

including some of the most longstanding like the case of Danila Shumuk. That is noted and appreciated. There again, people could say: "Well, all right, we all applaud that development, but why should anybody give the Soviet Union credit for letting people leave the Soviet Union to be reunited with their families at long last, who should never have been prevented in the first place? They don't deserve any credit for that." There is some justice in that observation, and also there are still some unresolved cases.

Here all I can say is, there is evidence of an important change. It is undeniable evidence. I think we have to register it, and I want to weigh it in as balanced a way as I can.

There have been other aspects of our bilateral relations with the Soviet Union which have also altered for the better in the last little while. Exchange programmes with the Soviet Union, for instance, were largely emptied of content in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and now the content is being restored - restored, we hope, in a way that makes more sense, and creates more genuine benefit both to the Canadians who are involved in the exchanges and to the Soviets, because these things will only work on a basis of reciprocity, of more mutual benefit than we were able to get out of such programmes in previous years. Well, again, there have been some extremely interesting instances of successful exchanges that have allowed Canadians really to see parts of the Soviet Union that have been very difficult to see before, to have contacts with people, to have conversations with people in the Soviet Union, in a much more candid way than was true in the past, about problems that are matters of common interest.

Those are further interesting signs. They are real. They are modest but real signs of alterations in the relationship. If, however, you look over the period, say, since 1985, at Soviet foreign policy in general, it seems that you can see the signs of what? - soundings, experiments, tentative probes here and there in areas of traditional Soviet concern: relations with Japan, relations with China, even the Afghanistan question. There have been signs that perhaps new minds were looking at these problems, and that things might change.

But you have to say that the most important accomplishment - and it's not yet an accomplishment - in Soviet foreign policy, lies in the area we have already discussed, that is the fact that the superpowers have brought themselves and their allies to the point where we may yet see by the end of this year the first actual nuclear arms reduction agreement. Now that is not yet a bird in the hand, but if you are looking around for hopeful signs, that is what you can say. You can say no more and no less than that right at the moment.

On the other hand, there are other areas where you really do not see any signs of change. It seems, for instance, as between the Soviet Union and Japan, that the two sides have looked at the relationship. Perhaps the Soviets have taken a new look at the relationship; there were some signs of that. But in the end, on key questions for the Japanese like the status of the Northern Islands, there is no sign of any change in the Soviet position. And when you run through some of the other items on the list: Cambodia, Afghanistan, and so on - you cannot really say that anything has happened yet which justifies the conclusion that the new leadership has also produced a revolution in Soviet foreign policy. On the contrary, the essence of most classic Soviet positions has been preserved up to this point. That also, I think, is material for reflection so far as the thrust of the domestic reform is concerned. Of course, that is more a matter of their internal affairs. While the world watches with interest, and while no doubt whatever happens - in addition to its fascination - has long-run implications for us, nonetheless it is a process that is relatively harder for people at our distance to penetrate and to understand. The Soviet economy and Soviet society are vast and complicated affairs. How much success the leadership can hope to have in reforming them is very