

We are interested in the reforms taking place in the Soviet Union. There has been real movement on a range of issues. But the facts require us to be cautious as well. We must always keep in mind how far the Soviet Union would have to go to give its peoples the palest imitation of what we already enjoy as free citizens of a free nation. We should welcome real change, but we should also ensure that western nations present our side of any debate as aggressively as the Soviet's present there side.

What is important is realism. There has been change. There may be more. It should be encouraged by Canada and other free societies.

We want to be sure the change is real before we celebrate it - and we must, throughout this period, maintain our own commitments to the values of free societies, and the means to keep the peace.

I am honoured to be with you tonight. All my life, it has been my privilege to work closely with Canadians of Ukrainian origin. You are part of my heritage as a Canadian.

In his 1904 poem, Michael Gowda, a Ukrainian pioneer, echoed the Testament of the Ukrainian national poet Taras Schevchenko when he wrote:

"But, Canada, in liberty we work till death,  
Our children shall be free to call thee theirs,  
Their own dear land, where gladly drawing breath,  
Their parents found safe graves, and left strong  
heirs."

Strong heirs, and a priceless understanding of the value of freedom, are among the greatest gifts Ukrainians have given Canada. You do your forefathers proud.