

The Government does not support a declaration of nuclear weapon-free status for Canada. Although Canada does not possess nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons are not stationed on Canadian territory, Canada is a member of NATO which, as already indicated, relies on a nuclear deterrent. The declaration of a nuclear weapon-free zone, if it is maintained, would be inconsistent with membership in that alliance.<sup>2</sup>

Despite this position the local authorities in 169 municipalities across Canada have declared their areas nuclear-free. Manitoba, Ontario, and the Northwest Territories have each declared themselves to be NWFZs. As a result of these declarations, approximately 60 percent of the Canadian public resides in locally declared NWFZs.

### Parliamentary Comment

Proposals to make Canada a nuclear weapon-free zone have been put forward in the House of Commons on several occasions. On August 31, 1987 Mr. Neil Young of the New Democratic Party (NDP) put forth a Private Member's Motion (C-214) to declare Canada a NWFZ. The motion called for a prohibition of "the deployment, testing, construction and transportation of nuclear weapons and associated equipment through and within Canada, [and] the export of goods and materials for use in the construction and deployment of nuclear arms," while calling on the government to "encourage cities, provinces and states throughout the world to undertake similar action."<sup>3</sup> In Mr. Young's view, Canada would thereby strengthen its position on international disarmament and proliferation matters, building upon its traditional support for the establishment of NWFZs.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Commons Debates, 31 August 1987, p. 8627.