

tions between two of our Commonwealth partners in Asia, India and Pakistan. As I informed Parliament on February 29, Canada has agreed to contribute \$22.1 million over the next ten years to the development fund for the Indus basin proposed by the International Bank. It is proposed that part of our increased Colombo Plan contribution will be devoted to this very worthy cause, thus enabling Canada to assist in the solution of this issue.

Canada has made substantial contributions also to the economies of the non-Commonwealth members of the Colombo Plan. Of special interest to the Committee will be the Mekong River project, which is expected to bring great economic benefits to Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam, three of which countries I referred to a few moments ago. In connection with this project in which we are co-operating with the four states I have just named, as well as with certain other countries and the United Nations, Canada is now conducting an aerial survey of the main stem and tributaries of the Mekong River flowing down through the centre of the Southeast Asia peninsula, which, when it is completed, will enable these four Southeast Asian states to move ahead with plans to develop the resources of this great river system. The cost of this survey is being met out of Colombo Plan funds.

In addition to the large capital projects such as those I have mentioned, Canada makes a significant contribution to the economic development of our Colombo Plan partners in Asia through our technical assistance programmes. We are sending Canadian experts to Asian nations to share with them our knowledge of modern technology and we are continually receiving in Canada Colombo plan trainees who come to this country to study in our universities and schools and to learn industrial techniques and methods of administration. More than 160 Canadian experts have gone abroad and, at the present time, there are some hundreds of trainees from under-developed countries taking courses of study in Canada.

Not long ago I had the pleasure of meeting a large group of these trainees here in Ottawa. I am sure that members of the Committee who shared that pleasure were impressed, as I was, with the high quality of the trainees and particularly with the great goodwill they hold toward Canada. It seemed to me that this was an excellent illustration of the way Canada's participation in the Colombo Plan serves not only to bring economic benefits to those countries which need them so badly but also to contribute materially to a better understanding between the people of Canada and the people of Asia. I think it is generally agreed that this portion of the Plan, which involved the bringing of young leaders from these different countries to Canada, is extremely beneficial to Canada and to the countries from which they come.

Last month marked the tenth anniversary of the concept of the Colombo Plan. Canada and the other members of the Colombo Plan can rightly be proud of what the Plan has done in ten short years to improve economic conditions and living standards of our Asian partners. But the rate of economic expansion