

for meetings later this evening or early tomorrow morning with the Secretary of State of the United States. We talked about three areas in which the help of Canada can be offered: one is material, one is moral and political and the third is diplomatic.

Regarding material help, there may well be in Latvia, as there sadly is in Lithuania, a need for some medical supplies. I asked Vice-President Ivans on behalf of the Government and people of Canada to prepare a list of the things that might be needed by the Latvian people, things that we might be in a position to provide and we would then look at ways -- and they could be difficult -- by which those might be delivered to people in need.

I would encourage groups in Canada who might have materials, medical supplies, perhaps other things that would be necessary to consider ways by which those might be gathered and made available for transmission to people in the Baltic States.

In terms of moral and political support, two or three matters were raised by the Vice-President of Latvia. One of them I think must be considered carefully by this House. It holds some risks, including personal risks and including a risk of being counter-productive and that is the possibility of a delegation of parliamentarians of this House going from here to Latvia.

As Secretary of State for External Affairs I would not at the moment make a recommendation on that matter. I think that is simply because this debate comes so quickly after the proposal was made.

There are some positive things that could be gained from a gesture of that kind. But there are dangers, some of them personal in the circumstances, and also the danger that that kind of action by parliamentarians from this House would invite exactly the opposite response from what we seek from the Soviet Union.

The Baltic countries have established a Baltic centre in Stockholm. That is something the Government of Sweden has determined to be acceptable by its interpretation of international law and practice. Certainly, I think it is important and useful for us to consider whether a similar arrangement might be applied here.

There are things that we have to consider doing on the diplomatic front as was discussed in this House in answer to questions from my friend for Winnipeg-Transcona. There has to be consideration here as to what we can do in the context of the United Nations, probably most likely in its committees dealing with human rights. We are already trying to define some ways in