

It goes without saying that the individual governments must themselves decide what observances will be most appropriate for them during the international year, and how those measures are to be carried out. This is fairly obvious and it seems to us that there can be no gainsaying the point. On the other hand, Mr. Chairman, among the many suggestions that have been put forward there are some that appear to us to be more apposite than others, partly because they are specific and pragmatic, and partly because they go to the question of financing; and it is with some of these that I would now like to deal as being of particular interest to the Government of Canada. I arrange these points in no particular hierarchy of importance. We simply suggest them, at this time, for what they are worth.

First, we would agree that the conference and the related programmes ought to examine and evaluate United Nations objectives, technique and procedures in the human rights area. Assessment and recommendations for the future are the heart of the matter. But the emphasis here, in our judgment, ought to be more on procedures than on standards, for the no more complicated reason than that we have the former (by and large) but lack the latter; and that time and energy concentrated in this particular way on the further elucidation of standards may be misplaced. It can hardly be said to be a matter of priority. We would think moreover that the conference and the programmes should not become bogged down in attempting a dreary catalogue of facts about human rights in each and every country. This is an impossible and often counter productive task. And it can have, as we all know, a very high nuisance value indeed.

Secondly, the conference might well think it worthwhile to consider afresh the relationship that ought to obtain between the Universal Declaration, the two proposed covenants, and the interlocking declarations that are in existence already, all with a view to reviewing the unity, the orientation and the momentum of the total United Nations programme. This is a matter of principle rather than of fact gathering, and it would involve an appraisal of the broad course which the United Nations has charted for itself in this particular area of activity. A related inquiry might pertain to the possibility of coordinating all major human rights activities within the United Nations system itself. What one has in mind here--and we raise this only for purposes of discussion--is the feasibility of harmonizing the policies and actions of the various organs and agencies that deal with human rights on the United Nations level, and of guiding them towards common ends.

Thirdly, we would like to see the conference and the programmes produce the greatest possible impact on the public at large, while at the same time laying the basis for sound and solid advances of a more or less permanent nature. In this regard, the immensely important educational role that the United