

A continuing and deep-rooted economic problem arises out of the backward agricultural and industrial condition of many countries of southeast Asia. It was realized that, if ignored, this condition, worsened by the destruction and impoverishment in that area during World War II, would undermine the promise that these countries achieve a healthy and continuous development along democratic lines. The 1950 Colombo Conference, therefore, urged the necessity of the more industrially advanced countries giving assistance to the nations of that area, and fashioned the Colombo Plan, which continues to play an active part as one of the most promising contributions towards building up the free world and enabling it to stand against totalitarianism.

International tension, besides adversely affecting the world's economic development during recent years, has also made it necessary to devote to strengthening the defences of Commonwealth countries resources that would normally have been used to increase trade and prosperity. The world-wide distribution of the Commonwealth countries has made essential the organization of their defences on a regional basis providing for full co-operation with friendly foreign countries. For example, Canada and the United Kingdom, as members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, have continued to work together in co-operation with the other members of NATO.

Commonwealth co-operative arrangements also exist in other fields. Canada is represented on such standing groups as: the Executive Council of the Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux; the Commonwealth Economic Committee; the Commonwealth Shipping Committee; the Commonwealth Telecommunications Board; the Commonwealth Air Transport Council; the Commonwealth Advisory Aeronautics Research Council; the Commonwealth Liaison Committee; the Commonwealth Committee on Mineral Resources and Geology; the Imperial Institute; and the Imperial War Graves Commission. These bodies form useful means of exchanging information and views on special economic, scientific or technical questions and of working out recommendations for the consideration of the governments concerned.

Canada's first High Commissioner to Ceylon arrived at Colombo in August 1953, thus completing the nation's diplomatic representation in Commonwealth countries.

Constitutional developments in United Kingdom colonial territories attracted some attention during 1953. These included a conference at London on federation in the West Indies, the establishment of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and progress towards more complete self-government in Nigeria, the Gold Coast, and other colonial territories.

Despite difficulties and problems the Commonwealth association has, during the period covered by this survey, continued to serve as one of the most effective means of international discussion and co-operation, based in large measure on common traditions, similar political institutions and common ideals.

### **Subsection 2.—Canada and the United Nations**

The most important development in the period Apr. 1, 1953 to Mar. 31, 1954, was the conclusion of a Korean Armistice on July 26, 1953. The armistice agreement was a document signed by military commanders and was intended to establish provisions of the armistice and make possible a final peace settlement. Commenting on the signing of the Armistice, the Prime Minister of Canada paid tribute to the