

a number of factors respecting Canada and the other countries concerned.

While stressing our moral considerations, we must also be realistic and recognize the difficulties in drawing a line between human rights and other areas of activity. The suspension of aid is frequently suggested as a response to human rights violations, and it may seem on the surface to be an understandable way for a donor country to react. You will agree with me that we cannot question the need to provide food aid to some impoverished countries. But, in the area of economic aid, let me emphasize the real dilemma we face in attempting to determine what part of, for instance, a project for a cement-plant or an irrigation scheme benefits the people and what part ends up simply serving the aims of a government unresponsive on the question of human rights. This fine line, as I describe it, is hard to draw in practice, and I can only repeat that I have an open mind on this subject. I am prepared to consider possible courses of action available to us if I can be convinced that such action will prove effective.

At the same time, there is a real difficulty in acting on many economic issues. If we go beyond what is called for by international sanctions, where do we then draw the line as matter of policy? If we take unilateral action, and it accomplishes nothing, what have we gained?

We accept international sanctions as the only really meaningful and potentially-effective measures against repressive regimes. Although we receive numerous requests to take action in cases of varied gravity, importance to Canada and humanitarian concern, we must necessarily consider the possible consequences of our action on future cases, in the hope that we can continue to be effective in human rights issues.

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We have a responsibility, too, to consider the long-term implications of our representations, especially if they give rise to hopes which we cannot fulfil. If, through our actions, we encourage unwarranted expectations, so that the pressures generated by dissidents become intolerable to a given regime, what guarantees can we provide for their safety, or for the stability of their whole societies, in the event of massive upheavals in their states, such as occurred in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968? There are other implications that must be taken into account before determining a course of action. We may have other humanitarian interests — for example, our refugee program in Chile — that we should wish to safeguard by remaining on at least proper if not cordial terms with the other country concerned.

I have spoken frankly this evening

about the problems and the types of considerations which govern our attitude to human rights issues.

As most of you consider human rights a matter of utmost priority, I hope, nevertheless, you will agree that the way in which we seek to deal with human rights violations is delicate and difficult and is subject to numerous considerations.

The question of human rights is one of the most complex issues in foreign policy because it strikes to the root of our traditions and therefore constitutes a potential challenge to other societies whose traditions may essentially be different.

Despite the need for delicacy and balanced judgment, Canada will continue to uphold internationally the course of human rights, in the legitimate hope that we can eventually ameliorate the conditions of our fellow men.

News briefs

- Legislation to make efficiency the key test of whether companies might merge or form monopolies, even if competition suffered as a result, was introduced in the House of Commons recently by the Consumer and Corporate Affairs Minister. Mr. Abbott told reporters the proposed legislation was justified because companies "have to operate in an increasingly hostile international environment." This meant, he said, that they might have to band together into larger units to increase production at lower cost.
- The Canadian Armed Forces will employ about 9,000 students this summer as part of the Federal Government's Student Summer Employment Activity Program, Defence Minister Barney Danson announced recently. The Department of National Defence's share of the \$65.9 million project will be \$7,552,000, making it the second-largest departmental contribution to the program. The Department of Manpower and Immigration will spend \$45.9 million. The Forces will provide cadet-training and -activities, community-assistance projects and reserve training, similar to programs operated for the past six years.
- Prime Minister Trudeau said on March 17 that he would bar Quebec

from attending international conferences if provincial officials continued to renounce their ties with the rest of Canada and "behave as though the province has an international personality." Mr. Trudeau said provincial officials could talk about activities in their provinces at international meetings but could not formally represent Canada or bypass federal authorities in dealing with other countries.

■ Significant potential resources of oil and natural gas still exist across Canada, according to two documents tabled in the Commons recently by Energy Minister Alastair Gillespie. The documents said that there was a 90 percent chance that up to 229 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 25 billion barrels of oil would be discovered. Canada now uses about 1.4 trillion cubic feet of gas annually and about 730 million barrels of oil. Mr. Gillespie said later that the country had the potential oil and natural-gas resources it needed to make itself self-reliant in energy, but that the costs of developing the supplies would be high.

■ The Commons has passed legislation ratifying a federal-provincial agreement under which the provinces take over some taxing power from Ottawa and receive increased jurisdiction over health care and higher education.