

concern for the fundamental rights and freedoms of its own citizens.

It is important for us to turn some attention for a moment as we discuss our impact upon human rights in the world to consider the impact of the example of Canada in terms of respect for rights in this country. In this country we have a government that tried to gag a member of this House with threats, and having failed there, is now harassing a newspaper editor whom it does not happen to like. This is a government, and we heard the Minister of Justice (Mr. Basford) on this subject only yesterday, that condones secret trials. This is a government that continues to use writs of assistance 200 years after they were abolished in England. This is a government that, as we saw again today, is all too ready to take away from parliament and hide, with a royal commission, responsibility for looking into the illegal use of the private tax and medical files of individual Canadians.

This is a government which wants to inhibit the basic freedoms of charitable organizations by limiting their right to petition their government and their parliament. This is a government that finds no fault with the systematic surveillance of political parties and candidates. This is a government that passed an order in council making it illegal for any Canadian even to discuss the activities of a uranium cartel, of which the Government of Canada was a part. This is a government which, under the Immigration Act, claims the right to give foreign workers in Canada a special social insurance number so they can be singled out.

This is a government which increases postal rates by executive fiat, in defiance of the law and in defiance of parliamentary principle. When Canadians look at a record like that we are entitled to ask ourselves: is this government so committed to quiet diplomacy in the defence of human rights internationally because quiet diplomacy works, or because it is a convenient way to evade action and avoid scrutiny?

If this government has been too silent in asserting Canada's commitment to human rights, it most certainly has been inconsistent and hypocritical in applying those principles to its own policies. On occasion we hear lofty statements of principle on this matter by government ministers. We heard one in the House of Commons last December made by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Jamieson) when he was talking about commercial relations with South Africa. We noted, to give him credit—and he is in the House now—the strong statement of the Minister of State for Multiculturalism (Mr. Cafik) in summing up the tragic failure of the Belgrade Conference. We heard a statement in recent days from the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) in respect of our aid policy toward Cuba. The rhetoric in these statements is fine. The record unfortunately, does not measure up.

To take some of those examples, we are told that the government is ending its support of commercial dealings with South Africa. But the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Horner) sees nothing wrong with the Export Development Corporation continuing to support activity in that country. Indeed, he gives us to understand that his

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concern for human rights begins and ends with credit ratings. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien), when he finally understood the arrangement he had made, was happy to have South African banks participate in propping up the Canadian dollar. The Prime Minister's statement in regard to Cuba was just as empty. He made the grandiose gesture of cutting off aid that in fact had already stopped. Even after that statement in relation to CIDA, the fact is the Export Development Corporation continues to finance sales to the Castro regime.

The government would have us believe that it is concerned about the massive repression of civil liberties in Chile, and yet it continues to support commercial dealings with that regime. An all-party group of members from this House, as you will recall, reported evidence of terror and suppression in Argentina, and the government sold that country one Candu reactor and tries to sell it another.

[*Translation*]

Even though the resolutions introduced in the House concerning Mr. Shcharansky and Mr. Orlov received unanimous consent, it is obvious that the government does not take these matters seriously. Even though there was agreement to give unanimous consent, we are not doing enough to follow up on the statements made in parliament. It seems that we are not using these statements. Moreover, the government does not express steadfastly enough its concern about cases such as those I have mentioned. They are usually put aside and quickly forgotten.

Canada should take the initiative and raise at the United Nations the obvious cases of violation of human rights. A few weeks ago, the House of Commons agreed unanimously to a motion by the hon. member for Matane (Mr. De Bané), supported by my colleague from Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker), about the Shcharansky case. I then proposed that this motion serve as a starting point for a Canadian initiative at the United Nations. Nothing has been done in this regard, but the proposal is still valid and I hope it will receive serious consideration.

Canada should also reveal and publicize the violations of human rights in other countries. We should not allow the continuation of current repressions in Chile, in Latin America, in Indonesia and in South Africa without objecting to them.

● (1542)

[*English*]

In sum, this is a government whose commitment is doubtful and whose record is shabby. The people of Canada expect better of their government in support of human rights. I say to this House and to the people of Canada that the government we form after the next election will provide a better example and a better quality of life.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: First, we will put our own domestic house in better order. A government which believed in freedom of