

Afghan resistance began in June 1984 when Serge Jusyp, a lawyer representing the Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church in Toronto, met several deserters while in Afghanistan. In October 1984 a first attempt to bring the six to Canada failed for administrative reasons but renewed impetus to rescue the six came in April 1986 following interviews with the soldiers by reporters of the Kingston Whig-Standard. In November, the five were released into Canadian custody and flown from Pakistan to Canada where they were placed with Russian and Ukrainian families in Toronto. Soviet officials were permitted to meet with the defectors and ask them if they wished to return to the Soviet Union - all five declined.

Speaking in India during his February 1987 visit, Joe Clark said that for Canada the major threat to Asia-Pacific security is the Soviet military build-up in the area. He referred to new statements from Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev that may signal a positive change in Soviet attitudes in the region and called upon Mr. Gorbachev to put his words into action:

Nothing would more dramatically illustrate Mr. Gorbachev's determination to follow through on his Vladivostok speech than a withdrawal from Afghanistan. The brutal occupation of that country, should it continue, will give the lie to any Soviet protestations of good intent in South West Asia. It would be my wish that all nations which share our commitment to democracy and human rights could join us in urging a Soviet disengagement from Afghanistan and self-determination for the Afghan people.<sup>6</sup>

With respect to the refugee problem, the Government remains committed to providing humanitarian aid to the refugee population. Responding to the report of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons, the Government promised that:

<sup>6</sup> DEA, Statement, 87/08, 13 Feb. 1987, p. 7