

United Nations General
Assembly -- special
session

The energy price question is coming to a head at a period when terms of trade have shifted significantly in favour of primary-commodity producers. The demand generated by high levels of industrial activity during the past two years, reinforced by inflation, has driven the prices of minerals and agricultural products to unprecedented levels. The earnings developing countries as a whole derive from high commodity prices far outweigh the transfer of resources to them by way of development assistance. Thus, to some extent at least, the health and vigour of the world economy -- including particularly the maintenance of strong demand for commodities -- is more important to the oil-importing developing countries than the maintenance of developing assistance.

The situation I have just described is particularly relevant to the special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on the issue of raw materials and development that will start on April 9.

As both an important producer and consumer of natural resources -- renewable and non-renewable --, Canada has a deep interest in ensuring the maintenance of markets, of orderly supply, reasonable prices for both producer and consumer and the best use of the world resources both in domestic terms and internationally.

While it is likely that agricultural commodities and food-supply problems will be discussed to some extent at the forthcoming special session, they will be at the centre of the World Food Conference that will take place in Rome next November.

World Food and World
Population Conferences

The relationship of resources, food and population is obvious. Within a space of 25 years, the world's population is expected to reach a figure of 6 billion. To underline the common concern about this problem, 1974 has been designated World Population Year. A World Population Conference will be held in Bucharest in August. The conference will examine the relations between population and economic and social development, resources and environment. These are questions of the first importance to all countries. The Government has initiated major preparations for Canada's participation. The CIIA, in conjunction with the Family Planning Federation and the Inter-Church Project on Population, will be holding a series of meetings across Canada beginning this week. The provinces will also be consulted in the final preparations for the Canadian delegation's brief.

Changing demand and consumption patterns and the aggravation of the supply situation by natural causes are already such that food