

Indeed, last week in Vienna, Mr. Shevardnadze invited Canada and other CSCE countries to come to Moscow to discuss humanitarian cooperation. That was the latest step in a deliberate campaign to change the Soviet image on human rights. We should not dismiss this proposal out of hand. It requires a careful response from the West, designed to move Moscow from image to action.

But, in deciding whether such a conference would be worthwhile, we will need more information from the Soviets about what the meeting should accomplish. Convening a conference is no substitute for acting on existing obligations. Quite the contrary. A Moscow Conference on Human Rights would be credible only if there is substantive and tangible action on existing obligations, as a condition precedent. As the sponsor of the last CSCE Conference on Human Rights, Canada would insist that journalists, petitioners and other interest groups have the same rights respecting the Moscow Conference that they enjoyed in Ottawa.

We would be seeking other guarantees, before determining whether to accept or reject Mr. Shevardnadze's latest proposal. The result of such a conference would have to be to advance this aspect of the review of the Helsinki Final Act now taking place in Vienna, not detract from it.

Part of this new approach by the Soviet Union is a more sophisticated use of public relations to give the illusion of progress where really there is none. There is no dispute that several prominent and longstanding refuseniks have been released this year. I had the honour to meet Anatoly Shcharansky in Israel in April, and we rejoice with his family at the birth of their first child in freedom last week. We have seen the release of Dr. Yuri Orlov, David Goldfarb and Benjamin Bogomolny. After much pressure, Inessa Fleurova was eventually allowed to be accompanied by her husband when she travelled to Israel to donate bone marrow to her brother who is dying of cancer. We have welcomed these developments and have encouraged the Soviet authorities to continue such releases. But is this really progress? What about the increased repression of those who remain? What about Ida Nudel, Vladimir Slepak or the others who are still denied permission to leave?

In my view, what this dichotomy means is that nothing has really changed in the Soviet Union except where non-compliance with their international obligations is