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CANADA STUDIES IMPLICATIONS OF NEW SOVIET CITIZENSHIP LEGISLATION

Recent news reports have suggested that a new citizenship law in the USSR, due to come into effect on July 1, 1979, will extend Soviet citizenship to a great many Canadians who do not already possess it. Since the new law was announced, the Department of External Affairs has been examining its possible consequences for Canadians. The information available to the Department of External Affairs suggests that, while the new law may be somewhat more specific than earlier legislation, the intention behind it appears to be essentially to consolidate past legislation.

The Department is in touch with Soviet authorities concerning any implications the new legislation may have for Canadians which go beyond past practice. In the meantime, the Department will continue to monitor the situation. The Department notes that the Soviet Government has traditionally continued to recognize the Soviet citizenship of nationals living abroad and has considered citizenship to devolve on children whether born in the Soviet Union or abroad. Accordingly, the Department has advised and continues to advise Canadians who may have queries about the subject of Soviet citizenship to communicate with the Soviet Embassy.