

The growing use of travel restrictions imposed upon South African opponents of apartheid means that we can only maintain contact with them through our Embassy. They cannot come to us; we have to go to them. We can only do that if we're there.

Again, in the world as it is, if we were absent from Pretoria, we would have more difficulty mounting an aid program in Namibia; more difficulty advancing Canadian and Commonwealth interests in South Africa and no ability to demonstrate within South Africa itself our solidarity with anti-apartheid leaders.

There are countless other examples that must be considered in any serious discussion of the future of our Embassy.

Of course, it is valid to ask, as the Member for Windsor Walkerville did yesterday, when would it be appropriate for Canada to withdraw. I don't know the answer to that question. Probably no one does today. But, in all the circumstances, it is the Government's considered view that this is the wrong time for Canada to walk away, or to cut ourselves off.

The question of economic relations is less clear-cut. The South African Government is extremely sensitive to both its economic links with the world, and its growing isolation in the international community. Economic sanctions undoubtedly have an impact, economically and psychologically. That impact is greater when those sanctions are more broadly supported. As I told the House on February 5th, the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers is gathering evidence and recommendations which could result in a wider, tighter, more intense application of sanctions. That work becomes even more urgent now, and I have been in touch with my colleague Commonwealth Ministers to see how we can speed up that program.