Naturally Mr. Gorbachev still seeks to preserve national advantage and advances some proposals whose primary intent is to cause domestic political problems for Western governments. But there is a fundamental dynamic to the new Soviet attitude which is refreshingly flexible, even reasonable in its tone and content. Rather than strangers playing games according to different rules, using different concepts, and seeking different ends, one now has the sense of a traditional negotiating process between players who accept the rules, share the concepts and know where the areas of compromise lie. One sees this in the new negotiations on conventional forces in Europe, as well as in nuclear arms control.

Now, what should our attitude in the West be to all of this?

And what stake and interests do we as <u>Canadians</u> have in this process?

To me, the most fundamental question for the West is this: Is it in our interest to see Mr. Gorbachev succeed? From this, everything else follows.

To me, the unequivocal answer is yes.

Why should we fear a more prosperous and free Soviet society? Are the processes of social and economic development which turned Western societies away from war and towards diplomacy invalid for the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe? Is the Soviet leadership incapable of seeing the advantages of peace, and the costs of war? Just as within the West, the webs of trade and prosperity act as a damper on conflict, is it not possible to envisage a similar fabric between East and West? And should we not strive to bring that to pass?

If we are suspicious of Mr. Gorbachev; if we deride the pace of his reforms or the degree of his success; if we shun opportunities for mutual advantage then we must ask ourselves some troubling questions.

Would the alternative be better?

Do we wish to see the Old Guard returned?

Despite what we've been saying for years, do we really prefer Stalinist repression, inefficiency and imperialism?

Are we so fearful of change that we seek a retreat to the past?