, the day before the opening of the Colombo Plan Conference which was held in the Chamber formerly occupied by the Upper House of the New Zealand Parliament in Wellington. Wellington, a city of 250,000 people, is situated on a fine, well-protected, natural harbour. There are many things in New Zealand to remind one of life in the British Isles. Customs, manners, the structure and design of houses, all clearly have a very strong British character; the people are pleasant, polite, and orderly.

The Conference itself was opened on the morning of December 4 by Prime Minister Holland and its Chairman was the Minister of External Affairs, Mr. MacDonald. In its several sessions, the Conference provided an opportunity for me to state the Canadian position that our interest in this agency was predicated upon the firm belief that the Colombo Plan was one of the best ways of achieving peace through economic and social improvement. I think I can say, whether or not we all agree on the extent of the contributions made so far, that perhaps nothing is more salutary in our time than the fact that the Western nations of the Commonwealth and the United States, in association with the nations in Asia, have now joined together for the purpose of promoting the improvement of the economic and social life of the Asian peoples. It is a hopeful sign for the improvement of international relations between certain nations of the West and that section of the world that it should be possible for nations like Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain and the United States to share some of their skills and some of their resources with nations whose material standards of life admittedly are not as high as their own. After my talks with many of the ministerial representatives whom I had already seen in their home countries or whom I was to see at a later stage in the tour, I am firmly of the view that to the extent we support and follow our role in the Colombo Plan activities, we will be making an important contribution to the peace of the world. Canada's role in the Plan is very much appreciated and is not suspect anywhere. Next to the United States, we are the major dollar contributor, our contribution being fixed for the present year at some \$34.5 million. From the reports given at the Conference, it is apparent that in South and South-East Asia as a whole, economic and social progress is taking place, although not at a uniform rate in each country which benefits from the plan. It is important to realize, however, that the basic job of reconstruction which is underway in Asia is largely due, and I believe must continue to be due, to the efforts of the people of Asia themselves. Wherever I went I pointed out that so far as Canada is concerned there were no strings attached to our assistance. While we have more material goods than most of the countries of Asia have, they have something which we