

There are, of course, certain limits to the effectiveness of an official complaint or inquiry by one country about the actions of another. That's why it is important to act jointly with other members of the international community when really major violations occur. This is exactly what happened in regard to the Vietnamese boat people, when pressure was brought to bear by so many of the countries represented at the conference in Geneva this summer.

More and more frequently the question is being asked by Canadians if there is not more that the government should do in regard to violations of rights in other countries. More and more the suggestion is being made that we should take these factors into account in determining our aid and trade policy with the countries concerned. There are, of course, strong arguments against such proposals. Our aid programs, for example, are designed to assist the people in the recipient country, not to support the governing regime. To cut our aid may only have the result of further depriving an already oppressed people.

Like so many issues, this is not a simple one. The nature of the programs varies enormously, and it may be that we shall find it impossible to come to any hard and fast rules. But we must ask ourselves the question. Is it right, for example, that we should provide aid in the form of newsprint to a country that does not allow that newsprint to be distributed to a paper whose editorial policy is opposed to the government? It is questions such as this that we shall be dealing with in the review of our foreign and aid policy that I mentioned a few minutes ago.

Whatever the outcome of that review may be, however, you may be assured that as long as this government is in office, Canada will be committed to fostering the cause of human rights with all the energy and strength at our disposal. I trust that in these efforts we shall have the support of the media both at home and abroad.

But I hope that these matters will not be the only ones that you will find worth reporting in the years ahead. It is my intent to reinforce our relations with the United States and we do all we can to increase the ties we have with Latin America and the Caribbean. For example, I would like to see us increase the number of cultural exchanges within the region so that our citizens can learn to appreciate and enjoy each other's cultural heritage. I know that a great