

Canada has objectives which we must pursue in support of peaceful change and dialogue. They are legitimate and reasonable objectives. We intend to pursue them. Up to now we have been able, through our Embassy, to carry out our programs in South Africa. That is why the Embassy is there. If the implementation of the various measures announced this past week by Pretoria prevents us from accomplishing our goals, we will have to consider again whether our presence is justified.

The struggle in South Africa has entered a new stage, more dangerous, more frightening. The Eminent Persons Group warned of massive bloodshed and, last week, the South African Government pushed the region closer to that nightmare. As new rules repress opponents of apartheid within South Africa, those of us outside must become more effective and imaginative in our initiatives. The response of Canada is particularly important, because of the practical leadership we have exercised since the Nassau Conference. This is not a time for Canada to withdraw. Quite the contrary. Our position is known and respected. What we need, what I need from this House and other Canadians, are practical suggestions and initiatives we can take - little steps and large ones - to make progress against apartheid. An interesting suggestion was made yesterday regarding the Security Council of the United Nations, and we are examining that proposal. We are increasing our help to the victims of apartheid; considering how we respond specifically to the Draconian new measures of last week; and are discussing with our allies of the Commonwealth, the Summit and elsewhere, what new actions nations might take together. Our Ambassador to South Africa has been back in Canada for a meeting of Africa Heads of Post, and will be staying here a little longer for consultation. As there are new developments, I will report them to the House.

This Parliament has shown an active and nonpartisan interest in the fight against apartheid. The Prime Minister and I accept and exercise the Government's responsibility to lead on this issue, but naturally we would continue to be interested in practical suggestions from other Members and parties of the House of Commons.