

mobilize their internal food production resources and who give a high development priority to efficient food production.

In a more encompassing perspective, the minister stated:

● (1650)

[English]

—mankind has no choice but to arrange his feeding in harmony with a balanced use of all the earth's resources, or his civilisation will go the way of those of Nineveh and Babylon—which destroyed the soils that fed them.

[Translation]

There are several ways, Mr. Speaker, to change the present food situation in several countries of the world. There is, of course, food assistance and plain help to developing countries, which must be considerably increased. In many countries, there is a lot of waste that must absolutely be prevented. Sacrifices must be made by some nations if they want to put an end to hunger. As regards our country, people must be made aware of the problems of poverty in general and of nutrition in the third world in particular. This awakening must be done not only by the decision makers, but also at the whole population level. Here, Mr. Speaker, non-governmental agencies can play a major role. Mention must also be made of the important part these agencies played at the Rome conference. I am convinced that they will pursue their awareness campaign throughout the country. In our efforts to try and change the situation in which several countries now find themselves, we should not forget the farmer. I was very pleased to see that the hon. Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) took the responsibility of pointing out to the delegates to the Rome conference, and particularly in the commissions, that the farmer was indeed the basic element of a reform which would make it possible for the developing countries to expand considerably their food potential. I must say, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. Minister of Agriculture of Canada was highly praised by several delegates to the Conference because of what he said and because he took the defence of the agricultural class. Two suggestions were made at the Conference in order to remove hunger in the world which are worth being pointed out. Mr. Romulo, whom I quoted earlier, stated:

[English]

Let me sum it up briefly. There is no substitute for food. You can have your factories, as many as you want; mills and markets, foreign exchange reserves, gold, oil, special drawing rights, whatever your economists and financial experts can think of and demand; but if your people do not have enough to eat, if they do not grow enough food to feed themselves, you are in trouble, deep trouble, you are in crisis.

An economic crisis, a political crisis, a moral crisis, and in the long run nobody can bail you out of it except yourselves.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, a similar statement was made by the chief of the Chinese delegation, who reminded the developing countries that they should no longer depend on wealthy countries, given their selfishness, and that from now on they should depend on their own resources only.

Although these statements are certainly commendable, for they offer, in the long run an ideal solution to our

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problems, the fact is that this solution is not possible in the short run.

Mr. Speaker, as regards development assistance, Canada can be a leader. One of our great diplomats, Mr. Maurice Strong, said a few years ago:

[English]

There are three overriding influences determining our age, one is the space race, one the nuclear arms race and the third the development race; Canada has no role to play in the first two, but in the one of the developing countries we can be a major power. We know what development means because we've done it here ourselves.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, during the two weeks of debates and discussions of the Rome Conference, one of the most remarkable contributions which I had the privilege to listen to was not made at the Palace of the Congress where the conference was held, but during the audience which Pope Paul VI granted the Conference delegates in the St. Peter Basilica in Rome. Here are some excerpts which I found particularly interesting:

This crisis appears mainly as a crisis of civilization and solidarity. A crisis of civilization and method which appears when the development of life within a society is seen from a unilateral point of view, when considering only the type of society which results in an industrialized civilization, that is to say, when putting excessive trust in the automatism of purely technical solutions and forgetting basic human values. A crisis which appears when the search for economic success only resulting from major profits in industry intensifies, thereby causing the nearly complete abandonment of the sector of agriculture and the accompanying neglect of its highest human and spiritual values. Also, a crisis of solidarity which maintains and sometimes accelerates the disparities between individuals, groups and nations, and which unfortunately results—as it is increasingly obvious—from the insufficient will to contribute to a better sharing of available resources, especially with underdeveloped countries and with human sectors which are still living under an essentially primitive type of agriculture.

We are therefore faced with the paradox of the present situation: Mankind has an unequal power over the universe; it possesses tools by which full productivity can be obtained from its very resources.

Will the very people who hold those instruments remain struck with paralysis in the face of the absurdity of a situation in which the wealth of a few would tolerate the persistent misery of too large a number, in which the highly enriched and diversified food consumption of a few nations would be content with the vital minimum granted all the others, in which human intelligence could alter the fate of so many gravely ill and yet would shirk the task of ensuring adequate food to the most vulnerable peoples of humanity?

Should it come to that, grave errors in orientation will have been committed, though perhaps at times only through neglect or omission. It is high time to discover how the mechanisms have been warped, that the situation might be rectified or rather set upright from end to end.

And finally, the Pope added:

[English]

To you who are engaged in a task at once so difficult yet so rich in promise, we put forward two principles to guide your work: on the one hand, to face up to the data of the problem without allowing yourselves to become bewildered in your evaluation of them through panic or through excessive timidity; and on the other hand to feel yourselves sufficiently stimulated by the absolute urgency and priority of the needs in question so that you will not be satisfied in any single case by delays or by half measures. This conference will not resolve everything on its own; it is not in its nature to do so. However, through the clarity and energy of its conclusions it will give the impetus to a series of effective and sincerely accepted commitments; or contrary to the expectations placed in it and in spite of the goodwill of its members, it will have been held in vain.