

However, during this same period, the Soviet Union has been quietly but resolutely building up its nuclear and conventional forces. It has shown by its invasion and continued occupation of Afghanistan that it is prepared to resort to military force in pursuit of what it considers to be its national interests. Unfortunately, the serious implications of these developments were not perceived among large segments of our people. To them, detente gave the promise of reversing the nuclear arms race. Now they mistakenly imagine that it is our modernization decision which threatens detente, rather than Soviet missiles, the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and Soviet pressure on Poland. In truth, the peace movement is more a product of fear than of logic.

We must do a better job of addressing these fears. We must convince our publics that unilateral disarmament increases rather than reduces the risk of war. We agree with the peace movement that the nuclear arms race can and must be arrested. They should be assured that we are not trying to match the other side one for one and that we are not seeking military superiority but greater security at the lowest possible level of armaments, nuclear and non-nuclear. We should do all we can in our communiqués and with the communication resources of the Alliance to show that this is an essential purpose for us. The fears of the peace movement need to be addressed, but the real campaign for nuclear disarmament has to be waged at the bargaining table.

All of us warmly welcomed President Reagan's statement on November 18. Canadians were impressed by the comprehensive approach taken by the President on the broad range of arms-control issues, including his announcement that the United States was prepared to resume negotiations on strategic weapons early in the new year. They also welcomed the opening of negotiations in Geneva last week. The President's statement went a long way towards removing the unease and anxiety about the Alliance's commitment to arms control.

As leaders of the Alliance, we all need to exercise great care lest there be misunderstanding of our fundamental desire to avoid war. Our peoples need reassurance that for us, all war is anathema -- not just nuclear war, but all war.

Of course, we must bargain from strength. There must be no backing down from our resolve to counter the Soviet threat. We have, however, now shown more clearly to all who desire peace our alternative to unilateral disarmament.