

19. Viewed in this light, it is all the more crucial to maximize the beneficial impact of the overall Canadian contribution. What will be required is a concerted effort at development cooperation involving all Government policies affecting relationships with developing countries and all aspects of those relationships—bilateral and multilateral, official and private.

b. Public Interest and Support—

20. A basic assumption of the foregoing discussion is that Canadian involvement in international development assistance is in accord with (and indeed is dictated by) basic values held by the Canadian people. The Subcommittee believes that this underlies the consistent public support for the allocation of growing sums of development assistance over the past two decades.

21. As with any government programme, it is extremely difficult to obtain a precise measure of public interest and support for international development assistance. No comprehensive survey of opinion has been made to date, but the Subcommittee's witnesses and the writers and commentators on the subject are virtually unanimous in the judgment that Canadians generally are firm supporters of this policy.\* Further recent evidence is the general public approval of the decision taken by the Canadian Government to continue increasing the budget for foreign economic assistance at a time of austerity in most governmental programmes. It is consistent with the basic rationale discussed in section A above that among the other programmes exempted from cutbacks were those directed to Canada's own slow-growth areas and to the disadvantaged sectors of Canadian society. The Subcommittee has concluded that these priorities do in fact enjoy a large measure of support from the Canadian people.

22. As has been indicated, however, the Subcommittee is deeply concerned that much of this support is somewhat passive and acquiescent. As official aid programmes have grown, so has their complexity and the bureaucratic machinery required to administer them. As a consequence, it may even be that individuals have had a *lessening* awareness of, and involvement in, development cooperation as a whole. This situation will not provide a dependable base of public support for the continued expansion of aid to which the Canadian Government is committed. In fact, unless real changes are made, Canadians may not be immune much longer to the "weakening of will" which has afflicted some other countries.

\* The Canadian Council for International Cooperation has conducted nation-wide surveys of the attitudes of youth on this subject, while interested groups in cities like London, Ontario and Calgary have polled representative sample groups in their communities. Another indication of public sentiment is the strong support voiced by mass-membership organizations like the Canadian Labour Congress and, indeed, by the policy conferences of the national political parties. The membership, participation and financial contributions of broadly-based non-governmental organizations concerned with development also represents a wide and committed aid constituency.

23. In order to maintain (and reinforce) the essential public support, the Subcommittee believes that vigorous new efforts at public education and involvement will be required. It was pleased to note, therefore, that this objective has been set as one of CIDA's five highest priorities by the new President of the Agency. As Monsieur Gérin-Lajoie said in his testimony:

"We should all admit that this work until now has been done in a spotty and not very methodical way. To say that is not to underestimate the enthusiasm and bright ideas of those who have worked to tell Canadians about the issues of international development. There have been good starts—the Miles for Millions Walks are an example—but they are no more than starts.

There needs to be a much more concerted effort to involve the Canadian public. The people and the talents are clearly available." (11:13)

24. The Subcommittee has heard some fairly detailed suggestions as to specific programmes which might be undertaken in this area. M. Gérin-Lajoie referred to these proposals and stated, "Together with officials of the Agency I am studying these and other possibilities carefully." (11:14) It is to be hoped, therefore, that a substantial effort by CIDA to inform and involve the Canadian public will be underway in the near future.

25. Not only is development cooperation generally supported by the Canadian public, but there is also a clear consensus of support among all political parties on the importance of active Canadian participation. There should not, therefore, be any major political difficulty in allocating government funds for the indirect support of independently-run educational programmes. These, in fact, are a logical and desirable complement of CIDA's own informational activities. In cases where government programmes are criticized or other differences exist, there is a possibility for constructive dialogue which is, in itself, of great educational value. Nevertheless, some of the issues relating to public information and involvement on development are surprisingly controversial. The Subcommittee considers it vital that these questions be kept in perspective and that unnecessary and damaging divisiveness and competition, particularly when this occurs between non-governmental agencies, be avoided.

26. Development is an emotional issue, concerned with some of the most fundamental values of a good many people. The potential problems (and serious stresses have arisen in the past) seem to occur when issues are discussed on a superficial level, without clear distinctions being made among varying foreign policy objectives. The solution then is more education, more informed discussion and dialogue. Above all, education and involvement programmes must now stress the urgency, magnitude and complexity of the international development problem. It must be made clear that there are no panaceas or quick solutions and that a sustained and intense global effort is required. A widespread public understanding is needed to counteract any tendency toward