

We must be sensible and deliberate in the way we use that asset. We must steer between old memories and new enthusiasms, and always be guided by the pragmatism that makes foreign policy effective. But we can help encourage new thinking in the Soviet Union and Eastern and Central Europe by displaying imagination here at home.

That is why I come to you this evening - not just out of courtesy to a significant Canadian community, nor simply to celebrate your culture and your history. I am here to ask your help in Canada's contribution to positive and permanent changes in the Soviet Union, and in Eastern and Central Europe.

This past year has been momentous in relations between East and West.

It has brought elections in Poland and the Soviet Union and the promise of the same in Hungary. In January we signed the Concluding Document to the Vienna Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. New conventional arms negotiations for Europe have begun.

And last month, in Brussels, Prime Minister Mulroney and other Heads of Government commemorated the 40th Anniversary of NATO in a Summit that set out new directions for the Alliance. President Bush's dramatic proposals have regained the negotiating initiative for the West. The Prime Minister's proposal of a new scholarship plan -- to help citizens of Central and Eastern Europe learn about democratic institutions -- helps assure the dynamism of an Alliance that has safeguarded Western security for four decades.

This is a time of profound change in the lands from which many of you and your families came. Like all change, it can be difficult and controversial, and will require both imagination and compromise. We are not spectators in these events. We are part of them - as a nation whose citizens share languages and heritages with Europe; as a country prepared to exercise our influence internationally; as a society whose economic system and political traditions offer encouragement and examples to those seeking changes in Europe.

As we assess these changes, some of you will counsel caution, and we will want to weigh your advice carefully. Others will see opportunities that do not leap to the eyes of our officials.