

nuclear states to claim impotence in the arms race, and could encourage states without nuclear weapons to argue that they have a right to acquire them.

If these patterns continue, and the path toward effective nuclear arms control remains blocked, the world will become infinitely more dangerous.

We, therefore, welcome the meeting that will take place in Washington later this week between President Reagan and Foreign Minister Gromyko. We applaud the United States' willingness, expressed so eloquently yesterday by President Reagan, to engage in political consultations on a regular and frequent basis. We hope that the USSR will respond positively to this opportunity to meet and talk.

On these questions, Canada's influence is limited but real. We have no corner on moral authority or technical expertise, but we do enjoy a reputation as a people who are serious about peace and skilled at mediation. Those qualities are critically important in reversing the ominous trends which threaten to unravel arms control. The essential problem today is not moral or technical — neither superpower wants a holocaust; and human ingenuity, which can invent weapons, can devise controls. The problem is political, and this is one of the fora in which we must work together to inch the world away from nuclear devastation.

Some despair that anything constructive can be done in the present state of international tension. They point to the recent lack of progress in virtually every area of arms control. The Canadian view is that something must be done and so it can be done.

The major decisions rest with the superpowers, but the responsibility rests with us all. Multilateral efforts, led and encouraged by the medium and smaller-sized countries, can help improve the atmosphere, and can put specific, workable ideas on the agenda.

Canada, for its part, is determined to continue to play a leading role in the search for peace and disarmament. We believe the nuclear buildup threatens the life of every Canadian, and the existence of human society. Countries like our own must use our influence to reverse that buildup and reduce the danger of destruction. That will be a constant, consistent, dominant priority of Canadian foreign policy.

My country is not neutral in the contest between open and closed societies. We defend, and actively assert, the values of democracy and individual freedom. We believe it is essential to pursue the goals of peace and freedom simultaneously.

We shall seek, through concrete and realistic steps, progress toward a comprehensive test ban treaty. We shall encourage superpower and multilateral discussion on all outer space weapons, and shall commission further studies on how a space weapons ban might be verified. We shall work for the success of next year's Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, in order to prevent the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. We shall bring to bear our technical expertise in verification measures to ensure mutual confidence and security in areas where arms control agreements can be achieved. We