

I cannot say that my government was overly sanguine when the results were in from our initial review of implementation at this Madrid meeting. But as an act of faith, if you will, and appreciating the importance of revitalizing *détente*, we were prepared to proceed, to try to reach agreements which would develop further the Helsinki Final Act and contribute to the strengthening of security and co-operation in Europe.

Agreement sought

Fifteen months of the most difficult, arduous negotiations are now behind us. We have worked assiduously with others to achieve a precisely defined mandate for a conference on disarmament in Europe. We have tried to reach agreement on provisions which would afford protection for Helsinki monitors, and for the basic right of citizens of our respective countries to know and act upon their rights. As is well known, my delegation has sought the agreement of others to hold an experts meeting which might bring us closer together in our understanding of human rights and fundamental freedoms and thus help to remove a serious impediment to better relations between East and West.

After 15 months, we can say that we have made some very modest advances. Agreement on the important issues has eluded us, although the draft final document which has been tabled by eight participating states might yet serve as a basis for negotiating the balanced and constructive results we must have. But now events have come to pass which point up how woefully inadequate our efforts have been and suggest that when we again turn to the business of negotiation, stronger provisions, particularly on human rights, will be required.

Polish situation

A new situation has arisen, which is clearly eroding the prospects for the strengthening of security and co-operation in Europe. The imposition of martial law in Poland on December 13, 1981, and the regulations made under it have, as the Prime Minister of my country stated on December 30, further defaced the already battered vision of a European order based on respect for the obligations assumed voluntarily by governments under the Final Act of Helsinki. The situation in Poland calls into particular question the commitment of Polish authorities to the principle governing respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to that of equal rights and self-determination of peoples. Although, as I said in November 1980, human rights are open to varying interpretations, the Final Act does require agreement on certain concepts and on the inherent dignity of the human person.

As signatories to the Helsinki Final Act we agreed, pursuant to Principle VII, to "respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion". We also agreed to "promote and encourage the effective exercise of civil, political, economic, social, cultural and other rights and freedoms all of which derive from the inherent dignity of the human person and are essential for his free and full development".

Helsinki commitment forgotten

The commitment of the Polish government to fulfil its obligations under Principle VII has clearly been abandoned in the events which have transpired in Poland since December 13, 1981. Thousands of people have been interned, simply for having been active in an organization duly recognized by the Polish courts. They have been
