

Canadians, therefore, have earned the right to speak. They are telling us, the members of this House, as people everywhere are telling their own leaders, that the danger is too near. They want their leaders to act, to accept their political responsibility, to work to reduce the nuclear threat.

Last fall I spoke of an ominous rhythm of crisis. I drew attention to the confluence of three potentially disastrous trends — the resort to force to settle disputes, the risk of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and the worsening state of East-West relations. I decided to practise what all seven leaders of the industrialized democracies had proclaimed last summer at Williamsburg: "...to devote our full political resources to reducing the threat of war".

I decided to use Canada's influence to call international attention to the danger, to try to inject high-level political energy into East-West relations, to turn the trend-line of crisis, to work at the cross-roads of common interest between the two sides.

I proposed that the megaphones be put away, that an armistice be declared in the war of ideology and recrimination, that an end be made to manichaeism on both sides; that we exercise leadership, and apply statecraft, in East-West relations — the most important strategic relationship that we have.

The initiative

Since last fall I have taken that message to Paris, The Hague, Brussels and Rome; to the Vatican, to Bonn, to London and to Zurich. I presented it in Tokyo, and Dhaka, and to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in New Delhi; to Peking, to Washington, and to the United Nations. I met with leaders in Prague, East Berlin and Bucharest, to ensure that our message was heard in the highest councils of the Warsaw Pact.

At each step along the way, my message was straightforward. Canada was not looking for a seat at the superpower table. But our lives and our future were on that table, as were those of the nine-tenths of the world's population living outside the USA and the USSR. We all had a right and a responsibility to involve ourselves, to press those at the table to remember their own humanity.

We proposed giving political impetus to the Stockholm Conference on measures to build confidence and reduce the risk of war in Europe. As many East-West contacts collapsed, that conference took on importance even beyond its status as the only forum serving the Helsinki process of *détente*.

We insisted that both sides invest political effort to stimulate the talks in Vienna on mutual and balanced force reductions (MBFR). These MBFR talks are the key to achieving parity of conventional forces in Central Europe and to raising the nuclear threshold, thereby diminishing reliance on early first use of nuclear weapons.

If I may make an aside, I want to insist that the MBFR are concerned with force reductions. They are not seeking equilibrium at a higher level. They are seeking equilibrium at a lower level. And I can't understand for the life of me, because I have explained it many times, why raising the nuclear threshold