

we will continue to monitor this situation closely from our Embassy in Damascus.

In my view, one person more than any other -- not just in Canada but in the world -- turned that situation around. Judy Feld Carr, the Chairperson of the National Task Force for Syrian Jews, who has worked tirelessly for the Jews of Syria, has been responsible in no small way for the considerable progress we have witnessed.

It just shows what one individual -- and the 24-hour fax machine -- can accomplish.

But in a world of such rapid change, no one can afford to be complacent. The Jewish people have learned this lesson well over their long and often tragic history.

With all the dramatic developments that we have seen over the past 18 to 24 months, the world is still not a safe and stable place. And, as in most instances of instability, the dangers to the Jewish people are often multiplied several times over.

Anti-Semitism in the republics of the former Soviet Union remains. It may linger beneath the surface and fester, but inevitably it will emerge. It is often linked to economic issues, and this evening I leave for Lisbon to continue the work of an international group co-ordinating economic assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States.

We are developing far-reaching programs based on the integrity of markets and fundamental economic reforms. An empty stomach can be a powerful incentive for intolerance, hatred and, eventually, upheaval. We must ensure that one form of repression is not simply replaced by another.

While this particular planning group is working on economic reform, Canada is also assisting with democratic development bilaterally as well as through organizations such as the Group of Seven (G-7).

There are also other arenas. I have just returned from a meeting of the Organization of American States (OAS) where the principal item for discussion was the deterioration of democracy in Haiti and Peru. Again, economic conditions are a powerful factor in the developments in these countries.

We do not have easy solutions at our disposal, and often our choice of policy instruments, such as the use of economic sanctions, can have an unintended side effect of further aggravating the economic well-being of those people who are the poorest of the population.