

(c) *Japan sponsors proposal for Special Agricultural Fund.*—Following the initiative of Foreign Minister Miki of Japan, the ADB has agreed to administer a Special Agriculture Fund and is now developing detail plans. Japan has announced it will make a substantial contribution and has asked all developed members of the Bank to contribute.

(d) *SEA Ministers of Education Council and Secretariat (SEAMES) formed.*—Eugene Black met with the SEA Ministers of Education in November 1965 and heard their expression of interest in cooperating on establishment of academic "centers of excellence" to serve the region. He told them if they did develop sound proposals for regional education projects that the United States would assist in financing them. At a second ministerial meeting with Mr. Black a year later, the Ministers endorsed some 10 project proposals and the United States promised to seek AID funds for 50 percent of project costs up to \$28 million.

(e) *Malaysia proposes SEA Transportation/Communications Program.*—Following discussions with the Black mission in Malaysia in November 1966, the Malaysian Government publicly announced its intention to convene a regional meeting to explore prospects for integrated transportation and communication development in Southeast Asia. An Asian group has visited countries of the region in preparation for a planning meeting September 4-9.

(f) *Mekong Development Fund proposed by Mekong Committee Staff.*—President Watanabe held discussions in May 1967, with the Mekong Committee's Executive Agent on possibility of a Mekong Development Fund under ADB administration. They considered a draft agreement between the ADB and the Mekong Committee. Three of the four Mekong countries have endorsed such a proposal.

(g) *Increased ECAFE interest in practical development problems in the region.*—An ECAFE Resolution in April 1967, underscored ECAFE's hopes and that of its subsidiary bodies for programs which emphasized "action orientation and regional cooperation." An Asian Industrial Development Council was created within ECAFE; a port survey team was organized and highway transportation (Asian Highway) is receiving special attention.

(h) *Central banking and planning officers in Southeast Asia* have initiated regular consultations on common financial and economic problems in Southeast Asia (Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines).

(i) *Asian Productivity Organization has expanded its program.*—The APO has expanded its activities by undertaking for its 12-member countries a new small business management and consultants course; the development of a production-level personnel program; and an information and visual aids program.

(j) *The Philippine Government is planning establishment of a regional coconut research center.*—A detailed proposal has been submitted to the United States and to the United Nations.

(k) *The Chinese Government is sponsoring establishment of an Asian vegetable research center.*—Plans are well advanced and consultations have been held with other Asian governments, the United States, Japan, and private foundations.

(l) *The Chinese Government is hosting a regional conference on population growth.*

2. New political-economic organizations

(a) *ASPAC (Asian and Pacific Council) formed by nine Asian countries in Seoul in June 1966.*—In establishing ASPAC, the Ministerial representatives of Australia, New Zealand, Republic of China, Japan, Philippines, Thailand, South Vietnam, Malaysia, and Korea formally and publicly acknowledged the "pressing necessity for more active and fruitful cooperation among participating countries for mutual benefits of their peoples in economic, technical, social, and cultural information fields."

(b) *ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asia Nations) formed by five SEA countries, including Indonesia, in August 1967.*—This organization was established at a conference in Bangkok in August 1967, by the Foreign Ministers of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. Its announced aims are to accelerate economic growth, social progress, and cultural development in the region through joint endeavors; to promote regional peace and stability through the rule of law and adherence to the U.N. charter; to help each other with training and research in educational, technical, and administrative matters; to cooperate in trade, agricultural, transportation, industrial, and communications matters; to promote Southeast Asia studies; and to cooperate closely in all existing international and regional organizations.