

And often, in this circumstance, countries like Canada can have a larger influence. Let me mention two priorities of our policy.

One, obviously, is human rights. Respect for human rights is a cornerstone of Canadian foreign policy. Prime Minister Mulroney and I have raised this question directly with governments around the globe - from Korea, to Central America, to Burundi, to South Africa, to the countries behind the Iron Curtain. Just two weeks ago, at the United Nations, I told Mr. Shevardnadze of Canada's continuing concern about human rights in the Soviet Union. We will never stop pressing the Soviet Union to continue to improve its record, including its treatment of religious and national minorities. We believe we are beginning to make a difference, particularly with regard to travel.

In the first half of 1988, our Embassy in Moscow issued 2034 visas to visitors and 84 to immigrants. In the whole of 1986 there were only 676 visits by private citizens to Canada and 33 immigrants from the Soviet Union. Many of you and your families will already have experienced the benefits of those changes. I can assure you we will press for more.

Family reunification is especially important to us. Out of the 42 specific cases I presented in 1987 to Mr. Shevardnadze, 33 have been resolved, including all 6 from the Ukraine. This year our results have been less successful, so I have asked that he personally review our list. For my part, I will continue to do everything I can to help bring families together.

Our Government has amended our own Immigration Regulations to encourage family reunification, and we continue to devote great effort, at home and abroad to resolving outstanding cases. In our discussions with the Soviet Government, this issue is always prominently raised as a serious and permanent concern of the Canadian Government, and a major factor in bilateral relations.

In many ways, the major battleground for human rights is the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Canada plays a leading role in seeking compliance with the commitments of the Helsinki Final Act.