

results of that consideration by the cabinet. I can say that weighing the advantages and disadvantages, however carefully, does not produce an automatic result. This is apparent from the divergence of views expressed within the House of Commons Sub-Committee on Canada's relations with Latin America and the Caribbean, and among the public. Within the cabinet we are examining the membership question with an open mind, but a decision to join the OAS would have to be based on a firm conclusion that it would have decisive advantages for our political relations with Latin American states and for the promotion of Canadian interests in the region.

Another important factor in our relations with the countries of Latin America -- as with all countries -- is the question of human rights. The enhancement of respect for human rights is a fundamental element in our foreign policy, and Canada has a respected place among the countries of the Americas championing common ideals and demonstrating how these can be put into practice. The voice of Canada should -- and will -- be heard alongside Latin American voices seeking to advance the cause of human rights in this hemisphere.

We have not hesitated to condemn abuses of human rights wherever they occur. We have done so by quiet but persistent pressure through diplomatic channels and by speaking out when it has been useful. In all cases we must chose the instrument that will have the maximum real impact. This can be achieved to a certain extent through more intense political relations with