

DECEMBER 16, 1987, CASTLEGAR, B.C.

I - Arrival, Brunch and Press Conference

Our brief stop in Castlegar was a highlight of the tour. We were truly overwhelmed by the warmth, humility and sense of peace of those we met and those who made preparations for us, primarily the Doukhobor community. Upon arrival at the airport we were taken on a tour of the local museum and then to the Brilliant Cultural Centre, where we had a brunch with members of the Doukhobor, peace and civic communities. Seven newspapers and two radio stations participated in a 15-minute press conference.

II - Public Forum

The Mayor of Castlegar, Audrey Moore, and John Verigin, Sr., the Honourary Chairman of the Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ and Chairman of the Association of Canadians of Russian Descent, gave words of welcome and the Kootenay Youth Choir performed at this forum attended by 400 persons. Three of five questioners referred to what they termed the contradictions in aspects of the White Paper and Canada's traditional role as a peacemaker, particularly with the acquisition of nuclear-powered submarines. The second questioner opined that Canada did not give enough aid and that the world should focus not only on USSR activities in Afghanistan but also on American involvement in Nicaragua. A questioner pointed out that Canada had doubled its uranium exports since 1981 and asked how we could distinguish between exports destined for military and non-military uses. John Verigin, Sr. asked what Canada could do to reduce the arms trade to underdeveloped nations. The mood of the forum was generally spirited but polite.