

Internationally, it was his government that first sought and gained the election of Canada to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, where we were ably represented by Margaret Aitken for one three-year term in the early 1960's. This was the first time Canada had served on the Commission and the only time until 1976. Under Mr. Clark's government, human rights found a new and spirited champion in Flora MacDonald, who as Secretary of State for External Affairs gave these issues the highest priority. Her efforts on behalf of the refugees from Indo-China added a new and strong note of compassion to Canadian foreign policy. So I think we address human rights on the international scene with good credentials, with a good track-record, and with true respect for the inherent rights of the individual and the rule of law.

The Government will be looking for more effective ways of using Canadian influence to encourage all states to live up to their international obligations on the protection of human rights. I am sure that many of you here today will wish to participate in the consultations on the Green Paper, and I assure you that the Government will welcome your views on promoting human rights as an established and important element in our foreign relations. I should be very surprised if Canadians cannot come up with new thoughts and new inspiration.

One of the most significant developments of the past year in the international human rights field has been the adoption by the U.N. General Assembly of the Convention Against Torture. Canada was active in its drafting, and you may recall that in his address to the General Assembly, Mr. Clark made a strong plea for its adoption. It represents an international consensus to take action against torture, and steps are now being taken to permit Canada to sign in the near future. I should add that the Government is making a further contribution of \$50,000 to the U.N. Voluntary Fund for the Victims of Torture, in addition to Canada's continuing annual support for that Fund. This Fund is supporting the psychological and physical rehabilitation of torture victims at several international centres, including one in Toronto.