

Moscow which would endorse numerous new bilateral agreements, the Canadian posture remained a predominantly negative one. In early May however, Mr. Clark took the Soviet government's release of a prominent family for immigration to Canada as the opportunity for a major address in which he emphasized the Canadian government's recognition of "what can only be called a revolution sweeping Soviet society" and stated "unequivocally" that it is in our interest that Mr. Gorbachev succeed.

Like other Western countries, Canada has had to struggle, throughout the period of accelerated change in Eastern Europe, to find the appropriate and constructive response. It has been important for the West to restrain the tendency to "triumphalist" rhetoric which could backfire and weaken the position of Mr. Gorbachev and the other reformers. All sensible arms reduction possibilities must be pursued as rapidly as possible, in part to help relieve the economic burden on East Bloc countries and our own, recognizing at the same time that such economic benefits will come gradually. The West needs to offer concrete cooperation in trade, investment and technical and managerial assistance wherever reforms will make this productive, but help to restrain the pent-up expectations of Eastern Europeans that rapid prosperity will now follow automatically. Similarly the West must offer substantial "bridging" assistance to help meet vital human needs during the transition period, but do so without creating aid-dependence or delaying the inescapable economic reform, and without encouraging the illusion that a new "Marshall Plan" will be either possible or appropriate for reforming East Bloc countries.

Arms Reductions and the Conversion Challenge

On the arms control and disarmament front, the immediate focal point of world attention is the set of negotiations now underway in Vienna on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), with parallel and related talks on Confidence and Security-building Measures (CSBMs). The CFE talks between all NATO and Warsaw Pact members were formally launched in early 1989. Following initial exchanges of proposals and counter-proposals, they have been put on an accelerated schedule, aiming for agreement by mid 1990. With the Soviet Union accepting the need for asymmetrical reductions in its superior ground strength, and the West agreeing to include combat aircraft and helicopters, cuts in combat manpower in US stationed forces, and a ceiling on American and Soviet personnel stationed outside national territory, the prospects increased for vastly more rapid progress than in any previous talks.