

He reaffirmed the Government's support for the UN-sponsored negotiations headed by Under Secretary Diego Cordovez and criticized as unreasonable the withdrawal timetable proposed by the Soviets. According to Lewis, "it took them only 72 hours to get in. It need take no more than a week or two to get out. But if the political will is absent, then the military might remain".³

The Ambassador's comments were echoed that same day by Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark in his address to the opening session of the Vienna follow-up meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). In speaking of the CSCE process, Clark pointedly noted that

we cannot forget that one participating state [the Soviet Union] has, over the past seven years, violated virtually all the principles guiding relations between states by its continuing military intervention in Afghanistan."⁴

The Government announced on 12 November 1986 that it was lifting sanctions imposed against the Soviet Union in the wake of the December 1979 invasion. Responding to questions in the House, Joe Clark said:

The sanctions that were introduced...against the Soviet Union in 1979 were successful at the time because they helped galvanize world opinion against the Soviet actions in Afghanistan. Those actions in Afghanistan continue to be deplorable....It is clear that if we want to change other aspects of the practices of the Soviet Union...then we have to try some other instruments.⁵

In December 1986, five Soviet Army "deserters" were spirited out of Afghanistan to Canada. Efforts to rescue six Soviet soldiers held by the

³ Ibid., p. 5.

⁴ DEA, Statement 86/63, 5 Nov. 1986, p. 4.

⁵ Commons Debates, 21 Nov., 1986, p. 1404.