

We were impressed by the growth in public support for a human rights dimension to Canadian foreign policy, a trend that is likely to persist. We see this evolution in public attitudes as part of a worldwide recognition that human rights are now a concern of the world community, symbolized most concretely by acceptance of the Helsinki Final Act at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe in 1975. For Canadians an additional impetus has been the entrenchment in the Constitution of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

In discussions with witnesses and panelists, differences of opinion emerged over how best to promote respect for human rights in other countries. On South Africa there was wide support for a range of sanctions extending as far as breaking diplomatic relations and all trade and cultural contacts. Most advocates of sanctions directed at South Africa shared Professor Linda Freeman's opinion that "the best policy...is slow, co-ordinated pressure by the West, step-by-step pressure...of course, not on our own, but moving forward, not marking time". (24:14) A few witnesses expressed particular concern about the record of the Soviet Union on human rights, including the denial to Soviet Jews of the right to emigrate and the imprisonment of peace activists. More generally, a large number of witnesses wanted to see Canadian trade, investment and aid denied to countries that abuse the human rights of their citizens. In the words of Edward Ratushny of the University of Ottawa Law School, "I do not see how we can separate the conditional performance of recipient countries [in the matter of human rights] from their right to receive foreign aid." (25:40) A few witnesses placed greater emphasis on persuasion, noting that abuses of human rights may be exacerbated by poverty; moreover, national pride in the face of foreign criticism might cause a counter-reaction and actually have effects opposite to those intended. As John Holmes warned,

You cannot simply order countries to behave. ...You have to cajole, persuade, do all sorts of things and quite often you have to try to save their faces. (25:45)

We were especially impressed by the number of witnesses expressing the heartfelt belief that Canada should act generously abroad to attack poverty and underdevelopment. The Saskatchewan Council for International Co-operation told us that "In...an interdependent world it is unrealistic to think Canada can be an oasis of prosperity in the impoverished world." (40:22-23)

We received a similar message in Halifax from the Interchurch Committee for World Development Education:

Canada has had some success in mediation, negotiation and peacekeeping ventures. As a result, we have been able to approach other countries, in particular developing countries, with greater credibility. While not completely outside the East-West power breakdown, Canadians have promoted a North-South view of development and international relations. We should continue along this approach while we seek to help less fortunate people develop with pride in their own culture, human dignity in their internal politics and control over their own resources and economic development. (33:35)

Not surprisingly, the preferred area for this kind of activity was the broad field of development assistance. Many witnesses, moved by the deprivation and suffering of people in other countries and grateful for the relative prosperity and well-being of Canadians, were ready to contribute from this base to international efforts to help others.

Members of the Fort Garry United Church Sunday School in Winnipeg showed their concern with a presentation involving 15 young people and their teacher. Said Tracy Kozar,