

Prospects and Problems of Canada/CARICOM Trade

The Canadian and CARICOM delegations reaffirmed the importance which they attach to the further development of trade. There was a useful exchange of views on trade and access questions in general and on the specific matters raised by CARICOM, including possible improvements in the Canadian General Preferential Tariff (GPT). The Canadian side reported on progress made by them to date by outlining both the steps already taken, or under active consideration at the present time, particularly as regards rum.

Financial and Technical Co-operation

In the area of financial and technical co-operation, the CARICOM Member States drew attention to a number of project areas in which Canadian assistance would be welcome including the CARICOM technical assistance fund, a CARICOM Country Officer Scheme for the LDCs, science and technology for development, regional communications, the development of marine resources, training, air and sea transport, manpower planning and disaster prevention preparedness and relief. It was agreed that these proposals for financial and technical co-operation will be considered at a special meeting of the Ad Hoc Industrial Group in May so that action in this area could be expedited.

The Canadian delegation reiterated their support, given at the first Joint Trade and Economic Committee (JTEC) meeting, for the Pool of Experts Scheme for the Windward and Leeward Islands, and the meeting endorsed the understanding that assistance should be directed to the creation of a pool of indigenous expertise within the Eastern Caribbean Common Market (ECCM) subregion, as a means of achieving permanent improvement in the technical, managerial and administrative capabilities in the subregion.

Industrial Co-operation

In the context of the overall programme on industrial co-operation a full report on the results of the Action Programme established by the Ad Hoc Working Group in April 1980 was received. The JTEC noted with satisfaction the considerable progress already made and expressed its expectations of continuing progress in achieving closer industrial co-operation between Canada and CARICOM over the broadest possible range of activities.

The CARICOM delegation sought clarification on the Canadian proposal to provide one million dollars per year to CARICOM as concessional industrial credits to enable the hiring of Canadian advisers to assist in industrial planning and implementation. Moreover, CARICOM indicated the major advantages of utilising the services of regional experts whenever possible.