

Our central finding and source of apprehension is that there appears to be a serious **lack of coherence and consistency** between many of Canada's aid, trade and financial assistance relationships with other countries, on the one hand, and our human rights commitments on the other. Canada, like most other human rights supporting nations, seems often to be in the position of piously condemning human rights abuses "on Sundays" and then carrying on business as usual—including mutually lucrative business—with human rights abusing countries, during the rest of the week .

This concern raises difficult practical questions. How can human rights ideals be incorporated effectively into all aspects of Canada's external relations, including commercial and financial sectors that customarily have not embraced human rights? Can this strategy be effective? How can it be done without jeopardizing other parts of the delicate fabric of international relations? These practical problems need careful exploration, and we intend to attach priority to them in our future work.

We have also become troubled about the degree that the process of applying human rights considerations in foreign policy is carried on behind closed doors, insulated from review by either Parliament or the public. As our work progresses, we will be exploring ways in which this sub-committee can be a catalyst for **governmental openness** concerning human rights and foreign policy. We shall also be developing recommendations for mechanisms to ensure greater public awareness and governmental **accountability** with regard to the development, commitment to, and implementation of human rights standards in Canada's external affairs.

This Sub-Committee agrees that it is "logical and proper that the standards we promote within Canada should find full expression in Canadian foreign policy."<sup>(1)</sup> We also agree with the government that "this is not a field in which perfect answers or solutions exist."<sup>(2)</sup> The fostering of human rights abroad is, however, vitally important to Canadians and to the rest of the world. Through a review of Canada's foreign policies and relationships, we intend to develop recommendations aimed at implementing more comprehensive practices than those now employed by Canada in the cause of global human rights.

Since World War II, Canada has played the role of a promoter of human rights on the international stage. We have sought to enhance the efforts of the United Nations and other multilateral organizations in monitoring and encouraging human rights observance. In political exchanges, Canada has been one of the less timid actors in naming countries that violate international norms. We applaud the steps Canada has taken to coherently integrate human rights factors into its official development assistance (ODA) programs, with respect to the amounts, channels and purposes of aid to some countries. More