

Such programs should also be practical and primarily technical in nature, careful to avoid advocacy, propaganda and the most sensitive or controversial areas of democratic development. Such matters are for the people of any country to debate and settle themselves. International assistance can be helpful in developing the means to achieve agreed-upon goals. We would offer the following as examples of activities that have already occurred in embryo and could be developed further.

- Strengthening Canada's capacity and effectiveness as an observer in elections abroad and developing programs of technical assistance in building of electoral institutions and procedures. (56:26-27)
- Providing technical and financial assistance in the strengthening of workers' organizations. This work could build on earlier projects such as those undertaken by the Canadian Labour Congress with CIDA support to help set up trade union research institutes in Belize and Jamaica.
- Encouraging partnership between human rights research and advisory bodies in Canada and their counterparts abroad through programs of exchange and joint research.
- Establishing a Latin America-Canada co-operative research program in legislative institutions. In time this might lead to the building of a Latin American legislative research and technical assistance network. (25:41-67)

Other promising areas include the organization of human rights bodies such as offices of ombudsmen, federalism, the strengthening of judicial institutions, the rule of law, local government, and the media. The government and the Parliament of Canada should consider developing direct programs of their own. For example, a program in electoral and representative institutions could be created in CIDA's Institutional Co-operation and Development Services Division, and the Parliamentary Co-operation program run by the Parliamentary Relations Secretariat could be expanded. In general, however, we incline to the view that projects should be developed and managed by non-governmental organizations in co-operation with counterpart organizations in partner countries.

Canada has not previously been particularly active in international efforts to encourage human rights development. It can and should be for a number of compelling and practical reasons. Canada has the ability and, we believe, the credibility to co-operate in this area. Canada's approach to international relations emphasizes co-operation with others rather than imposition of its own values and institutions. Programs to encourage human rights through democratic development would also be a means of opening political channels with other countries. They would serve as a two-way street, allowing Canadians to express their own values and share their experience while learning of the needs and aspirations of others and being reminded of the incompleteness and vulnerability of Canada's own democracy. To these reasons we would add another: such programs could serve as a unifying force in Canadian foreign policy, expressing the Canadian commitment to human rights in a non-ideological and non-partisan manner. To this end, we recommend that the government consider establishing an International Institute of Human Rights and Democratic Development with carefully prepared guidelines for supporting activities by non-governmental organizations. To ensure that the Institute is sensitive to the varying national perspectives on democratic development, particularly in the Third World, we recommend that its board of directors include international representation, on the model of the International Development Research Centre. Funding for the Institute should be provided as a small fraction of official development assistance funds.