

*External Aid*

two aspects of foreign policy, it is not true to say that the consideration of human rights was not a part, if only in an unspoken or unidentified way, of basic foreign policy.

If we were to examine the trading patterns and aid patterns of Canada since World War II, we would notice a wide variation with regard to our response, depending upon our perception of these countries to be countries that would be worthy of funds or economic assistance. Worthy can be defined from many points of view. It can be defined in terms of a serious intent with respect to the development of their own country. It can be defined in terms of whether they share the same kind of strategic or political interests. It can also be defined in terms of whether we have respect for the way in which a government treats its people.

Recently in the United States and in the American Congress initiatives have been taken with regard to programs of foreign aid as they are directed toward countries where there has been a rapid increase in the serious violation of human rights. I think of the particular and growing concern there has been in a number of Latin American countries, some of which the hon. member for Montmorency (Mr. Duclos), the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin), and I, had an opportunity to visit a couple of years ago to examine the serious situation with regard to the loss of basic human rights in those countries.

As a result of American initiatives, beginning roughly in 1974, certain kinds of economic assistance have in fact been terminated to countries like Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay. However, we would have to recognize that the major advance with respect to dealing with this problem occurred with the election of the Carter regime in 1976.

Beginning in 1977, the Carter administration's concern with human rights became a major component of United States foreign policy. Indeed, legislation which has imposed limitations on aid, direct and indirect, to certain designated countries, has been passed by Congress and signed by the President.

We see in particular that under the Foreign Aid Appropriations Act which became law on October 3, 1977, security assistance to Argentina, Chile, Ethiopia, Uruguay, Brazil, El Salvador and Guatemala has been prohibited. In addition, action has been taken in international forums to prevent or limit the role of the American government with regard to foreign aid contributions to countries where there is a serious violation of human rights. This, with the establishment in the U.S. State Department of a new office which would deal directly with the question of human rights and humanitarian affairs, headed by an assistant secretary and deputy assistant under secretaries for refugees and migration, as well as for prisoners of war missing in action, has indicated a major thrust on the part of American foreign policy.

In our own country, a similar kind of action has not ensued. Indeed, some members may recall that a little less than a year ago, in response to the new initiative of the Carter administration, I raised questions with the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), and subsequently with the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Jamieson) in committee, about the possibility of looking at our over-all economic patronage, our aid pro-

grams as they operate under CIDA, and our trade package, particularly as expressed under the Export Development Corporation, to see whether actions in these areas were in line with our basic commitment to a fundamental observation of human rights. At that time both the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs gave a clear indication that they felt it would be difficult and publicly unacceptable to relate these two facets of Canadian public policy. Interestingly enough, the hundreds of letters I received from individuals and organizations across the country did not share the stumbling blocks or problems that seemed to exist in the mind of the government.

I think the government has begun to realize that this is a major issue. I wish to quote from a speech which the Secretary of State for External Affairs made in this House on December 19. It is an example of the change of attitude on the part of the minister and his department. He was speaking in a special external affairs debate we had at that time and was turning his attention particularly to South Africa. He said:

It is true, of course, that in other countries of the world there are clear violations of and disregard for human rights. There, too, Canada is expressing its concern, as are all members of this House. South Africa stands alone. It is the only country which as a basic part of its government structure—whether it is constitutional in the legal sense is beside the point—has a declared and unequivocal policy. It stands apart as a country which makes decisions affecting human beings on the basis of race and colour.

The minister went on to say that, as a result of the new concern the Canadian government had with respect to developments in South Africa, steps would be taken to reduce drastically the level of support or promotion of economic activity on the part of the government in South Africa. He announced the closing of a number of consulates, the withdrawal of trade missions, the removal of trade preference, and the general discouragement of economic activity on the part of Canada with South Africa. There can be no misunderstanding on this point. The government made a specific change in its policy with respect to the relationship of human rights and economic activity in the announcement of the minister on December 19.

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In that connection it is significant that today, just before this debate began, a number of well known organizations held a public press conference at which they announced a Canadian campaign to stop bank loans to South Africa. I regard this as an important step in itself, because it signalled very clearly to the Canadian banks that a number of leading organizations will no longer accept the policies and programs followed by them in connection with their economic support for a government which, as the Secretary of State for External Affairs himself said, stands alone in its acceptance of a political structure which judges people and sets them apart on the basis of race.

The organizations which have taken part in this nation-wide campaign to stop bank loans to South Africa include the main Canadian churches, which are grouped together in a task force, the Canadian Labour Congress, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, the National Union of Students, the Canadian University Service Overseas, OXFAM Canada and