

Prime Minister Gives Opening Address at Open Skies Conference

The following is the text of the address to the Open Skies Conference delivered by the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister, on February 12, 1990.

We are living in remarkable years in world history. The Berlin Wall is down, Nelson Mandela is free, and a new age is born.

Throughout Eastern Europe, governments are grappling with the unfamiliar challenges of democracy and economic change. They are trying to accomplish in months what it has taken others decades, and even centuries, to achieve. Fulfilling the dreams of a nation for democratic government and satisfying the expectations of a people for new opportunity and prosperity for themselves and their children are historic tasks. They demand time, patience and a great resolve.

Nobody, as far as I know, has the necessary experience to prescribe a way to certain success for these governments that would make it possible for them to avoid either great national difficulties or considerable individual sacrifice. New national structures and economies are built slowly and with difficulties, but all nations have a stake in the success of the new governments and an interest in responding constructively to their needs.

Canada stands ready to do its part. Fully 15 per cent of Canadians have their origins in Central and Eastern Europe. These Canadians are schooled in the management of government in a bilingual nation and a multicultural society, and they are experienced in the conduct of international business in a free enterprise world. Canada is committed to cooperate in the rebuilding of Eastern Europe.

Canada is also ready to play its part in building a new international order. For almost half a century there has been



Prime Minister Brian Mulroney (left) with Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark at the Open Skies Conference.

half a peace, based on distrust and built on deterrence. Confidence was impossible while basic values were in conflict. But the confrontation of ideologies has at last subsided. We are no longer hostage to the frozen political meteorology of suspicion and animosity. The Cold War is over. And today, in Ottawa, former adversaries work together to ensure that such a long and bitter winter never comes again.

The conditions exist now to make a new start on building a better world. The infernal nuclear legacy of the past

"The Cold War is over"

remains. Unresolved issues and ancient conflicts, forgotten for a while, are exposed now by the sunlight of the perestroika thaw.

But, in recent months, much common ground has also reappeared. These developments raise profound questions about the most effective means of reinforcing political and economic progress in Central and Eastern Europe; about the evolution of the European Community and the unification of Germany; about the risk to stability of dormant

conflicts re-awakening; about the future of our alliances and about the nature of the relationship that will exist between North America and Europe; about what sort of wider world we want to see.

What is needed now is a new concept of security rooted in universal, democratic values. What is also necessary is the genius to give constructive expression to our rediscovered sense of shared purpose.

Newspaper headlines are filled with a new lexicon of diplomatic architecture — expressions such as a common European home, concentric circles, confederation and so on. These ideas reflect the need to create new instruments of cooperation, to breathe new life into existing organizations and to bring greater definition to our common political vision of a new European future.

The new Bank for European Reconstruction and Development is one creative response to these needs. It is needed to complete the unfinished business of European economic reconstruction. It will have a very important role for the spirit of enterprise which is beginning in Eastern Europe. It will also be important for the integra-