

NORAD agreement extended

An exchange of notes, constituting an agreement between the Canadian and United States Governments to extend the current North American Air Defence Command (NORAD) agreement for a year, were tabled in the House of Commons on May 12.

The notes were exchanged in Washington by Canada's Ambassador to the United States Peter Towe, and Sharon E. Ahmad, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Canadian Affairs in the U.S. State Department.

The Canadian Government sought the extension to provide an opportunity for the House of Commons Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence to express its views on the subject. Because of the recent election, such a review could not be undertaken before the current agreement expired on May 12.

Refugee worker reduces costs

A Canadian relief worker has helped to reduce the cost of food which is distributed to Kampuchean refugees in Thailand.

Soon, most of the food consumed by the 120,000 refugees at Khao-I-Dang camp, 300 kilometres east of Bangkok, may be purchased at a fraction of its former cost because of the efforts of Suteera Thomson.

Dr. Thomson, a Science Council of Canada microbiologist, has just returned from her native Thailand, where she was helping Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO) become involved in the refugee crisis.

Khao-I-Dang, Thailand's largest refugee centre, is to be broken up into smaller camps and one of those camps will be run by CUSO.

Dr. Thomson, a veteran of community relief projects in Thailand, questioned the United Nations' practice of purchasing food from large Thai companies instead of directly from Thai farmers.

Mechai Viravaidya, director of Community-Based Emergency Relief Services of Bangkok, discovered that onions and garlic could be purchased from local farmers for one-sixteenth the cost that the United Nations was paying for the same goods sold by large distributors.

The United Nations gave the farmers a

far superior price than the large distributors paid and still came out ahead.

Mechai said everyone benefits from purchasing the food directly from farmers, except of course Bangkok businessmen.

The project now may be expanded to include most other foodstuffs consumed at the camp, Dr. Thomson said.

The Thai military has given CUSO 45 acres at Kap Cherng, 500 kilometres northeast of Bangkok, for a camp which will house 10,000 Kampuchean peasants.

The camp will be somewhat unique in Thailand because the staff will be almost exclusively Thai. The medical and administrative personnel at most other camps are European or North American.

Half of the land will be used for agricultural purposes so the refugees can grow some of their own food.

Investment climate more optimistic

Canadian businessmen have become more positive about Canada's investment climate despite the country's economic problems, the Conference Board in Canada says.

In its latest survey of business attitudes and investment intentions conducted in February, 49.5 per cent of survey participants said they consider the present to be a good time to undertake expenditures on new plants and equipment, up from 32.5 per cent in the 1979 fourth quarter.

It said 21 per cent in the latest survey considered the present to be a bad time to undertake capital spending while 30 per cent replied that they were not sure.

Regarding over-all economic conditions, 31.5 per cent predicted a further deterioration, down from 7 per cent who held that view in the 1979 fourth quarter survey. The board said 57 per cent expect economic conditions to remain the same over the coming six months while 11.5 per cent expect an improvement.

Underlying the improvement in attitudes was a recovery in the outlook for sales which had dipped in the 1979 second half, the board said.

Industries reporting a relatively bright foreign sales outlook include forest products, oil, gas and chemicals, machinery and transportation equipment, non-metallic mineral products and construction and real estate. Industries reporting a poor foreign sales outlook include food and beverage, mining and metals and wholesale trade.

Mayors study foreign policy

A group of 12 Canadian mayors from communities in the Northwest Territories and each of the ten provinces recently toured Europe.

The eight-day tour was sponsored and organized by the Department of External Affairs, the NATO Information Service, the Delegation of the Commission of the European Communities in Ottawa and the Department of National Defence.

During their tour abroad, the mayors visited NATO Headquarters and the European Communities Commission in Brussels, Belgium; the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers in Europe near Mons, Belgium; the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France; and the Canadian Armed Forces base in Lahr, Germany.

In previous years, similar groups of parliamentarians, high school teachers and journalists from Canadian weeklies have had similar opportunities under this program to familiarize themselves with Canadian international commitments. This is the second time that mayors have been included in the program.

Representative to United Nations



Michel Dupuy (left) Canada's permanent representative to the United Nations, presents his credentials to Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim at the United Nations in New York, May 6. Mr. Dupuy has most recently served as the President of the Canadian International Development Agency, a post he held since 1977.