

SSEA: I was here eighteen years ago as Deputy Minister, as a bureaucrat, when I accompanied Mr. Lester Pearson who later became Prime Minister of Canada, when he was the Foreign Minister. On this occasion I have been invited by the Soviet Government on an official visit and I had an opportunity yesterday to talk about both bilateral and international questions with Mr. Gromyko, the Foreign Minister of the U.S.S.R., whom I have encountered on a number of occasions throughout the world since he visited Canada four years ago. In recent years there has been a very great development in relations between Canada and the U.S.S.R.; we have signed a number of agreements and, in particular, the Protocol on Consultations which, in a sense, is the umbrella under which we are holding the talks here in the U.S.S.R. A great deal of the emphasis to our developing relations came about as a result of the visit here in the U.S.S.R. of our Prime Minister, Mr. Trudeau, and the visit of Mr. Kosygin to Canada in 1971. The U.S.S.R. is one of the close neighbours of Canada, our closest neighbour in the North, and, moreover, we have had continuing relationships with the U.S.S.R. in such places as the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe of which Canada is a member. The discussions that I had yesterday reflect the nature of the relations between our two countries. During the morning, for example, we discussed bilateral relations between our two countries. We talked about cultural exchanges, we talked about human contacts, particularly the reunification of Canadian families; in the afternoon we talked about the international questions in which our two countries are very closely involved. The principal topics of conversation in the afternoon, for example, were the Middle East situation, Canada's participation in the United Nations' Emergency Force and the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. We found in our discussions some questions on which we were fully in agreement, some questions on which we were partly in agreement and more questions on which we had strongly differing views. And in my opinion it was very important that we should have had this exchange of views, not only on the questions on which we were in agreement, but particularly on those questions on which we had a differing point of view. On those questions on which we had differing points of view I believe it is important that we should have an exchange of views so that there is no room for misunderstanding, that both countries understand why they hold differing views and in the hope of influencing one another towards agreement.

Reunification of Canadian families: There are in Canada a number of Canadians who wish to bring members of their immediate family to Canada and thus reunite their families which often have been separated for a good many years. There is another question which relates to the concerns of Canadians about the general question of human contacts, reunification of families in a general sense which applies to many groups and, insofar as Canadians are concerned, since there are many of those racial origins in Canada, to the Jews and to the Ukrainians. On the first question of reunification of Canadian families very substantial progress is being made. During the last few years substantial proportions of the cases that have been brought forward by the Canadian Government have been dealt with satisfactorily. The general question of reunification of families and freedom to travel and so on, I did not raise except in the context of the concern of Canadians. I did not make representations on behalf of the Canadian Government as I did in connection with reunification of Canadian families, and on that question Mr. Gromyko replied that that was a matter of internal concern to the U.S.S.R. and was not an appropriate question for discussion in a bilateral context, and I should add that in the reunification of Canadian