

Sixth, we can help alleviate the shortages which the Soviets fear may cause deprivation and disorder over the coming winter. The Prime Minister indicated in Paris that we were prepared to consider making available a new \$150-million credit facility that the Soviet Union could draw on to purchase foodstuffs. I am able to confirm today that the Government has now decided to proceed with this initiative which will be within current program and resource levels. I will be communicating with Foreign Minister Shevardnadze this week to establish how available Canadian goods and Soviet priorities coincide.

Finally, I believe we can move forward together to enhance bilateral co-operation on Arctic matters and to consolidate and expand co-operation among all Arctic nations. I would like to expand on this last point.

Canada and the Soviet Union share a common stewardship for the Arctic, so much of which is composed of our lands and waters. We are both Northern nations and whatever else has separated us, the Arctic has linked us -- physically and spiritually. The Arctic is our history and our heritage.

All too often, it has been a heritage we have ignored or squandered. The North has been the recipient of tensions which have divided us. Its delicate and beautiful ecosystem has become a dumping ground for pollutants from the South, carried by winds and waters which know no borders. Northern peoples have sometimes suffered unintentionally through the application of Southern solutions to Northern problems, and the clash of modern and traditional civilizations has created more than its share of victims.

These have been problems shared to one degree or another by all Arctic countries. They can benefit from co-operative solutions. And here, there are new opportunities -- opportunities to share experiences, share information and technology and develop joint strategies with others.

This combination of challenge and opportunity has produced an explosion in Arctic co-operation in the last year -- bilateral and multilateral, governmental and non-governmental. In addition to the bilateral co-operation between Canada and the Soviet Union, the Finnish initiative for environmental co-operation has progressed substantially, with a ministerial meeting planned for next spring in Finland. An Arctic aboriginal summit is planned for 1991. And a meeting of Arctic regional governments was held in Alaska in September, a meeting which declared an intent to establish a Northern Forum for circumpolar co-operation at the sub-national level. All of these developments have involved active Canadian and Soviet participation.