

five representing developed, and ten representing developing members. We agreed on the co-chairmen for each of the four Commissions and approved general guidelines regarding the work of the Conference.

At a follow-up meeting last week, Dr. Perez Guerrero and I, as Conference co-chairmen, together with the eight co-chairmen of the four Commissions, reviewed preparations for the work of the Commissions. We agreed that each of the Commissions should meet five times between now and July and we made a number of recommendations with respect to the duration of meetings, participation by observers, and other procedures. While the initial meetings of the Commission will probably deal with organizational and procedural matters, I believe they will quickly move on to substantive questions. A meeting of senior officials from the 27 members may review the progress of the Commissions in about five months' time – probably in June. It is expected that a Ministerial Meeting will be held next December to conclude the work of the Commissions.

Reason for two chairmen

The two co-chairmen of the Conference have a particularly sensitive role to play. Although all participants in the Conference on International Economic Co-operation are prepared to approach issues in a positive and co-operative manner, there is a broad range of differing national interests and philosophies among the developed, developing and OPEC members of the Conference. To a degree, it was this very diversity of interests and the consequent difficulty of providing leadership equally responsive to both the Group of Eight – the developed members – and the Group of Nineteen – the developing members – which led to the choice of two co-chairmen as a technique for organizing the Conference. This co-direction of the Conference is symbolic of the determination of the member countries to work together and to accept shared responsibility for the results. Just as Dr. Perez Guerrero and I have a certain responsibility for ensuring that the work of the Conference proceeds in an orderly and constructive manner so the co-chairmen of the Commissions have a responsibility for guiding the work of their Commissions

so that they achieve results which are broadly acceptable to the international community, including those countries which are not members of the Conference. I have, of course, been working very closely with Dr. Perez Guerrero to achieve that goal, and I am sure that the co-chairmen of the Commissions will also work as a team.

Work on Commissions

Canada is a member of two of the four Commissions: Energy and Development. The dialogue in the Energy Commission may eventually encompass such sensitive issues as oil prices, indexation and security of supply. We hope that it will lead to increased stability in the international oil market which would facilitate the orderly, planning and development of Canada's own energy needs. I also trust the dialogue will make a real contribution to solving the problems of the developing countries most seriously affected by the rise in oil and other prices.

I am particularly pleased that Canada will participate in the work of the Development Commission. As you know Canada has won considerable respect in the Third World for its stand on development questions. I can assure you Canada will continue this positive approach in the Development Commission which will probably consider a broad range of issues in such key areas as food and agricultural development, industrial and technological co-operation, trade liberalization, and official development assistance.

Canada is not a member of the Raw Materials and Finance Commissions. As they may deal with a number of vital issues such as the stabilization of commodity prices, the stabilization of earnings derived from commodity exports and international financial questions, we do have a substantial interest in their proceedings. We shall, therefore, be following the work of these Commissions closely through our observers in them. We expect to consult frequently and closely with our colleagues in the Conference who are participating in these Commissions.

I think that we have got off to a good start. Canada has been given an important part in shaping this new instrument of international co-operation. That may be a matter of satisfaction but it is also a challenge....

Emergency aid to Guatemala

The Canadian International Development Agency has purchased 40,000 blankets and some orthopedic equipment for shipment on its emergency airlift to Guatemala, the Agency announced February 10.

A spokesman for the Agency said that he expected all of the 100 tons of milk powder purchased under the \$500,000-emergency aid program to be delivered within a few days, to the stricken Latin American country.

A six-man Canadian team made up of representatives of CIDA and the Canadian Embassy in Guatemala were supervising the unloading of the food supplies and have organized a distribution system, the spokesman said.

The first flight in the airlift, a Transair aircraft provided free by the Winnipeg-based company, arrived in Guatemala on February 10 with 13 tons of milk powder.

Canada's \$500,000-pledge in emergency aid is made up of \$300,000 in food aid, \$100,000 for the Canadian Red Cross for delivery to the League of Red Cross Societies and \$100,000 for individual priority requirements as they are identified by the Canadian team in Guatemala.

Consumer prices

Higher rates for electricity and natural gas and increased costs for shelter helped push the consumer price index up sharply by six-tenths of one per cent during January, reports Statistics Canada.

The index was 9.6 percent higher than its level in January 1975; January was the second consecutive month in which the index showed a 12-month rise of less than 10 per cent.

Prices for shelter – both in owned and in rented homes – were higher.

Domestic natural gas rates rose in some Ontario cities and higher electricity rates also had an impact. Telephone service rates were up in central Canada.

Food prices, however, showed a continuing decline, mainly because of lower beef prices and bargains on poultry. Some dairy product prices moved down. But pork prices gained, as did prices for restaurant meals.