

F for a More Humane World

A vital and natural expression of Canadian values, the international promotion of human rights has been an integral part of Canadian foreign policy for many years. South Africa's abhorrent system of *apartheid*, and Canada's staunch opposition to it, is a case in point.

Apartheid is a system of institutionalized racism that is reflected in every aspect of South African life — social, political, legal and economic. In South Africa, a minority of the population continues to pretend to operate a democratic political system while denying political rights to the overwhelming majority of the population. This double standard, based entirely on race, is one that most South Africans and the world community find totally repugnant.

While the system of *apartheid* remains intact, the government of South Africa accepts that it can never successfully justify it — either to South Africans or to the rest of the world. Instead it pretends that *apartheid* no longer exists. Yet the black majority remains bereft of political rights; large numbers of South Africans are still being denied citizenship in their own land; controls are still placed on where people can live; and gross social and economic inequities remain *apartheid's* enduring legacy. Racism continues to be the cornerstone of South African society.

During the 1980s the black majority of South Africa has shown that it is prepared to pay the price to claim its human rights. The Government of South Africa has



responded to the growing unrest which arises from systematic racial discrimination with harsh repression. The price in blood and suffering has been high: since 1984 thousands have been killed, and tens of thousands have been detained without trial.

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Canada, with the support of all its major political parties and the overwhelming majority of its people, has opposed *apartheid* in no uncertain terms. Joe Clark, Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, has declared that "Canadians are offended by

and abhor the practice of institutionalized racism by a society that claims to share our values."

Canada has played a leading role in international efforts to bring an end to *apartheid*. Through international forums such as the United Nations, the Commonwealth and la Francophonie, Canada has worked to ensure that concerted international pressure is maintained on South Africa to dismantle *apartheid*, to enter into negotiations with black leaders towards the establishment of non-racial, representative government, and to allow Namibia its rightful independence.

To impress upon the South African government the urgency of real progress, Canada has imposed a series of strong measures unilaterally and in concert with the Commonwealth and the United Nations. Canada has adopted all the economic and

Breaching human rights: arrest and detention without charge in South Africa.

other sanctions agreed to by the Commonwealth. For example, Canada has banned new bank loans and new investment in South Africa; vetoed the import of South African agricultural products, uranium, coal, iron and steel; and terminated all programs designed to help firms exporting to South Africa or Namibia.

Canada also helps the victims and opponents of *apartheid* and supports South Africa's neighbours. Last year, for instance, Canada provided over \$5 million for education, community development and legal and humanitarian assistance to the victims of *apartheid*. These funds will be considerably increased