The substantial decrease in the food aid level presently recommended by CIDA for the Sahel region in 1975-76 results from several factors:

a) Approximately half of the 1974-75 allocation of $34.5 million for food and transportation is an advanced shipment to meet next year's needs before the rainy season virtually shuts down inland transportation.

b) FAO and CIDA's own mission reports indicate that the crop situation is much better than last year and the present on-going food shipments are being used to build up stocks.

c) CIDA is concentrating its efforts more on increasing nutritional levels,with milk powder, rather than alleviating calorie deficiencies through wheat shipments.

In the Sahel, once again, the food shortage is being monitored closely by CIDA and any deterioration could be met by further allocations from the large Reserve fund. Indeed, the Secretary of State for External Affairs will personally review the food and crop situation in the Sahel during his official visit to Ouagadougou, the capital of Upper Volta, later this month. Mr. MacEachen is scheduled to meet with officials of the Comité Inter-Etats de lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel (CILSS), which is based in Ouagadougou, as well as United Nations representatives and Canadian experts in the field.

Similarly, Canada will be willing and able to extend food aid during the current fiscal year to countries where there is some preliminary indication of possible shortages, such as Haïti. The government of Canada must ensure, however, that delivery and distribution systems will operate in such a way that Canadian food aid will in fact reach the people in need.