

tions in the drought belt below the Sahara.

The prime minister tabled a detailed proposal for international financial assistance for those countries, as did also France and Britain. And he gave credibility to his message by telephoning Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda and then reporting to his colleagues that 60 per cent of Zambia's national income is now spent on interest payments

The victory this time, while still not grand, was consequential. The

seven committed themselves to drafting a detailed assistance program by the end of this year.

On South Africa, we in fact achieved little. On African debt, the contributions of France and Britain were as consequential as our own.

The Canadian characteristic instead was consistency. Summits come and go, but at each of them we are usually alone in talking about those who aren't around the

table, the world's poor and less fortunate.

We also had our say on all the summit's heavyweight subjects, from debt management to fighting trade protectionism to co-ordinating international economic policies.

No doubt our interventions were sound and sensible, although it is likely the collective economic decisions that actually were taken by the summit leaders would have been taken anyway.

Toronto Star