

We face constraints of many kinds. The developing countries must cope with crushing debt, acute balance-of-payments pressure, and painful adjustment programs. Ominously, the per capita real income of the Third World as a whole is declining in absolute terms for the first time since the late 1950s, with all that this implies in human suffering.

Meanwhile, in the developed countries, economic anxiety prevails, funds for development cooperation are in decline, and cynicism is growing about our ability to respond on the domestic or international scene.

Can we learn from the past? Paradoxically, I believe that today's difficulties bear the seeds of future progress - because global interdependence has become so glaringly obvious, and because we have a better international framework than in the 1930s on which to build.

It is these new realities, therefore, which we must put before our electorates. If we fail, our adversaries will succeed with policies which capture only a slice of reality. We have to ensure the broad public understanding that will endorse reasonable decisions. Our purpose as liberals, in our country as in our world, must be, in the words of the Canadian poet, Louis Dudek, "the liberation of the individual self...working always for this time and this place, this self, to find the hidden meaning of all things - that is the great adventure. It's not a dark prospect, but an infinite horizon of possibilities". That "infinite horizon of possibilities" is the liberal view of the future of the world.