

account legitimate, honest differences of perception of human rights priorities as between Western democracies and some other members of the United Nations. A starving man, naturally, may be more interested in obtaining food than the right to vote. On the other hand, we all know that some countries put forward a variety of transparent pretexts to dodge the obligations they profess to honour. There are distinctions to be made here -- some easy ones, and some hard ones -- but we must not allow such distinctions to become further pretexts for general inaction.

Before closing, let me review very briefly some of our recent multilateral activities in promotion of human rights:

- Last July Canada signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, after having obtained the prompt accord of all the provinces. Prior to ratification, consultations will be necessary to ensure that both levels of government are prepared to undertake the obligations imposed by this new Convention.

- In the U.N. Commission of Human Rights, Canada is engaged in an effort to work out agreements dealing with torture and religious intolerance.

- At the Commission's last session, we secured the establishment of a group of experts to investigate "disappearances" of persons. We also won a resolution calling for an assessment of mass exoduses of population and the denial of human rights, and yet another resolution affirming the right and responsibility of individuals to promote human rights within their own country.

- Finally, a Canadian is now chairing the group established to propose a human rights role for the Commonwealth.

So much for recent activities. What of the future? We hope to ensure that international law is put to the service of man -- of men and women and children -- everywhere in the