

EA 8
75541

REF 24



External Affairs
Canada

Affaires extérieures
Canada

Statements and Speeches

No. 75/41

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
AFFAIRES EXTERIEURES
OTTAWA

JAN 22 1976

LIBRARY / BIBLIOTHEQUE

SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN A DIVIDED EUROPE

A Statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, in the House of Commons, on December 2, 1975.

The document I have just tabled, the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (called from the outset by its initials CSCE), was signed at Helsinki on August 1 by the heads of government of the states of Europe and of Canada and the United States. It is intended to establish the basis for the development of future relations between their countries and peoples. It is, therefore, an entirely forward-looking document; it does not look back to the past.

Many Canadians have been erroneously led to believe that, by signing the Final Act of the CSCE, Canada and its allies did something that sanctified the status quo in Europe. It is true that the Soviet Union, for the last 30 years and during the course of the CSCE itself, sought to gain acceptance of the political and geographical situation in Europe. But, throughout the conference, the NATO allies worked to avoid a document that could be pointed to in years to come as a surrogate peace treaty for the Second World War. Not one word of the Final Act justifies the claim that it constitutes recognition of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe or of the postwar *de facto* borders.

Canada entered the negotiations with a specific set of concerns. We wanted to play a part in the conference commensurate with our interests in Europe. In this we succeeded. We wanted to see incorporated in the Final Act measures to assist the freer movement of people and ideas. This goal has been achieved. Worthy of special note in this regard is the strong text on the reunification of families sponsored by Canada.

We sought the development of a confidence-building measure involving advance notification of military manoeuvres and, after difficult negotiations, such a measure was worked out. Finally, Canada had important economic and environmental interests to safeguard and advance; and the appropriate texts in the Final Act meet our requirements in this respect.

The Final Act provides for a meeting at senior-official level in Belgrade in 1977 to review progress in implementation and possibly

to organize a resumed conference. It is the policy of the Government to ensure that, for its part, the Final Act is implemented as soon and as completely as possible. Copies are being sent to all Federal Government departments and agencies concerned, to provincial governments and to non-governmental organizations whose co-operation is essential to the carrying out of Canada's responsibilities under the Final Act. Copies are now available to the public through the outlets of Information Canada.

Domestically, we are examining what changes should be made in our present practices to meet the moral commitments we have accepted. In our bilateral relations we are using the document to provide guidance in communiqués, agreements and treaties. Multilaterally, consideration is already being given to the matter of implementation in two United Nations bodies, the Economic Commission for Europe and UNESCO.