

It will be no innovation for Canada to take a strong stand against such flagrant violations of human rights as those inherent in the policy of apartheid practised in South Africa, though we shall be no less forthcoming in our condemnation of them. In addition, however, I intend to use my office to make direct representations to governments in individual cases of denial of rights. It is no secret that I have already done so in more than one instance. The most recent was the case of Ida Nudel whose attempts to emigrate from the Soviet Union have led to her being exiled to Siberia.

While, much as I would like to, I cannot intervene in every case of this kind that comes to my attention, I chose to make representations on behalf of Ida Nudel on humanitarian grounds: her health is deteriorating rapidly and the conditions of her detention in Siberia are particularly cruel; she is the suffering victim of a punishment that far outstrips her "crime".

The second area is that of public participation in foreign policy. I am deeply convinced that the more we can involve individual citizens in all aspects of government policy, the better will be the quality of government we shall have. A few minutes ago I spoke of the increased role we see for one Parliamentary committee. Well that is only one committee and only one aspect of the government's commitment to this policy.

There may be some of you here who are saying to yourselves: "oh sure, I've heard all this before." Well let me give you a concrete example of how we have already put these policy directions into effect.

Very early in my term of office I realized that the refugee situation in South East Asia demanded two different kinds of action. The first was on the political front. It was simply intolerable to the new government - as I am sure it was to the people of Canada - that the government of Viet Nam was pursuing a deliberate policy to expel hundreds of thousands of its own citizens. You will remember that for years - all through their war with the United States - Canada kept up good relations with the Government in Hanoi. We did not take sides in that conflict. Our moderate position was well recognized and appreciated by Hanoi.

But in light of the policy of violation of human rights that has been recently followed by Viet Nam we have cut off our aid programs to that country. I personally have spoken to representatives of that government in Ottawa and abroad emphasizing that the goodwill between our peoples is seriously jeopardized by their actions. At the Geneva conference on the refugee situation I called on all other governments to exert whatever pressure they could to deter the Vietnamese from their inhumane course. And although I wouldn't for a moment claim all the credit, Canada's representations along with those of several other countries, resulted in at least a temporary change in Viet Nam's policies. The flow of boat people was stopped.