

We hope that the United Nations, if it is given appropriate support in these activities, will be able to assume by the end of a three or four-year period the major responsibility for technical assistance in South and Southeast Asia and we are urging the greatest possible use of all U.N. Agencies offering technical assistance to South and Southeast Asia. That is not to say that as a participant in the six-year Colombo Plan for the economic development of the area and particularly as a member of the Commonwealth we will not have a direct and continuing interest in special technical assistance to those countries. But we do not wish the two approaches to this problem to overlap or conflict. We do what we can to avoid this. Let me give two examples.

As part of our activities this year under the Colombo Programme we have invited an Asian public health mission to come to Canada. This mission will be composed of twelve fairly senior public health officials from those countries who will study the organization and administration of our public health services in Canada at federal, provincial and municipal levels. Before making final arrangements for the mission our own Department of National Health and Welfare is seeking the advice of the Regional Offices of WHO which are most familiar with the particular deficiencies of the public health services in those countries.

At the request of the Government of Pakistan, we have offered to give training in Canada in public administration to twelve young Pakistani civil servants. But in drawing up the programme we are consulting the public administration officials of the U.N. Technical Assistance Administration who have built up a detailed knowledge of Asian requirements in that field.

There are two other considerations which should guide our participation in both the United Nations and the Colombo Programmes. First, we should concentrate on the training of middle and lower grade workers and technicians and secondly, we should concentrate on the training of these people in the areas in which they live. The Asian countries themselves have requested this training in the report which is the basis of technical assistance activities under the Colombo Programme, and the General Assembly of the United Nations has recently reaffirmed its belief in the same principles.

I have referred to the basic need of increased food production in the area. The technical assistance we provide to South and Southeast Asia should, therefore, be directly related to efforts to solve this problem.

I think it is true to say that the whole concept of economic and technical aid to under-developed countries and of our participation in these programmes of technical assistance would have been inconceivable as recently as in the 1930's. I think we would have decided then that for both economic and practical reasons such schemes were impossible. In participating in these programmes we have embarked upon an experiment in international relations motivated by political and moral considerations which are both new and demanding.

The present modest rate and scale of these programmes is determined not only by our ability to make the assistance available but also by the ability of receiving countries to absorb it and put it to best use. Our assistance must be