

But it is not simply a matter of generosity. We live in an increasingly interdependent world. The well-being of developed countries like Canada is more and more bound up with the fate of the developing world. Our best interests, therefore, require us to assist developing countries. Governments of some developed countries have experienced inward-looking and isolationist pressures which would have them restrict or curtail their aid programmes and limit their efforts exclusively to the search for solutions to domestic problems. But Canada must be and is an outward-looking nation, dependent on good relations with countries in many parts of the world.

The Canadian public, in my view, recognizes these realities and therefore strongly supports the thrust of our important and growing aid programme.

Related to public support for aid is the question of public involvement.

I have wanted for some time to bring members of the public and non-governmental organizations more directly into the foreign aid process. Participation by individuals and groups of persons interested in Canada's assistance to countries of the Third World is being facilitated and encouraged. Canada's non-governmental organizations have long participated actively and effectively in providing aid to developing countries, particularly in the field of humanitarian and emergency relief. The Canadian International Development Agency has made available increasing amounts of funds for Canadian non-governmental organizations to strengthen their capacity to play a significant role in assisting the peoples of the Third World. This financial support will continue to grow.

A new dimension of public participation will be made possible by Canada's new voluntary food aid programme which is a direct outgrowth of the World Food Conference held in Rome in November of last year. I shall seek through this programme to encourage and facilitate participation by the provinces, the public and non-governmental organizations in our food aid efforts. This will give all those who want to take part as individuals or organizations in our aid activity a greater opportunity to do so. The programme will be coordinated by the Federal Government and will, I hope, prove to be a cooperative venture involving many sectors of Canadian society in a global undertaking in which Canada plays such an important role.