



# Statements and Speeches

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## LEAVING ITS ALLIANCES IS NO CHOICE FOR CANADA

### WEAKENED NATO, NORAD MIGHT TEMPT KREMLIN LEADERS

By JOE CLARK, Special to *The Gazette*, April 3, 1986.\*

OTTAWA — Gwynne Dyer (March 15) argues Canada should leave the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the North American Aerospace Defence Command to make "nuclear war . . . less likely to happen." He believes we could become a Canadian Finland.

Both his assumptions are wrong.

Leaving the Western alliance would make nuclear war more likely. The Soviets might be emboldened by a break in the West. NATO would feel weakened, and some of its members might be driven to hawkish demonstrations of strength.

#### Road closed again

The atmosphere that led to the Reagan-Gorbachev summit could be shattered, and the road closed again to negotiated arms control.

Second, Canada could never be Finland. The Finns are an estimable people, shaped by their own nature and history. But their nature and history are different from ours.

We are proud of our role as an international peacekeeper, a moderate and reasonable country. But moderation is a means, not an end. Our purpose is to enlarge freedom. We prefer to do that by advocating peaceful settlement of disputes, by fighting poverty and famine, and by promoting respect for human rights.

But we have also always been prepared to defend our values, by force of arms if necessary. The determination and gallantry of Canadians in two world wars and in Korea are as much a part of our history as diplomacy and development. There is nothing neutral in Canada's nature or tradition.

Geography is not the paramount reason we belong in NATO or NORAD. Freedom is. Those alliances, with all their imperfections, defend a system of free societies and — by maintaining strength in the face of Soviet strength — help keep the peace.

It demeans Canadians, and misreads our history, to suggest that we stay in NATO because leaving it would displease the United States. We are in NATO because we belong there, just as we belong in the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, and in the fields of Asia and Africa teaching agricultural reform.

\*Mr. Clark is Secretary of State for External Affairs.