

*International Relations*

itself at the very basic level in teaching women in the south how to raise rabbits, to the Mennonite Central Committee, where years of expertise in farming are shared with newly-landed peasants, to CUSO whose members teach the illiterate to read.

Non-governmental organizations are enjoying wide financial support from the community at large, even to the point where private contributions are increasing in spite of the shrinking of the economic pie. In 1978-1979, NGOs raised over \$63 million for projects in the Third World.

In light of these facts, the task force recommended that the government direct an increased share of ODA to support the activities of NGO. Additionally, the bilateral programs branch of CIDA should assign some of the funds it expects to spend on agriculture, health and rural development to small projects which would be operated by Canadian NGOs.

The North-South dialogue is further confused by calls for a new international economic order. Paramount in my mind are the attitudes that would be reflected in being party to such a fundamental change in the economic affairs of the world. I firmly believe that human rights, free will and the sovereignty of nations must not be placed in jeopardy in any move toward change. These nations which are blessed by already having such benefits should neither give them up nor avoid the responsibility of seeing that less privileged nations are assisted.

I also strongly believe that the developed countries should not redistribute wealth but should apply development programs in such a way that the less developed countries become able to create their own wealth.

I do not think that it is beneficial or desirable to foster dependency in recipient nations. We should as a nation undoubtedly concern ourselves with the less fortunate, but with an eye on the long view. Our main goal, I believe, should be to get the less developed countries to stand on their own, independent and self-sufficient. That goal may take some time to be realized, but it should always be our final target. It has been my observation that collectivism and socialism rob people of their initiative.

We need to ask ourselves, why is Canada not an underdeveloped country? The party to the left needs to ask the question, why are we not an underdeveloped country? It is because of our economy and through the free enterprise system which has allowed us to grow and prosper, even though it is now threatened by the present government. Our system has further allowed us to be in the position where we can share our bounty with others. I personally feel a strong responsibility to see that other nations are allowed to learn and benefit from the free enterprise system, as Canada and other western nations have.

In a number of important ways the situation of Canada is analogous to nations in the south. They, like us, were once colonies; they, like us, have an economy which is largely predicated upon the export of primary commodities and the import of finished goods; they, like us, are not major world

powers and therefore have a stake in co-operation and working together without recourse to power.

All these similarities have conspired to put Canada in a position of trust in the eyes of the Third World. We are looked upon as a nation which can act as a bridge between the concerns of the South and the concerns of the North.

The bridge-building role which the parliamentary task force envisioned for Canada uses to advantage this position of trust, for not only does Canada have much in common with the South, but we are undoubtedly a member of the nations of the North. Canada is therefore uniquely situated to act as an arbiter, a go-between to aid in more meaningful dialogue between the North and South.

The Prime Minister's attitude to this crucial topic has trivialized it. He has not bothered adequately to explain to the Canadian citizen his concerns, his goals and his methods of achieving those goals. The Prime Minister should realize, Mr. Speaker, that he has a major problem with credibility out there in Canada, and oftentimes the mere fact that he says he is in favour of something is enough to turn people off. The people of Canada have been presented with the spectacle of the Prime Minister flitting around the world, bemoaning the lack of avocados and hobnobbing with world leaders. Granted these were the leaders of Third World countries; but for all we know the Prime Minister could have been talking to them about the new hem lengths in Paris, for he has not seen fit to take the people of Canada into his confidence. We are asked blindly to trust him when he assures us that the problems of North-South are of primary importance to him.

The members of the task force were convinced that North-South relations were critically important, but there are those of us who seriously question the Prime Minister's commitment. His actions, however, will determine whether that opinion is positive or negative, and I am deeply concerned that there will be negative public perception.

Mr. Speaker, in the course of our hearings, members were surprised to learn that Canada is involved in 89 countries, although 79 per cent of that involvement was in 27 countries. This massive but necessarily superficial involvement led us to question the effectiveness of our programs, as our Canadian personnel are spread extremely thin. We found that there are less than 100 CIDA personnel in the field, while in Ottawa CIDA is top heavy with about 1,000 employees. This can easily be seen to be an unsatisfactory situation.

The decision-making process is centred in Ottawa, far from the realities of the field, and is ponderously slow to respond to changes in field conditions. CIDA personnel in the Third World are hard-working and dedicated, I am sure of that, but they surely could do a better job with more support there and fewer officials at headquarters in Ottawa.

The task force therefore recommended that the government seek to reduce the number of countries in which it has aid programs. Further, it was recommended that the government strengthen the administration of its development assistance programs in the field.