

its efforts in the coming months to contribute to the progress and eventual success of current negotiations.

We know the series of negotiations that were under way at that time. I believe it is within that context that we can understand the Prime Minister's efforts, particularly the launching of his peace effort in his speech at Guelph on October 27. The Prime Minister made five specific proposals in that speech, but the main message, which he underlined, was the necessity for a jolt or an injection of high-level political energy to speed the course of negotiations on nuclear arms control, on conventional arms reduction and on military confidence-building measures. That was the main thrust of the Prime Minister's message, to try to get a jolt of energy into a system which had become virtually paralysed, where dialogue had virtually ceased and where rhetoric had been built up almost as the main instrument of diplomacy.

I will not mention all the elements of the Prime Minister's speech, but I will refer to two aspects of it. One concerns his suggestion of raising the nuclear threshold in Europe by reaching agreement on a balance of conventional forces in Europe. There was good reason why the Prime Minister should have referred to the Mutual Balance Force Reduction talks, the MBFR talks as they are called. There was good reason for his mention of them because they had been ongoing for almost ten years and had not yet reached the results which had been hoped for initially. The second point in that speech which I want to mention was his desire to give additional or real political impetus to the Stockholm conference on military confidence-building measures and disarmament. I mention these two aspects of the Prime Minister's speech, namely the MBFR and the Stockholm conference, because they have a lot to do with the current political dialogue between the East and the West.

The December meeting of the NATO foreign ministers held in Brussels offered an opportunity for the ministers and the governments represented there to make a response to the then current situation. Deployment had begun. The talks between the Soviet Union and the United States had been broken off or were about to be broken off, and we were meeting in that particular difficult context. It is true that a number of Parliaments in Europe had endorsed deployment very strongly, but it is also true that public opinion was greatly concerned at the difficult situation which existed. I think the NATO meeting was very important. The first thing the ministers did was to issue what was described as the Brussels Declaration. A communique was also issued but there was a shorter document called the Brussels Declaration which was intended to summarize the attitude of the West at the present time toward eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. In the Brussels Declaration the ministers acknowledged their respect for the Soviet Union's legitimate security interests and reiterated earlier pledges to seek security on the basis of a balance of forces at the lowest possible level. They also affirmed their intention to do their utmost to sustain a safe and peaceful future and to work with the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact states to achieve a balanced and constructive relationship based, as the

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Brussels Declaration said, on equilibrium, moderation and reciprocity.

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I thought these were all very important concepts that were declared by the NATO governments to the world as the basis of a future relationship with eastern countries. The ministers closed with an appeal for an open, comprehensive, political dialogue. That is what the Prime Minister seeks, and I am sure it is sought by every Member of the House of Commons and every Canadian who is concerned about the future of the world and the necessity for asserting ourselves in the interests of peace.

The second statement that the ministers made dealt with MBFR negotiations stalled now for 10 years, with eastern proposals on the table but with no comprehensive western response as yet. The ministers agreed to review the state of negotiations and determine whether they could be moved forward. It is to be hoped they can be resumed later this year and that at that time western NATO ministers will be able to make a response to the eastern proposals that would ensure progress. At least, that is the view of Canada. It is also the view of Canada that at a certain point the ministers might consider their own presence at these talks. The circumstances would have to be right. The possibilities for some progress would have to be assured, but it seems to me this is another forum in which a jolt of political energy could usefully be made evident.

A further decision taken at the December meeting had to do with the Stockholm conference. It was agreed that the conference should be launched at the ministerial level; that politicians ought to attend; that it ought not to be left to bureaucrats and ambassadors, no matter how important they are, but that politicians ought to go in order to underline the importance they attach to a comprehensive dialogue in the interests of peace. That was decided by NATO ministers and, as a result, the eastern European ministers, including Mr. Gromyko, were present at the Stockholm conference. I may say a word about that later but I think all those present would agree that it was important that ministers attend, that politicians attend. Not only were there speeches, there were numerous bilateral dialogues that took place on the margins of the Stockholm meeting.

At NATO the fourth important decision that was taken was to conduct a review of the current state of East-West relations. That review was first suggested by the foreign minister of Belgium, Mr. Tindemans, who referred back to the Harmel report and thought the political aspects of it ought to be revisited and that NATO had to review, at least in my view he was attempting to ask NATO to update, its assessment of the current situation in view of the deployment and other developments, and to look to the future as to what ought to be on the agenda of East-West relations. That review has to be carefully conducted and it has to be done in a way that will also give a message of importance to the world.