

Even more generally, I wonder on what basis we have chosen to participate in individual aid programmes. Have we taken into account the economic returns Canada may expect in both the short and long term? How good are we at assessing projects from the point of view of actually helping real development in the recipient country, and of doing ourselves some good at the same time? Would we be more responsible international citizens if we concentrated our attention in fewer countries or in fewer fields, so that our impact could be greater?

Along the same lines, I wonder if Canada should be so deeply involved in peacekeeping operations. Does this constitute the best contribution we can make to peace and security in regional trouble spots? I know the costs we bear for these both in terms of national expenditure and in the very direct human terms it has on the soldiers themselves and their families. Why are we spending so much time involved in the contact group on Namibia? Do Canadians really care?

Ever since the Second World War Canada has been cultivating the image of an international nice-guy. We're friends to everyone, the honest brokers. We've spent billions on aid and untold man-hours of effort in being as upright and noble to the third world as we can be. And yet last month in Havana the non-aligned countries cheerfully branded us as imperialists. Pakistan is one of the very largest recipients of our aid programmes, but it led the attack. Not only that, but it is a country whose head of government -- before he was executed -- said that he would rather reduce his country to eating grass than give up the right to develop a nuclear bomb. Is it really the right thing to do to divorce aid policy entirely from the rest of our relations, both political and economic, with the country concerned?

I also wonder if we are paying enough attention to economic and trade relations. Why is it, for example, that Canada still has so little trade with such powerful and growing economies as Mexico and Brazil and Venezuela? Perhaps we've been far too slow in establishing really solid economic ties with the fast-growing countries of the Pacific rim.

I'm also not sure that we really have paid as much attention as we should to our nearest neighbour and closest partner, the United States. I say this without in any way compromising my stand as a staunch Canadian nationalist -- our relations with the U.S.A. are so enormously important that they just must be our first priority. Have we really been as attentive, as co-operative, and yes, as tough as we should be in this regard?