

matters. Section 12 makes it a discriminatory practice to make public any symbol, notice, sign or other representation implying discrimination, as defined elsewhere in the Act, or inciting it.

Canada has thus established domestically a legislative and institutional framework to enable fulfillment of the obligations it has assumed internationally. In so doing, Canada has affirmed the view, not clearly expressed in several international instruments, that discrimination based on age is unwarranted and unacceptable.

C) Overview and Discussion

A full review of international instruments and Canadian legislation protective, directly or indirectly, of human rights would be vastly more extensive than the selective summary provided above. It would include, among other matters, an examination of provincial human rights legislation. A number of provinces proscribe discrimination on the basis of age while incorporating an upper limit of 65 years within their definitions of age, thus proscribing age discrimination in relation to the aging (up to 65) but not to the elderly. A full review would also include an examination of a vast range of substantive legislation, at both the federal and provincial levels, which directly or indirectly bears on the realization of human rights in Canada.

The purpose of the present overview is not, however, to examine critically and in detail international human rights instruments and Canada's human rights legislation. It is rather to portray Canada's major acknowledged human rights commitments, before examining some of the realities experienced by Canada's aging and elderly. In advance of this examination, however, the Committee would like to express some observations and concerns relating to the basic components of the human rights framework just surveyed.

The *Universal Declaration* and *Covenants* are of paramount importance to human rights not only because of the practical significance of the force of world opinion they help bring to bear on violators, but because they give authoritative expression to a global consensus about what our human rights are. Indeed, their educative significance is potentially of greater importance than their immediate practical significance.

The *Declaration* and *Covenants* imply a proscription of discrimination on grounds of age, if age is taken to be one of the unspecified "other