

May I now turn to human rights, an area where policy coordination with Israel has born particular fruit. The plight of Soviet Jewry is a case in point albeit only one example. Canada has repeatedly urged the Soviet Union to respect the basic human rights and fundamental freedoms of all its citizens, including Soviet Jews. The Soviet Union has recently released a number of prominent and longstanding refuseniks, among them the Shcharanskys and Orlovs , both of these cases have long and repeatedly been the subject of Canadian representations. But the repression suffered by the many others who remain behind has continued and Jewish emigration levels may reach an all-time low this year. I have personally impressed upon Soviet leaders, most recently upon foreign Minister Shevardnadze, that if the Soviet Union does not improve upon its human rights record, this will damage Canada-USSR relations. And I have obtained Mr. Shevardnadze's agreement to consider personally the specific cases of a number of Soviet Jews whose circumstances cry out for compassion.

We have also urged the Soviet Union to allow families to be reunited in Israel. We will be studying very closely the recent decree on Soviet emigration policy. I am profoundly disappointed, however, that the decree apparently makes no specific reference to the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel. But the real test will not be decrees or conferences on human rights. We must focus our attention on results. Are cases of interest to Canada being resolved? Are Soviet Jews being allowed to emigrate? Those are the standards against which Soviet protestations will have to be judged.

I believe that our greatest chance of success lies in maintaining firm and committed pressure on the Soviet Union to honour its existing obligations to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms. We will continue to work hard in all forums, including the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, to encourage the Soviet Union to allow families to be reunited and to end the repression suffered by refuseniks and others in the USSR.

When I visited Jerusalem In April this year, I said that part of the challenge facing Canada and Israel is to broaden and deepen the direct relations between our two countries. I would like to review a few areas where the Government has taken action.