

*North-South Relations*

put forward only those at which I have arrived after serious thought. I can submit them only for your consideration, Mr. Speaker, and for the consideration of the House, not claiming, of course, that they are the ultimate or the correct ones. In all frankness, I cannot help but come to the conclusion that whether we like it or not, the Soviet Union saw a certain danger along its border. As a result, the Soviets decided to move in, probably taking an enormous risk and hoping that they could get away with it, or hoping that the invasion would not be related to the Helsinki Act or other major understandings between East and West. That was a very serious miscalculation. With the the Soviets there, the probability is that eventually Afghanistan will become another Soviet republic. It is a reality in the historical evolution of the Soviet Union. Once the Soviets move in, they are unlikely to move out unless circumstances change dramatically, and circumstances have not changed in that part of the world. As a result of that action, we saw the Soviet Union losing ground in detente vis-à-vis the west. The Soviets lost ground in the United Nations and they lost ground in relation to the Third World Nations.

But is there a point where the west should take advantage of a situation when the U.S.S.R. seems to be in a position of wanting to regain lost ground? Here we can do two things. We can continue on the road we have followed so far, develop a hard line position and tell them that we will not deal with them until they move out of Afghanistan. Or we can, at a certain point, take advantage of a situation of weakness in which the Soviets find themselves now, in a sense, because they wish to regain lost ground. This can be turned into an opportunity in favour of establishing a better understanding in that part of the world. Alternatively, perhaps we can achieve a certain kind of neutrality which is badly needed, particularly in that part of the world. This could lead to a resumption of detente negotiations.

I am inclined to believe that a point has to come when we must move onward, just as the world does. It is a question of timing. It is extremely difficult to decide when to move ahead. I do not think we will achieve much more by maintaining this element of stagnation and this prevailing lack of political will on the part of the West by not taking an initiative in relations between East and West on which the North-South dialogue hinges, in good part, by continuing too far along this road.

I said I would make a few pleas. My last one concerns the next conference of the United Nations in the spring of 1982, which is the special session on disarmament. In 1978 we came forward with an outstanding policy proposal which has become known under the name of policy of gradual suffocation of nuclear armaments. This, in part, has been put into practice. A number of aspects have become evident that need to be re-examined. We still have a good year ahead of us. I urge the government to look at the position we took in 1978 to see how we can put forward a renewed, typically Canadian innovative position that will win the respect of all the nations at the United Nations, as we have done since 1978 and in light of the experience in the intervening three years.

• (2110)

I will move on to give a quick report on where the Madrid conference stands at the present time. The fact that the Madrid conference is still on, having started under the most difficult circumstances, is a measure of the difficulty of reaching agreement between East and West. Nevertheless, the conference has served a very good purpose, that is of reviewing the obligations that nations undertook in signing the Helsinki Final Act. Canada placed great importance in 1975 on this review of the implementation of the Helsinki act for it makes little sense to go on formulating new agreements and new promises when old ones are broken, unkept or ignored.

We have taken a look at our own record and at those of other states. Together with other western nations we have been forthright in our criticism of the Soviet Union for its actions in Afghanistan which violated virtually every one of the principles set out in the Final Act: non-use of force, non-intervention in internal affairs, self-determination of peoples, human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We have also taken a firm stand on the importance of the respect for human rights by all participating states, and have protested at the Madrid meeting the denial of the right to leave one's country, harassment for applying to do so, the denial of religious and intellectual freedom and the persecution of individuals, such as that of the members of the Helsinki monitoring groups who have been imprisoned simply for seeking to know and act upon their rights. In so doing, we have attempted to reflect the deep concern which exists among Canadians, particularly those whose roots lie in eastern Europe, for the human rights' situation in the Soviet Union and certain other of the participating states.

There have been improvements since 1975. Although the record is mixed, the reunification of families divided by frontiers between East and West has benefited from the impetus provided by the CSCE process. Negotiators at Madrid are attempting to build upon those benefits which detente has produced and which still remain. They are also attempting to rectify the shortcomings in the fulfilment of the Final Act.

Among the principal preoccupations of the Madrid meeting is the question of security in Europe, and specifically the holding of a conference on disarmament. The western approach is that this conference should take place in stages. The first would develop certain measures to build confidence between East and West. In order to create confidence, these measures must be militarily significant, verifiable, binding and extend throughout Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals. While some progress has been made in bringing the Warsaw Pact position favouring a more declaratory and general approach to a disarmament conference closer to our own, differences still remain.

Seeking agreement to hold a disarmament conference has dominated the Soviet approach to the Madrid meeting. The West has sought to widen co-operation in the other areas. We have sought to improve contacts between western businessmen and their eastern counterparts; to better the conditions under which they may set up business offices in east European