

that bitter memory deserve their answer as to where there are, and are not, contemporary parallels.

We need to deepen our attention to the task of dismantling the monstrous underpinnings of the Cold War, and not just its facade. This concern, presumably, led the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists to hold its Doomsday Clock at six minutes to midnight as 1989 drew to a close, although many hard-headed experts would be prepared to ease off considerably farther at this stage. We also need to raise our sights and widen our gaze beyond the military and ideological conflict in Europe to a pressing new global agenda for peace and security. Fifty years from now, the great test of our generation in Europe and North America will not simply be whether we broke down the terrifying and ruinous nuclear confrontation that threatened life on earth, but whether we used this open historical moment with courage, creativity and vision to usher in a new *global* era of peace with justice.

This is not the “end of history” as one American commentator has claimed – humanity is surely entitled to hope that the best is yet to come.

The agenda is full and challenging, but this kind of challenge is what Canadians and many others have been awaiting for forty-five years. It will take every bit of Canada’s skill and idealism to steer our way through the turbulent waters ahead and help to shape the outcome. With the all-embracing East-West confrontation breaking down, moves to reduce reliance on military force, and the patterns of international leadership in flux, this is the equivalent of the great re-orderings of the international system which followed both the first and second world wars. The latter period ushered in a “golden age” of Canadian diplomacy and peacekeeping with which this nation made its welcome mark throughout the world, and greatly strengthened its own sense of common purpose in the process.

The conditions now may be even more propitious and promising for Canadian initiative, creativity and enterprise in order-building, backed by strong Canadian credibility, human and material resources. Many Canadians will be diffident about any such international mission, because self-skepticism is an even more popular Canadian game than *Trivial Pursuit*, but there are few foreigners who would question this country’s unique credentials. Surely in an era when the Berlin wall and Nicolae Ceausescu can fall, even Canadian skeptics should be susceptible to inspiration.