

C. Accountability

Along with better access to information in general about government plans and activities in the human rights realm, witnesses and parliamentarians have stressed the need for augmented accountability, including some form of regular review by our Sub-Committee of how human rights policies are being implemented in the bureaucratic and international arenas. Again, this widely held opinion was related to each of the subject areas mandated for study.

Only with dependable and timely knowledge can Members of Parliament and the Canadian public participate significantly, in cooperation with government, in the promotion of international human rights. In our hearings, there has been almost uniform support for the concept of regularized reviews of the implementation of human rights principles in all elements of our external affairs. The form, frequency and scale of such review processes are questions calling for examination through the medium of our Sub-Committee's proceedings, and we plan to examine these matters with care.

6. OUR PLAN OF ACTION

Parliamentarians have long been among the leaders in envisioning innovative ways for Canada to promote human rights internationally. Building on that tradition of leadership, we wish to explore ways in which certain foreign policy instruments, namely development aid, trade and financial assistance, might be utilized more fully and consistently in the pursuit of human rights. The Sub-Committee on International Human Rights intends to pursue both a monitoring and a pro-active role to ensure that Canada remains a leader in the enhancement of human rights in the world.

This Sub-Committee plans to invite witnesses from non-governmental organizations (including organizations representing Canadians from refugee-producing nations), university faculties and government departments during the latter half of 1990. A series of hearing clusters, each focused on particular topics outlined above, will be undertaken, commencing with an opportunity for the Ministers responsible for the relevant areas to inform the Sub-Committee as to their current policy positions. We shall encourage interested parties to forward submissions to the Sub-Committee, including suggestions as to our process as well as with regard to our study mandate. These contributions will help us to take new approaches to human rights problems that all of us are striving to understand, and to arrive at some ethical, realistic and, we hope, innovative recommendations.