

It is here that we must take some time to examine our national contribution. The question as to our appropriate contribution to NATO is an old one, but not for that reason irrelevant to the present situation. I suggest that three principles should guide our discussion. First, our contribution must be relevant to the needs of NATO as perceived by our allies, as well as by ourselves. Second, it must be compatible with our overall perception of our needs in defence policy. Third, it must be an effective reminder that the security and economic fields are intertwined. While we fulfil our responsibilities in the one, we must be sure that our European allies are fully sensitive to our needs in the other.

Meanwhile, what can we hope for in other aspects of our relations with the countries of Eastern Europe? Since the Soviet bloc clings to the view that an ideological struggle between East and West is in the nature of things, there will presumably continue to be an underlying element of tension in all these relationships, whether Western countries want it or not. But there is no reason why this tension cannot find its release in civilized competition. I do not myself share the view that the communist and non-communist societies of Europe are fated to converge, some of them, at least, simply have histories too divergent for that. Yet it is possible to see ways in which many of the same problems -- energy shortages, inflation, consumer expectations, protection of the environment -- press on any society, regardless of ideological bent.

In this sense, new opportunities for co-operation with the countries of Eastern Europe will arise, ideological differences notwithstanding. Indeed, as relations with these countries have acquired substance, it has already become difficult to generalize about them. For the first time, Canada has recently made major sales of high technology products in Eastern Europe; nuclear equipment to Romania, pulp and paper technology to Czechoslovakia and Poland. Elsewhere, progress has been steady, but less spectacular. And in return, these countries, which have not historically been important trading partners for Canada, are finding better ways of selling their products in the unfamiliar Canadian market -- witness the Lada car.

With human contacts -- family reunification, family visits, visa questions and the like -- progress also escapes easy generalization. With some countries of Eastern Europe, for example, family reunification has virtually ceased to exist as a problem, with others, we seem to be dealing with a hard core of intractability. Despite a great deal of effort, we have yet to succeed in concluding satisfactory consular agreements with these countries. A basic stumbling block