

#### 4. Business and Social Trends of the 90's

In 1981 any predictions made of the events to unfold in the next 10 years would doubtless have been wrong. This 10 year period was a time of great upheaval, including the democratization of many eastern block countries, the end of the cold war and the elimination of the Communist party in the USSR, the tearing down of the Berlin Wall and re-unification of Germany, the Gulf War, and changing world positions towards Iran and Iraq.

The last decade saw, too, the growth and technical sophistication of international terrorism, including bombings and the kidnapping of Western hostages. The criminal element also became increasingly sophisticated in the smuggling of cocaine and other illicit drugs, associated also with elaborate international money laundering schemes.

Many of these developments were facilitated by the use of stolen or forged passports, including Canadian ones, and a significant impact on the PPO can be expected with increased focus on these issues. Of primary concern here, however, is to realize that the 90's are also unpredictable, and one can be certain that many surprises and upheavals can be expected. It is only possible here to attempt to look at areas where some reasonable predictions can be made and to try to understand the potential impact of these types of influences on the Passport Office.

##### 4.1 Increased Travel for Trade and Tourism.

One clear trend in the world today is the rapid evolution of large trading blocks and free-trade zones, such as the European Common Market, North America (Canada, USA, and Mexico), and possibly the Pacific Rim as well as the new free market Eastern Block. Members of these trading blocks trade with each other and with other blocks, usually under the growing influence of GATT rules. In addition, many large corporations are becoming "internationalized", with plants and offices in strategic locations around the world to minimize manufacturing costs and be close to key markets.