

“Criteria for Improving Cultural Co-operation.”

November 7, 1977.

... According to Canada's analysis of the impediments to the implementation of the cultural provisions of the Final Act, these obstacles are of three orders. First, access to cultural achievements and contacts between people active in cultural fields are too restricted in some of the participating states. As our colleague from Belgium pointed out in his comments on practices in the Soviet Union, attempts to force cultural creation to conform to ideologically-inspired standards hampers its development. It leads to clandestine activities on the part of creative people, who must hide their works when they do not conform with official taste. It means that these people do not have sufficient access to contemporary trends and innovations and that they cannot indulge freely in the natural process of "cross-fertilization" with their contemporaries both at home and abroad. It means that the public at home and abroad does not have free access to their works and that artists and writers are deprived of the critical opinion so essential to the creative process. As our colleague from Poland said, Shakespeare is not British but international. What he meant, of course, is that the notion of cultural patrimony has an international dimension and, in situations such as I have just described, the international community is prevented access to a patrimony it has the right to claim.

Mr. Chairman, when you run down the list of measures in the sections of the Final Act relating to access and contacts, the meaning of what I have said becomes clear in terms of co-operation between the participating states. Authors in some countries are still denied international contacts and communications with publishing houses. Their works are passed furtively from hand to hand at home in the form of *samizdat* and have to be smuggled abroad. These people are discriminated against, harassed and even exiled. How can publishing houses take into account the demands of other states in determining the size of editions when they cannot contact these authors? How can we encourage our firms to conclude agreements leading to a greater increase in the number and diversity of works by authors from other participating states when we can't assure them of contacts with these authors? Is