

Dalhousie universities. In December, 1981, the two universities co-sponsored the first ASEAN-wide seminar on the effect of the New Law of the Sea in this region. Dr. Phiphat, Thailand's leading academic in the study of the Law of the Sea, was a co-ordinator of the recent Bangkok seminar.

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Three officials from the Thai Ministry of Science, Technology and Energy recently completed a one-month study tour of Canada. The team began their visit in Ottawa, Ontario, and travelled from there across the country for briefings from representatives of both the public and the private sectors.

While in Ottawa the group visited Canada's National Research Council and discussed policy matters with officials of the Ministry of State for Science and Technology. From Ottawa they travelled to Toronto and Guelph, in Ontario; Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; Calgary, Alberta; and Vancouver, British Columbia to observe Canadian research facilities in many sectors including industry, agriculture and oil development technology.

The purpose of the study tour was to give the Thai team direct exposure to the science policy-making process in Canada and its practical application by public and private enterprises. The team also studied the financing of scientific research and project implementation and evaluation. It is hoped that the Canadian approach to science policy may serve as a model in the planned establishment of Thailand's own National Science Council later this year.

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Over 50 delegates from nations on the Pacific Rim attended the second Pacific Community Concept Conference in Bangkok in early June. Host of this gathering of leading businessmen, academics and government officials was Dr. Thanat Khoman, Deputy Prime Minister of the Royal Thai Government.

In his opening address Thailand's Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda called for increased economic co-operation among the countries of the Pacific and urged the Pacific Community to seek practical results through methodical efforts rather than seeking to formalize or institutionalize them.

Four separate groups were created to address major issues before the next Pacific Community Concept Conference, which is to be held in Jakarta in late 1983. A task force on trade and primary products, which will concentrate on agriculture, will be centred at the Pacific Economic Co-operation Committee of Thailand, while trade and manufacturing will be focussed in South Korea, trade



Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Thanat Khoman, host of the Pacific Community Concept Conference, talks with steering committee member Eric Trigg, Executive Vice President of the Aluminum Company of Canada.

and minerals at the Australian National University, Canberra, and investment and technology in Japan.

A high-level steering committee was established at the conference to oversee the task force work. Among those elected to that group was Eric Trigg, Executive Vice President of the Aluminum Company of Canada (ALCAN).

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The Canadian International Development Agency concluded a \$13-million loan agreement in March with the Royal Thai Government to participate in the second phase of the Accelerated Rural Electrification Program.

The funds will be used to purchase approximately 5,700 metric tons of Canadian aluminum ingots over a five year period. The aluminum will be processed into electrical conductors in Thailand, thereby providing a further significant value-added benefit to the Thai economy.

More than 8,000 villages in 27 provinces, mainly in the south and northeast of Thailand, are expected to benefit directly from the expansion of electrical services to rural areas. It is estimated that the project will provide direct social and economic benefits to 1,037,400 households and six million people.

The Provincial Electrical Authority will implement the program on behalf of the government and direct the Thai government's \$2.5 million share of the project.

Mr. Vitthaya Vejajiva, Thailand's new Ambassador to Canada, has kindly consented to share his "first impressions" of Canada and the evolving relationship between Canada and Thailand. . .

IT IS not always easy for a newly arrived ambassador to write about his first impressions of the country of his assignment, especially when it is the case of such a vast and varied country as Canada.

Whatever notions or thoughts crossed my mind during those early days in January—and there were a great many of them—the one that I still recall vividly is the sense of amazement and wonder at the distance that had to be travelled from Vancouver on the west coast to Ottawa, which is not even at Canada's eastern extremity. I suppose there are few countries in the world, besides Canada, where an ambassador can claim such a vast expanse of territory as his area of assignment.

So it was the extent, the sheer size of Canada that was the first to impress me, fill me with awe, and face me with a challenge of "long-distance" running.

Despite the three months of incessant freeze-up, at no time did my family or I feel the severity of the famous Ottawa winter. It may have been that in the first flush of activities in the process of settling in, the extraordinary warmth of initial contacts, friendship and hospitality we experienced from the people we met—from senior government officials, especially at External Affairs, parliamentarians and diplomatic colleagues to Canadians in other walks of life—helped to sustain us and enabled us not only to survive but thrive.

Coming from Thailand on assignment, albeit the first, to Canada, I was not altogether unfamiliar with the Canadian profile which is, in my own understanding as expressed before H.E. The Governor-General of Canada on the day of the presentation of my credentials, "a great country widely known and respected for its dedication to peace, freedom and the welfare of mankind, as evidenced by the constructive role it has played towards the solution of the multifarious problems of our modern-day world in whatever corner of the globe."

Relations between our two countries have always been excellent, sustained by a deep sense of mutual understanding and meaningful co-operation. We in Thailand have long learnt to appreciate Canada's valuable contribution towards the economic and social development and progress of our country. Canada's growing interest in Southeast Asia, especially her affinity with ASEAN's aspirations, has been formally evidenced in the ASEAN-Canada agreement on economic co-operation concluded in