

The period since November 1981 has been marked by exchanges of concrete proposals. The negotiations have been conducted seriously and have made some progress. Given the underlying need to take into account the legitimate security concerns of both sides, NATO ministers have agreed that this requirement could best be met through the elimination of all existing Soviet and planned United States' missiles in this class. We have also confirmed our earlier decision to begin deploying the missiles at the end of 1983, unless there were concrete results from the negotiations. We are willing to give full consideration to any serious Soviet proposals that would enhance the chances for effective and verifiable agreements.

Recently, the Soviet Union made a proposal concerning possible reductions of intermediate-range nuclear weapons. While the proposal is unacceptable in many respects, it appears to recognize that NATO governments have a legitimate concern about the number of SS-20s aimed at their European member states, and that a reduction is necessary.

This in itself is progress. However, it is not yet clear both sides have accepted that mutual security must be the basis of the negotiations. That is why 1983 is crucial.

Canada has a large stake in the INF negotiations. We intend to press vigorously the following basic approach:

- Canada places its full weight behind the negotiations. We strongly support a negotiated solution that will make deployment of the missiles in Europe unnecessary.
- Likewise, in the absence of concrete results in the negotiations, Canada considers that there is no viable alternative to deployment of the missiles.
- Every serious proposal must be seriously examined. By the same token, propaganda ploys must not be permitted to undermine serious negotiations.
- Statements aimed at public opinion cannot be a substitute for genuine willingness to reach an agreement.