

We see a clear analogy between Canadian nation-building, where we have pulled diversity together, and the demands of democratic community-building internationally. We see the need for something very much like our own mix of will and flexibility in managing the current international agenda.

Consider the major questions on that agenda. In the Soviet Union we are seeing the beginnings -- just the beginnings -- of what may be extremely significant changes. The questions of how we deal with the Soviets, and what collective strategy we apply now to arms control, are of singular importance -- perhaps even of historic importance. In international economics, the crisis of the early 1980's has receded -- and with it, unfortunately, some of the sense of shared urgency required to address fundamental structural issues. Now we are faced with growing strains among Japan, Europe and North America - in effect with types of nationalism or regionalism that can impede cooperation. Finally, we have to work harder at the coherence and relevance of our policies towards the Third World.

How significant are the recent developments in the Soviet Union? The verdict is not yet in, but our traditional responses will not be adequate to deal with the Soviets in the years ahead. A more open relationship is not going to be easy: What opportunities occur may be modest, and they will have to be explored with caution. But they should be explored. In Canada there is a history of skepticism about whether closer cooperation with the Soviet Union works in the long term but the prospect of major changes in the USSR can be ignored only at our peril. The era of an unresponsive and lethargic Soviet Union is probably over. We should therefore anticipate the impact of a dynamic, more powerful USSR, whose ultimate goals have probably not changed. The Soviet Union is going to be more formidable, and probably more flexible, but Soviet ideology will not simply wither away.

Let me be explicit about the questions that are involved here. Do we have enough confidence in the values we stand for to remain together without rallying simply -- even simplistically -- around the presumption of an unchanging external enemy? Are we making the consultative process work, to the extent that we could exercise more flexibility on East-West questions without internal splintering? I believe the answer to these questions is 'Yes'.

I think it comes down to a matter of balance. On human rights, for example, dissidents have recently been released in the Soviet Union. We should welcome that, but we should also make it clear that continued improvement is required to break down barriers and build up confidence.