

**Food**

One of the key problems in this area is the low priority assigned to agricultural development by many developing countries. Given the levels of malnutrition and starvation in many countries, however, food aid will likely remain essential for some time to come. To what extent, and how, should Canada increase assistance to help developing countries make fuller use of their agricultural potential? Can more be done multilaterally, perhaps by greater support for international agricultural research centres?

**Aid**

Aid, particularly for the poorest, will remain critical for many years to come. But it alone cannot provide the basis for healthy growing economies in the developing areas. Responses in other areas will also be necessary. This said, I believe we have to examine, as you have suggested, the quality and philosophy of aid and I look forward to your recommendations in this regard. The key question is probably what can be done to improve the lot of the poorest. In addition, I know we are all pleased that Canada's ODA [official development assistance] will begin to increase again after a period of decline. We must now consider what measures further to those announced must be taken to ensure that our commitment to higher levels can be met, and what is the best use for the additional funds. I would, in particular, welcome the views of the Task Force on the factors that bear on aid effectiveness and how this effectiveness may be improved. A more general question, which I believe also merits examination is whether systems cannot be developed, domestically as well as internationally, to ensure a more reliable or "automatic" transfer of resources. Similarly, what realistic link could be established between development and disarmament?

These, I suggest, are some of the key policy areas to be examined. Against this background, the government will also be considering what opportunities there are for Canada to play a helpful, or catalytic, role in the North-South area. As a member of the Western Summit Group, and host to next year's meeting, we are a member of the major industrialized "club". Our participation in the Like-minded Group provides us with links to other middle powers. Our membership in the Commonwealth and la Francophonie, our hemispheric links and special ties to the Caribbean, and our Pacific window on Asia provide us with privileged access to the developing world. Thus, Canada is in a favourable position — particularly in the coming year — to stimulate movement and attempt to conciliate the conflicting views of our major industrialized partners and those of the developing world.

In order to play such a role in the dialogue, we must try to develop an organizing principle with regard to Canada's contributions to the substantive aspects of North-South relations — a principle which takes account of our structural uniqueness as a resource exporter and capital and technology importer. We should examine the areas where we can make a significant but perhaps qualitatively different contribution from others. The impact of these potential contributions may involve a departure from present patterns but a more effective and more rational international division of labour regarding assistance to developing countries could result.

**Public support  
vital**

Finally, — and I reiterate now one of my initial points — if Canada is to address the issues positively and to play a constructive role in the dialogue, increased public awareness and support will be critical. As Mr. Breau is aware, I have just held con-