

individual Canadians to put forward their views and concerns as witnesses before the committee. They created public interest in many of the major issues of the day, and they appeared to have an impact on government policy.

The committee, however, held only two inquiries in 1974, one in each of 1975, 1976 and 1977, and none in 1978. This inactivity is to be regretted and is something that will be changed. One of the first jobs that will be given to the committee is the over-all review of our foreign policy in the light of the current world situation. We shall be encouraging the committee to involve as many Canadians as possible in that work.

I have said that I cannot prejudge the outcome of the committee's deliberations. Another thing I cannot do is avoid taking decisions until it has reported and the government has had an opportunity to study its findings. The world will not stop even for the Parliament of Canada. In the interval, of course, I shall be having discussions with a wide variety of people from all walks of life. My officials will be providing me with assessments of Canada's interests in the almost endless variety of issues that arise in the daily work of my portfolio. Life must go on, and in the process I shall also be preparing myself and my colleagues for the over-all review and the decisions that it will necessitate.

But as I have said, decisions must be taken, work must go on. I think it's only proper therefore, if I spend a very few moments outlining some of the approaches I shall be taking to this work, and some of the new emphasis I intend to give to the exercise of my responsibilities in this portfolio.

There are three general areas I want to mention here. First, I intend to ensure that Canada's foreign policy lays even greater emphasis than it has in the past on human rights issues. I firmly believe that the way we treat our brothers and sisters is the measuring stick of civilization. There is no shortage either in Canada or in the international community of pious statements of human and individual rights. There is also no shortage of examples of their flagrant violation.

It will be no innovation for Canada to take a strong stand against such flagrant violations of human rights as those inherent in the policy of apartheid practised in South Africa, though we shall be no less forthcoming in our condemnation of them. In addition, however, I intend to use my office to make direct representations to governments in individual cases of denial of rights. I have already done so in more than one instance. The most recent was the case of Ida Nudel whose attempts to emigrate from the Soviet Union have led to her being exiled to Siberia.

While, much as I would like to, I cannot intervene in every case of this kind that comes to my attention, I chose to make representations on behalf of Ida Nudel on humanitarian grounds: her health is deteriorating rapidly and the conditions of her detention in Siberia are particularly cruel; she is the suffering victim of a punishment that far outstrips her "crime".

The second area is that of public participation in foreign policy. I am deeply con