



# CANADA'S PERIODICAL ON REFUGEES REFUGE

Vol. 18 • No. 1

February 1999

## NOT JUST NUMBERS AND NEW DIRECTIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR CANADIAN REFUGEE POLICY

### Introduction

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Formal governmental concerns over Canadian immigration and refugee policy and legislation span more than two years of intensive inquiries and reports. This issue of *Refuge* highlights issues arising from the two reports: *Not Just Numbers: A Canadian Framework for Future Immigration*, published in January, 1998; and its successor, *Building on a Strong Foundation for the 21st Century: New Directions for Immigration and Refugee Policy and Legislation*, which appeared one year later, in January, 1999.<sup>1</sup> These reports followed a year-long investigation, inaugurated in November, 1996, of a special Legislative Review Advisory Group to the Minister of Immigration. This Group was charged with reviewing the whole of Canadian legislation on immigration and protection of refugees. As it traversed the country for an initial assessment, the Advisory Group invited some to deliver oral presentations and other interested parties to make written submissions, all of which would be taken into account and di-

gested into its voluminous 172-recommendation report, *Not Just Numbers*.

The appearance of that much-awaited report aroused a groundswell of reaction in early 1998. The outpouring 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 interested 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 proposed legislative agenda but to counter-representations on nearly every topic raised in the initial report.

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

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