

Canadian Lutheran World Relief, Cansave, and Food for the Hungry. CIDA contributed \$500,000 in skim milk powder to these non-governmental organizations.

Following the 1974 World Food Conference that called for increased commitments to agricultural assistance and food aid by the donor nations, a federal-provincial program was set up to augment Canada's existing international efforts in this field. Under this program, donations may be made by provincial governments, Canadian non-governmental organizations, joint federal-provincial funding, private companies or individuals. The program is administered at CIDA. For example, during its first year of operation 600 tons of white beans were donated by a province for the relief of victims in the Sahel region of Africa, and 10,500 cases of baby food were donated to a children's hospital in Haiti by a major food processing firm.

The International Grains Arrangement was reached in 1967 and includes the Food Aid Convention. The Food Aid Convention aims to share more equitably the food aid burden among the developed International Grains Arrangement countries and to prevent food aid from interfering with normal commercial transactions. It is renewed annually and has a commitment of 4.2 million tonnes, of which Canada's share is 12 per cent.

The "Rome Pledge" covers the three fiscal years from 1975-76, and was undertaken at a time when Canada could sell all its food grains at top prices. It commits us to provide one million tonnes of food grains and \$45 million worth of non-grain food, 20 per cent through multilateral channels. The ten million tonne international target has been reached, but there is less progress on the proposed forward planning of food aid. CIDA has been successful in placing its multilateral allocation, but since the Rome Pledge there has been a growing demand for non-grain foods due to unforeseen increases in the grain production of least developing countries, and CIDA has thus encountered difficulty in placing its bilateral cereal allocation. The Emergency Food Reserve has been established, to which Canada is committed to supply 10 per cent of a total 500,000 tonne food grain target. Money has been set aside in this year's budget to this end and, although no rules have been agreed upon, it is foreseen that there will be financial obligations in the future for replenishment.

With regard to the World Food Program, Canada has made a pledge for calendar year 1977 and 1978; the 1978 pledge is \$50 million in grains, non-grain foods and cash. To the United Nations Refugees and Works Agency Canada has made a commitment of \$2.5 million in food and \$1.65 million in cash in 1978. Finally, there is Canada's statement to the June 1977 meeting of the World Food Council, committing itself to forward planning of food aid. Canada was also part of a consensus advising increased concessional aid, enlarging the proportion of grant basis food aid to least developing countries in serious economic difficulties, and the attainment of a minimum annual international food aid level of ten million tonnes of cereal in 1977-78.

One of the criticisms respecting CIDA and food aid programs is with regard to the benefit to Canadians in overall food production. During times of high unemployment, there

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are many people who say to members of parliament that we should take care of our own house before going abroad to assist others. I am afraid we have not done a very good job of salesmanship. We must point out to average Canadians that in many cases we are assisting countries which have a per capita income of less than \$300 per year. There are very few people in this country with such a low standard of living. However, that is the case in many least developing countries.

Those who criticize the government of Canada for assisting countries in perilous economic straits would do well to look at the earnings of people there. They will find they are much lower than those of Canadians. The people of Canada must with good conscience determine that it is of the ultimate benefit to Canada to provide a stability throughout the world, raising the standard of living of those who have deplorably low standards of living. There are economic benefits for Canada. If we cannot sell this with moral persuasion, perhaps we can discuss some of the benefits that can accrue to Canada.

Food aid is not large in relation to over-all Canadian food production, but the impact of moving grain and non-grain commodities can be significant to producers. Food aid also complements Canadian agricultural and fisheries stabilization programs. The two most direct benefits are reductions in excess commodities inventories, and value-added benefits which result from the use of excess capacity in food-processing industries. The indirect effects on employment, regional development, trade development, marketing and pricing, technology, energy use, foreign exchange and transport utilization are indeed difficult to measure, but nevertheless they have to be taken into account.

With the increasing emphasis on food aid and the interest shown by the public in the subject, CIDA has decided to concentrate its various activities in food aid on one Food Aid Responsibility Centre, which will be located in the multilateral branch.

At the national food strategy consultation which took place in February 1978, the Working Group on marketing and food aid came up with five recommendations relative to food aid. First, food aid should be an integral part of our national food strategy. Canada should place more emphasis on developing the indigenous food development capability of developing countries. Canada should play a greater role in emergency relief. Canada should also play a major role in food aid given to a country, taking into account its nutritional requirements; and finally, a domestic food aid program should be introduced into the strategy.

● (1632)

I commend the hon. member who brought this motion before the House. We have worked over a period of several years both in the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence as well as at the seventh special session of the United Nations. I think he and I and many other members of this House would agree that if we are to play a significant role in the world dealing with food for the less developed countries of this globe, we must somehow make the urgency