

The issue before us is significant to all Canadians. It is an issue which was discussed at some length during the election campaign, and it continues to occupy our thoughts.

● (1700)

I hope I will be forgiven, since this is my first opportunity to say something about Guelph, if I inform this House of some of the background of my community. Such background will help Hon. Members understand the position I take on this and many other issues. Guelph is the county seat for Wellington. It began as an agricultural centre and, I am delighted to say, Mr. Speaker, that it retains much of that soundness and common sense today. Guelph is surrounded by an agricultural area and has a diversity which is envied by most people. It has a sense of history and is a place of beauty. We even have a correctional institution to house those people who come from other parts of the province. We also have a university which has been actively involved in this particular issue. Our university was the site of one of the main peace and disarmament conferences over the past 12 months.

I believe the people of Canada want an end to nuclear weapons. They want peace and they want disarmament. However, the natural caution of most Canadians dictates that we do not want a freeze which has the possibility of harming our strategic position.

I would like to address one specific element in this discussion, namely, verification. In an era of suspicion and uncertainty, nations are unlikely to accede to agreements affecting their own national security without some adequate means of assurance that other signatories will indeed live up to the terms of their agreement. An arms control agreement is essentially an agreement between states to undertake restrictive measures. Since the benefit to each state arises from the compliance of the other, there is, of course, mutual advantage. In simple terms, Mr. Speaker, verification is the means by which such assurance is given to the other states. Consequently, the nature of the verification measures associated with the arms control agreements is of vital importance. The Swedish-Mexican freeze resolution, unlike the other two freeze resolutions at the United Nations, does address the problem of verification in greater detail. The resolution calls for appropriate measures and procedures of verifications such as those which have already been agreed to by the Parties in principle in SALT I and SALT II.

Ignoring the fact, Mr. Speaker, that the resolution is declaratory and thus does not envisage the necessary negotiations of verification measures, there are elements called for in the resolution which simply are not verifiable under the suggested verification procedure. The SALT I and SALT II agreements deal with anti-ballistics missile systems with inter-continental ballistic missiles and with heavy bombers. It is relatively easy to verify the deployment or testing of these major weapons systems by national technical means. Indeed, non-intrusive national technical means are generally adequate to monitor fixed ICBM sites, the number and locations of heavy bombers and the number of submarines actually

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deployed. However, these methods are totally inadequate to monitor tactical nuclear weapons systems or dual use weapons delivery systems which we have today.

Furthermore, countries must still come to grips with how to verify submarine launch Cruise missiles and Cruise missiles which are deployed on surface ships. Stronger verification methods will be needed in order to ensure a ban on deployment and production of nuclear weapons and delivery systems.

It is a fact of life, Mr. Speaker, that in the world of arms control and disarmament, the need for verification is based on suspicion. To imply that disarmament should be based on mere trust or confidence, or even on less than adequate verification measures, is not realistic. It is the view of this Government that the need for adequate verification in arms control agreements is too important for national security for us to accept the partial measures proposed in the freeze resolution.

I did not know last Thursday evening when I hosted the dinner of an international conference on the verification issue in the context of arms control negotiations in Europe, that the subject of that seminar would be raised in the House the following day. For two days last week, several persons from the United States of America, Germany, the Netherlands and, of course, Canada, met to study this issue. Our own contribution to verification is an important one, one which I wish more Canadians knew about. We are interested in this area. We are active participants in the research on verification, particularly on what is needed to reach verification agreements between parties. We start from the assumption that no agreement will be lasting without an agreed upon level of verification, and those levels depend upon the technology available and the degree of intrusiveness allowed by participating countries. Not all verification, as I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, can be accomplished by technological means. Unfortunately, for some purposes, the verification must be an on-site inspection.

A freeze on testing, Mr. Speaker, is perhaps the most likely option to begin the nuclear reduction process. However, even here the verification means is only suitable for relatively large test units. It should come as no surprise to any Hon. Member of this House that we are indeed divided on this issue. Each of us approaches it from a different perspective. As a veteran of World War II, I want to work for peace while remaining strong. I do not look for a quick solution to this difficult and perplexing problem. It has taken us 40 years to get ourselves into this mess. It may well take 40 years to remove the weapons, the fear and the suspicion from all of our hearts and minds.

Let us not vote for United Nations resolutions which cannot be enforced. What compliance system could be used to verify a ban on production and delivery systems? I remind Hon. Members of this House that the Cruise, which we hear so often discussed, is a delivery system. People talk about it as if it were some kind of weapon in itself. The U.S.S.R. has repeatedly refused to accept on-site inspections. Yet we know that is what is required if one of these resolutions of the United Nations is to succeed. Despite the good intent of the motion, it does not,