

principles and guidelines. Agreement on intentions was perhaps only a small step, but it was a step forward. At Belgrade two years later, we came together to see whether progress had been made in implementing the intentions embodied in the provisions of the Final Act and to discuss how our performance could be improved where necessary. Throughout the meeting, Canada worked together with other Western participants towards these ends on the basis of a shared view of the underlying humanitarian values in the Final Act that we regard with such importance.

It should come as no surprise that the review of implementation revealed that there is a long way to go before it can be said that all participating states are fully living up to the provisions of the Final Act. Two years is obviously too short a period to achieve full implementation of so detailed a document as the Helsinki Final Act. The very nature of that document argues for a patient approach, especially as there are signs that the Final Act may already have been having some effect across the whole range of activities that it covers — political, military, economic, scientific and humanitarian co-operation. This does not reduce our feeling of disappointment with the outcome of the Belgrade meeting. We should like to have seen something in the areas of special interest to us emerge from the meeting, since it is precisely the humanitarian areas of concern that we think must be dealt with if *détente* is to take firmer root and to flourish. The fact that we were unable to take any new steps forward in Belgrade must give us all pause to reflect. At the same time, we realize that it would not make much sense to show excessive impatience with a multilateral process that is still in its early stages, particularly when it has already shown that, by exposing the performance of all participating states to periodic scrutiny, it can be an incentive to progress, however gradual.

Belgrade was only the first occasion for such scrutiny, and it was important for the precedents it was establishing. While it cannot be said that a true East-West dialogue took place, discussion of virtually the whole range of issues affecting East-West relations was possible and no governments can be in doubt where the gaps in implementation of the Final Act lie. Earlier expectations that the discussion of human rights at Belgrade would be a delicate exercise were confirmed by what happened at the meeting. At times the atmosphere was charged, but no breakdown occurred and Canada, together with others, was able, in a forthright and non-confrontational way, to voice its concern about such matters as the treatment of persons in some countries who have sought to do what the Final Act might make possible: to engage their governments in a dialogue about implementation of the CSCE undertakings. If some governments persist in denying the desirability of such