

Another embassy officer is leaving for Riga shortly.

We are looking at ways of including the Baltic States in the CSCE process. Canada is making strong statements at the CSCE conference in Valetta, the meeting on the peaceful resolution of disputes and will do the same at ongoing meetings in Vienna.

Canada and others will be invoking the human dimension mechanism of the CSCE which we think may provide us more influence than we had heretofore seeking explanations formally from Soviet authorities about what is happening in the Baltic States.

As the House knows, the Member for Markham raised a proposal in the House today of which I have taken note regarding the conference under the CSCE process on human rights.

We are discussing the situation with our allies in NATO and are considering the means by which it might be raised effectively in the United Nations, especially in the Commission on Human Rights meeting in Geneva later this month. Members of Parliament have made the point to me that, while they understand the effect of the veto on matters that might be raised in the Security Council, the presence of that veto should not in and of itself preclude us from raising the matter either there or in the General Assembly. We are looking at ways effect can be given to that view.

Bilaterally we are looking at concrete ways that Canada can support the Baltic States through increased contacts and direct assistance. We are also exploring with the Baltic communities in Canada the possibilities of opening a Baltic information office here in Canada.

I am prepared to look at any other ways that are practical. There are limits upon what we can do given our obligations in the family of nations and given the importance of our continuing relations with the Soviet Union, given the importance indeed of our capacity to influence that country and that government, not simply in matters it considers internal but also in other international matters.

I can say, that while I am aware of those limits, it is my intention and the personal commitment of the Prime Minister to push those limits as far as is humanly possible. I will need not simply the support of the House in that, but also the advice of the House as to means that might be followed that can accomplish that purpose. Any proposals that are put forward in this debate or later will be seriously considered.

The purpose of this debate, I believe, is to make one message clear to the Baltic peoples and most particularly to the