

Co-operation in Europe, the CSCE, embodied in the Final Act of Helsinki in 1975. The CSCE is a multi-faceted process in which there are at present two main parts, the security aspect and the humanitarian dimension. The Final Act recognized the importance of human rights to the Relationship between East, West and the Neutral and Non-aligned states of Europe, plus Canada and the United States.

The negotiation of the humanitarian dimension was difficult in the first instance and, with the decline of détente, has become an ever-larger bone of contention, at the first Follow-up Meeting in Belgrade and again at the second Follow-up Meeting in Madrid from 1980 to 1983. At the Madrid Meeting the subject of implementation in the field of human rights was pursued throughout the three years with full participation by the Canadian delegation. I regret to have to say that the debate did little to reach a solution to the problem of implementation as an irritant of major proportions. In fact, it would be fair to say that during the conference, performance became worse and exculpatory justifications were made by some participating states which will only add to the problem.

In his opening speech on November 11, 1980, the then Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. MacGuigan, proposed that a meeting of experts be held to discuss the problem of human rights within the CSCE context. I should add a word of caution at this point. The expression "meeting of experts" is a term of art within the CSCE system which defines the nature of the meeting rather than the nature of the participants. The meeting, to be held in Ottawa in April, May and June, 1985, will be an inter-governmental meeting and more political than expert. It will undoubtedly lead to a further review of implementation under the Final Act but the Canadian government would also hope that the meeting would start a political process which could lead to more common agreement on human rights than now exists between East and West. If this process can be inaugurated, it will undoubtedly be long and slow.

Before that meeting we shall be consulting widely with Canadians, individually and with non-governmental organizations of all types who may have an interest in the issues. I would hope that you, as persons having a real concern in these matters, might now start considering the matter, and in due course give the Government your thoughts on how the widely different concepts of human rights held in the West and in the East might be steered towards some form of reconciliation. If our aim was merely to attack the East European governments on their shortcomings, as we