

On 15 August 1988, Bill C-147, an Act to establish the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, was introduced in the House of Commons. The legislation received royal assent in September 1988. The mandate of the Centre, which will be located in Montreal, is, in the words of the Bill, "to initiate, encourage and support cooperation between Canada and other countries in the promotion, development and strengthening of institutions and programs that give effect to the rights and freedoms enshrined in the *International Bill of Rights*...."³⁰

PARLIAMENTARY COMMENT

Human rights violations in the Soviet Union and the East European countries continued to spark comment in the House of Commons. Several Members of Parliament referred to incongruities between the "promises" of *perestroika* and *glasnost* and the present "realities". On 23 August 1988, NDP Member Bill Blaikie urged Chairman Gorbachev to stretch "new thinking" beyond Soviet borders:

One of the true tests of *glasnost* and *perestroika* will be whether the new winds of freedom are allowed to blow in countries which for too long have been under Soviet domination. It has been suggested that Chairman Gorbachev show good faith by allowing free and open elections at the municipal level throughout Soviet occupied Europe as a first step. We in the NDP urge that this be done.³¹

In the case of Poland, on 1 September 1988, Progressive Conservative Member Andrew Witer called upon External Affairs Minister Clark "to press Polish officials to reinstate Solidarity, and to fulfil their obligation as a signatory of the Helsinki Accord by guaranteeing freedom of expression...."³² The Romanian Government was strongly criticized for abusing its citizens and especially for its decision "to bulldoze 7000 villages, uprooting and scattering the 2.5 million native Hungarians throughout Romania...."³³

³⁰ Canada, The House of Commons, *Bill C-147: An Act to Establish the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development*. Ottawa: September 13, 1988, p. 2. See also: Senate of Canada, Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Proceedings of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs*, Issue No. 34 (27 September 1988), pp. 34 : 17-38; Daniel Drolet, "Montreal, not Ottawa, gets Rights Centre." *Ottawa Citizen*, 16 August 1988, p. A5; Gisèle Côté-Harper and John Courtney, *International Cooperation for the Development of Human Rights and Democratic Institutions (Report to the Right Honourable Joe Clark and the Honourable Monique Landry)*. Ottawa, June 1987, pp. 1-5; and Schmitz and Berry, *supra* note 3, pp. 13-14.

³¹ *Commons Debates*, 23 August 1988, p. 18694. See also: 22 August 1988, pp. 18614-18615; and 27 September 1988, p. 19669.

³² *Commons Debates*, 1 September 1988, p. 19153. See also: 22 August 1988, pp. 18614-18615; 23 August 1988, p.18694; and 27 September 1988, pp. 19669-19670.

³³ *Commons Debates*, 11 August 1988, p. 18196. See also: 19 August 1988, pp. 18574-18575; and 31 August 1988, p. 19114.