

# Canada Weekly

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## Freer movement of families proposed at European conference

*The following passages are from a statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mitchell Sharp, to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, Helsinki, on July 4:*

...I now turn to an area in which Canada expressed particular interest at the preparatory talks — that of co-operation in expanding contacts between people and in solving humanitarian problems. Without improvement in human contacts and relations of all kinds, the work that we shall do here and in Geneva will have limited practical effect and little meaning for our peoples. More normal relations and expanded co-operation should involve not only governments and official bodies but should also extend to the level of person-to-person contacts.

We in Canada believe, and we think it reflects the views of humanity as a whole, that members of families should not remain unwillingly separated because they reside in different states and that citizens of different countries should be able freely to marry and join their spouses. While we recognize that specific cases must of necessity be dealt with on a bilateral basis, the enunciation of principles and the adoption of concrete measures on divided families and like problems would, we believe, substantially improve inter-state relations.

Canada attaches the highest importance to this question of freer movement, not only because of the composition of the Canadian population but also because we believe that progress depends more on putting these principles into effect than on repeating accepted norms. This question is, in many ways, the touch-stone of the success of the conference. If we can achieve gradual but meaningful progress in removing barriers to the movement of persons and information, we will be well on the way to achieving our goals — creating the mutual understanding and confidence necessary for any enduring security and co-operation. For these reasons, I shall be asking the

executive secretary to circulate a written submission on this question for consideration at the second stage of the conference.

### Hope for full participation

All of us, I am sure, are already thinking of what may follow a successful conference. On this subject, we in Canada have an open mind. As the negotiations proceed over the next months, we will be able more easily to reach a judgment on whether any follow-up machinery will be justified, and if so, what. If it is eventually decided that such machinery should be created, Canada's chief preoccupation will be to ensure that it will have clear and precise terms of reference, will not duplicate existing institutions and will provide for full participation by Canada and the United States of America as well as by all European states. The security of North America and Europe are interdependent; so are their economic and cultural future, and our common participation in this conference and in any follow-up to it will be essential.

Mr. Chairman, this is an historic moment because it is the first time the foreign ministers of all (or practically all) the states of Europe have assembled in company with Canada and the United States of America to work out ways of furthering their common interests in greater security and wider co-operation. This occasion reflects in a tangible way that interdependence of Europe and North America of which I have spoken and which is such an important fact of international life for Canada in particular.

### New approach

We are in the course of initiating a new kind of negotiating process in