

I was very much moved, this afternoon, when I laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

I was struck by the simplicity of the monument and how well it reflected the nobility of the sacrifice made by so many young men and women of the Soviet Army in the great patriotic war.

Just ten days ago, in Ottawa, I placed a wreath at Canada's National War Memorial to honour the sacrifice made by so many of our own young men and women in that same war, and in other wars.

Each time wreathes are laid, solemn oaths are sworn never to forget those sacrifices -- solemn vows are made never to permit them to happen again -- and solemn undertakings are given to build a better world for generations to come.

In the warming of relations between East and West, we have the opportunity to keep those promises. Canada and the Soviet Union were allies in the last war against a common enemy. That fact, too, should never be forgotten.

A new generation of leadership in the Soviet Union is helping to bring a new spring of hope and opportunity to international affairs. It is, also, providing the basis for a new beginning in relations between Canada and the Soviet Union.

It is my deep conviction that it is very clearly in everyone's best interests that your reforms succeed. The opportunity is given to few men to try to change the course of history. Success in the attempt to do so is rarer still.

But President Gorbachev is making a uniquely indelible imprint on world affairs. The scale and the importance of the changes that have been embarked upon by the Soviet Union, indicate clearly that President Gorbachev is emerging as one of the genuine reformers of modern history. It is said in the proverbs that "where there is no vision, the people perish."

I believe that President Gorbachev, Chairman Ryzhkov and their colleagues have provided strong and visionary leadership.