

That attitude is in evidence elsewhere. In Asia, in Latin America and in Africa, brave governments and courageous people are embracing democracy because they know that what they have had does not work, that it does not deliver. They are recognizing that systems which suppress societies are systems which self-destruct. That systems which deny prosperity to their people are systems which will always be poor. That systems which deny human rights in the interest of social peace are systems where that peace is only a truce.

The battle for human rights and democracy will never be won if they are seen only as luxuries or as dangers. They must be seen as key components of societies which work, societies which are stable, societies which are prosperous. That realization is growing and it will be a key factor for success in our cause.

What can we do to encourage that attitude and promote those developments abroad?

First, it is essential that we avoid the easy trap of trying to impose our models on those societies. There is no blueprint for democracy, no how-to book for human rights. Democracies and human rights cannot be imposed from abroad anymore than they can be imposed from above. Political systems are homegrown. They must accommodate the traditions and history and dynamics of particular societies. If they do not, they will not work and they will not last.

Second, we must reject a notion of superior accomplishment, a notion that is both arrogant and misplaced. Our accomplishments, which are substantial, have been a product of providence, as much as will, a function of the way we have used the rare prosperity inherent in Canada. And our accomplishments are in so many cases recent and incomplete.

It was not until 1940 that women in every province in Canada could vote in provincial elections. Indians in Canada -- women and men -- did not have the right to vote until Mr. Diefenbaker changed the law in 1960.

And there are many rights still unfulfilled, still incomplete. The blights of poverty, of illiteracy, of violence against women, of prejudice and intolerance, of hatred and propaganda are phenomena that do not stop at the North/South divide. They are uncomfortably present in Canada.

And our own democracy requires development -- constant nurturing, repair and care. The constitutional impasse of this spring is ample evidence of that. So too is the fact that in many ways our institutions have ceased to represent what we as a society have become.