

I think Canadian foreign policy has, for too long, been the preserve of what a bolder man would call an elite, often an inspired elite. Today, more people are interested, both because the world economy and the nuclear threat force their interest, and because they have more time and information.

That has been demonstrated dramatically in the Canadian citizen response to the famine in Africa. When I announced our Fund for Africa, our experts told me that we might collect an additional \$10 million from individual Canadians. Many doubted that much would be collected. Just three months after the programme was announced, between 400,000 and 500,000 Canadians have given money and the total contributed is approaching \$30 million. Non-governmental organizations tell us that, in normal times, their average contributions are in the range of \$30 to \$40. In response to the African famine, the average donation size has been from \$60 to \$70 - or twice the normal amount. You may argue that a famine, magnified by television, excites exceptional response. I believe that view underestimates the interest of ordinary Canadians in their world, particularly when they are provided an opportunity to make some contribution to resolve problems which worry them.

A second motive for the review is that it is healthy for Canada, after decades of worrying about our identity and our constitution, to look to the wider world, and to act in it. Indeed, we may learn more about our character from our actions abroad than we do from our introspection at home.

I have been involved recently, in a very modest way, in what may become a very significant contribution to peace in Central America. The four countries of the Contadora group - Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama - are proposing an agreement to achieve peace in Central America, and a mechanism to keep that peace, if it is achieved. Because Canada won a reputation as a peace-keeper - in Indochina, in the Middle East, in Cyprus - the Contadora countries asked our advice on making sure the peace-keeping mechanism could work. Canada, under Liberal and Progressive Conservative Governments, provided that advice. I sent experts down to Mexico to review the peace-keeping mechanism in detail, and we have given Contadora a mechanism that can work. That is not as spectacular as a bombing mission - or a peace mission - but it is a practical, solid, essential contribution, that probably no country but Canada could make. That case is not unique.