

It is normal that our external relations should reflect the remarkable growth in the respect for human rights which has been seen in Canada in recent years. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms which now forms part of the Canadian Constitution serves as the cap-stone of a complex and comprehensive structure of federal and provincial legislation and administrative processes, all designed to protect the individual from injustice and discrimination, and to enhance the rights of groups who may be at a disadvantage. In this last vein there have been solid efforts made on all fronts to improve the lot of our native population, the handicapped, women, children, and others whose rights may be particularly vulnerable.

It is natural that we should wish to project these efforts abroad, but we must not think that this is a one-way street. Many concepts that we considered part of our heritage have been given clearer definition and added force from being tested in the international arena, and have returned to be incorporated into new Canadian legislation, or to be used as general guidance by our courts. Consequently, in this and in many other ways, the continued efforts of Canada to protect and promote human rights everywhere will be in our own Canadian interest.