

I am also saddened by the news that on February 21, 1989 Vaclav Havel received a sentence of nine months and that the other persons who were arrested with him are also being sentenced. I cannot regard the peaceful act of laying flowers to commemorate a death as an act of "hooliganism" obstructing the public order. Nor, following the Vienna Meeting, can my comments be regarded as intervention in Czechoslovak internal affairs, since we all recognize that questions of human rights and fundamental freedoms are essential to security and therefore legitimate subjects of discussion.

At a time when East-West relations are showing positive signs and some countries are taking steps to improve human rights, we in Canada hope that this process will continue to show progress in all signatory states.

I therefore strongly urge your government to reconsider its position in this matter and I hope for the early release of Vaclav Havel and the other detainees. "