

Last week on Remembrance Day, as I stood at the Cenotaph in Ottawa, the sounds of sacrifice and loss blew quietly in the early winter wind. I remembered, then, the 100,000 young Canadian men and women who lie buried at Vimy Ridge and Dieppe and Ortona and other battle-fields in Europe. I thought of similar memorials in London and Leningrad and Berlin -- and the tombs of unknown soldiers in Washington and here in Paris. And I was reminded once again of our common history, our shared experiences, tragic as well as joyous -- and of how much we all -- Canadians, Americans and Europeans -- have at stake in the new Europe.

Canada is a North American country whose roots go deep into the rich and varied cultures of Europe. The struggles and triumphs of the human spirit in Europe have been our own. Our values have been influenced by Europe, tempered by our New World experience, and enriched by people from around the world.

Our earliest trade -- in furs and lumber -- was with Europe and our hinterland was charted by French explorers and the British Hudson's Bay Company. Canada's economy continues to be directly linked to the countries of this continent in mutually beneficial trade and investment.

The ravages of two world wars taught Canadians that security is indivisible, that peace in Canada is threatened if Europe is at war, that shots fired across the Rhine or the Elbe or the Danube echo along the St. Lawrence River valley, across the vast sweeps of the Canadian prairies and down through our shared history.

Canada's interests in Europe are concrete, compelling and enduring. They lie at the heart of our membership in NATO, our relationship with the European community and our belief in the important role that lies ahead for the CSCE.

Fifteen years ago, when the leaders of East and West gathered at the first CSCE summit in Helsinki, Europe was divided by antagonism and suspicion. The process of reconciliation begun in Helsinki marked the start of a long struggle to move us all to safer and better ground. The process had its critics, who feared that the CSCE's promises were empty and that its dreams of freedom and democracy would die on the barren land of geopolitics and ideology. But the leaders of the West never wavered in their convictions. And the power of an invincible idea, combined with the courage of extraordinary people -- of Havel and Antall and Mazowiecki and of countless others, not at this table -- kept the dreams alive. And so, the promises of the CSCE are being redeemed today.

The success of the CSCE is applauded by all those who are present. But there would be no summit today to inaugurate the new Europe had it not been for the vision and the courage of President Gorbachev. He recognized that the desire for peace lives in the hearts and minds of all men and women. And, at great risk to himself, he opened avenues to cooperation that consigned the East-West division of Europe to history. His statesmanship was reciprocated by President Reagan and President Bush, whose firm resolve and constructive leadership made possible the extraordinary progress that this assembly marks today.