Formal governmental concerns over
Canadian immigration and refugee
policy and legislation span more than
two years of intensive inquiries and re-
ports. This issue of Refuge highlights
issues arising from the two reports: Not
Just Numbers: A Canadian Framework for
Future Immigration, published in Janu-
ary, 1998; and its successor, Building on
a Strong Foundation for the 21st Century:
New Directions for Immigration and Refu-
gee Policy and Legislation, which ap-
peared one year later, in January, 1999.1
These reports followed a year-long in-
vestigation, inaugurated in November,
1996, of a special Legislative Review
Advisory Group to the Minister of Immi-
giration. This Group was charged with
reviewing the whole of Canadian legis-
lation on immigration and protection of
refugees. As it traversed the country for
an initial assessment, the Advisory
Group invited some to deliver oral pres-
tations and other interested parties to
make written submissions, all of which
would be taken into account and di-
gested into its voluminous 172-recom-
mendation report, Not Just Numbers.

The appearance of that much-
awaited report aroused a groundswell
of reaction in early 1998. The outpour-
ing of concern required the Minister of
Immigration, Madame Lucienne
Robillard, to extend her initially
planned highlighting tour to a veritable
second set of inquiries. Groups and in-
terested parties who had been passed
over on the first round insisted on a
hearing while engaging the local and
national print and electronic media to
attend not only to the government’s pro-
posed legislative agenda but to counter-
representations on nearly every topic
raised in the initial report.

These vociferous representations
have resulted in substantive modific-
tions. They attempted to clarify initial
aims of the Advisory Group, e.g., to

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