

Limited nuclear war could be won

REGINA (CUP) — American defence officials are starting to think that a limited nuclear war could be fought and won, according to the Canadian Peace Congress.

Nicholas Prychodko, national director of the congress, said in a speech at the University of Regina that he is alarmed that "the United States has moved away from a position that neither side could win (a nuclear war)."

The peace congress is a

voluntary, non-profit organization dedicated to peaceful coexistence. It is campaigning against NATO's decision to deploy Pershing II Cruise Missiles in Western Europe. These missiles are aimed at the Soviet Union, and intended to allow the United States to wage a nuclear war limited to Europe, said Prychodko.

The American State Department estimates the U.S. could win a limited nuclear war with only 20 to 30 million dead. This is deemed

to be "compatible with national survival and recovery," said Prychodko.

American strategists believe that the Soviet Union, on the other hand, "would not be able to regain the status of a twentieth century military and economic power," he said.

For the last quarter-century, most American defence planners have believed the United States and Soviet Union can only avoid nuclear war if neither country is capable of delivering a knock-out blow on a "first strike." If either country attacked the other, it too would be devastated.

To maintain this strategy's credibility, each side must be able to inflict unacceptably high damage on the other country's civilian population. Since Jimmy Carter's Presidential Directive 59 in 1980, however, missiles previously targeted at cities will now be aimed at nuclear weapon installations.

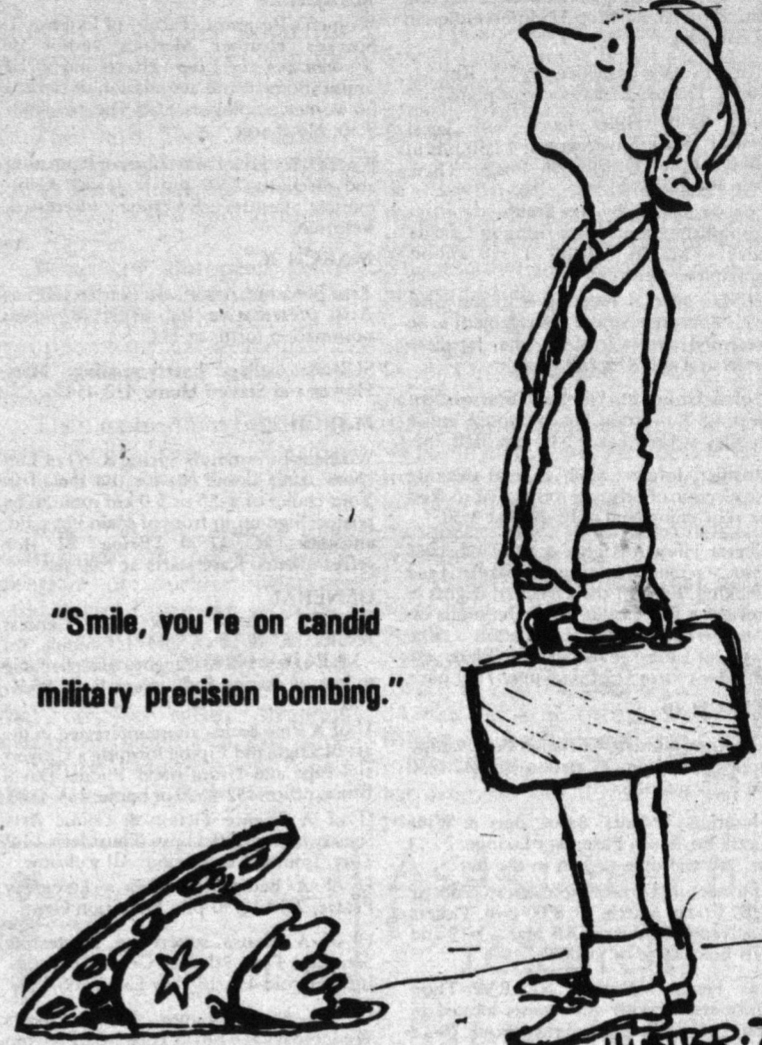
"This would only be useful on a first strike," said Prychodko.

The congress is also alarmed that advances in missile technology have, reduced the warning time from 30 to four minutes.

This seems frightening, said Prychodko, "especially considering the fact that in the past two years there have been 149 documented instances of false alarms." These alarms have been caused by flocks of geese, weather conditions and burnt-out microchips.

"Sometimes it has gone as long as 15 minutes without being discovered," he said.

The Soviet Union will probably develop similar capabilities soon, said Prychodko.



The result: both sides would have first-strike capability, and the four-minute warning time would put them under tremendous pressure.

The Canadian Peace Congress hopes their "Peace is Everybody's Business" campaign will raise awareness in Canada about peace and disarmament issues. They are circulating

petitions to pressure the Canadian government because it supports the Cruise Missiles and will allow them to be launched from Canadian air space.

"A million signatures (on a petition to the Canadian government) might make an impression," said Prychodko.

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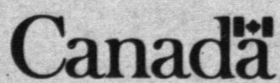
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