



*The Canadian Consul General in Sydney, Australia, W.G. Pybus, and Mrs. Pybus, guests of honour at Australia Day celebrations in Newcastle, New South Wales, participated with*

*Newcastle's Lord Mayor G. Anderson in the citizenship ceremonies recently. Mr. Pybus (left) and Mr. Anderson congratulate Sam Pillay, a new Australian from India.*

#### **Human rights** (Continued from P. 2)

great, and it comes mainly from people whose indignation is kindled by what must seem like our official silence and inactivity. Regarding Chile, a country about which I have received a lot of mail recently, Canada has been particularly active with regard to the human rights situation in that country and will continue to be so as long as evidence of violations persists. In addition to speaking and voting on these issues in international forums, we have spoken directly to Chilean representatives. As a concrete indication of the concern of Canada for the human rights violations taking place in Chile, we have authorized 5,360 Chilean refugees to find permanent homes here. Ninety-two former Chilean political prisoners and approximately 200 of their dependents have achieved similar status. Canada's record with regard to promoting the re-growth of human rights in Chile is second to no other nation's and Chilean officials are well aware of this.

We have a responsibility, however, to exercise delicate judgment as to when to "go public" and when to continue

with "quiet diplomacy". The phrase "quiet diplomacy" may seem to some a euphemism for a lack of responsiveness. This simply is not the case. In the proper circumstances, it can accomplish far more in the long run than public appeals that may satisfy an immediate pent-up frustration but cut off prospects for a satisfactory resolution of conflicting views. An illustration of this type of approach is our attitude towards Indonesia. During a visit to Indonesia last year, my predecessor, Mr. MacEachen, took the opportunity of a meeting with Foreign Minister Malik to raise the problem of political prisoners and to express the concern with which a number of Canadians view this issue. Mr. MacEachen noted that some of the detainees have already been released by the Indonesian Government, and expressed the hope that this trend would continue. We have been encouraged that this trend has, in fact, continued since that time.

#### **Importance of ultimate goals**

Whether a given course of action will be effective depends, as well, on our

ultimate goals. If we seek to rectify isolated abuses or aberrations in a state's normal performance in the human rights field, the task is generally manageable; but if we seek to alter a firm policy or the fundamental basis of another state's society, the issue is not likely to be resolved, at least easily or quickly. South Africa, for example, has resolutely refused to yield on the *apartheid* question, which is not simply one of that state's peripheral customs but an integral part of its social composition.

The appropriateness of Canadian action is related to our record, principles and traditions. We should not wish to condemn hastily, before the facts are in or before we can reach reasonably firm conclusions after an examination of the available evidence. Similarly, it would not be appropriate to expect other countries to do more than we are prepared to do at home.

The Canadian record, both at home and in international bodies like the Commission on Human Rights, is excellent, and we have a right to be proud of the conditions we enjoy in this country. At the same time, we are not perfect, and we must be vigorous in our efforts to secure the highest possible standards.

As Christians, we must never lose sight of human rights at any time, and must always be willing to convey our concerns to others. The Canadian Government has a right and duty to act that we expect other states to respect, just as we respect their right to approach us on similar issues. At the same time, we have to be prudent. For our actions to be meaningful, they must reflect the genuine concerns of Canadians. This, in turn, means that we cannot be involved to the same degree in every single human rights problem, because there is a danger that a Canadian action would eventually be interpreted as simply yet another empty moral gesture, which other countries could then dismiss.

Seriousness is an obvious consideration. While we cannot ignore any discernible pattern of violations of human rights anywhere in the world, our case will be stronger where the offence is greater and if the weight of Canadian and of world opinion is behind our representation. Thus the determination whether Canadian action is appropriate depends upon a careful assessment of