



# Statements and Speeches

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REFERENCE

## INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION -- MORAL IMPERATIVE AND POLITICAL NECESSITY

Notes for a Speech to the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, Ottawa, May 20, 1975.

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Until recently, international development could be discussed almost exclusively within the framework of bilateral and multilateral aid programs. True, there were a few experts, a few Cassandras, who claimed that international assistance was not working, since there could never be enough of it to finance the social and economic transformation of the three-quarters of the world that lived in poverty. True, the developing countries were not only clamouring for more aid but also asking, in UNCTAD and other arenas, for a re-vamping of international trading arrangements that would enable them to "earn their own way", so to speak, -- that is, to finance their development out of export earnings. All of us were familiar, long before the seventh special session of the United Nations, with the slogan "trade not aid".

Yet international development was still mainly discussed with reference to the aid relationship. Statistics were endlessly recomputed, as if more dollars could be wrung from figures. A call to do more invariably meant more money for international development agencies. Studies and reports tended to focus on various aspects of the aid relationship -- bilateral *versus* multilateral aid, agriculture *versus* industry, the sending of experts *versus* technical training, ways and means to relieve them of their debt burden, or to co-ordinate more effectively assistance made available to them from various sources. By and large, the contribution of donor countries to international development was still considered as a response to a moral imperative. The affluent sought to buy their peace of mind with a slice -- quite often a substantial slice -- of national budgets. The problem thus defined, only a predetermined set of questions needed to be answered. The technicians having taken their cue from the moralists, vital issues of development were thrown out with the bath-water of aid.

What has changed recently is that, while remaining a moral imperative, international co-operation in the field of development has become a political necessity. The persistence of acute economic disparities in the world, the lack of effective and visible progress to