

# Times-Colonist

★ Wednesday, December 16, 1987

## No-nuke world a matter of hope

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They were the experts with the military haircuts who came to tell the children that in the world of nuclear disarmament there is no Santa Claus.

She was the clear-voiced teenager who said that if she and enough

others believed, there would be a Santa Claus.

And the experts allowed that, yes, with people like her, there may indeed be a Santa Claus.

Retired Lieutenant-General Reg Lane, former deputy commander of NORAD, and Lt.-Col. Alex Morrison, counsellor and adviser to the Canadian mission at the United Nations, told the students of Spectrum community school Tuesday that hopes of a nuclear-free world were "a pipe dream."



■ LANE: never is a long time

The latest U.S.-U.S.S.R. arms-reduction pact removed only four per cent of nuclear weapons in the world, they said.



■ MORRISON: take it step by step

Even a Moscow summit next summer, which could cut weapons even more, would still leave plenty of death-dealing weapons in the arsenals of the super-powers.

"It's not likely there will be a world without nuclear weapons," said Lane, who was born into a nuclear-free world.

Never was too strong a word for 17-year-old Rona MacLeod.

"If people stood together," the red-haired student told the military men, "it could be a world without nuclear weapons."

She said she refused to accept that people of the world would never trust one another enough to remove the threat of mutual annihilation.

That rebuke prompted Morrison to, if not rethink, then at least adjust his position.

"That is a good attitude," he told MacLeod.

"You have a hope, but I think you are realistic enough to realize the hope will not be realized today and are prepared to take it step by step."

Lane admitted, "Never is a long, long time."

The men were at the school to speak on the topic *A World without Nuclear Weapons*.

Morrison said the Russians are "intellectually ignorant" and suspicious of the rest of the world. Having been

victims in wars from Napoleon to Hitler, they have a hard time trusting the West.

He said the latest Reagan-Gorbachev treaty was signed because:

- The West stood firm on earlier calls for disarmament;

- First Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev has brought a new age to the Soviet Union, where they want to spend money on consumer goods rather than bombs;

- Negotiations leading to last week's treaty have been going on for six years; and;

- The influence of many ordinary people on world leaders prodded them to this pact.

"Canada is a burr under the American and Soviet saddle," he said.

"Canadians should become a bit more immodest... to recognize we play a vital and significant part in trying to advance disarmament."

Lane said the biggest stumbling block is trust through verifiable confirmation that the other side is keeping up its side of the bargain.

"One hiccup on either side and we will be right back to Square 1," he said.

However, he warned the problem could also be Gorbachev, who he called "a breath of fresh air."

"He has problems at home. If he moves too quickly he could unseat himself. I fear he could move too quickly and be removed from power."