

The terms of reference of the larger study have been published, and I have tabled them today. In the same spirit we are concerned by what appear to be significant breaches of the mandatory embargo on arms export, which members of the United Nations are obliged to respect. As individual nations, and as a committee, we will be seeking hard evidence and considering specific actions to ensure that the mandatory arms embargo is enforced.

The most effective new weapon enlisted in defence of apartheid is the deliberate new emphasis on censorship within South Africa, and propaganda at home and internationally. A simple summary of major press legislation in South Africa - which sets out what journalists may not write about - that summary alone runs to over 300 pages. On top of that is the weight of other threats and regulations which limit freedoms we Canadians take for granted - the freedom to meet, to publish, to speak without fear, the right to protection against detention without trial. No one knows how many people are detained, without charge, in South Africa; no one who is detained knows when he or she might be freed, or detained again. Even little children are locked away.

And, as the curtain comes down within South Africa, the campaign intensifies outside, to portray as reform proposed institutions in which no black leader will participate; to caricature all opponents of apartheid as communists or killers; to exploit prejudice. I have no doubt that campaign of censorship and propaganda is carefully organized and targetted, and the Commonwealth will become much more involved in exposing and countering propaganda and censorship.

That holds its own risk. When it comes to rights, no Commonwealth country is blameless, some less than others. During the meeting, and in other conversations, I warned that the accusation of a double standard would almost certainly be made against the Commonwealth, and that the best way to deal with it is by improvement in our own countries. But most in this House, and most in the world, would agree that inequity or abuse in other countries does not excuse an apartheid regime which writes racism into law.