

in community organizations and in academic pursuits are placed at a disadvantage when they attempt to reconcile their perceptions of a country's human rights record with Canada's decisions concerning ODA allocations. More importantly, they are hampered in their quest for protection of people in other lands whose human rights deprivation may sometimes be far down the list on the diplomatic agenda.

It could be asserted that to publicize Cabinet's annual conclusions about other countries' human rights records might damage our external relations without advancing the cause of human rights. It is plain, however, that the lack of openness in the assessment procedures means that our government is not adequately accountable to Canadians for the actions it takes. Our Sub-Committee hearings will foster sustained discussion about realistic and responsible ways of establishing a more open process for evaluating potential and current aid recipients in light of their human rights performance. Moving beyond the work of earlier parliamentary committees, we shall also attempt to fashion recommendations for attaching human rights conditions to related foreign trade and financial relationships.

3. INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

In the foreign policy reviews of the 1980s, the possible connections between international commerce and human rights received less persistent and less coordinated attention than ODA-human rights links, with the exception of military matériel exports and economic sanctions directed at South Africa, the Soviet bloc and China. The issues are not clear-cut. One can find support for the notion that trade with human rights violators can be a way to maintain communication and prevent isolation, and thus be a catalyst towards progress in human rights (e.g., in Eastern Europe or China). But Canadian church organizations have expressed particularly deep discomfort with the lack of coherence between Canada's trading practices and our use of diplomatic and aid instruments to support human rights objectives. While castigating a country at the United Nations for its trammelling of human rights, Canada can be actively encouraging commercial activities with the same state. A number of services may be called into play to cement trading opportunities, including the backing of the Export Development Corporation.⁽¹⁷⁾

Those who advocate using trade in pursuit of human rights recognize the complexities involved, but plead that when respect for human rights falls below a universally-recognized floor, the trade lever should be put into motion.⁽¹⁸⁾

The use of economic pressure to advance respect for human rights requires careful assessment of the specific circumstances of particular country situations in the light of universal human rights standards and of the likelihood that economic sanctions will be