

Routine Proceedings

and welcome response to the daring and innovative reforms being implemented by the Soviet leadership.

Last Wednesday, in Moscow, I attended with Prime Minister Ryzhkov the inauguration of an organization, the Canada-U.S.S.R. Business Council, that will do much to underpin our new political relationship and to bolster our bilateral commercial ties.

The council includes almost all of the principal Canadian firms with significant current or prospective commercial interests in the Soviet Union and is co-chaired by Albert Reichman, President of Olympia and York, and Alexei Malkevitch, head of the Soviet Chamber of Commerce.

[*Translation*]

The Canadian business delegation that was in the Soviet Union during my visit numbered about 240 people. A good number of them signed agreements for direct investment, joint ventures or equity participation arrangements.

These agreements, worth one billion dollars, plus, are an extremely important part of building a new relationship between Canada and the Soviet Union.

President Gorbachev made very clear that the U.S.S.R. was not looking for direct aid from the West.

What the Soviet Union wished to have with Canada was a cooperative, mutually beneficial, political, economic and technological relationship because of the many similarities between our two countries, and because of the experience we have in coping with many categories of problems that the U.S.S.R. is now dealing with in a serious way.

[*English*]

For our part, Mr. Speaker, we went to the Soviet Union with the objectives of establishing a broadly-based relationship of confidence with President Gorbachev and his colleagues, of seeking on behalf of all Canadians to respond constructively to the historic changes that the Soviet leader is seeking to make and of bringing about a new beginning in Soviet-Canadian relations.

I believe that we have achieved these objectives. I also hope that, together, we have made a contribution to the building of a more durable international peace, which is

the most important legacy our generation can pass on to our children.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, what is happening in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe today is the most important and cataclysmic change in human affairs since the last world war and indeed perhaps since the Soviet Revolution itself.

Millions upon millions of Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, Russians, East Germans, Bulgarians, Latvians, Estonians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians are demanding freedom, demanding democracy, and they are getting it.

The urge for freedom is unpredictable and finally irresistible. Totalitarian regimes are falling at a staggering rate. They are being shunted aside in the sweep of history. The most remarkable feature about the drama surrounding us that we see every night on television is that so far this popular evolution is being done without violence.

Diplomats are becoming irrelevant, the pundits and experts are at a loss to explain what has happened. Very few of them predicted it. Foreign policy analysts, so used to seeing the world only in terms of the superpowers, have been confounded by what is happening. Leaders and the elites are being toppled. The people are rolling over them all. The tearing down of the Berlin Wall is only the most visible symbol of this demand for freedom.

What this government of ours has failed to grasp so far is that the urge for freedom is exploding; it is bursting out, not only in Berlin, but at almost every level in the East Bloc countries. Yet while the whole of Europe is alive with discussion, as Hungarians and Poles and Czechs are on the streets debating these issues and calling for freedom, we in this Parliament have had no discussion of what our approach should be to these massive, compulsive and unprecedented changes in the world.

The Prime Minister has signed an agreement which he claims will usher in a new era in Canadian-Soviet relations. Yet, it was this Prime Minister whose major foreign policy plank in the last election was to spend billions upon billions of dollars on building a fleet of nuclear powered submarines to protect us from the Soviets.