

The UN Second Development Decade presents us with an opportunity for some fresh initiatives in this respect. Your Committee has recently heard proposals on this subject, including one to establish a national commission on development. I am studying these and other possibilities carefully. I am particularly anxious that our young people should be closely associated with any new initiative that is taken. They have demonstrated in many ways, at home and abroad, their enormous potential for creative and constructive tasks. Moreover, they are going to be most affected by the achievements -- and the failures -- of the next ten years. I should like, therefore, to harness the idealism and vitality of young people to give real thrust to the plans for the Development Decade. I shall do my utmost to work closely with them.

A second aspect in the involvement of Canadians is the participation of business. Many developing countries, with memories of their colonial experience, are suspicious of foreign business and tend to overlook the creative contribution which the free-enterprise system could make to their development.

Canada, as a nation that is very familiar with the problems of foreign investment, could perhaps play a more understanding and sensitive role in this respect. Canadian private investment could, if it proceeds wisely and carefully, help to create a new image of the foreign investor as a partner rather than as a potential exploiter in the developing countries. This is no easy role to play, but I believe CIDA should make efforts to help businessmen who look upon investment in low-income countries as a genuine partnership out of which can come a shared and mutual benefit.

The need for increasing the flow of Canadian private resources is only too apparent, if we are to meet the 1 percent target of GNP. Official development assistance may come close to the 0.7 percent target before long, but there is the other 0.3 per cent, most of which is implicitly expected to come from private sources. Up to now Canada's private flow has been one of the smallest, but it need not be in years to come. CIDA's Business and Industry Division has met a lively response in its first few months of offering help with starter surveys and feasibility studies. The initial response suggests there may be a reservoir of investment as yet untapped.

As well as encouraging Canadian businesses to consider investment abroad, CIDA and the Government generally have a responsibility to ask them to consider their role at home in relation to developing countries. By that I mean Canadian producers and the Government must face important issues of trade policies, particularly the protection of domestic industries from the competition growing in the low-income countries. I see a danger here in the polarizing of attitudes. There are groups today, such as Canadian textile manufacturers and workers, who face hard times during this period of high unemployment and quite naturally call for protection; others, like Canada's beet-sugar growers, hope to expand and want subsidies. At the other pole are those who call for a swift end to these arrangements so that Canada may offer to producers in the developing countries the most open access for their goods.