

VIII. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE THIRD WORLD

Most of the group participants were convinced that Canada has a comparatively solid reputation as a contributor to Third World aid. In Toronto and Vancouver, a number of people expressed the view that perhaps too much aid was being provided and that "charity begins at home." The most striking point emerging from this discussion area was that aid seemed to be viewed more as a function of Canadians' compassion rather than as a function of a moral obligation on the part of better off countries to share their wealth.

Many people expressed the opinion that the assistance provided is misdirected or "band-aid" in nature, evidence of a belief that aid is predominately in the form of subsistence materials (i.e., food, medicine) rather than technology and training which would help the developing nation eventually reduce its dependence on other countries. The notion of tied aid, or aid involving the provision of goods which Canada has an interest in producing, provoked no strong reactions pro or con, the bottom line being that it should be rational either in terms of fulfilling an immediate need or as part of a overall development strategy.

Group participants were fairly pessimistic about the prospects of Third World economies ever becoming self-sufficient, a pessimism which appeared to some extent rooted in a view that the countries in question did not do enough to help themselves (i.e., practise birth control, plan land use more wisely).

This general tone to the discussion surrounding Third World aid appeared to contrast somewhat with the evidence that Canadians have been making substantial out-of-pocket contributions to relief funds in recent months.