

to the extent that the security concerns of states are met, and beyond that, that states abjure the attempt to resolve grievances, even valid ones, by force of arms.

During much of the seventies we had a state that was most often described as one of detente. That state was one which was taken advantage of by the Soviet Union to develop further their nuclear capacity and in particular their intermediate-range nuclear capacity. That was the situation which confronted the NATO governments in December, 1979 when they decided on a two-track policy, on the one hand moving towards further disarmament and, on the other hand, providing us with adequate security.

In the context of the decision on security, which involved the modernization of nuclear arms, they agreed at that time that they would start deploying in Europe in late 1983, 464 ground launched Cruise missiles and 108 Pershing II missiles. When fully deployed the intermediate-range forces would represent a total of 572 warheads against the 900 SS-20 warheads—which is 300 missiles each with three warheads—plus 300 single warhead SS-4s and SS-5s for a total of 1,200 Soviet warheads. That is roughly the present state of the Soviet readiness, some 1,200 Soviet warheads. At the moment in NATO we have no intermediate-range nuclear weapons.

That is a measure of the gap which still exists. Even when these 572 warheads are deployed they will be many fewer than the number of Soviet missiles. Because we will have some defensive capacity, however, we believe that at least in the short run that will prove to be an adequate factor of safety.

That decision was arrived at on behalf of Canada by the predecessor government to this one. We were pleased to adopt it as our own when we took office. Because of the doubletrack concept it involved at the same time the movement toward disarmament negotiations which, in fact, become possible only if there is this kind of western capacity which can be bargained off against the existing Soviet capacity.

Following the decision of 1979, President Carter requested some 18 months ago that we allow one of the proposed missile systems, the Cruise missile system, to be tested in Canada. It is the Carter request, which was subsequently adopted by the Reagan administration, which has been accepted by the Canadian cabinet.

I have explained in the House that we propose to do two things. First of all, we propose a framework agreement that will possibly provide for the testing of large numbers of weapons systems in Canada in the future and which provides for the joint control of those operations and every other aspect of the testing, including any compensation which may become necessary for minor damage. In the case of each weapons system there will be a sub-agreement under which the testing of that particular weapon or weapons system will be legitimized.

We are proceeding with the negotiation of the framework agreement with the United States, as I have announced. At this time we are not proceeding with the negotiation of the sub-agreement dealing with the Cruise missile but there has been some misunderstanding about this. The decision to go

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ahead with that has been taken. What is being held up is the implementation of the decision which has already been taken. We are holding this up in deference to the request made by a number of Members of Parliament. In fact, I may say that in any event, if there were a general agreement either on testing or on disarmament and arms control which made such tests either illegal or unnecessary, we would obviously not be proceeding with them. The fact that we will not be proceeding to negotiate the sub-agreement on the Cruise missile in the interval does provide an additional guarantee that we will await the results of the UNSSOD II meeting.

I might also explain that the reason Canada is the logical site for such testing is that I believe it is the only really effective site within the NATO alliance with not only the northern conditions but, more particularly, with the amount of space that is required. The width of the corridor which the United States could provide for such tests would be only five miles, whereas we are able to provide a 30-mile wide corridor.

Mr. Benjamin: Why don't they use Alaska? Why don't they use their own land?

Mr. MacGuigan: Some hon. members are asking why they do not use Alaska. I guess they know that Alaska does not go as far south as Canada, so the full range of the weapon could not be tested. That is the easy answer to that question, which I think was intended rather flippantly.

It should also be understood, contrary to what has so often been asserted in recent days in this country, that the Cruise is not a first-strike weapon and cannot be a first-strike weapon because of its slow speed. First-strike weapons are those which go quickly. First-strike weapons in Europe, such as the Pershing missiles, would reach their target in something like five or six minutes, whereas the Cruise is a slow-moving missile and can fly only at the speed of an airplane, some four or five hundred miles an hour. Although it is extremely accurate, it is also extremely vulnerable to defensive measures. It is true that it can probably fly under most present radar networks, but it is also easily detectable by AWAC planes. Its value is not for its first-strike capacity, which it does not possess as it is too slow, but for its accuracy. In that sense it is a responsive weapon.

On the subject of the Cruise missile, I have to say that when I listened to the leader of the New Democratic Party I was reminded of the famous remark of Clement Attlee, one-time leader of the British Labour Party. He said that some socialists seem to labour under the illusion that an ineffective defence is morally superior to an effective one.

• (1600)

The focal point of the Cruise decision is that it is only by possessing this kind of capacity, which matches the Soviet Union's existing capacity, that the Europeans can feel adequately protected.

The NATO decision of 1979 was made at the request of the Europeans, in particular the socialist government of West Germany, and is supported by the socialist government in