

East-West Economic Relations

The Versailles Summit will, like Ottawa, address the implications of East-West political tensions (particularly over Poland) for economic relations between Summit Countries and the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. While the West's underlying political goals vis-à-vis the East will be discussed at the NATO Summit in Bonn, Canada also favours a balanced discussion of western geo-political, strategic and economic interests vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe at Versailles, where President Mitterrand and Prime Minister Suzuki will be present. We would want such a discussion to touch on the benefits of economic interdependence between East and West, as well as the possible problems which interdependence may entail.

Technology

The French initiative for a discussion at Versailles on the theme of technology and its effects on employment and the economy opens a new area of Summit preoccupation. A focus on this sort of structural question complements the more publicized problems of unemployment, productivity, trade and North/South relations. It also provides an opportunity for Canada to establish a positive basis for managing changes, by using technology as a key instrument for our development, and by educating Canadians on the realities of changes, many of which could require major structural adjustments as well as new work habits. President Mitterrand should be congratulated for bringing so forcefully and creatively to the attention of Summit leaders a question that will deeply affect the medium term health of our societies. Canada looks forward to drawing on its own experience in certain high technology sectors and participating fully in future cooperative work on this theme in the Summit context.